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Strongly Bonded Supervisory Relationships: Demystifying the Bond Aspect of the Supervisory Working Alliance

Melissa Heinrich
Western Michigan University, melissaheinrich@gmail.com

STRONGLY BONDED SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS: DEMYSTIFYING THE BOND ASPECT OF THE SUPERVISORY WORKING ALLINACE

by

Melissa T. Heinrich

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Doctoral Committee:

Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D., Chair
Eric Sauer, Ph.D.
Kathryn Lewis-Ginebaugh, Ph.D.

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Melissa T. Heinrich

STRONGLY BONDED SUPERVISORY RELATIONSHIPS: DEMYSTIFYING THE BOND ASPECT OF THE SUPERVISORY WORKING ALLIANCE

Melissa T. Heinrich, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University

The current study explores the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance through the lens of relational-cultural theory (RCT). Previous research posits a quality supervisory relationship is important for effective supervision and clinical outcomes. The Supervisory Working Alliance (SWA; Bordin, 1983) is a pan-theoretical model for the growth process in supervision including (a) mutual agreement on goals for supervision, (b) mutual agreement on associated tasks for accomplishing the goals, and (c) the emotional bond in the supervisory relationship. The process for mutual agreement of goals and tasks seems clear, the bond aspect of the SWA seems less clear. Research concerning supervisees' perspectives on quality supervisory relationships describes supervisor behaviors or demeanor, leaving gaps in the literature for a clear description of the bond aspect of the SWA. The primary purpose of the current study is to add a clearer description of the bond aspect of the SWA by exploring strongly bonded supervisory relationships from supervisees' perspectives through the lens of RCT. RCT is a counseling theory that posits growth and change happen through connection with others (Jordan, 2010).

The current study utilizes an interpretative phenomenological analysis method of qualitative inquiry (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). Participants included nine pre-doctoral interns from accredited university counseling centers who acknowledged having a previous or

current strongly bonded supervisory relationship and received multicultural training in their program or internship site. Participants provided two interviews either face-to-face or over Zoom video conferencing. Analysis resulted in discovery of six themes: Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, Supervisor Guided Supervisee Development, Cultural Attunement, Supervisor Way of Engaging, Supervisor Integrity, and Positive Outcomes.

Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship was discovered as a core theme as it set strongly bonded supervisory relationships apart from other supervisory relationships. It is possible Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship is the difference between strongly bonded and "good" supervisory relationships. The results also support RCT as a potentially effective approach to supervision due to the overlap between the themes of this study, descriptions of quality supervisory relationships in the literature, and core theory tenets. Finally, the results reflected and extended research that suggests the importance of supervisors' multicultural competence in quality supervision. Results of the current study suggest direct and on-going multicultural dialogue initiated by the supervisor is additive to strongly bonded supervisory relationships, and in some instances, integral to the initiation of the strong bond.

The findings of the current study have particular relevance for the practice of supervision and the training of future supervisors. The results of the current study suggest the importance for supervisors and supervisors-in-training to have strong relational skills, and on-going development of multicultural competence—specifically, quality skills for initiating and maintaining multicultural dialogue. Quality supervisory experiences support supervision outcomes, which are vital for producing quality clinicians and quality clinical outcomes. Adding clarity to the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance increases opportunities for quality supervision and clinical outcomes.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The impetus for the design of this study came from a combination of factors that set an accurate context for understanding study findings and implications. This chapter presents a narrative describing pivotal supervision experiences in my training as well as some early thought processes that led to the design and implementation of the current study. The purpose of this narrative is twofold. First, it describes my experiences to provide the reader a contextual frame for this study. Second, it makes my subjective experience transparent, which allows the reader to follow the interpretative points of the study from start to finish strengthening the rigor of the study (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

Early on, I had no idea supervision could be a life-changing experience. I thought supervision was the place supervisees learn the nuanced skills for providing therapy before becoming licensed clinicians. I had no idea supervision could also help me learn more about myself and about my relationships. I didn't know supervision could help me find and strengthen my voice. I did not realize how much personal development would mix with professional development through the process of supervision. One supervisory relationship in particular has been foundational and integral to my development, so I became curious about what made that supervisory relationship different.

I began my training in a small cohort, therapy-focused Master's program. My cohort was initiated to our roles as supervisees explicitly before we even began supervision. I learned supervision was not always comfortable, but was worthwhile. Supervision was in service to myself, and my future clients, it was where I was going to learn how to be a good counselor. A catch phrase I remember is "aim for a 7" on a 1-10 scale measuring level of vulnerability of

shared information with supervisors. I learned I would get out of supervision what I put into it, and, as such, it was my job to find comfort with talking about uncomfortable things, find comfort in the "gray" of clinical work, and to push myself toward the goal of self-awareness. I learned feedback was a natural part of supervision, and it is in the best and highest good of all concerned that I remain open to feedback. It was clear to me I was not required to accept every word spoken in supervision as ultimate truth. Rather, it was my job to remain open to the feedback to develop my own voice as a clinician. I also respected the fact I practiced under my supervisors' licenses and thus, I should follow their lead in the process of finding my voice. Beyond ethics, safety, and foundational skills—I could keep what fit, and leave what did not. This personal growth focus clicked easily and effortlessly with my own already personal growth focused mind. It spoke directly to my person and purpose.

I had exceptional supervisors. I was unaware to what degree at the time. I simply thought that was how supervision always looked. Throughout five semesters of supervision (i.e., foundational skills class, two practica, and Masters-level internship) each of my supervisors was dedicated to my professional development and the care of my clients. I experienced each of them as *with* me in the process of learning in their individual ways. My first supervisor used stories from her own training, and the changes to her personal life in the process to normalize the challenges I experienced. My second supervisor openly talked about her "failings" as a therapist to illustrate important lessons for clinical work. My third supervisor was the first to normalize difficult feelings toward clients with examples from her own work for ways to use difficult reactions to clients therapeutically. I looked up to these professionals and often wondered if I could ever be as "good" of a clinician. Each of them displayed a deep respect for the supervisory hour(s), were fully present for our meetings, and seemed deeply committed to my learning. At no

time did I ever experience their self-disclosure as self-serving. Their doors truly felt open for me to ask questions and check-in. In return, I was the supervisee I was taught to be, and it felt right. I was eager to learn, and felt like I grew my clinical skills each semester. I shared, asked questions, laughed, cried…I held onto content until I felt ready to share, and almost always chose to share. I experienced feelings of joy, confusion, frustration, embarrassment, and relief.

My fourth supervisor came in a perfect storm, which took place over the course of the internship year for my Master's degree. I will call my fourth supervisor Karen. At the time, I was focused on growing my self-awareness, experiencing supervision, and reading a book suggested by a peer on the power of vulnerability. Karen changed supervision entirely for me.

My first couple of meetings with Karen went similarly to others. We set up goals and expectations and began the process of supervision "as usual." Directly prior to our third session, I had a difficult experience with a classmate, which was distracting. I acknowledged needing a few minutes to process this interaction and asked if that would be okay before we addressed clinical work. Karen acquiesced. Once I had expressed myself, she said, "I think this is about as real and present as I have ever experienced you." I was wide-eyed. Really? She went on to explain all of her experiences of me had always been professional, congenial, and dedicated, though somewhat guarded. She felt the *real* me was hidden behind careful discernment. And she was completely right. I knew exactly what she was talking about. I had some internal walls up, ones that I built on my own with bricks of perfectionism and perception management. I was presenting myself carefully, trying to be sure I did not make a fool of myself. In the moment I was airing my frustration, I let myself speak more authentically. After this session, I began to nudge past my walls in supervision.

By mid-semester, I had been working with several clients and consistently with one long-term client. He had a difficult upbringing that included trauma and neglect, so I wanted to be sure I did well by him as his counselor. I was speaking about him with Karen and she asked, point-blank, "Are you attracted to him?" I knew well enough from ethics class plus many other discussions throughout my training that sexual attraction toward clients was a taboo topic not often talked about. I must have stared at her with my mouth open. Karen said, "It's okay if you are, and if you are, supervision is the place to talk about it. Obviously, it's not something to act on. You're also human and attraction happens, it's happened to me before." She proceeded to tell me about a time she knew she felt attracted to a client, her process for acknowledging it to herself, and consulting with a trusted colleague. Of course, she handled the situation ethically and therapeutically. I was so amazed she told me this so grounded in her own truth. In that moment, it occurred to me this woman trusted me enough to share her experience with me. If she trusted me enough to talk to me about a subject that remains hushed in the field, certainly I could trust her with my truth as well.

My truth regarding my client was I was not at all attracted to him. He tugged on my helper strings, and I wanted very much to assist him on his journey. I genuinely enjoyed our time together as he took our work seriously and shared openly. He was psychologically-minded, so it was effortless to process with him. But I was not sexually attracted to him. My endearment was more brotherly. Karen's question pushed me to consider a notion I would not have otherwise. Because of her trust in me, I trusted her and our relationship to genuinely explore my true feelings toward this client. Her trust was a gift. Our work continued to progress accordingly throughout the semester and I felt my professional growth take off exponentially. While I learned

from my previous supervisors, I felt I learned a great deal more in supervision with Karen. I felt a permission of sorts to be more myself, to develop *my* voice as a human providing therapy.

What was it about Karen, or our supervisory relationship that felt so different? Arguably, self-disclosure could be named. Yet, I experienced (and appreciated) supervisor self-disclosure with others prior to our work together. An interpersonal style could be named, as she talked about her experience of me in the moment of my rant. That feedback certainly caught my attention and perhaps set us on a trajectory that felt different. Yet, none of these possibilities felt like the whole story.

A few months later, I was on a plane flying to interview for my doctoral program. A friend had recommended *Daring Greatly* by Brene Brown (2012) to read on my trip. Within a few pages it hit me that vulnerability was the difference Karen brought to supervision. Dr. Brown talks about vulnerability as "uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure" (2012, p. 34) and highlights the power of vulnerability in connection and growth. She argues if people engage with vulnerability, they can "show-up" more authentically and real in their relationships and experiences. She quotes a passage from Margery Williams's *The Velveteen Rabbit* (1922):

> "Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you…Generally by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out, and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real, you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

Reading this on the plane, I was crying and highlighting this beautiful passage at the same time.

Karen's willingness to be vulnerable with me gave me permission to be vulnerable as well. Her being Real, like the passage describes, made it okay for me to be Real. Certainly, her disclosure regarding her client could be considered vulnerable, and I deeply respected and honored it as such. Beyond that, her willingness to give me real feedback about her experience of me in the moment seemed vulnerable, a moment of realness and authenticity. Giving feedback can be just as vulnerable as receiving it, particularly when the feedback is very personal. She was willing to speak her truth about herself and her experience of me, and all of it seemed to be in service to my learning and development. I felt less need to be overly perfectionistic, and more free to speak my truth in supervision. Her vulnerability created space for my vulnerability and gave me "permission" in a way to develop my professional voice.

By the time I came to understand what was different about supervision with Karen, our supervisory relationship was complete and subsequent supervision was not quite the same. Vulnerability with Karen felt easy, like running on pavement, whereas vulnerability with subsequent supervisors felt more like running in waist-deep water. I could do it. It just required a lot more energy. I pushed myself to continue to be vulnerable knowing how much I learned with Karen. I did not want to stagnate my development (something my Doctoral Chair calls "showing up anyway"). But, I often left supervision wondering, "Should I have said that?" Being vulnerable with other supervisors felt more anxiety provoking. I was still learning of subsequent supervisors, but the learning felt less dense. I wondered if I was developing as much as I could since I was preoccupied with ambivalence: should I be Real or guarded?

I became fascinated with what made one supervision experience so different from the rest. The variety of experiences in supervisory relationships sparked the idea for this study. I wondered how much of the dynamic was about the supervisor, was about me, was perhaps

gender-based, culture-based, or about theoretical orientation, etc.? I wondered if vulnerability was the key to learning within supervisory relationships, particularly on the part of supervisors as they hold the position of power in supervision.

My subsequent experiences with supervision fueled even more questions about what makes up a quality supervisory experience. Supervision in my doctoral program has ranged from the developmentally focused supervision I was used to from my Master's program to more task-oriented approaches. While I have noticed continued professional development throughout this range of supervision, I learn more from supervisors who take a developmental, mentorship-type approach. Like many members of the dominant culture, I previously assumed most supervisees would share my same perspective. My doctoral training has taught me my perspective is not universal. Not everyone prefers a relational approach, not everyone is interested in a more process-oriented supervisory experience. Not everyone learns the way I learn, and not everyone is afforded the same societal privileges I experience as a member of the dominant culture. One professor exclaimed to me in exasperation, "Your ideas assume all supervisors are mentally and emotionally healthy people!" an excellent point I had not previously considered. Not all supervisors may know how to responsibly handle vulnerability. My wondering changed to *is* vulnerability a key aspect of strongly bonded supervisory relationships? If it is not vulnerability, what is it? What is the "thing" that makes for a supervisory relationship that stands out and allows for deeper learning? Additionally, I now wonder how much of my perspective is reflective of my identity as a White female. Do people of color have a different answer than vulnerability for what makes a strongly bonded relationship? Does gender make a difference? I want to know within supervisory relationships, what is it that makes a strong bond.

In early reading for this study, I came across Relational-Cultural Theory and was deeply moved. The theory resonated with my perspective. The whole theory is based on the notion that growth takes place in connection with others, which reflected my experience, most pointedly with Karen. I could think of connections with others throughout my lifetime that supported the idea of growth in relationship with others such as relatives, teachers, coaches, friends, etc. RCT tenets of mutuality, mutual empathy, and authenticity (explained herein) let me know my experience in supervision with Karen was a lived example of a growth-fostering relationship. Coming upon RCT seemed to be a foundation on which to build the ideas that sprung from my experience. Knowing my experiences are not universal, I remain curious what others might call that which I have experienced in supervision with Karen, and what RCT calls growth-fostering relationships.

This narrative reflects my journey in approaching this study. I had some profound supervisory experiences that led me to wonder about the connection between supervisor and supervisee. Finding a relationally focused theory in RCT provided a framework on which to structure my ideas in order to study them. The following chapter provides an overview of the current literature regarding supervision, supervisory relationships, and RCT. The next chapter provides a detailed description of the method for data collection and analysis, followed by a chapter detailing the results. The last chapter provides a discussion of major ideas connecting the results to the current literature as well as an exploration of implications and limitations.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The provision of therapy is learned in supervision. Nuanced skills related to emotionality, in-the-moment processing, and listening between-the-lines are learned experientially, in action, in supervision. Class lectures, discussions, and exam material can provide insight into content and the conceptualization of clients' presenting issues. However, providing therapy under the guidance and expertise of a supervisor is where the real process of therapy is learned. Supervision is the space for learning the finesse for holding client content and the therapeutic process at the same time, all to bring about healing and change. Bernard and Goodyear (2014) suggest two goals for supervision: (a) to develop supervisees' professional skills, and (b) to ensure the well-being of clients. When supervision is effective, supervisees gain confidence in clinical and conceptualization skills, develop trust in their therapeutic instinct, and develop their own voice as a therapist. Ineffective supervision, on the other hand, may cause stagnation, harm, doubt, and feelings of inadequacy—none of which create a rich space from which to assist in the therapeutic process with clients (Allen, Szollos, & Williams, 1986; Goodyear, Crego, & Johnston, 1992; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Wulf & Nelson, 2000).

The supervisory relationship is a key element within supervision and is central to supervisees' learning experience (Holloway, 1987; Loganbill, Hardy, & Delworth, 1982; Nelson, 1997; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). The supervisory relationship can also support therapy outcomes and therapeutic relationships (Doehrman, 1976; Hill et al., 2016; Patton & Kivlighan, 1997). The supervisory relationship can affect levels of openness to influence and exploration, which in turn affects the level of learning for supervisees (Slavin, 1998; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Knowing what elements are effective for creating a supervisory

relationship that will best promote the professional development of the supervisee is of major importance.

A quality supervisory relationship can benefit supervisees in a variety of ways including reducing anxiety, increasing openness to learning, enhancing professional development, and decreasing self-doubt (Bucky, Marques, Daly, Alley & Karp, 2010; Slavin, 1998; Strozier, Kivlighan, & Thorenson, 1993; Weaks, 2002; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Positive supervision as perceived by supervisees can lead to feelings of confidence, self-efficacy, increased skills for interventions, and increased conceptualization of complex presentations (Worthen & McNeill, 1996). Positively perceived supervision can lead to increased desire and commitment to professional development and to the process of supervision for supervisees (Worthen & McNeill, 1996). These outcomes highlight the importance of quality supervision for the development of clinicians-in-training to become competent professionals. The therapeutic relationship between supervisees and their clients is also influenced by the supervisory relationship by way of parallel process (Doehrman, 1976) and by supporting the clinical skills of supervisees in order to best serve clients (Hill et al., 2016). Because the supervisory relationship has high potential to affect the therapeutic relationship it is important to be intentional about the development and maintenance of the supervisory relationship.

Having a model from which to conceptualize the supervisory relationship is helpful. The supervisory working alliance is a pan-theoretical model for the change process associated with development in supervision and includes mutual agreement between supervisor and supervisee on (a) goals of supervision, (b) associated tasks to reach goals, and (c) the emotional bond that supports the change process (Bordin, 1983). As detailed in the literature review that follows, research on the supervisory working alliance suggests the bond aspect of the supervisory

working alliance sets the tone for the environment in which the tasks and goals will be pursued (Bordin, 1983; Ladany et al., 1997; 1999; Ladany & Friedlander, 1995). The bulk of the literature on supervision focuses on supervision outcomes and supervisee satisfaction without specific focus on the development and maintenance of the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance.

The broad classes of models for approaching supervision include psychotherapy-based models, developmental approaches, and social role models (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Many models for supervision are classified among these broader classes. RCT is a counseling theory that might provide a particularly useful lens for exploring the bond because of the emphasis of on growth and development in connection in RCT. As detailed in the literature review that follows, principles of RCT promote positive growth in therapy and mentoring contexts.

In the current study, I bring together an understanding of supervision literature, the supervisory working alliance literature focusing particularly the gap in understanding of the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. I apply an RCT lens through which to study the bond. The following literature review has six sections. In the first section, I explore why supervision matters and the connection between the supervisory relationship and the development of supervisees. In the second section, I address the supervisory working alliance, particularly for its relevance to supervision and conduciveness to being explored through the lens of RCT. In the third section, I provide an overview of the RCT counseling theory which serves to describe an RCT approach and to establish RCT as a potentially useful approach to supervision that has not been empirically researched to date. In the fourth section, I review relational-cultural research related to mentorship-style relationships to establish the usefulness of an RCT approach to supervision, which could also be seen as a mentorship-style relationship. In the fifth section, I

review research on supervision experiences from the perspective of supervisees to establish what is known regarding supervisory relationships perceived as beneficial by supervisees. In the sixth section, I summarize the literature reviewed, and discuss the purpose of the current study. Together, this review determines what has been established regarding the bond aspect of supervision, the usefulness of an RCT approach to developing the bond, and the gaps in the literature the study has been designed to address.

Supervision Matters

Supervision Matters for Supervisees and Clients

Supervision has been widely recognized as a vital and effective component in the training of mental health clinicians (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000; Holloway, 1995; Ladany & Inman, 2011). Further, supervision serves to protect the integrity of the profession through effective training and education (Everett & Koerpel, 1986; Morgan & Sprenkle, 2007). Outcomes benefitting supervisees include increased self-awareness, treatment knowledge, basic skills, self-efficacy, increased capacity for conceptualizing, and strengthening therapeutic relationships between supervisees and clients (Beutler & Kendall, 1995; Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000; Holloway, 2012; Holloway & Neufeldt, 1995; Inman & Ladany, 2008; Landany & Inman, 2011; Wheeler & Richards, 2007, Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wrape, Callahan, Ruggero, & Watkins, 2014). Friedlander, Keller, Peca-Baker, and Olk (1986) found a positive relationship between supervisee self-efficacy and the supervisory working alliance. From supervision, supervisees can achieve insight, self-understanding, and growth which shifts a sense of self toward a professional identity (Lerner, 2008; Worthen & McNeill, 1996) with “greater sensitivity and awareness in relating to and coming to know others” (Lerner, 2008, p. 30).

Supervision has been demonstrated to directly affect clients by increasing supervisees' clinical skills (Hill et al., 2016). Supervision has further been shown to indirectly affect clients by affecting the supervisees who are providing therapy (Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000; Holloway & Neufeldt, 1995). More specifically supervision affects both (a) the working alliances between supervisees and their clients (Patton & Kivlighan, 1997), and (b) the outcomes associated with the client-therapist working alliances (Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000; Horvath & Symonds, 1991; Orlinsky, Grawe, & Parks, 1994). Because direct effects of supervision on working alliances have been established, and direct of effects of working alliances on client outcomes have been established, it is possible to infer supervision affects client outcomes (Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000). Therefore, research regarding the content and processes of supervision that are most effective serves a vital service to the profession, to supervisees, and to clients.

Supervisory Relationship

One aspect of supervision considered to be most pivotal regarding effectiveness is the supervisory relationship (Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000). The supervisory relationship is complex in that both the supervisor and the supervisee inhabit multiple roles concurrently. The interaction of these various roles creates a dynamic that can be tricky to navigate effectively. At any given time, supervisors maintain the roles of mentor, teacher, coach, and administrator singularly or in combination (Morgan & Sprenkle, 2007). Additionally, the supervisory relationship is hierarchical (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; 2015; Morgan & Sprenkle, 2007) adding the element of evaluation to the role of the supervisor. Supervisees also maintain various roles concurrently including student, therapist, supervisee, and colleague (Holloway, 1984; Ladany & Friedlander, 1995; Weatherford, O'Shaughnessy, Mori, & Kaduvettoor, 2008). These multifaceted and simultaneous roles of supervisors and supervisees create a relationship that is unique and

complex. Yet, the quality of the supervisory relationship effects supervision outcomes for supervisees and has consistently emerged as a key factor in supervisees' satisfaction with supervision (Allen et al., 1986; Bucky et al., 2010; Gray, Ladany, Walker, & Ancis, 2001; McMahon, 2014; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Weaks, 2002). Because the supervisory relationship is a key factor for supervisory and clinical outcomes, it is important to identify elements conducive to quality supervisory relationships.

From the perspective of supervisees, a positive supervisory relationship includes several known qualities. Factors discovered to benefit the supervisory relationship from the perspective of the supervisee include support, instruction, and interpretation (Kennard, Stewart, & Gluck, 1987), with collegial and respectful interactions (Gandolfo & Brown, 1987). Supervisees report positive supervision incorporates a non-judgmental, facilitative relationship with task-oriented behavior, which reduced anxiety and supported exploration of client relationships (Hutt, Scott & King, 1983). Further, Worthen and McNeill (1996) found supervisees appreciated being met with acceptance and support from supervisors when sharing feelings of inadequacy. The findings in these studies help to elucidate behaviors and interactions supervisors can incorporate to provide beneficial supervision. However, these findings do not provide a clear description of the emotional bond, "likeability" or the "interpersonal attractiveness" often cited when describing the supervisory relationship (Bordin, 1983; Inman & Ladany, 2008; Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff, 2001).

Knowing the supervisory relationship is vital to the process of learning through supervision, it is important to deeply understand in greater detail that which determines "likeability" or "interpersonal attractiveness." Thus far, it seems as though the literature acknowledges the presence or absence of "likeability" and "interpersonal attractiveness" but

does not offer clarification on defining or developing these aspects of the supervisory relationship. The aforementioned factors cited by supervisees for quality supervision (i.e., support, non-judgement, acceptance) seem more task-oriented or behavior oriented. Little clarity is provided with regard to the bond aspect of the supervisory relationship, leaving the field with little understanding for the development of the bond. Elucidating the process for developing this bond may be beneficial for the important process of supervision.

Working Alliance and Supervisory Working Alliance

The therapist-client relationship has been widely discussed since the inception of the field of psychology. The interaction between therapist and client, and how their relationship effects outcome has been discussed and researched for decades. Discussion of the interaction between supervisor and supervisee is often framed as an extension of the literature on interactions between therapists and clients. The following provides background for two pan-theoretical models for these working relationships: the working alliance and the supervisory working alliance. Each offers similar components of the change process and includes the bond.

Working Alliance

The concept of a working alliance (WA) between a therapist and client is can be described through a pan-theoretical model for the development of a therapeutic relationship (Bordin, 1983). In this mode, the WA is a partnership for change that involves (a) mutual agreement and understanding of the goals for change, (b) mutual agreement and understanding of the tasks associated with each individual, and (c) the bond between individuals (Bordin, 1983). Together these three elements describe the process and necessary elements for change in therapeutic relationships (Bordin, 1975; 1979). The working alliance has been widely studied and has been repeatedly demonstrated to be the key factor in therapy outcomes and client

satisfaction (e.g., Bernecker, Levy, & Ellison, 2014; Bordin, 1975; 1979; Horvath, Del Re, Fluckiger, & Symonds, 2011; Horvath & Symonds, 1991). Effect sizes of meta-analyses studying the relationship between WA and therapy outcomes are consistently demonstrated to be statistically and clinically significant, suggesting that the WA is a key predictor for therapy outcomes (Horvath et al., 2011; Horvath & Symonds, 1991). Meta-analysis on the working alliance in individual therapy determined the working alliance was important to establish early in therapy, the development of a working alliance is a skill to be developed by therapists, and active monitoring of the working alliance throughout the process of therapy is important (Bernecker et al., 2014; Horvath et al., 2011; Horvath & Symonds, 1991). Eventually, as Bordin (1983) continued to develop and research his pan-theoretical model for the development of a therapeutic relationship, he began to postulate the same principles could be applied to supervision relationships.

Supervisory Working Alliance

The concept of a supervisory working alliance (SWA) derives from a pan-theoretical model of the process of development in supervision. Paralleling the working alliance between therapist and clients, the supervisory working alliance involves (a) mutual agreement on the goals of supervision (e.g., mastering counseling and conceptualization skills), (b) mutual agreement on tasks necessary to complete goals (e.g., observing session recordings, discussing client concerns), and (c) the emotional bond between supervisor and supervisee (Bordin, 1983). Descriptions of the bond aspect of the SWA emphasize perceptions of mutual liking and caring, rather than a more one-directional perception (Bordin, 1983). The amount of change possible in the supervision process depends on the quality and strength of the supervisory working alliance (Bordin, 1983).

The SWA has been widely studied and has been found to be associated with supervisee self-efficacy and satisfaction (Ladany, Ellis, & Friedlander, 1999), supervisor self-disclosure (Ladany & Lehrman-Waterman, 1999), influence of racial identity and racial matching (Ladany, Brittan-Powell, & Pannu, 1997), and role conflict and role ambiguity (Ladany & Friedlander, 1995) among others. Moreover, Patton and Kivlighan (1997) discovered the strength of the supervisory alliance significantly predicted the strength of the therapeutic alliance between supervisees and their clients. The specific connection between the supervisory working alliance and the therapeutic working alliance highlights the paramount importance of intentionally building a strong supervisory working alliance in order to best support the professional development of the supervisee, so they may best serve clients.

Before going further, it is important to dispel some ambiguity that exists regarding the SWA model and a popular measurement for the supervisory relationship, the Supervisory Working Alliance Inventory (SWAI; Efstation, Patton, & Kardash, 1990). The SWAI was created to measure the quality of supervisory relationships from the perspective of both supervisors and supervisees (Efstation et al., 1990). Despite the similarities in name, the factors within the SWAI do not correspond with the factors presented in the SWA. As previously stated, the three factors within the SWA are mutual agreement on the (a) goals of supervision, (b) associated tasks for each person to reach said goals, and (c) the emotional bond between supervisor and supervisee (Bordin, 1983). For the SWAI, factors within the supervisor version include (a) Client Focus, (b) Rapport, and (c) Identification, and the factors within the supervisee version include (a) Client Focus, and (b) Rapport (Efstation et al., 1990). Client Focus reflects supervisors' emphasis on promoting supervisees' understanding of clients, rapport reflects supervisors' effort to support and encourage the supervisee, and identification reflects the

supervisors' perception of supervisees' identification with the supervisor (Efstation et al., 1990). The factors associated with the SWAI do not correspond with Bordin's conceptualization of the SWA, creating some confusion about the model and the popular measurement. Additionally, the popularity and wide usage of the SWAI may be further clouding the concept of the bond as the "rapport" factor does not seem to directly match the "bond" component of the SWA. For the purposes of the current study, the concept of the supervisory working alliance will be associated with Bordin's (1983) model of the supervisory working alliance.

Regarding the SWA, agreement on goals and associated tasks within a particular supervisory relationship seems relatively clear compared to the bond aspect of the SWA. Often the bond has been described as "interpersonal attractiveness" or "mutual liking and caring" (Bordin, 1983; Inman & Ladany, 2008; Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff, 2001) which seems too abstract to offer much guidance for specific ways to develop and maintain the bond over time. Because of the importance of supervision to the development of supervisees, and the importance of the supervisory relationship to effective supervision, it is imperative to more deeply understand what constitutes an effective bond within the supervisory working alliance. Understanding what makes up an effective bond can elucidate ways to teach supervisors to develop and maintain the bond with all supervisees. With the importance of the bond in mind, and curiosity for how to develop and maintain a quality bond, these descriptions of "interpersonal attractiveness" or "mutual liking and caring" seem vague and do not provide much guidance.

The loose description of the bond also leaves room for interpretation which may be inaccurate, biased, ineffective, or even harmful. Supervisors and supervisees come to the supervisory working alliance with their own sociocultural contexts, which can be distinct along

central, multiple dimensions of difference including race, gender, sexual identity, and socio-economic status. Leaving the bond to "interpersonal attractiveness" seems ripe for missing key cultural and identity components to bonding. It seems helpful to have a clearer sense of the bond in order to support multicultural competence, and intentionally create skills necessary for supervisors to develop bonds. Leaving the definition of the bond so loose could be problematic, particularly as the field of psychology and the clients served continue to diversify. It is important supervisors are competent in developing effective bonds with diverse supervisees.

The bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance seems underdeveloped. As a pan-theoretical model, the supervisory working alliance may be effectively combined with other theories or models to further understanding of the bond. RCT is a counseling theory that focuses particularly on the idea of mutuality as growth-producing and thus connects well with the emphasis on mutuality in the supervisory working alliance. It is my hope that studying the bond of the supervisory working alliance through a growth-in-relationship theory like RCT will illuminate characteristics which support such bonds and illuminate how bonds are developed and maintained to best support the growth of supervisees. Integrating RCT and other theories may be helpful in increasing our understanding of the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance.

Relational-Cultural Theory

In 1976, Jean Baker Miller published *Toward a New Psychology of Women*, a book that began to change the lens through which women were viewed in psychology. At the time, the field of psychology was almost entirely based on a White male perspective, so women were often pathologized for behaving in ways that were antithetical to the social norms of White males. Miller recognized the need to create and support a female perspective. *Toward a New*

Psychology of Women, inspired theory developers to create what has become Relational-Cultural Theory (RCT).

Modern RCT Overview

RCT posits "the primary source of suffering for most people is the experience of isolation and that healing occurs in growth-fostering connection" (Jordan, 2001, p. 95). According to RCT, individuals grow in relation to others in the context of growth-fostering relationships. Core tenets of the theory include (a) mutuality, (b) authenticity, (c) connection/disconnection, (d) relational paradox, and (e) mutual empathy (Jordan 2010; Miller, Jordan, Kaplan, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Walker, 2004). The following defines each of these tenets and synthesizes the core concepts of RCT.

Mutuality. Mutuality is a process in which each person contributes what they have to offer and each is open to being influenced by the other's contributions (Surrey, 1991; Jordan 2010). Typically, mutuality might connote the idea of sameness or equal responsibility. However, in RCT, sameness is not assumed as it would dishonor each person's personal context (Walker, 2004). To clarify mutuality, Jordan (2001) acknowledges "mutuality in no way suggests full disclosure or equality or sameness in role between patient and therapist" as the therapist has a "special role that needs to be adhered to" (Jordan, 2001, p. 98). Instead, mutuality is an openness to being influenced by the other (Surrey, 1991); this acknowledges the power of each individual, thus preventing power differentials impeding connection. Mutuality deconstructs destructive power-over-other stances and honors each individual's context and contributions (Walker, 2004).

Authenticity. According to RCT, authenticity is defined as awareness of one's thoughts and feelings, and ability to make them clearly known to others (Miller, 1976). Authenticity is

often thought of as spontaneous full-disclosure or total honesty, which is not actually relational at all (Jordan, 2001). Instead, authenticity is based on the development of an understanding of others and care regarding the impact of what we share. What is shared is decided based on sound clinical judgement with the best intentions for clients at the forefront (Jordan, 2001). Rather than being completely about self-disclosure, authenticity is more accurately aligned with "real responsiveness" through being fully present (Jordan, 2001, p. 98). Authenticity works against inequality in that subordination is incompatible with authentic relation (Miller, 1976). To remain subordinate, one must remain constantly aware of and act in alignment with dominant needs and expectations. The process of subordination severely undermines authenticity and cooperation. Acknowledgement of one's inner perspective works against subordination. Through authenticity each person within the relationship is able to honestly see and be seen by the other, perpetuating a growth-fostering relationship.

Connection, disconnection, relational paradox. Connection is defined as both an encounter and an active process, with a fundamental quality of respect akin to the concept of unconditional positive regard within person-centered models of therapy (Miller & Striver, 1997; Rogers, 1989; Walker, 2004). Additionally, connection includes a central element of bidirectionality as respect is not simply bestowed upon the other person. Rather, respect is a shared experience that "invites exposure, curiosity, and openness to possibility" within relationships (Walker, 2004, p. 9). Experiencing connection creates a safe space from contempt, yet does not guarantee comfort. Increased connection can cause discomfort and conflict when relational safety allows differences to come to surface. The surfacing of differences provides an opportunity to work through conflict in a growth-fostering manner (Walker, 2004). Connection uses respect to negotiate difference in a way that facilitates growth (Jordan 2010; Miller, 1976).

Disconnection. Disconnection happens when "people fail each other empathically, do not understand, or let each other down" (Jordan, 2001, p. 95). Disconnection is inevitable and normative in relationships. Addressing disconnection is necessary in order for growth in relationship to occur, which can in turn strengthen connection (Jordan, 2001; 2010). Conversely, unchecked and unaddressed disconnection can lead to withdrawal, inauthenticity, shame, and stagnation (Jordan, 2010). The difference is in the way disconnection is addressed.

To illustrate, Jordan (2001) provides the following example. Imagine a child whose feelings have been hurt by a parent. The child signifies their hurt to the parent who then expresses concern and sorrow for hurting the child's feelings. The parent responds in such a way that the child "feels heard and understood" (Jordan, 2001, p. 95). The child feels confident they can continue to authentically represent their experience to the parent. The child feels "effective" and that their "well-being matters to the parent" (Jordan, 2001, p. 95). In this example, authenticity and empathic responding allow the child to continue to interact in relationships with self and others authentically, feeling effective in their relationships (Jordan, 2001).

Conversely, imagine the same scenario (Jordan, 2001), but the parent responds to the child's signified hurt with anger, denial, rejection, or withdrawal. The child then "begins to disconnect from his or her own experience" (Jordan, 2001, p. 96) resorting to self-blame and a pull to be inauthentic in relationships to maintain contact. This inauthentic, self-blaming interaction works against genuine connection. Although it may feel superficially safe, the child begins to "feel less real, less seen, and less understood" (Jordan, 2001, p. 96), leading to feelings of self-doubt, ineffectiveness, and isolation. Often the desire for connection for the child in this situation remains, yet the vulnerability necessary for genuine connection seems too great a risk, creating a paradox (Jordan, 2001; 2010).

Relational paradox. The relational paradox is "both the *longing for* and the *terror of* connection" (Walker, 2004, p. 9). Often the strength of the paradox is associated with the power of the chronic disconnections that created the paradox. The yearning for connection grows more intense as the fear of the vulnerability needed for connection propagates (Jordan, 2001). Chronic disconnection can happen on an interpersonal level and a societal level as well. Particularly when the dominant culture is the perpetrator of disconnection, a reduced receptivity to connection may develop (Walker 1999; 2004). Strategies for disconnection create a sense of safety from violation, but fall short of providing growth-fostering connections and relationships. The basis of RCT is to provide clients with key tenets of the theory within the therapeutic relationship in order to create the relational safety necessary to foster growth and change.

Mutual empathy. According to RCT, mutual empathy occurs when each person in the relationship is seen, known, and has felt the responsiveness of the other person (Jordan, 2008; Jordan, 2010). Mutual empathy is necessary for change to occur in growth-fostering relationships and contributes to the repair of perpetual disconnection created in early relationships (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Mutual empathy expands on the Rogerian notion of empathy by (a) expanding the concept beyond a one-way direction, (b) honoring relational movement which involves periods of connection and disconnection, and (c) serving to eradicate sociocultural factors that serve to maintain disconnection and isolation (Comstock et al., 2008). Reframing empathy to a two-way process expands the empathic encounter as both parties are "empathically attuned, emotionally responsive, authentically present, and open to change" (Miller et al., 1991, p. 11). The mutual responsiveness inherent in the tenet of mutual empathy deconstructs feelings of isolation and creates space for growth in connection with others (Jordan, 2010). Because

mutual empathy is a two-way connection, some degree of vulnerability on the part of clinicians is required for authenticity to come through (Comstock et al., 2008).

Growth-fostering relationships. According to RCT, growth fostering relationships are those in which people "are able to bring themselves most fully and authentically into connection" (Jordan, 2010, p. 25) and contain what Miller called "the five good things" which are (a) sense of zest, (b) better understanding of self, others, and relationships, (c) sense of worth, (e) enhanced capacity to act, and (f) increased desire for more connection (Miller & Stiver, 1997). Growth-fostering relationships are characterized by the core tenets of RCT: Mutuality, mutual empathy, authenticity, and connection. The ripe environment of a growth-fostering relationship is "safe enough" (Jordan, 2008, p. 214) to address the relational paradox and move toward connection and growth. The idea of safety is not to connote comfort, as conflict and discomfort is an inevitable part of relationships (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Walker, 2004). Instead, the idea of safety is indicative of engagement, active participation, and a willingness to address ruptures using the tools of RCT tenets. Growth-fostering relationships result in development and growth of both parties (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997).

RCT process and vulnerability. The core tenets of RCT come together to synthesize the change process in action. According to RCT, it is believed that "people grow through and toward relationship throughout the life span" (Jordan, 2010, p. 24). Mutuality, mutual empathy, and authenticity are all characterized by full engagement of both parties, and both parties benefit from the connection (Jordan, 2010). Increased relationship elaboration, differentiation, capacity, and complexity is the goal of development through growth-fostering relationships, rather than individuation or separation (Jordan, 2010). In growth-fostering relationships, both parties are fully present in the relationship with their whole self. Core tenets are used to repair conflict and

disconnection, strengthening the growth-fostering connection that supports development and change.

A concept repeatedly mentioned in RCT literature, but not acknowledged as a tenet of the theory is vulnerability. Jordan (2008) defines vulnerability as uncertainty and risk to genuinely see and be seen by others. This definition does not suggest weakness or liability, as is often associated with vulnerability. Instead, vulnerability suggests intentional courage. Similar to the RCT tenet of authenticity, vulnerability does not mean an abandonment of care, or openness to all. Vulnerability includes judiciousness and context, an intentional response rather than spontaneous reaction (Jordan, 2008). RCT authors refer to vulnerability as "uncertainty" (Jordan, 2010; Rosen, 2004) and a "moment of possibility and risk" (Jordan, 2010, p. 45) that holds potential for connection. Throughout the literature, vulnerability is acknowledged as "necessary" for RCT tenets to be present in relationships (Jordan, 2008; 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Rosen, 2004; Walker, 2004). Like the human body whose many parts need a blood supply to function, so too does authenticity and connection need vulnerability to flourish. Turning toward vulnerability rather than turning away in shame requires "non-judging awareness and self-empathy" (Walker, 2004, p. 12) to cultivate courage. This courage and turning toward vulnerability allows greater possibilities of exploration increasing the capacity and complexity of connection (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997).

I designed the current study to explore the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance through the lens of RCT. The supervisory relationship is designed to produce growth in supervisees, suggesting similarity with a growth-fostering relationship, so I expected to find support for RCT tenets. Vulnerability and mutuality are the constructs of RCT on which I chose to focus. Vulnerability appears to be a key ingredient for RCT tenets, despite not being named a

tenet of the theory on its own. Vulnerability seems to connect all the tenets because each of the tenets calls for vulnerability. Similarly, mutuality appears to broadly represent RCT. Although mutuality is named as a tenet of the theory on its own, it also seems to be a necessary component for all the tenets. Mutuality, or openness to affect and be affected (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Walker, 2004), speaks to the necessity of bidirectionality. Relationships require effort from both parties, and deliver benefit to both parties, though each party provides unique effort and receives unique benefit. Depending on their role, each party uniquely gives and receives, highlighting the bidirectional nature of connection. Mutuality appears necessary for authenticity, empathy, and connection to function in growth-fostering relationships. While vulnerability speaks to the risk necessary, mutuality speaks to the bidirectionality necessary for growth-fostering relationships. As such, vulnerability and mutuality are the specific aspects of RCT I chose as the focus of this study.

Summary

Relational-cultural theory is a relevant lens through which to study the bond aspect of the supervisory relationship because of its focus on development and growth in supervision. The tenets of RCT focus on growth by intentionally creating an environment conducive to exploring a broad spectrum of feelings and experiences. Growth-fostering relationships support the process of unraveling relational paradox so connection is more possible. Two constructs of RCT that seem representative of the whole theory are vulnerability and mutuality. Each theory tenet and the process of relating with an RCT approach seem to require a willingness to see and be seen (vulnerability) and an openness to affect and be effected (mutuality). As such, vulnerability and mutuality will be the RCT lens through which I will explore the bond of the supervisory relationship.

A relational-cultural approach to supervision has not been empirically researched to date. Because supervision is considered a growth-fostering relationship, the following sections explore RCT empirical research on growth-fostering relationships and mentorship. Because of the overlap between supervision and therapy (Doehrman, 1976; Hill et al., 2016; Searles, 1955) outcome research of an RCT approach to therapy establishes plausibility of the effectiveness of RCT supervision through effectiveness of RCT therapy. Next, I review a body of literature on supervisees' perspective on supervision and supervisory relationships to establish what is known thus far regarding the supervisory relationship and the bond therein. I chose research from the perspective of the supervisee because supervisees are internalizing *their* experience of supervision, rather than internalizing their supervisors experience or intention. Because the purpose of supervision is the professional development of supervisees, it felt important to begin with understanding the experiences supervisees are internalizing when it comes to their professional development. I conclude this chapter with a synthesis of the reviewed literature to establish relevance of the current study and acknowledge gaps in the literature the study is designed to address.

Relational-Cultural Research

Mentorship and Development

No research exists to date applying an RCT approach to supervision, so I reviewed studies that focused on mentorship as a related type of relationship. Supervision and mentorship overlap in that a more junior person is receiving guidance from a more senior person to increase development. I located two studies focused on developmental relationships through the lens of RCT. The first study was on mentorship of college-age women (Liang, Tracy, Taylor & Williams, 2002); the second was a study on developmental relationships between young people

and adults (Spencer, Jordan, & Sazama, 2004). Both of these qualitative studies were designed to explore an RCT approach to development. Reviewing these studies adds to the foundation for supervision as a developmental-type relationship and considerations of an RCT approach.

Liang and colleagues (2002) conducted a quantitative pilot study looking at a relational approach to mentoring college-age women. The authors hypothesized that "high levels of relational mentoring would evince higher levels of self-esteem and sense of connection beyond any effects of structurally based characteristics of mentorship" (Liang et al., 2002, p. 276). In their review of the literature, the authors endorsed importance of engagement, authenticity, and empowerment qualities for promoting positive psychological outcomes of mentoring relationships. Further, they described mentoring as one of the most intimate and intense of all helping relationships. To gather data, the researchers sent out a packet of measurements to all first-year and fourth-year students at a private, liberal-arts college for women with a return rate of 53%. The packet included a survey questionnaire containing the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983) to measure self-appraised stress levels, the UCLA Loneliness Scale (Russell, Cutrona, Rose, & Yurko, 1984) to measure sense of connection, Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) to measure perceived self-worth, and the Relational Health Index-Mentor (Liang et al., 2002) to measure the quality of mentoring relationships.

The researchers received 296 completed packets. Demographic information for the 296 participants reported, 192 identified as White (64.9%), 69 identified as Asian American (23.3%), 13 identified as African American (4.4%), 13 identified as Latina (4.4%), and 17 identified as "other" (5.7%). Racial and gender matching of mentors was also reported: 23 matched in both

ethnicity and gender (7.8%), 131 matched on either ethnicity or gender (44.3%), and 142 did not match on ethnicity or gender (48%) with their mentor.

In describing the design of the analysis, the authors reported a set of regression analyses where results indicated relational quality significantly predicted loneliness and self-esteem beyond effects of structural facets of mentoring such as stress, race, or academic class standing (Liang et al., 2002). The frequency of contacts with the mentor only marginally predicted loneliness, and the mentor matching on gender and race did not predict any of the variables measured. The results suggested the RCT tenets of mutual engagement, authenticity, and empowerment support positive developmental outcomes (Liang et al., 2002).

With regard to limitations, the authors acknowledged a convenience sample was collected from a small, academically rigorous institution which was likely to draw high-achieving students whose stress and loneliness levels could have been effected by variables other than mentorship (e.g., academic achievement and skills, participation in campus groups, etc.). The authors also acknowledged a potential participant bias toward seeking mentorship and a lack of clarity in the causal direction as the survey was not able to detect whether dependent variables affected quality of mentorship, or if mentorship affected dependent variables (Liang et al., 2002). The lack of precision in the design of the study calls to question the possibility for contributing to the wider literature as the study maximized neither internal nor external validity. The use of a convenience sample which cannot be generalized minimizes potential for external validity.

Despite imperfections in the design of the study, the results appeared to support the value of mentoring relationships that focus on authentic engagement to support feelings of connectedness and high self-esteem for some mentees. This is connected to the idea of the supervisory relationship as it can be viewed as a specific type of mentoring relationship.

Therefore, it is possible to surmise supervisory relationships that incorporate relational qualities such as engagement and authenticity could support feelings of connectedness and self-esteem for supervisees.

In another study, Spencer and colleagues (2004) looked at another type of mentorship-style relationship between children and supportive adults the children perceived as mentors. While this study does not directly pertain to supervision, the developmental nature of the relationships between the young people and adults in the study may hold implications for the developmental nature of the supervisory relationship. The design of the study was qualitative, and utilized focus groups to study growth-promoting relationships between children and adults. The purpose of the study was to explore potential for RCT to "contribute to the explication of the important and well-established link between strong relationships with adults and better psychological health in young people" (Spencer et al., 2004, p. 355). Participants were invited to participate in the study from community youth groups, after-school groups, and church youth groups in a metropolis in the Northeastern region of the United States. A total of 91 urban and suburban youths participated in the focus groups and ranged in age from 7 to 18 years-old. The authors reported participants identified as White, African American, Cape Verdean, Latino/a, and Armenian. The participants represented low, middle and high socio-economic statuses, but the authors did not explain how many of each were represented.

Each focus group duration ranged from one hour to 90 minutes and took place over a two-month period. A protocol was created to guide the focus group discussions with added questions or adaptations to make existing questions more age or culturally appropriate whenever necessary. Researchers also followed issues raised by participants to ensure freedom for participants to discuss their perceptions and experiences. The strategy for analysis utilized the

standard content coding and construction of a conceptually clustered matrix (Spencer et al., 2004).

The results indicated that mutuality and respect were experienced by the youths with adults who seemed to genuinely care about the young person for who they were rather than for their behaviors or achievements (Spencer et al., 2004). An important factor of mutual respect was adults' active listening and "capacity and willingness to allow the child to have a direct and open impact on him or her and to shape their relationship with each other" (Spencer et al., 2004, p. 357).

The young people acknowledged experiencing authenticity when adults would share their experiences with them as a way to validate and guide the youths' experiences in their "normal voice" rather than speaking down to the young people (Spencer et al., 2004). Authenticity is distinct from reactivity in that authenticity acknowledges awareness and concern for the other person and reactivity happens outside of awareness and concern for others (Spencer et al., 2004). Reactivity negatively affected young persons' willingness to share with adults.

Context-specific barriers to building relationships had three sub-themes including expressions of concern, experiences of racism, and adults who are too busy to spend time with young people (Spencer et al., 2004). The results of the study suggest caring adults who are authentic in their interactions with young people and display mutuality and respect in their exchanges can be a source of support for young people.

A key strength of this study was the process of allowing the themes to emerge from the self-reported experiences of the participants rather than introducing the themes and directly asking the participants if the themes fit their experiences. Because the themes were present in the natural flow of dialogue, it suggested the themes were naturally embedded in participants'

experiences. Though the authors did not mention limitations, a lack of clarity in procedure and in the demographics of participants and researchers makes replication and extrapolation of results difficult.

Because the study found relational qualities such as authenticity and mutuality beneficial to developmental relationships for young people, it is possible these qualities could be beneficial to the supervisory relationship as well, due to the developmental nature of supervision. While I located no empirical research on RCT supervision, adjacent themes of mentorship and developmental relationships have been explored to discover what is already known about application of RCT themes. While the sample participants researched do not exactly fit supervisee populations, these results still hold some weight regarding supervision due to the mentorship style of the relationships studied. It appears RCT themes of mutuality, authenticity, empathy and connection in mentorship and developmental relationships support positive growth and feelings of connectedness for young people (Liang et al., 2002; Spencer et al., 2004). Because the supervisory relationship is meant to be in service to the development of supervisees from more experienced supervisors who, at times, act as mentors, the results of this research may hold implications for supervision. It is possible the RCT themes explored in this research could hold implications for elucidating the bond aspect of the supervisory relationship. To gain further understanding of the effects of RCT tenets, empirical evidence for clinical applications and outcomes of RCT must be explored.

Outcome Research for RCT

Two quantitative studies explored outcomes of an RCT approach to therapy. These findings support the usefulness of an RCT approach to supervision due to the connection

between therapy and supervision (Doehrman, 1976; Hill et al., 2016; Searles, 1955). Effective outcomes in RCT therapy suggest an RCT approach to supervision may be effective as well.

In the first study, Oakley and colleagues (2013) conducted a qualitative study researching outcomes for a time-limited, manualized RCT model for women receiving services in a community-based setting. The study utilized randomized control and qualitative methods with 91 ethnically diverse women ranging in age between 17-66 years-old (M = 35.6). Over 40 ethnic/culture identifications were acknowledged by the participants. The Brief Relational-Cultural Therapy model (BRCT; Oakley & Addison, 2003; 2006) was developed as a time-limited model of RCT. Adherence to the model was assessed as part of the quantitative portion of the study through the Brief Psychotherapy Center for Women-Empowerment Adherence Scale (BPCW-EAS; Oakley & Addison, 2003). Two raters rated adherence using the BPCW-EAS for 126 sessions; involving 18 clients; seven sessions per client drawn from the beginning, middle and end of therapy (Oakley et al., 2013).

Data on eight scales were collected multiple times beginning at initial screening, during treatment (7 weeks), and at 6-months post-treatment. The scales measured depression, self-esteem, state/trait anxiety, alexithymia, self-silencing, well-being, and client objectives. A MANOVA analysis revealed all participants improved significantly on all outcome measures. Participants reported (a) significant attainment of treatment goals, (b) strong satisfaction related to the RCT model, therapeutic relationship, and personal gains, and (c) maintenance of gains at 3-month and 6-month follow-ups post-treatment (Oakley et al., 2013).

The results suggest the effectiveness of an RCT approach to clinical work with women. The authors collected data from racially diverse participants, suggesting an RCT approach was not exclusively representative of a White perspective. Because of the connection between

supervision and therapy (Doehrman, 1976; Hill et al., 2016; Searles, 1955) the results suggest an RCT approach to supervision may benefit female supervisees. Further research seems necessary to understand outcomes of an RCT approach with clients who do not identify as female. Because of this gap in the literature, the current study will be inclusive with respect to participant gender.

In another outcome study, Tantillo and Sanftner (2003) conducted an experimental study comparing short-term group RCT to short-term group cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) for women with bulimia nervosa. The study compared levels of perceived mutuality in relationships, and severity of symptoms for depression and bulimia nervosa. The participants, consisting of 15 women (all Caucasian, ages 20-54, $M = 37.33$) were randomly assigned to a 16-week, manualized RCT or CBT group. The authors acknowledged following treatment manuals for each respective form of therapy, but did not specify the manuals.

Data were collected at the initial session, at 8 weeks, at 16 weeks, at 6-months post-treatment, and at 12-months post-treatment to measure frequency of binge episodes, vomiting episodes, bulimic behaviors, depression and mutuality. An ANOVA analysis concluded both treatment conditions showed significant improvement in reducing disordered eating behaviors and depression at the end of treatment and during follow-ups. However, participants in the RCT group reported higher levels of perceived mutuality within their treatment group. These results suggest treatments that focus primarily on relational factors can potentially be effective in the treatment of bulimic and depression symptoms among White women (Tantillo & Sanftner, 2003). These results are relevant to the current study due to the potential of connection between therapy and supervision (Doehrman, 1976; Hill et al., 2016; Searles, 1955). If RCT therapy can benefit clients, it is possible RCT supervision may benefit supervisees.

Some limitations create difficulty in gauging applicability of this study to other contexts. First, it is difficult to know how applicable these results are based upon the omission of detailed information regarding manualized treatment and adherence therein. Without detailed knowledge of the manualized treatment, or specific ways adherence was rated, it is difficult to know how RCT was utilized with participants. Also, the lack of racial and gender diversity make it difficult to know if these same results would be applicable outside of White women. Despite these limitations, the results of the study support the possibility of positive outcomes of RCT supervision.

These two outcome studies were promising in their implications for the effectiveness of an RCT approach. Both studies focused on women, so it is unknown at this time if these same outcomes would replicate for groups of people who identify as men, trans*, or gender non-conforming. While Oakley and colleagues (2013) focused on an ethnically diverse group, Tantillo and Sanftner (2003) focused only on White women. Continued research on RCT outcomes in increasingly diverse groups with respect to gender and race is important. The results of these outcome studies implied growth-promoting effects of a relational approach. If an RCT approach is found to be effective in therapy, it is possible an RCT approach to supervision may be beneficial as well.

Summary and Relevance

RCT mentorship and development research and RCT outcome research support the potential usefulness and benefit of a relational approach to a variety of relationship contexts. It appears RCT tenets such as mutuality, authenticity, mutual empathy, and connectedness serve to create growth-fostering relationships which aid in growth through connection for children, college students, and clients (Liang et al., 2002; Spencer et al., 2004). Because empirical

research on the use of RCT in supervision does not exist to date, in the current study I specifically apply an RCT lens to supervision will add to the literature. In the spirit of the theory that holds an emphasis on inclusivity to dispel oppressive power (Kaplan, 1991; Walker, 2004), and acknowledges all relationships are culturally situated (Jordan, 2010; Walker, 2004), it is important to include discussion of culture and identity in the data collection process reflected in this study.

Research specifically applying RCT to supervision can highlight potential benefits to the professional development of supervisees. This is important, particularly as the field and the clients served continue to diversify. Using an RCT lens in this study to examine the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance is likely to elucidate that which helps to create effective bonds. In this study, I aim to create a base-line from which to continue racially specific and gender specific research on supervision. In this study, I will explore culture and identity in relation to supervisory relationships in data collection rather than recruitment procedures. In this way, I hope to gain a clearer understanding of the relation of culture and identity to the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance from the perspective of supervisees.

Supervision Experiences from the Perspective of the Supervisee

Because there is no empirical research to date on RCT supervision, I will next review the literature associated with supervisees' perspective of supervision. The purpose of this review is to highlight what is known thus far about supervision experiences from the supervisees' perspective. To know more about the bond, I will explore that which makes up a positive perception of supervisory relationships. Exploration of negative experiences will also serve to determine what is known thus far regarding what the bond *is not*. I review eight articles representing the body of literature on supervisee perceptions of supervision. First, I will review

positive supervisory experiences, followed by a comparison of dichotomous experiences of supervision (best/worst), and finally I will review a retrospective exploration from professionals working in the field.

Supervisees' Perception of Positive Supervisory Experiences

In the following section, I will review two studies, one quantitative, and one qualitative, concerning positive supervisory experiences as perceived by the supervisee. The results add to the literature by describing behaviors and relational characteristics supervisees perceive as beneficial to their supervisory experiences.

Bucky and colleagues (2010) conducted a quantitative study of supervision characteristics associated with the supervisory working alliance as rated by supervisees. The purpose of this correlational study was to identify supervisees' perception of strengths and weaknesses in (a) the characteristics and behaviors of supervisors, and (b) the relationship variables that contribute to supervisees' learning experiences (Bucky et al., 2010). The researchers developed a questionnaire to measure supervisee evaluation of supervision based upon their review of measures looking at supervisory working alliance, role conflict and role ambiguity, self and other awareness, quality and outcomes of supervision, and supervisory styles (Bucky et al., 2010). Specifically, the questionnaire was developed to measure supervisees' actual experiences of supervisors and supervisory relationships, rather than ideal preferences.

Participants in the study were 87 doctoral-level psychology students in Southern California. Thirteen participants (15%) identified as men and 74 (85%) as women. Seventy-two participants (83%) identified as Caucasian, 5 (6%) identified as Latino, 5 (6%) as Asian-American, and 1 (1%) as African-American. The age of participants ranged from mid-twenties to over fifty, with the majority (74%) in the 20-30 range.

An analysis of frequency provided descriptive statistics on questionnaire items. The results indicate perceived supervisor "strengths: above-average intelligence, a positive attitude toward themselves, ethical integrity, and strong listening skills" (Bucky et al., 2010, p. 159). Weakness indicated for supervisors included (a) a lack of awareness of counter-transference in supervision, (b) an inability to stay focused and meet time constraints, (c) a lack of commitment to the supervisory alliance, and (d) ineffective skills in challenging supervisees (Bucky et al., 2010).

While the perceived strengths determined in this study are helpful in the process of deciphering positive supervision, the perceived weaknesses appear to have stronger implications. Many of the acknowledged weaknesses seem opposed to RCT tenets, namely the commitment to the supervisory alliance. Because the alliance has been repeatedly shown to be a key factor in supervision, it is startling that it was acknowledged here as a weakness. Similarly, weaknesses in awareness of counter-transference and skills for challenging supervisees seem to describe weakness in awareness of self and other, and the ability to effectively communicate that awareness. These seem indicative of RCT tenets of authenticity and mutuality. As such, it appears the participants in this study have not experienced supervision in the context of an RCT growth-fostering relationship.

Worthen and McNeill (1996) created a phenomenological qualitative study looking at supervisees' perception of "good" events in supervision. Though the authors did not provide their working definition for "good" events, it is possible to infer from the article that "good" suggests helpful, effective, and positive. The purpose of the study was to develop an "in-depth understanding of what events constitute good psychotherapy supervision" in order to "comprehend the relevant and crucial aspects of supervision" that contribute to the learning and

development of supervisees (Worthen & McNeill, 1996, p. 25). The eight participants (4 men, 4 women) who all identified as White, were recorded in an interview lasting 45-50 minutes. The recordings were transcribed and the transcriptions were analyzed to discover meaning units throughout the data.

The researchers discovered "good" supervision events followed a four-phase pattern (Worthen & McNeill, 1996). The first phase is "Existential Baseline" which is defined as disillusionment to sense of efficacy with therapeutic process for supervisees. The "Existential Baseline" suggests supervisees come to supervision knowing there is more for them to learn about providing therapy. The second phase, "Setting the Stage," is defined as a sensed inadequacy consisting of a disruption of the usual for the supervisee. In the "Setting the Stage" phase, a novel event occurred for supervisees as they are providing therapy making them unsure of how to move forward. This was followed by the third phase "Good Supervision Experience" defined as an empathic, non-judgmental, validating supervisory relationship. In the "Good Supervision Experience" participants' inexperience was addressed non-judgmentally and learning was encouraged empathically by the supervisor. In the final phase, "Outcomes of Good Supervision" supervisees acknowledged strengthened confidence, increased sense of professional identity and expanded abilities to conceptualize and intervene (Worthen & McNeil, 1996).

The process of cycling through the phases discovered by Worthen and McNeil (1996) seems consistent with RCT concepts. The "good" supervision experience was described as: empathic, non-judgmental, validating, encouraging of exploration, normalizing, and included a sense of freedom which allowed for reduced self-protection and increased receptivity to input for supervisees (Worthen & McNeill, 1996). This description appeared closely related to elements of

a growth-fostering relationship according to an RCT approach, which supports an RCT lens for the current study. The description of the supervisory experience in this study is different from similar studies as the description is focused on concepts and dispositions of supervisors and supervisory relationships rather than behaviors. Rather than focusing on supervisor behaviors or tasks, this description applies a wider vision to define elements present in the relationship. It appears an RCT approach is similar in that the descriptions of core concepts are less about *what to do*, and are more focused on *ways of being*. This difference speaks to the focus of the current study as a way to describe the bond aspect of the relationship, rather than the tasks. However, all participants in the study identify as White which provides a limited racial perspective, leaving a gap in the literature.

Together, these two studies support the usefulness of an RCT approach to supervision as evidenced by RCT concepts reflected in the results of each study. Perceived weaknesses in supervision suggested a lack of RCT concepts (Bucky et al., 2010) and positively perceived supervisory experiences appeared to suggest RCT concepts assisted in the learning experiences of supervisees (Bucky et al., 2010; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). These results add to the foundation of the current study by supporting an RCT approach for exploring the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance.

Supervisees' Perspective on Positive and Negative Supervisory Experiences

In the following section, I review four studies related to comparing extremes of supervisory experiences as perceived by supervisees. The studies use different language to describe the extremes such as "effective and ineffective" (Ladany, Mori, & Mehr, 2013) or "best and worst" (Allen et al., 1986). Yet, the common theme among the studies is comparing

supervisees' preferences and dislikes. The results of these four studies help to elucidate what is helpful and unhelpful in supervisory experiences as perceived by supervisees.

Ladany and colleagues (2013) conducted a mixed-method study to explore supervisees' perceptions of effective and ineffective supervision. The purpose of the study was to determine (a) supervisor skills and behaviors perceived by supervisees as effective and ineffective, and (b) to determine processes and outcomes deemed effective and ineffective by supervisees in terms of supervisory working alliance, supervisor style, and self-disclosure. The authors hypothesized the differences between effective and ineffective would be in (a) the strength of the supervisory working alliance, (b) amount of self-disclosure, (c) perceived positivity of supervisor style, and (d) favorability of evaluation process (Ladany et al., 2013).

One hundred and twenty-eight individuals participated in the study (100 female, 27 male, 1 unknown; Ladany et al., 2013). Participants ranged from current doctoral students to post-doctorate. Most participants identified as White (109, 85.2%), while eight (6.3%) identified as Latino(a), five (3.9%) identified as African American, three (2.3%) identified as Asian American, and three (2.3%) did not specify race. Participants completed a questionnaire that included measures on supervisee evaluation of the supervisor, the supervisory working alliance, supervisors' style, self-disclosure of supervisor and supervisee, and an evaluation of process within supervision.

Each participant was asked to provide information regarding a specific best and worst supervisor in the qualitative questionnaire, and complete the remaining measures with regard to their general experiences of supervision (Ladany et al., 2013). Discovery-oriented analysis was used to create mutually exclusive categories for effective and ineffective behaviors. A chi-square

analysis was run on the remaining quantitative measures to determine effective and ineffective behaviors of supervisors.

The authors discovered effective supervisors and effective behaviors included: a strong supervisory relationship, supervisor as expert clinician, empathy and encouragement, empowering the supervisee, encouraging autonomy, self-disclosure of relevant clinical experiences, and feedback that is both positive and challenging (Ladany et al., 2013). Ineffective behaviors were essentially described as antithetical to effective behaviors. Best and worst supervisor behaviors were found to affect supervisees' perceptions of the supervisory working alliance, strengthening and weakening, respectively (Ladany et al., 2013). These results imply the perception of the supervisory working alliance is related to supervisees' perception of effectiveness of supervision. Specifically, behaviors that reflect investment in the development of the supervisee were deemed most effective. Growth-fostering relationships within RCT reflect a similar investment in development which is demonstrated in relational engagement and connection. Yet, participants in this study were mostly White females adding to the gap in the literature with respect to diversity. Also, the study appears to focus on supervisor skills, behaviors, and supervisory processes that supervisees deem as effective or ineffective. While behaviors and processes may provide some helpful information about the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance, they do not demonstrate a thorough description.

In a similar study, Allen and colleagues (1986) conducted a quantitative study on doctoral students' perceptions of their best and worst supervision experiences. The authors stated they chose a quantitative approach to obtain more widely generalizable results of supervisees' perceptions of best and worst supervision. One hundred and forty-two doctoral student participants (74 female, 68 male) from 50 randomly selected doctoral programs completed a

survey questionnaire developed by the authors. No racial demographic data of the participants was provided (Allen et al., 1986).

A chi-square analysis revealed best supervisors modeled respect and encouraged supervisees to explore novel strategies (Allen et al., 1986). Best supervisors were tolerant of mistakes, gave clear and direct feedback, confronted resistance safely, and honored exclusive time for supervision (Allen et al., 1986). An additional finding suggests "satisfaction with supervision is determined more by supervisors' general assumptive, theoretical, and stylistic stances than by how training is structured or how particular interventions are used" (Allen et al., 1986, p. 97). Rather than being focused on behaviors, it is possible the best experiences of supervision reflect a focus on supervisor disposition. This focus reflects an RCT approach as growth-fostering relationships are described in ways of being, rather than behaviors. While the participants in the study are somewhat balanced in terms of binary gender, the authors do not provide participant racial demographics defeating the purpose for creating more generalizable results. Without knowing racial identities of participants, it is impossible to know if the results reflect a racially diverse perspective.

Hutt and colleagues (1983) conducted a phenomenological qualitative analysis of post-Master supervisees' experience and perception of positive and negative supervision. No demographic data were provided for the six participants. Three participants focused on positive supervision experiences, three focused on negative. The authors conducted open-ended interviews with each participant that were transcribed. After the transcripts were read, a second interview of each participant took place to clarify and secure further meaning. Analysis revealed clusters of emergent themes that were joined to create a *fundamental structure* of both positive and negative supervision as perceived by the participants (Hutt et al., 1983).

The results revealed positive supervision included a supportive, engaged supervisory relationship with an interpersonal climate that facilitated growth and learning with respect, understanding, and trust (Hutt et al., 1983). Behaviors, attitudes, and feelings of supervisees were explored without questioning their worth, and conflicts in supervision were openly resolved. Supervisee self-disclosure was encouraged and supported by supervisor self-disclosure, deepening the relationship as they revealed themselves to one another (Hutt et al., 1983).

The exploratory process of positive supervision was described as "mutual, although the focus is on the supervisee's emerging professional concerns and needs" (Hutt et al., 1983, p. 120). The strength of the relationship allowed for open processing of supervisees' experiences which increased "awareness of how specific feelings, behaviors, and attitudes can interfere with or facilitate interactions with clients" (Hutt et al., 1983, p. 121). Positive supervision coupled with respect for integrity and autonomy lead supervisees to learn to "assess interventions in terms of client impact rather than supervisor approval" (Hutt et al., 1983, p. 121) which increased self-efficacy of therapeutic skills for supervisees.

With regard to negative supervision, participants noted the "most significant aspect of negative supervision is the supervisory relationship which evokes intense negative feelings" such as "anxiety, frustration, and anger" (Hutt et al., 1983, p. 121) that fail to meet the professional development needs of supervisees. Negative supervision included criticism, disrespect, feelings of powerlessness, mistrust, and a lack on honest disclosure of both supervisors and supervisees. Supervisees acknowledged withholding problems, conflicts, and difficult feelings for the purpose of self-protection, obscuring the task of supervision which then became less meaningful to supervisees (Hutt et al., 1983).

Supervisors in negative supervision did not address conflictual interactions within the supervisory relationship suggesting an interpersonal insensitivity to supervisees (Hutt et al., 1983). Supervisees who attempted to process conflictual interactions or difficult feelings in negative supervision were met with supervisor defensiveness or dismissiveness, leading to discouragement of supervisees. Anxious or constricted supervisees became more so after negative supervision. Most pointedly, negative supervision may teach supervisees "avoidance tactics" (Hutt et al., 1983, p. 122) to manage feelings and reactions, rather than teaching the processes for using feelings therapeutically. Supervisees perceived their learning in negative supervision to be focused mainly on content with little or no focus on process (Hutt et al., 1983).

These results appeared relevant to the current study through demonstration that positive and negative supervision are not opposites, rather each has a particular structure (Hutt et al., 1983). The description of positive supervision appeared to reflect the concepts of growth through connection, and growth-fostering relationships associated with an RCT approach. These concepts are particularly reflected in the patterns describing mutuality in service to the supervisee. The authors even use the term "mutual" to describe the structure of positive supervision (Hutt et al.,1983, p. 120) supporting an RCT approach to supervision. The participants of the study acknowledged meaningful learning and, most pointedly, self-efficacy evidenced by "assessing interventions in terms of therapeutic impact on clients rather than in terms of supervisory approval" (Hutt et al., 1983, p. 121). This seems to reflect the central purpose of supervision—to teach supervisees how to conduct helpful therapy (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014).

The description of negative supervision appears to reflect behaviors associated with the RCT concept of disconnection—a barrier to growth and change. Participants acknowledged less meaningful learning in negative supervision, which failed to meet their needs. These results

suggest that consistent disconnection in supervisory relationships without attempts for repair may act as a barrier for growth for supervisees.

While the results described by Hutt and colleagues (1983) seem promising in support of an RCT approach to supervision, a gap in the literature remains with regarding a racially diverse perspective because the authors did not acknowledge demographic information of the participants. Also, more current methods for qualitative research acknowledge the importance of using direct quotations from participant interviews to support emergent themes as a practice of trustworthiness and representation (Merrick, 1999). The authors do not use participant quotations to support their interpretation of data, relinquishing transparency for how the structures for positive and negative supervision emerged from the data.

In another study, Nelson and Friedlander (2001) conducted a mixed-method study on conflictual supervisory relationships from the perspective of supervisees. Thirteen participants (9 women, 4 men) participated in the study who had experienced a conflictual supervisory relationship in the previous six months to three years (Nelson & Friedlander, 2001). No racial demographic information on the participants was provided.

A semi-structured interview was followed by two measurements of supervisees' experiences of supervision. The results describe the typical initiation of conflictual supervisory relationships as distant, and the supervisors appear remote and uncommitted. A few participants described the initiation as overly involved, and the supervisors acted too-friendly with poor boundaries (Nelson & Friedlander, 2001). This apparent dichotomy is interesting to the current study as it appears a conflictual supervisory relationship can spring from a supervisor acting too distant or too familiar. Participants who experienced overly involved relationships described supervisors as divulging difficulties with the training site or within their own personal

relationships (Nelson & Friedlander, 2001) with no apparent relevance to the supervisees' professional concerns. This appears to support the findings of Hutt and colleagues (1983) demonstrating the supervisory relationship must be in service to the development of the supervisee (Hutt et al., 1983). It appears the too-distant and too-close supervisory experiences share a violation in focus and purpose.

Nelson and Friedlander (2001) also found supervisors in conflictual supervisory relationships were perceived by supervisees as unwilling to take responsibility for the difficulties in the relationship. These supervisors either placed all blame on the supervisee for the conflict, denied, or ignored conflicts altogether (Nelson & Friedlander, 2001). The supervisees in these relationships withdrew, lost trust, felt powerless, and came to supervision feeling guarded (Nelson & Friedlander, 2001). This appears to reflect a pattern of repeated disconnection according to RCT. These conflictual supervisory relationships appear to lack RCT tenets that support approaching disconnection to regain and maintain connection. RCT tenets that create growth-fostering relationships appear absent from the participants' perceptions of conflictual supervisory relationships. This absence suggests a connection between a lack of RCT tenets and problematic supervisory relationships. The results presented by Nelson and Freidlander help to determine what the bond aspect of the supervisory relationship is *not*. It appears the bond does not develop when the supervisor demonstrates a lack of focus on the development of the supervisee by being too distant or too familiar. This suggests the bond may be most likely to develop in a supervisory relationship that is engaged for the purpose of supervisee development.

Comparing the extremes helps decipher what supports supervisees' learning and what distracts learning. While the purpose of the current study is to explore strongly bonded supervisory relationships, it seems beneficial to describe what creates conflictual supervisory relationships as a way to also know what the bond *is not.* Studying the supervisee's perspective of positive and negative experiences in supervision suggests relational elements tend to be present in positively perceived supervision experiences and are absent in negatively perceived experiences (Allen et al., 1986; Hutt et al., 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001). The positive essence of relational elements in supervision adds to the support for an RCT approach to supervision.

Retrospective Perceptions of Supervision from Professionals

I located two studies qualitative studies that explored a retrospective perception of supervision from professionals working in the field. First, Weaks (2002) conducted a phenomenological qualitative study on the experience of supervision as recalled by experienced counselors working in the field. The purpose of the study was to examine factors perceived as most important for a good or positive supervisory experience (Weaks, 2002). The author interviewed 9 participants (6 women, 3 men) whose experience in the field ranged from 6-26 years (M = 12.6) and ranged in age from 37-63 (M = 51). No other demographic data was provided. The participants identified as either British or Irish and resided in Scotland, UK. Each participant was recorded in a semi-structured interview regarding their experiences and meaning-making in supervision.

The interviews were transcribed and the recordings were listened to repeatedly by the author who used a grounded-theory process to analyze the data (Weaks, 2002). The purpose of grounded-theory design is to discover a theory from the data (Creswell, 2007). Three emergent

concepts revealed themselves throughout the data: safety, equality, and challenge (Weaks, 2002). Safety was described as affirmation, non-judgment, and freedom from the need to protect the self in supervision. Equality was described as a diminished power differential, appropriate self-disclosure, and a common humanity where each person had the courage to face their own growth edges. Challenge was described as increased self-awareness through clear feedback, and repair of ruptures in the supervisory relationship (Weaks, 2002).

Each of the three emergent concepts appears to describe aspects of the supervisory relationship itself and hints toward RCT tenets. Safety appears related to encouragement and openness through a sense of authenticity, of feeling "safe enough" to be authentic. Equality seems related to mutuality and mutual empathy as evidenced by the notion of common humanity. Vulnerability and mutuality is also suggested in the idea of courage for supervisors and supervisees to face their own growth edges with one another. Challenge also seems related to vulnerability and mutuality by way of openness to give and receive feedback. Some level of vulnerability may likely be required to address ruptures in supervisory relationships, and repair suggests a sense of connection necessary for growth-fostering relationships. These results support the value of RCT tenets in supervisory relationships. However, the results continue to reflect behaviors or dispositions of supervisors, continuing to leave a gap in the literature regarding a rich description of the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. Additionally, without more demographic information, it is impossible to know if the results reflect diverse perspectives. As such, further research seems necessary.

Next, Wulf and Nelson (2000) conducted a qualitative study to determine a clearer understanding of supervisory behaviors that encourage professional growth beyond internship experiences. Three female and three male professional psychologists who had completed APA

accredited internship experiences and had been licensed between 5 and 10 years were interviewed. No participant racial demographic data were provided. A semi-structured interview for each participant (lasting 45-60 minutes) was recorded and transcribed. The authors utilized consensual qualitative methods to determine meaning units and axial coding to determine emergent constructs (Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Consensual qualitative methods include open-ended interviews, emphasis on the importance of context, and multiple viewpoints from a team of researchers (Creswell, 2007).

The results demonstrated the supervisory relationship was a key factor in supervisory experiences as recalled by the participants (Wulf& Nelson, 2000). The participants acknowledged a preference for supervisors who were (a) invested in the training relationship, (b) gave clear feedback that was both affirming and challenging, and (c) demonstrated interpersonal skills in supervision (Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Participants acknowledged drawing from their supervisory experiences many years beyond internship, and continued to demonstrate ways of being with clients and supervisees that were modeled by supervisors.

These results continue to support the importance of the supervisory relationship and suggests ways the relationship may be developed or maintained. The results of this study suggest a lasting impression of supervision, and underscore behavioral aspects for developing and maintaining the supervisory relationship. Studying professionals' retrospective experiences of supervision helps to discover long-term effects of supervision. The supervisory relationship continues to be a focal point for supervisees, even many years later (Weaks, 2002; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). The supervisory relationship continued to be determined as a key factor for supervision, but continued to be described behaviorally. The results do not appear to add clarity to the bond aspect of supervisory relationships. Also, because participants were professionals

rather than trainees, it is possible their impressions of their supervisory experiences may have shifted over time. Again, with no racial demographic information on the participants, a diverse perspective is left unaddressed.

Summary and Relevance to Current Study

Studies of supervisees' perceptions of positive supervision elucidate behaviors and interactions that benefit supervisees' professional development. Looking at supervision from the perspective of supervisees appears useful as it illustrates what supervisees are experiencing and internalizing. This helps to shed light on any discrepancies that may arise between supervisees' experiences versus supervisor intentions. The supervisory relationship has been repeatedly acknowledged as a central component to supervision, and is reflective of the supervisory experiences as a whole (Allen et al., 1986; Buckey et al., 2010; Hutt et al., 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Nelson & Freidlander, 2001; Weaks, 2002; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Supervisees reported preferences for supervisory relationships that balanced encouragement and challenge (Hutt, et al., 1983; Worthen & McNeill, 1996). Non-judgement and empathy were often referenced as important characteristics within the relationship for supervisees to feel a sense of safety (Allen et al., 1986; Buckey et al., 2010; Hutt et al., 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Weaks, 2002; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). As a result of safety paired with encouragement to develop professional identity in supervision, supervisees perceived an increase in learning, experienced motivation to learn more, and carried the learning many years beyond supervision (Allen et al., 1986; Buckey et al., 2010; Hutt et al., 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Weaks, 2002; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000).

The core findings of supervisees' perceptions of positive supervisory experiences can be connected with core constructs of RCT. The RCT construct of growth-fostering relationships that

nurture growth through and toward relationships (Jordan, 2010) seems connected to descriptions of positive supervision. The developmental essence of growth-fostering relationships that serve to empower and encourage is reflected in supervisory relationships that focus on the development of supervisees, encouraging them to experiment to find their own professional voice. In RCT, authenticity is an awareness of thoughts and feelings and the ability to make them clearly known to others (Miller, 1976), which seems connected to supervisees' descriptions of freedom from self-protection and increased willingness to put fears of judgement aside. Authenticity and mutuality is also suggested in the notion of self-disclosure by both supervisors and supervisees. A key distinction of authenticity is that it is not spontaneous, full-disclosure, rather it includes a regard for the impact of shared content and so should be done judiciously (Jordan, 2001; 2010). Similarly, self-disclosing done *in service to the supervisee* seems to be a key distinction between helpful and unhelpful disclosure.

The RCT concept of mutual empathy is suggested in the overwhelming acknowledgement of supervisees' preference for an empathic supervisor (Allen et al., 1986; Buckey et al., 2010; Hutt et al., 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Nelson & Freidlander, 2001; Weaks, 2002; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Although the empathy acknowledged in the studies appeared unidirectional, it is possible supervisees felt empathy in a more mutual capacity without acknowledging it as such. Because the reported preferences by supervisees appear related to RCT tenets and core constructs, it seems RCT is a useful lens through which to study the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance.

A distinction between RCT and the literature on supervisee perspectives of supervision is the focus on behaviors of supervisors which seem more closely associated with tasks. These tasks seem focused on what supervisors *do* rather than elucidating the bond aspect of the

working alliance. RCT appears to reflect a way of being, rather than associated tasks. The behaviors acknowledged by supervisees may be related to the development and maintenance of the bond, though a connection between these behaviors and the bond remains unclear. Thus, a gap remains in the literature for a clear description of the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. It appears looking at the bond through the lens of RCT may help clarify the bond.

Another apparent gap in the literature exists regarding participant demographics. Most of the studies have been almost entirely from the perspective of White participants, or samples that were not demographically defined (e.g.: Allen et al., 1986; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). It is possible racial minorities may have a different perspective on what constitutes a growth-fostering supervisory relationship, particularly as relationships are culturally laden (Walker, 2004). What constitutes a quality supervisory relationship cannot be limited to a White perspective and applied universally. Research that values a diverse perspective benefits the field by informing multiculturally competent training which, in turn, informs multiculturally competent therapy. Without a racially diverse perspective, the picture of supervisees' experiences of supervision is only partially drawn. The studies that provide gender demographics acknowledge male participants, though typically in minority. No studies acknowledge gender diverse participants. It will be important to intentionally obtain a gender-diverse perspective for the supervision literature to grow. The current study attempted to expand the literature through inclusion of demographic information of participants, and inclusion of culture and identity in the data collection process to more thoroughly understand how culture and identity presents in strongly bonded supervisory relationships. I hope this study will serve as a base line from which to continue further research on specific diverse populations.

The potential connection between positively perceived supervision experiences and core constructs of RCT suggest the utility of researching the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance through the lens of RCT. It is possible the RCT lens will assist in understanding what makes the bond and how it is developed and maintained beyond the associated tasks or behaviors. Researching the bond related to culture and identity will help to provide a more contextualized description.

Summary and Purpose of the Current Study

Supervision has been established as a key training tool for psychologists-in-training to learn the process of providing therapy (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000; Holloway, 1995 Ladany & Inman, 2011). It is important supervision feels meaningful to supervisees to support their professional development and therapeutic outcomes. The supervisory working alliance is a pan-theoretical model for change in supervisory relationships, supporting growth and development of supervisees (Bordin, 1983). The supervisory working alliance includes mutual agreement on the goals, mutual agreement on associated tasks, and the emotional bond that supports the endeavor of growth and development (Bordin, 1983). Though the supervisory working alliance has been widely studied (e.g., Hill et al., 2016; Ladany et al., 2001; Ladany & Lehrman-Waterman, 1999) the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance tends to be described in general terms such as “interpersonal attractiveness” (Bordin, 1983), or in terms of behavior (e.g., Weaks, 2002; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Also, previous research that relies on the SWAI as a measure of the supervisory working alliance may have a limited understanding of the bond due to limited correspondence among factors of the SWAI and the aspects of the supervisory working alliance. The bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance continues to be less clearly defined, when compared to the mutual agreement on goals and associated tasks.

The RCT tenet of mutuality and the mutuality of agreement on the goals and associated tasks of the supervisory working alliance suggests RCT may be a useful lens through which to study the bond.

To establish clearer information regarding the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance, RCT may be a useful lens through which to study the supervisory relationship. RCT is a theory built on a central assumption that people grow in connection with one another throughout the life span (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). RCT tenets fit together to create growth-fostering relationships, all of which seems fueled by vulnerability, or a willingness to take risk—to see and be seen by others. Despite vulnerability not being named as a core tenet of the theory, it is repeatedly acknowledged as necessary to support theory tenets. RCT posits growth takes place through connection in growth-fostering relationships. Researching the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance as a growth-fostering relationship through the lens of RCT may help demystify the bond.

Because there is no empirical support of an RCT approach to supervision, I explored adjacent concepts within RCT. Mutuality in mentorship relationships was discovered as supportive of self-esteem and protection against loneliness in college-age women (Liang et al., 2002). Mutuality, authenticity, mutual empathy, and connection also appeared to support positive growth and feelings of connectedness for children with adult mentors (Spencer et al., 2004). While neither of the samples of these studies were supervisees, the developmental nature of the relationships in these studies may reflect the developmental nature of supervisory relationships. As such, the results illustrating positive effects of RCT tenets seem encouraging. Outcome research supporting the effectiveness of an RCT approach to therapy is also encouraging of a

similar approach to supervision due to the association of therapeutic relationships and supervisory relationships (Doehrman, 1976; Hill et al., 2016; Searles, 1955).

Supervisee perspectives on supervisory relationships provide information about what is already known regarding the supervisory relationship and the bond therein. Supervisees repeatedly acknowledged the supervisory relationship as the key factor for satisfaction and level of professional development (Allen et al., 1986; Hutt et al., 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). A comparison of best and worst supervisory experiences illustrated that negative supervisory relationships were deemed too distant or too familiar due to a common factor: the development of the supervisee was not the focus. Characteristics repeatedly cited as preferable in positive supervisory relationships were empathy, non-judgement, supervisor self-disclosure for the benefit of the supervisee, normalizing, and encouraging of the supervisee to develop their autonomous professional identity (Allen et al., 1986; Bucky et al., 2010; Hutt et al., 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Weaks, 2002; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). These characteristics reflect the RCT tenets of mutuality, authenticity, mutual empathy, and the RCT construct of vulnerability. The presence of these tenets and constructs imply engagement and a bi-directionality that honors the respective context and roles of supervisors and supervisees. The reflection of RCT tenets and constructs suggest supervisees experienced their positive supervisory relationships as connected and growth-fostering. Thus, supporting the usefulness of studying the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance through the lens of RCT.

Overall, supervision is known to be pivotal to the development of psychologists in training, and the supervisory working alliance is known to be an effective model for developmental relationships (Allen et al., 1986; Bordin, 1983; Bucky et al., 2010; Gray et al.,

2001; Ladany et al., 1997; 1999; McMahon, 2014; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Weaks, 2002). While the agreement of goals and tasks within the supervisory working alliance seem clear, the bond aspect seems less clear. RCT appears to be a useful lens through which to study the bond aspect of the supervisory relationship to determine its make-up and development. If more is known about the bond, guidance may be given for its intentional establishment. If supervisors and supervisors-in-training learn specific skills necessary for intentional development of the bond, it is possible to enhance the experience of supervision for more supervisees in the future.

The majority of the research on RCT has been conducted from the perspective of participants who identify as White and female, so it is therefore limited. A diverse perspective is necessary in order to more fully understand an effective bond within the supervisory relationship. To remediate this gap in the literature, I intentionally address culture and identity in the data collection process. I hope this study serves as a starting point for continued research in the future for culturally specific and multiculturally diverse perspectives. As the field and the clients served by the field continue to diversify, it is critical that research follow suit. To know how to best serve diverse supervisees who serve diverse clients, culture and identities must be represented in the research to guide the field.

The purpose of the current study aims to expand the understanding of what makes up the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance by exploring strongly bonded supervisory relationships through the lens of RCT. In focusing on the bond, I hope to support the field of supervision by clarifying the bond so supervisors and supervisors-in-training can develop associated skills for intentionally creating quality bonds in supervision. Without a clear description of the bond it is difficult to train supervisors with the skills necessary to intentionally create strong bonds with supervisees. Particularly as relationships are culturally laden, relying on

less clear definition of the bond across diverse identities seems especially problematic. Without a clear picture of the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance, it is difficult for current supervisors and supervisors-in-training to understand how to intentionally cultivate quality bonds with supervisees. A clearer understanding of the bond and how it may be developed and maintained may better inform the provision of supervision and the training of supervisors in the future.

Research Questions

The primary research question for the current study is: How do supervisees experience deeply connected supervisory relationships? The secondary research question is: How do these strongly bonded supervisory experiences correspond with existing relational constructs of vulnerability and mutuality as defined by relational-cultural theory?

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Significance of Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance through the lens of RCT. Relational characteristics of the supervisor likely play a role in the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. While the supervisory working alliance has been studied (e.g., Hill et al., 2016; Ladany et al., 2001; Gunn & Pistole, 2012, etc.), the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance remains unclear. Because the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance is the less clear component, this study attempts to demystify the bond aspect of strongly bonded supervisory relationships through application of concepts from relational cultural theory (Jordan, 2008; 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Walker 2004).

Research Questions

The primary research question for the current study is: How do supervisees experience deeply connected supervisory relationships? The secondary research question is: How do these strongly bonded supervisory experiences correspond with existing relational constructs of vulnerability and mutuality as defined by relational-cultural theory?

Qualitative Research and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

In this study, I utilize a qualitative design to gain a deeper understanding of the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance as perceived by supervisees. I chose a phenomenological approach as it explores individuals' lived experience to describe meanings made therein and to develop an understanding of the essence of the shared lived experience (Creswell, 2007). Using individual experiences to develop an understanding of the shared essence of a phenomenon can also be understood through the hermeneutic circle (Smith et al.,

2009). The hermeneutic circle refers to the fluid and dynamic relationship between any part of the whole and the whole itself. The whole is affected by any given part, and any part is affected by the whole. In this way, phenomenological qualitative research looks closely at parts in order to understand the whole and connects the whole back to the individual parts. To more fully understand the aspects (parts) that create strongly bonded supervisory relationships (whole), I chose a phenomenological approach for this study, specifically an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

IPA is a phenomenological approach designed for studying phenomenology in the context of psychology and psychological interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). IPA focuses on the lived experiences of people and speculates that experience is best understood through the meanings people place on experiences (Smith et al., 2009). IPA includes a focus on researcher interpretation to make meaning of key aspects of participants' described experiences. Phenomena typically studied through IPA analysis relate to personally significant experiences such as important relationships or major life-changes (Smith et al., 2009). IPA is unique from a general phenomenological approach in that it combines psychological and interpretive components as well as insight to the subjective context of participants' lived experiences (Smith, et al., 2009). IPA is the suggested analysis for studies designed to understand a lived experience and how the individual made sense of the experience (Smith et al., 2009).

IPA analysis involves interpretation and a 'double hermeneutic' (Smith & Osborn, 2003) in which the researcher makes sense of the participant who is making sense of the studied phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). The researcher observes the phenomenon from the subjective perspective of the participant, while concurrently observing the phenomenon alongside the participant to include a wider view of the phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). Interpretation done

by the researcher in IPA actively incorporates context in which the data were given (Smith et al., 2009) in order to ensure analysis and results reflect participants' lived experiences of the phenomenon. This double hermeneutic process is the unique, interpretive component of IPA to make sense of participants' lived experience (part) in the context of the phenomena being studied (whole).

I chose IPA as it is best suited for research with a "focus on personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context, for people who share a particular experience" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 45). For the purpose of this study, I used IPA to explore personal meaning and sense-making of supervisees regarding strongly bonded supervisory relationships. I designed this study to fill the gap in the literature regarding the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance in order to elucidate the bond, and to explore the meaning supervisees make of strongly bonded supervisory relationships.

Participant Recruitment

I recruited nine clinical psychology and counseling psychology, pre-doctoral interns at Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC)-accredited university counseling centers to participate in this study. IPA research suggests three to six participants for beginning researchers (Smith et al., 2009). I chose to include more participants to support rigor, and in the hope for a more heterogeneous sample (Morrow & Smith, 2000). Because IPA research demands a smaller sample size and warns of the problematic nature of a sample that is 'too large' (Smith et al., 2009), I designed the study to be limited to nine participants, allowing for an in depth consideration of multiple sources of data for each participant.

I chose APPIC-accredited university counseling centers as the pool from which to draw participants due to the type of supervision that is typical of those spaces. University counseling

centers tend to lean more toward an interpersonal, developmental approach to supervision, making it more likely that the potential participants would have experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship. In this way, recruiting from accredited university counseling centers supported the scope of the current study. This choice also reflects the transferability of the results, as many doctoral-level psychology trainees choose university counseling centers for their required internship year. Even when university counseling center work is not their ultimate career trajectory, trainees often choose to intern at university counseling centers. As such, many trainees will receive training and supervision experiences that reflect the typical approach of university counseling centers.

Counseling psychology and clinical psychology pre-doctoral interns at APPIC sites have experienced several supervisory relationships in their training and were likely participating in intensive supervision at their internship site. Participants were supervisees who acknowledged a supervisory relationship in which they experienced a strong bond with a supervisor at some point in their training. Further, the majority of research on supervisees' perspectives of supervisory relationships has been conducted with White female participants. I sought to include perspectives of diverse participants through multiculturally attractive recruitment materials, and by recruiting from sites that tend to recruit diverse pre-doctoral interns. Incentive to participate in the study included a chance to be randomly chosen for one of three $50 Amazon gift cards at the end of the study. For the initial recruitment strategy, I emailed training directors at APPIC-accredited internship sites recruitment materials and informed consent (Appendices A,B, & C) with a request to come to their site to invite pre-doctoral interns to participate in person, or to forward the emailed recruitment materials to their current interns. Options for me to meet with interns in-person included staff meetings, group supervision, or some other scheduled meeting where pre-

doctoral interns were expected to join. One training director acquiesced to me presenting in person. When it was not possible for me to present in person, training directors were asked to forward the recruitment email to their interns should they see fit, which was chosen by most training directors. Recruitment began within the local radiuses around me at my university and at my internship site to support being able to do the first interview in-person. This initial strategy resulted in recruitment of two participants. As more participants were needed, I posted recruitment materials on the American Psychological Association, Society of Counseling Psychology Division (Division 17) ListServ twice (Appendix P), which yielded no new participants. As more participants were still needed, I emailed recruitment materials to training directors at APPIC university counseling center sites across the country with a request for the materials to be forwarded to pre-doctoral interns via email only (Appendix R). This final strategy resulted in recruitment of five participants.

I also employed snowball sampling. I provided participants and colleagues with recruitment materials to give to other potential participants who might be interested in participating. Snowballing in this way avoided obligation and allowed participants choice in whether or not they wanted to participate in the sampling process. Snow ball sampling resulted in recruitment of three participants. Most participants were recruited by way of training directors forwarding recruitment materials via email (5 participants), and snowball sampling (3 participants), while in-person presentations only provided one participant.

One participant volunteered after analysis had already begun and was emailed a message thanking them for their interest, letting them know they would be contacted (Appendix J) if analysis of the data collected did not meet saturation. I planned for any potential participants who may not have been chosen to participate or expressed interest after all data were collected to be

sent an email thanking them for their interest, letting them know we are no longer collecting data at this time (Appendix K & L).

Data Collection Procedures

Prior to data collection, I performed an informal question try-out of the interview protocol. I went through the interview protocol (Appendix F) with a peer who would fit participant criteria and made necessary changes regarding clarity and structure of the interview questions. No data were collected from the question try-out. I also had a different peer interview me using the interview protocol to be sure the questions were producing the information I sought. Following the question try-out, the interview protocol was edited as needed to ensure the protocol was productive toward the research questions.

I collected data over three data points: a demographic questionnaire, and two interviews. I asked potential participants interested in the study to contact me via email as specified in recruitment materials (Appendix B). I responded to their email with a link to the survey that included informed consent (Appendix C) and the demographic questionnaire (Appendix D) after reiterating participant criteria. The email that provided the link to the survey also initiated the process for scheduling the initial interview (Appendix E). Regarding the initial interviews, two were conducted face-to-face, and the remaining seven initial interviews took place over Zoom due to distance. Whether in-person or over Zoom, the interviews were recorded (audio only) onto a password-protected laptop and uploaded onto a password-protected, private drive for later transcription. Only the designated transcriber and I had access to this drive. The designated transcriber transcribed the interviews on a password-protected laptop and uploaded the completed transcripts onto the same private drive as the audio recordings.

I emailed each participant a copy of their transcript for review, and asked to schedule a follow-up interview (Appendix G). Each follow-up interview took place over Zoom. I recorded and transcribed all follow-up interviews adhering to the same protocol as the initial interview. In the follow-up interview (Appendix H), I asked each participant if after reviewing their transcript from the first interview, they determined they told the researcher the story they wanted to tell, or if there is more they would like to add or change regarding their experience of a strongly bonded supervisory relationship. In the follow-up interview, I also asked participants about their least strongly bonded supervisory relationship to see if the antithesis would shed more light on the strong bond. Finally, I provided participants the themes that emerged from the data after initial analysis to perform a member check, and checked to see if the emergent themes resonated with participants' experiences of strongly bonded supervisory relationships. The purpose of this follow-up interview was to extend the conversation about strongly bonded supervisory relationships to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' experience, and to perform a member check on the data.

A results check (Appendix I) was the final contact with participants. Once the final results write up was fully drafted, I emailed each participant a copy of the results chapter so they could see their direct quotes in context of the results chapter. The quotations of other participants were redacted. The purpose of the results check was to give participants an opportunity to be sure their anonymity was not inadvertently compromised in the presentation of the results. Participants were given two weeks after receipt of the result check email to contact me with any concerns. If participants did not respond within those two weeks, submission of the final write-up continued. Four participants responded to the results check confirming their approval of the presentation of their direct quotations.

Materials

Demographic Questionnaire

A demographic questionnaire (Appendix D) was collected from participants regarding their demographic information as well as their respective supervisors (as reported by participants). The demographic indicators for participants were: race, ethnicity, gender, age, program of study, degree, number of supervisors, number of supervisory experiences, and extent of multicultural training. Demographic indicators regarding the respective supervisors were: race, gender, estimated age range, degree, degree focus (clinical or counseling), and indication of whether or not the supervisor received training on the provision of supervision.

Initial Interview Protocol

The initial interview protocol (Appendix F) was designed to form the basis of a semi-structured, in-depth interview with each participant as is typical for IPA research (Smith et al., 2009). The interview was designed to be a "conversation with a purpose" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 57). IPA research suggests six to ten questions (plus possible prompts), beginning with a broad question that invites participants to describe an experience (Smith et al., 2009). I developed a seven-question protocol, with care to create open-ended questions that were not leading and did not make assumptions as suggested by IPA (Smith et al., 2009). The focus of these questions was on participants' experiences with strongly supervisory relationships, relationship development, any effects of culture, and outcomes the relationships had for participants' learning and development. I developed the initial interview protocol with the research questions and purpose of the study in mind to create the highest potential for rich data. After each initial interview, I made notes in my research journal describing my thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the interview.

Follow-Up Interview Protocol

The follow-up interview (Appendix H), took place after the participant had been given a copy of their initial interview transcript and was meant to deepen the conversation regarding participants' experiences, and to perform a member check. The second interview protocol asked participants if the data in their transcript told the complete story of their experiences with strongly bonded supervisory relationships and provided opportunity to add or change their story. Participants were also given a list of themes that had emerged thus far in the data to see whether or not those themes resonated with their experience of a strongly bonded supervisory relationship. The follow-up interview also asked participants about their least strongly bonded supervisory relationship to attempt to deepen understanding of strong bonds through the antithesis. The follow-up interviews were completed over Zoom, and were recorded and transcribed using the same protocol as the initial interview. After each follow-up interview, I made notes in my research journal describing my thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the interview.

Results Check

A results check email (Appendix I) was sent to each participant once the final write up of the results chapter had been drafted. Only participants' respective quotations could be seen in the context of the chapter, as all other participants' quotations were redacted. The results check offered participants an opportunity to review the use of their direct quotations in the context of the results write up to be sure their anonymity was not inadvertently compromised. Participants had two weeks after receipt of the result check email to express any concerns to me. If I did not hear from the participants within that window, I proceeded with the submission of the final write-up with the quotations used.

Analysis Process

Analysis within IPA is flexible and is "characterized by a set of common processes" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 79) rather than a rigid, single structure in order to accommodate deep meaning making of participants' experiences. IPA analysis is iterative and inductive (Smith, 2007; Smith et al., 2009) in that results emerge from repeated analysis of the data, and are pieced together to address the research questions. IPA analysis includes the following processes: (a) reading and re-reading each participant interview line by line, (b) identification of patterns that emerge from the transcripts, (c) fluid movement among the data, emergent themes, and the psychological knowledge of the researcher to create an interpretation of the data, (d) development of connection or pattern among themes, (e) organization of material to create a coherent, replicable research process, (f) use of audit to test interpretation of data, (g) use of narrative, direct quotations from participants in the results to support emergent themes, and (h) reflection of researcher's perceptions and processes throughout the study (Smith et al., 2009).

To implement an IPA approach to analysis, I read each transcript several times, first to gain familiarity to the participant's story, then to look for relevant quotations. I printed each transcript with wide margins on each side. As I was reading, I highlighted segments of interest to create a "descriptive core of comments" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 83) that have a phenomenological focus describing that which matters most to participants, and the meaning they made from their experiences. I then made notes next to the highlighted segments in the right margin using blue ink. These notes included (a) descriptive comments focused on describing the content, (b) linguistic comments focused on the specific use of language, and (c) conceptual comments focused on interpretive notes to assist in understanding how and why participants have their particular perspective (Smith et al., 2009). I then went through each transcript another time to

write emergent themes in the left margin in black ink that reflected the participant's original thoughts blended with my interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). I went through each transcript making notes following this note-taking protocol, intentionally and temporarily bracketing emerging themes from previous transcripts to allow new themes to emerge. Throughout this analysis process, I made entries in my research journal for the purposes of bracketing, tracking observations, and elucidating my interpretations. I also consulted regularly with my doctoral chair who served as an internal auditor for the analysis process.

Once I noted emergent themes on each initial interview transcript, I wrote all emergent themes on note cards. I went through and noted the interviews from which each theme emerged. I sorted the themes first with regard to frequency and emphasized the emergent themes that were mentioned in all, or almost all, interviews as my first list of emergent themes, though I kept the notecards with the less frequent themes. Then, I went through each transcript and notes again to see if any patterns emerged between the transcripts and the themes on the notecards, and edited my list of themes, accordingly. Through a synergistic process of describing and interpreting (Smith et al., 2009), emergent themes began to paint a bigger picture of the supervisory bond phenomenon. I began to look for connections across emergent themes. To do so, I sorted the notecards to group similar themes together into super-ordinate themes through abstraction (Smith et al., 2009). These super-ordinate theme groups became the themes, and the emergent-themes within the groups became the aspects of the themes. Once I created a list of themes and aspects of themes that reflected participants' stories, I contacted participants to schedule follow-up interviews. Seven of the nine participants responded to my email request, scheduled, and completed follow-up interviews. I used my initial list of emergent themes and associated aspects of the themes to member check during follow-up interviews. Each follow-up interview was

transcribed, printed and analyzed using the same protocol as all initial interviews. I continued to refine emergent themes based on feedback from participants, and on-going feedback from my internal auditor.

I then created a separate word document for each theme and associated aspects of themes with all respective quotes from participants. I color-coded each participant so all quotes within the word documents presented in participants' respective colors. I went through each theme to be sure the quotations and themes supported one another, and made necessary adjustments including moving quotations and editing names of themes and aspects of themes to ensure the most accurate representation of the data. I also created one document that included all themes and associated quotations. I used this document to review the themes and respective quotations again to continue to ensure accuracy in representation of the data. My internal auditor provided on-going feedback throughout this analysis process.

When all follow-up interviews were completed, transcribed and analyzed, I provided my external auditor with a binder that included the following materials: a complete list of themes and aspects of themes, all initial transcripts that contained all of my notes, clean copies of all transcripts, and my research journal. The external auditor went through the data I provided to determine if she could follow the emergence of the themes from my analysis process and created a document citing her process and recommendations (Appendix T). I scheduled a meeting with my internal and external auditors so we could discuss the findings of the external auditor together. I made adjustments to the themes according to the recommendations set during that meeting, and created a document explaining my process (Appendix U). Again, I checked and re-checked to be sure of the accuracy of the names of themes and aspects of themes, and to ensure

quotations appeared under appropriate themes and aspects of themes. I incorporated feedback from my internal auditor throughout the process.

Rigor

Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed parallel criteria to quantitative concepts of validity to support the trustworthiness or rigor of findings from qualitative research. They emphasized (a) credibility instead of internal validity, (b) transferability instead of external validity, (c) dependability instead of reliability, and (d) confirmability instead of objectivity (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). However, as qualitative methods continued to develop, parallel criteria seemed "defensive and limited, given its reliance on quantitative terms" (Merrick, 1999, p. 27). A quantitative approach uses concepts of validity to establish truth of facts, where qualitative methods are more interested in the "adequacy of the researcher to understand and represent peoples' meanings" (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1994; p. 143). As such, within a postpositivist framework, validity in qualitative methods is recently more focused on trustworthiness, reflexivity, and representation (Merrick, 1999).

Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, trustworthiness should be built in beginning with the conceptualization of the study. Trustworthiness "has to do with how one approaches, collects, analyzes, interprets, and reports data" (Merrick, 1999, p. 31). Often, qualitative research regards trustworthiness as the standard to evaluate credibility and quality (Banister et al., 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merrick, 1999; Stiles, 1993). Elements of trustworthiness include (a) researcher disclosure of orientation, (b) prolonged engagement with the material, (c) persistent observation, (d) triangulation, and (e) discussion of the process and findings with others (Stiles, 1993). This process includes grounding interpretations with examples and quotations given by participants to

support theorizing. Trustworthiness is supported by qualitative researchers consistently moving between the data and interpretation (many times) to ensure results accurately reflect the data.

To address trustworthiness in this study, I disclosed my orientation to strongly bonded supervisory relationships in Chapter 1, and kept a research journal to track personal reactions to the data and to bracket personal responses. Prolonged engagement with the material and persistent observation were reflected in (a) the design of the interview protocols to produce deep discussion, (b) repeated contact with data throughout observation and analysis, and (c) repeated interviews with each participant. Triangulation was reflected through internal auditing, external auditing, and member checking. Throughout the study, an internal auditor monitored the design, data collection, and analysis. Each of the seven participants that completed a follow-up interview performed a member check on emergent themes to ensure the themes reflected their experiences. After member checking was complete, an external auditor evaluated the analysis and interpretation. I discussed the process with the internal and external auditors. Internal auditing was performed by the chairperson of my dissertation committee. She reviewed transcripts, notes, and themes to ensure the transcript data tracked with the themes and vice versa. She offered feedback, questions, and suggestions to ensure the analysis and interpretation was strongly grounded in the data.

External auditing was performed by a third party, doctoral student who is familiar with the experience of supervision, both as a supervisor and a supervisee. The external auditor was also familiar with the process of qualitative research, as she designed and was in the process of executing her own qualitative dissertation study. The external audit was performed after all data were collected, analyzed, and participants had provided a member check. The external auditor reviewed the research process to assess whether the findings are supported by the data and

provided notes and suggestions to myself and the internal auditor (see Appendix T). I went over the external auditor's notes and set a meeting with her and the internal auditor to review auditing notes, ask questions, and discuss her suggestions. After the meeting, I reviewed the notations the external auditor made to the transcripts and re-read transcripts, as per the internal and external auditors' suggestions in the meeting. As a result of that discussion, two sub-theme names were changed, and an additional variation to another sub-theme was added to the writing of the results chapter, which was in-progress at the time (see Appendix U).

I provided a thick description (Geertz, 1973; 1983) of collected data and emerging themes, which is an important aspect of trustworthiness (Morrow, 2005). Thick descriptions involve "detailed, rich descriptions not only of participants' experiences of phenomena, but also of the contexts in which those experiences occur" that acknowledges "multiple layers of culture and context" (Morrow, 2005, p. 252). Thick descriptions were possible due to the semi-structured design of the interview I created to leave room for asking for clarification and expansion on participants' experiences. I included cultural and identity factors into data collection, analysis, and interpretation. During interviews, I listened for elements of culture and identity that called for expansion and responded with follow-up prompts accordingly. During analysis, I looked for ways culture and identity factored into the data and subsequent interpretation of the data.

Another aspect of trustworthiness is negative case analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A negative case analysis was addressed in the follow-up interview where I asked participants to describe elements of their least strongly bonded supervisory relationship. By exploring elements of an antithetical type of bond, I hoped to add clarity and precision to discoveries made regarding strong bonds. In order to describe what the bond *is* I also wanted to know what it *is not*.

Sampling is recommended to continue to the "point of redundancy" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 235), also referred to as saturation (Morrow & Smith, 2000). Saturation is reached when no new data are presented despite new participants being interviewed and is reflective of a sharpening focus of inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Saturation was monitored throughout the data collection and analysis process to ensure the data reflected a complete picture of the phenomenon. After seven interviews had been transcribed and analyzed, I sensed the themes were coalescing. While I was waiting to schedule follow-up interviews, two more participants expressed interest in the study. After transcribing and analyzing these last two initial interviews, saturation was confirmed, as these two interviews yielded no new themes. Within the collected data provided by nine participants, saturation was reached as evidenced by the redundancies within the data.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a commitment to reflect on and critically evaluate the research topic, design, and personal experience of the researcher who is part of the context she or he is trying to understand and accurately represent (Altheide & Johnson, 1994; Banister et al., 1994; Merrick, 1999). The purpose of reflexivity is to make transparent to readers the "constructed nature of research outcomes" (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 695) as the research outcomes are products of a series of choices made by the researcher (Ortlipp, 2008). Rather than attempting to bracket researchers' assumptions, reflexivity serves to make the assumptions and decisions of the researcher explicit to the reader in order to manage subjectivity, and to make clear the co-construction of meaning and interpretation the researcher presents (Morrow, 2005; Ortlipp, 2008).

Often, reflexivity is exhibited through a formal acknowledgement of the researcher's personal experience with the subject prior to data collection, followed by the use of a research

journal throughout data collection and analysis to assist the researcher in his or her "disciplined self-reflection" (Wilkinson, 1988, p. 493). Within this study, I made a formal acknowledgment of my experience with strongly bonded supervisory relationships in chapter one. Throughout the study I kept a research journal to continue the practice of reflexivity, in which I made notes after each initial interview and throughout the analysis process on my thoughts, feelings, and reactions. I made note of any emotional responses I experienced throughout the interviews and analysis process and commented on anything that "stuck out" to me. My research journal was used to make my "history, values, and assumptions open to scrutiny, not as an attempt to control bias, but to make it visible to the reader" (Ortlipp, 2008, p. 698). Journaling my experiences with supervision allowed me to bracket my story to decrease potential for my experiences to affect my interpretation of the data. I also tracked my responses to interviews and analysis in my research journal to bracket my reactions, and to elucidate my subjectivity. The external auditor read my research journal, which helped her track my interpretation throughout the analysis process. I also had regular discussions with my internal auditor for both using and bracketing my personal experiences of supervision in the analysis process. These reflexive tasks and the associated feedback provided by my internal and external auditor led to clarification of themes and aspects of themes.

Representation

Representation is an important concept for conducting responsible qualitative research as it ensures the researcher is accurately representing the lived experiences of participants with regard to the studied phenomenon (Merrick, 1999). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) acknowledged a "crisis of representation" within qualitative research. The researcher is to directly articulate the lived experience of participants, yet the researcher is the filter through which data flows before it

is represented on the page. As such, some critics argue the lived experience of participants "is created in the social text written by the researcher" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 11). A best practice to address representation is to include direct quotes and narratives from participants in the write-up (Fine, 1994; Merrick, 1999). Including direct quotes to support themes serves to clarify the connection between data and the themes. Making the pathway to themes transparent allows the reader to judge the quality of interpretation (Stiles, 1993). In this study, I used direct quotes from participants to support themes throughout the analysis and presentation of results in order to address representation.

Participants were also given the opportunity to review the results prior to the submission of the final presentation of the results chapter. The purpose of this was for participants to have an opportunity to see how their direct quotations were used in the results chapter, and to ensure their identity was not inadvertently compromised. I emailed each participant a copy of the final results chapter with their respective direct quotations as they appear in the chapter. I redacted all other participants' quotes. Participants were given a two-week window in which to contact me if they had concerns regarding their anonymity as a result of their direct quotations, before submission of the final draft. Any feedback given by participants was addressed and the results were edited accordingly.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of the current study is to understand the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance through the lens of RCT. Relational characteristics of the supervisor likely play a role in the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. Because the bond aspect is the least clear component of the supervisory working alliance, this study sets out to demystify the bond aspect of strongly bonded supervisory relationships. The primary research question is: How do supervisees experience strongly bonded supervisory relationships? The secondary research question is: How do these strongly bonded supervisory experiences correspond with existing relational constructs of vulnerability and mutuality? The interview questions I asked participants explored the strongly bonded supervisory relationship, supervisors' contributions, participants' shifting behaviors and outlooks associated with the strong bond, the phenomena that made the strong bond possible, and cultural similarities and differences that may have contributed to the strong bond.

This chapter presents the results of qualitative analysis with nine doctoral-level interns. The first section of this chapter describes the nine participants interviewed for this study. The following sections describe each of the six themes that emerged from the data: Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development, Cultural Attunement, Supervisor Way of Engaging, Supervisor Integrity, and Positive Outcomes. Quotations from the data are provided in each section to support the description of each theme. Quotations were

selected to illustrate nuance within themes, and to offer the best representation of meaning within each theme.

Description of Participants

I interviewed nine participants for the current study. Criteria for participation included current doctoral-level training at either a counseling psychology or clinical psychology program, current internship placement at an APPIC-accredited university counseling center internship, previous or current experience with a strongly bonded supervisory relationship, and some multicultural training either from a home program or internship site. All nine participants matched criteria. Five participants identified as female, and four participants identified as male. Regarding racial and ethnic identity, six participants identified as White, one identified as White and Latina, and two identified as Latino. Sexual orientation information was not collected, though two participants disclosed their sexual identity in their interviews, one as gay and two as bi-sexual, reflecting some sexual identity diversity. Three participants were part of counseling psychology programs, and six participants were part of clinical psychology programs. Three participants endorsed their strongly bonded supervisory relationship happened in their training prior to internship, while the other six reported their strongly bonded supervisory relationship took place during internship.

Participants provided some demographic information regarding their strongly bonded supervisors. These data were reported by participants rather than gathered directly from supervisors. Five supervisors were identified as female, and four were identified as male. Seven supervisors were identified as White, one as Native American, and one as Pacific Islander. Four supervisors were reported to be between the ages of 30-40 years old, four were reported to be between 40-50 years old, and one was reported to be over 60 years old. Six supervisors were

reported to hold a Ph.D., and three were reported to hold a Psy.D. Three supervisors were reported to have their degree is Counseling Psychology, and six in Clinical Psychology. Seven supervisors were reported to have received training on the provision of supervision, and two were reported as "unknown" regarding their experience receiving training on the provision of supervision.

Themes

The following themes emerged from the data. These themes reflected the essence of strongly bonded supervisory relationships from the perspective of the nine participants, who identified as supervisees who had experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship. The themes emerged from the following process, going through each interview one-by-one. First, I identified noteworthy statements within the interview and made notations about why each statement was noteworthy. Next, I went back through the interview and began to categorize each noteworthy statement based on patterns that emerged. Then, I looked through all the interviews again to find patterns within the data to determine themes. The themes were identified after all first interviews had been analyzed, and refined throughout the process of second interviews, during which participants member checked and expanded upon identified themes.

The themes are listed in a particular order beginning with the core theme, Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship. The following two themes, Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development and Cultural Attunement, describe aspects of interaction between supervisor and supervisee that support strongly bonded supervision. The next two themes, Supervisor Way of Engaging and Supervisor Integrity, describe supervisors' ways of being in supervision that support the strongly bonded supervisory relationship. The last theme, Positive Outcomes, describes outcomes for supervisees associated with the strongly bonded supervisory experience.

Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship

The first theme, Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship was reported by all nine participants as contributing to their strongly bonded supervisory relationship. As described by participants, this theme included Feeling Valued, Feeling Known, Mutuality, and Supervisor Handled Supervisee Vulnerability Responsibly. Intimacy in the Supervisory relationship was described as feelings of care, closeness, understanding, and valuing. Participants discussed a deeper sense of knowing their supervisor, and feeling known by their supervisor, leading them to remain open to their supervisor, rather than shutting down.

Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship as described by participants emerged as a core theme, reflecting the essence of strongly bonded supervisory relationships. When looking for the phenomenon that made the strong bond possible for participants, Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship set the strongly bonded supervisory relationship apart from other supervisory relationships. The remaining themes described concepts that supported Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, and concepts that were experienced as a result of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship.

Feeling valued. One aspect of Intimacy in the supervisory relationship participants described was Feeling Valued by their supervisor. Eight participants described this aspect of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship. Feeling Valued was described in a variety of ways such as care, respect, trust, and connection. Participant E (White/Latina, female) described feeling valued by her supervisor reflected in the care and effort put toward their supervisory relationship:

> …it seemed like she worked hard to make my experience a good one…she seemed like she actually cared…she seemed really thoughtful…about my comfort…it seemed like she really cared…on a personal level, too…she was there for me and for the clients…

For E, the perceived thoughtfulness and care she experienced with her supervisor supported their bond because she felt valued.

Participant A (White, female) stated, "…being recognized and having your opinion valued, or your input being valued is pretty remarkable," when she was discussing Feeling Valued by her supervisor. Similarly, Participant G (White, female) reported, "…I think it also just was helpful because it made me feel like she valued my opinion, or she valued my clinical judgement," when her strongly bonded supervisor would approach her clinical concerns with curiosity. Both A and G noted Feeling Valued supported their supervisory bonds. Participant F (Latino, male) reported his supervisor's transparency and inclusion of him in the process led to feeling valued by his supervisor: "…I think transparency would be one of the huge things. Um, she really made me feel like I was a part of the process, like I had a voice and that she respected and trusted me." For F, his perceived sense of respect and trust coming from his supervisor added to the sense of Feeling Valued, which supported their supervisory bond.

Participant H (White, male) described a particular instance in which he felt his supervisor's care for his wellbeing as a way of Feeling Valued. H reported he needed to hospitalize a client, and his strongly bonded supervisor was thoughtful throughout the process:

> …he was very affirming during that, like he…walked me through the process…he called me while I was at the hospital and, um, so, that was really nice…he was really, um, helpful throughout that whole process and aware of me and…how I was doing and coping and feeling with that, like I felt very supported...

For H, he noted his strongly bonded supervisor's awareness of his feelings, and processes for checking-in with him throughout the process led him to feel valued and cared for by his supervisor.

Participant G (White, female) described her sense of Feeling Valued by her strongly bonded supervisor in a more wholistic manner. She reported the intimate connection she experienced with her supervisor lead to Feeling Valued, as well as comfort in sharing more vulnerably:

> …I think like the intimacy in our supervisor/supervisee relationship was really at the heart of it…I feel like we got each other, we were close with each other in a way that was boundaried and respectful, but I also felt…like I just felt like a little more connected to her than I did other people at the center…she like really fostered that intimacy. And so because of that, I think I was able to be super raw with her, you know, felt comfortable sharing the cringe-worthy video that I wish I could just delete because I knew that intimacy was there, I knew she saw me for who I was and it felt like, it felt okay to say so.

According to G, this aspect of Feeling Valued really added to the intimacy within her strongly bonded supervisory relationship, and the intimacy really set that strongly bonded supervisory relationship apart from others she had experienced.

Feeling Known. Another aspect of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship participants described was a sense of Feeling Known by their supervisor. Eight participants described this aspect of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship. Feeling Known was described by participants as feeling accurately known and understood by their supervisor. Regarding her

strongly bonded supervisor, Participant G (White, female) stated, “I feel like we got each other…”. Participant H (White, male) discussed feeling understood by his supervisor:

> …I think that really helped me feel really bonded to him was just that I felt like, um, (pause) I just felt really understood by him…I feel like and I could talk to [Supervisor] about that and I really felt heard and understood about that…I mean I think he just like kind of tracked me emotionally…

H noted his supervisor’s capacity to track his emotions supported his felt sense of understanding from his supervisor. Similarly, Participant A (White, female) endorsed her supervisor’s ability to accurately reflect her experiences led her to feel deeply understood by her supervisor “…it was really just understanding my experience…he accurately reflected my experience of what was going on…it just like felt like relating, like as understood as you could be by another person…”. Participant A noted her experience of relating to her supervisor and feeling understood by him supported their strong bond.

Participant G (White, female) stated her felt sense of Feeling Known by her supervisor was noticeable as their relationship progressed:

> …I started to feel more connected when things, like I didn't have to say as much or, um, I didn't feel like I had to really like explain myself as much, because she just got it, um, and like what she would say back to me was like absolutely dead on what I meant…I knew she saw me for who I was…

Here, G realized she felt known by her supervisor, leading to a decreased need to explain herself as thoroughly, especially as her supervisor was able to accurately reflect her meaning. The decreased need to explain themselves to their supervisor was shared by Participant C (White, male) and F (Latino, male) who both noticed they did not feel they needed to prove themselves

to their supervisors because they felt their supervisors accurately knew their clinical strengths and growth edges. During an experience with a difficult client, Participant C (White, male) explained why he felt a decreased need to explain himself to his supervisor: "…he gets that I know how to do this, I'm just struggling right now as anybody else would…". C's supervisor helped him feel like he accurately knew C's capabilities, allowing him more room to explore the areas in which he was struggling.

Similarly, Participant A (White, female) endorsed feeling known by her supervisor when she was discussing difficult feelings she had toward a client, and her supervisor was accepting of her feelings:

> …being willing to cry in supervision like when the affect came up and being able to express frustration. Being able to say like I don't like this client I'm not quite sure why, but just being able to say that without fear of like [supervisor saying] oh, you're a bad therapist because you don't like your client. Being understanding [that] its just part of human experience, to not like people.

Participant A reported her supervisor knowing she is not "a bad therapist" because she did not like the client supported their bond as she felt she could be honest, explore her feelings, and create a plan that will be therapeutic for the client. She described relief in her supervisor knowing that she still cared and wanted to be helpful for her client, despite her difficult feelings toward the client.

Mutuality. Another aspect of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship described by participants was Mutuality. Participants described Mutuality when they reported themselves and their supervisor bringing their whole selves to supervision, and displaying an openness to being influenced by one another. Seven participants discussed Mutuality more directly within their

strongly bonded supervisory relationship, though two participants indirectly discussed Mutuality within their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Direct acknowledgment is reflected in the following quotations and includes a stated element of each party being open to being influenced by the other and/or bringing their whole self to the strongly bonded supervisory relationship. Indirect acknowledgment included descriptions in which Mutuality was being spoken around, rather than directly—instances in which participants were describing behavior and ways of being that assumed Mutuality.

Participant A (White, female) noted her strongly bonded supervisor's "…willingness to be vulnerable and transparent with his feedback…allowed me to be vulnerable and transparent in what was going on for me in my reaction to feedback…". Here, A reported she was able to be vulnerable and transparent because her supervisor was "willing" to be vulnerable and transparent. Similarly, Participant F (Latino, male) stated his strongly bonded supervisor displayed willingness:

> …a willingness to make herself uncomfortable or to explore uncomfortable things…then that made me feel like I could [explore uncomfortable things], too. Like, she was an excellent role model in terms of helping me realize that being uncomfortable in supervision is so helpful.

F noted his strongly bonded supervisor was "willing" to make herself uncomfortable in supervision, which helped him to also make himself uncomfortable in supervision. He noted the importance of "being uncomfortable" in supervision due to the growth that happened for him subsequently. Both A and F incorporated the word "willingness" into their description of Mutuality, suggesting an intentional choice for openness to be affected by the other.

Participant C (White, male) described Mutuality in terms of supervisor vulnerability. C stated, "…I sometimes forget how much, how many risks he probably takes in that seat with me," especially as Participant C reflected on his new experiences of taking on the role of supervisor, he noted, "…when I create space for vulnerability [i.e. with supervisees], that makes me vulnerable." Here, C reported creating space for his supervisee's vulnerability, makes him feel vulnerable as well—vulnerability influenced vulnerability. Similarly, Participant D (Latino, male) reported his strongly bonded supervisory relationship was "…a more developed form of relationship with more of each of us in it…". D perceived he and his supervisor brought more of their whole selves to the relationship, which made it stand apart from other relationships, and allowed more depth in sharing. For Participant B, (White, female) Mutuality in her strongly bonded relationship meant "…creating space for that dyad in relationships…versus having the one-way push…". Mutuality seemed to be an important aspect of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship as reflected by seven participants describing Mutuality, either directly or indirectly.

Supervisor handled supervisee's vulnerability responsibly. The final aspect of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship was Supervisor Handled Supervisee's Vulnerability Responsibly. This appeared to be an important aspect of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, as all nine participants described this aspect as an important aspect of their experience in their strongly bonded supervision. When participants were describing Supervisor Handled Supervisee's Vulnerability Responsibly, they noted ways their supervisor approached their vulnerable disclosures with curiosity, compassion, empathy, and support. Participants also noted a lack of criticism, punishment, or defensiveness in their strongly bonded supervisor's response to the supervisee's vulnerabilities. For example, Participant I (White, female) reported

she felt an "inherent comfort" in speaking with her strongly bonded supervisor and appreciated the space to process countertransference:

> …free to be able to talk about more personal things…say I had countertransference, I did with a client, um free to be able to talk about not only what that countertransference was and how I felt and how I dealt with it in the session, um but also you know where that was coming from, from my own personal self and for her to be able to not only respond to that professionally as the supervisor, but also to be able to talk about her own past experiences with countertransference and what that looked like.

Participant I appreciated not only being able to address how to deal with the countertransference in session, but also being able to process its origin to more deeply understand. She also appreciated her supervisor's willingness to discuss her own experiences with countertransference.

In another example, Participant A (White, female) discussed the first time she disclosed emotional information with her strongly bonded supervisor. She stated he was present with her throughout the experience, which she perceived as a corrective emotional experience:

> …he just sat in it with me, didn't try to, like didn't ask to be excused, didn't try to bring me back up to the surface, like he sat in the suck with me…my tears didn't make him uncomfortable, and my reactions didn't make him uncomfortable and that was the part where I'm like well okay this is like a safe thing to do…I didn't feel like I had to button it up really quickly…that was like a corrective emotional experience for me…[to] have someone genuinely mean like it's okay to [i.e., be emotional]…

For A, she stated she came from a family that was strictly not emotionally expressive, so to have her strongly bonded supervisor witness her emotions at all felt vulnerable. To have him approach

her emotions with acceptance felt like a corrective emotional experience for her. She noted ways she continually became more and more emotionally authentic throughout their relationship after this initial exchange.

Similarly, Participant E (White/Latina, female) noted her strongly bonded supervisor was welcoming of her emotions in ways she felt other supervisors had not been:

> …I didn't feel like, like my emotions were too much with her, um, whereas…with other supervisors who just really didn't want to hear…about how you were doing at all, then the emotions just felt excessive (chuckle) and there was no place for them. Um, just knowing that she was open, made it feel a lot more manageable…

E endorsed her strongly bonded supervisor's approach to her emotions helped her to feel like her emotions were "manageable" and weren't "too much" for supervision. E noted she shared more vulnerably in her strongly bonded supervisory relationship because she trusted her strongly bonded supervisor's response. She stated their relationship "…got stronger when I started to share more and she was okay with it…". Participant E's strongly bonded supervisory relationship grew as her supervisor continued to handle her vulnerability in a way that felt supportive.

Participant G (White, female) also described ways her strongly bonded supervisor responded to her emotions:

> …I just remember there was one supervision where I was like trying to keep it together, I was trying not to cry, I was trying to just be like very professional and then I just like (makes noise) I just started crying (chuckle), and like I couldn't regulate…what I was saying, I just kind of word vomited all over her, and…she like handled it really well…I see this was safe, this was a big risk, it was not an intentional risk, but, um, she was just

> very supportive and I think she was very also like practical in how she…responded to me…

Here, G noted although she unintentionally took the risk of emoting in that particular session, she felt "safe" because her supervisor was not only supportive to her emotions, but also addressed some practicalities Participant G found helpful.

Participant D (Latino, male) noted he felt specifically most vulnerable regarding his clinical work. He described ways he trusted his strongly bonded supervisor to avoid hurting him in the process of addressing growth edges:

> …I like to think I'm this very relaxed, chill person, and there's elements of me that are, but I think professionally, clinically, I have a lot of vulnerabilities and sitting with that, baring my soul to people in that [supervisory] role and then [for them to] do it responsibly and not hurting me with it…like they're never going to hurt me with it was a big deal and helped me to open up more…there was some element of excitement even…there was always some idea that I could develop something from [i.e., sharing] each meeting…

Participant D described ways his strongly bonded supervisor helped him to think out loud about his clinical concerns, rather than criticize them, in order for D to grow along his growth edges. He noted because his strongly bonded supervisor helped him "open up more" he was able to address his growth edges more deeply.

Participant F (Latino, male) also reported feeling he could share more vulnerably with his strongly bonded supervisor because he knew she would respond with compassion:

> …I needed her support and I knew she would be able to support me, so I was able to just show her the areas in which I was really struggling…I could truly show her, you know,

> these are all of the areas that I need help with like, how can you support me, how can we talk about it, how can we work through all of it, and how can I grow, um, because again, I just felt like I could trust her with [i.e., vulnerable topics], I felt safe, um, and she always responded, again, with compassion and care…like those difficult kind of vulnerable topics, I felt really comfortable bringing those in to supervision because I didn't feel like I was being judged, um, and I felt like I would be understood…

F stated knowing his strongly bonded supervisor would meet his vulnerability with compassion, understanding, and without judgement helped him to disclose his vulnerability more deeply with her, adding to their strong bond.

Summary. In summary, all participants reported Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship added to the strong bond with their supervisors. Aspects of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship included Feeling Known, Feeling Valued, Mutuality, and Supervisor Handled Supervisee's Vulnerability Responsibly. Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship emerged as a core theme, setting apart strongly bonded supervisory relationships from other supervisory relationships.

Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development

The second theme participants reported was Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development. All nine participants reported this theme as contributing to their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Within Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development, participants reported Guiding Supervisees Professional Voice, Encouraging Self-Exploration, Vulnerability was Encouraged Not Forced, Modeling and Experiential Learning, and Guiding Supervisees' Unique Career Trajectory. Participants noted their supervisors took their development seriously, and put considerable effort into supporting their learning and growth. For example, Participant H

(White, male) reported his strongly bonded supervisor was his first supervisor to utilize the hour before their supervision meeting to prepare and watch recorded sessions outside of supervision. Participant H noted this practice made him feel like his supervisor cared and took his development seriously. Participants noted their supervisors assisted them in finding their own answers, rather than telling them exactly what to do, or how to be. Participants also noted ways supervisors helped them clarify their career trajectory.

Guiding supervisee's professional voice. One aspect of Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development is Guiding the Supervisee's Professional Voice. Six participants reported on this aspect of Guiding Supervisee Development. Guiding Supervisee's Professional Voice was described by participants as supervisors helping them think out loud about clinical concerns in order to come to their own answers, rather than be given the supervisor's answers. As Participant G (White, female) put it, her supervisor asking questions, rather than giving answers, "developmentally helped me think through some things…". Participants described ways their supervisor helped them to determine their personal clinical style—what does it sound like when *they* provide therapy. Participants also described ways their supervisors challenged their thinking and encouraged them to apply their learning about their professional voice in the future. For example, Participant B (White, female) described her experience with a difficult systemic concern in the clinic and her supervisor's response to her outrage:

> [Supervisor said]…now, what has that taught you about how systems function and…how can you translate this into your next role?...At first, I felt confused because I was like…why wasn't she more upset?...I thought about it and like, oh, she's been in the system for…years and she understands how these things work and she is trying to give us the tools…to affect change…then I felt a lot of respect for her in that moment…

She noted her supervisor helped her to think ahead about how she can develop and utilize her professional voice in future roles to affect change.

Participant H (White, male) described feeling frustrated, at first, when his supervisor would not simply tell him what he should do with his clients. He noted his supervisor asked him thoughtful questions and really listened to his answers as a way to help him develop his own clinical voice:

> …he would ask me a lot of questions and…I thought maybe he was searching for something, I'd be like just tell me what to do [Supervisor]…but he just like would keep asking me…it really helped me slow down and really think through things and I think that was really helpful… I feel like [Supervisor]…wanted me to develop my own rationales he wasn't just trying to tell me what…answer in his mind that he wanted me to come to…

Participant H noted how his supervisor helped him begin developing his own rationale by asking questions, rather than giving answers.

In a slightly different way, Participant D (Latino, male) described an instance when a supervisor challenged his thinking by asking questions, particularly regarding theory:

> [while watching tape in supervision]…he's like, uh, what you are telling the client right now, is that really what you think would work? And, I was like, no. Then, what are you telling them that then? Because that's what the theory says. Okay, well I want you to tell them what you think would actually work and help in this situation. Don't tell them what the theory would say because if you don't believe it, they are not going to either.

Here, Participant D noted his supervisor helped him look within himself for his professional voice, rather than looking to theory for professional voice.

Participant F (Latino, male) talked about ways his supervisor helped him to develop his professional voice by helping him deconstruct some earlier assumptions:

> …basically I had to Whitewash my identity in a way. I couldn't talk the way I talked growing up or I couldn't show that to staff members nor could I show it to clients. I kind of convinced myself that I couldn't do that, um, so a lot of the work with this particular supervisor was kind of challenging that belief that I can't show this to anyone, um, but really helping me realize that this is a part of who you are and you can use this to connect with people…

For F, his supervisor helped him to see that he could use more parts of himself, rather than feeling like he had to hide those parts of himself in professional spaces. Further, his strongly bonded supervisor helped him to see that in connecting with more of himself, he is better able to connect with others, including clients and colleagues. In this way, his supervisor helped him to develop a professional voice that sounded like *himself* rather than a "Whitewashed" version of himself.

Another way participants described supervisors assisting with the Development of Professional Voice was helping participants turn their existing traits into clinical skills. Three participants reported their supervisor helped them to see their typical way of being with people could be used therapeutically in the clinical setting. Participant E (White/Latina, female) described the experience most thoroughly when she noted her supervisor helped her to see her strongly emotional tendency could be used to serve her and her clients:

> …she'd found strengths and found ways to channel them…I guess it highlighted strengths that I didn't necessarily really think…were strengths…or could be used as strengths…Like natural tendencies that usually aren't incredibly adaptive (chuckle)…but

> that could be, could be used positively…it's something…I can do like that felt more natural, and so, I guess it, yeah, kind of gave me more of an identity as a therapist and maybe also as a person…that I have these strengths as opposed to just weaknesses…I tend to be more strongly emotional and I…can be kind of self-conscious which means that I can wind up tuning into my own reactions a good amount, and so…she used stuff like tuning into your own reactions in a situation…to give you information, and so…she kind of gave me a way to use that as information.

Participant E noted her supervisor helped her to see her emotionality can be harnessed as the clinical skill of tuning into internal reactions for important clinical information. She offered incorporating this skill into her work with clients as part of her professional voice.

Encouraging self-exploration. Another aspect of Supervisors Guiding Development of Supervisees described by participants was supervisors Encouraging Self-Exploration. Five participants noted their supervisor encouraged them to explore themselves and their feelings in general and in relation to clinical work by asking reflective questions and making reflective observations. Participant A (White, female) noticed her strongly bonded supervisor had, "…no fear of calling attention to what was going on with me like in supervision, so what was going on for me on tape, and then what was going on for me in supervision…". She stated his observations and questions regarding her reactions and experience helped her think out loud, and helped her connect internal reactions to therapeutic ways of being for her clients. Similarly, Participant G (White, female) talked about ways her strongly bonded supervisor encouraged exploration around specific clinical skills. G discussed learning nuanced considerations to think about when she is considering self-disclosure:

> …she's really helped me figure out like if I'm going to do it, how I'm going to do it, why I'm going to do it, and um, I don't know, she's like prompted me with a lot of questions to like ask myself, um, before doing it…

G noted the exploration her strongly bonded supervisor encouraged, helped her to be more purposeful around self-disclosure with clients through asking herself exploratory questions.

Participant H (White, male) admitted to losing patience early on with his strongly bonded supervisor's exploratory questions, as he was looking for his supervisor to tell him what do to, while his supervisor was more interested in H's finding his own answers within:

> …he would ask me a lot of questions…I like was kind of impatient…I'd be like just tell me what to do…but he just like would keep asking me and…it really helped me slow down…helped me process through my own thoughts…

For H, these conversations helped him to understand the origins, facets, and potential implications for his thought processes as they relate to his personal and professional life. Similarly, Participant I (White, female) stated, "…that's one thing that I definitely have learned with the help of my supervisor is being able to really listen to myself…" which helped her to better connect with her personal and professional needs such as work-life balance, and self-care. Participant I reported her supervisor would regularly ask exploratory questions around work-life balance to help her connect with and meet her own needs.

Vulnerability encouraged not forced. Vulnerability Encouraged Not Forced was another aspect of Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development. Three participants described feeling their supervisor encouraged and created space for vulnerability, but never forced them to be vulnerable, or required them to be vulnerable without their agreement. While only three participants directly described Vulnerability Encouraged Not Forced, it was a large part of the

discussion for Participant C (White, male). C described coming into his training experience under the impression he should be as vulnerable as possible, as much as possible, and his supervisor helped him learn a more nuanced approach:

> I had this bias that more vulnerability is better always - I should be as vulnerable in my life as possible, as authentic and genuine and he kind of helped me understand, he was like no, no, no – we need those walls, we have those walls for a reason. Like, it's okay to defend and it's okay. You need to choose when you need to be vulnerable, when you want to be vulnerable and when you need to protect yourself.…it's kind of freeing, because now it's like there's not all this constant pressure to be my real self at all one, at all times and I'm still trying to figure out who my real self is…with him, its like he's not going to yank it out of me, but when I need to…I absolutely can, and I have.

He noted his supervisor did not "yank" at his vulnerabilities, while also helping him to discern for himself if, and when, it was time to be vulnerable, rather than feeling he needed to be indiscriminately vulnerable.

Similarly, though in the opposite direction, Participant A (White, female) described her experience being closed off to her strongly bonded supervisor at first. She described ways he helped her to open up more as time went on by encouraging her vulnerability, but allowing her freedom to choose. Here, she described an example of her supervisor asking about a difficult client and allowing her to choose whether or not they discuss the situation further:

> [He said] Well, we haven't heard about so-and-so for a while, um, wait, what's going on with that? Um, and then I would get, like, like the heat rise to [my] face, like I've been found out, but, like giving me the agency or the freedom to choose whether or not to

> watch [tape] or to bring up [i.e., countertransference], it's like he opened the door, I was always the one to like choose to walk through it or not… ultimately I got to decide…

Unlike Participant C (White, male) who started off very open and found ways to be more discerning, Participant A (White, female) reported starting off closed, and her supervisor encouraged her by giving her opportunities to be more open, giving her agency to decide whether or not to utilize the opportunity. For all participants who reported the encouragement of vulnerability without being forced, they reported the freedom to choose helped them relax and be thoughtful about opening up at their own pace.

Participant G reported her strongly bonded supervisor supported her autonomy in being able to decide whether or not she wanted to take up vulnerable space:

> …and she was very intentional, I think, of doing that in terms of like getting to know me, giving me the space for things, um, not pushing if it felt like maybe a day to not push and like giving me permission to say that it might be a day not to push, um, and so I think she by really letting me take the lead, like I always felt really comfortable, I think she was very intentional in that way…

Here, G stated she appreciated the ways her supervisor was "intentional" about creating space for her to decide whether or not she would like to be "pushed" on any given day throughout their relationship, which made her feel like she had autonomy. Because G's supervisor didn't force her to be "pushed" when she was not ready, she felt "really comfortable" in the relationship.

Modeling and experiential learning. Another aspect of Supervisors Guiding Development of Supervisees is through Modeling and Experiential Learning. As Participant C (White, male) put it, his experience with Modeling and Experiential Learning helped him with, "…the how of it all…". Seven participants described Modeling and Experiential Learning within

their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Participants described emulating their supervisor in therapy and supervision, as well as learning how to provide a therapeutic experience for others by receiving that experience from their supervisors. For example, Participant A (White, female) noted she was unable to provide deep processing experiences for clients because she had never experienced deep processing until she'd done so with her strongly bonded supervisor:

> I couldn't get into the deep aspect [i.e., of emotional processing] and I couldn't…encourage the client to go deeper because…that is not what I was doing personally, um, and…I didn't know how, and I had never really experienced it myself and so just being able to have the experience for myself [i.e., in supervision], I think, made me more open to be willing to try…

Participant A realized she did not know how to encourage deep emotional processing as it was an experience she had not had prior to supervision with her strongly bonded supervisor. In this way, her experience in supervision helped her to understand how she might support clients' emotional processing by experiencing her own emotional processing with her supervisor.

Similarly, Participant C (White, male) described ways his supervisor modeled a therapeutic way of being for him in supervision, which C wanted to emulate for his clients:

> …and he models what I want to do with my clients…he allows me space to speak from my emotions, again, unfiltered, I can be irrational, whatever, um, and doing that it just helps model it and it helps me understand okay, how can, how can I create this space and how can I gently draw this out of my students, as well.

Similar to A, C described experiencing emotional processing in supervision helped him understand how he might begin to do the same thing with his clients, and why doing so is helpful—because he had a lived experience of the importance of emotional processing. The idea

of modeling as a result of a lived experience in supervision was also described by Participant F (Latino, male). He reported being increasingly transparent with clients due to experiencing his supervisor's transparency:

> …trying to be transparent with my thoughts and my feelings, or if I'm feeling stuck, like, how can I bring them to be part of the process with me and not have all the answers, um, because I think my supervisor was a great role model for that, she didn't pretend to have all the answers…

Here, F discussed modeling inclusion of the client in the process and releasing himself from the expectation of "having all the answers" because his supervisor showed him how to do that, and also showed him it is okay to do that.

In his role as a supervisor, Participant H (White, male) reported, "I think I tried to, um, emulate [Supervisor] in that I was really interested in understanding how my supervisee was feeling and that she was feeling safe…". He described wanting to be similar to his strongly bonded supervisor, since that supervisory relationship was so different in a positive way from his other supervisory relationships. Similarly, in her role as a supervisor, Participant I (White, female) wanted her supervisees to experience their supervision with her as different in a positive way. She described an instance in which her strongly bonded supervisor checked-in with her regarding a conversation she had about the supervisee to another supervisor. Participant I (White, female) noted the exchange was "…really good modeling of…how we engage professionally, when…we do something and we're unsure whether or not somebody would like that being able to have that open and honest conversation." She expressed appreciation for the modeling the supervisor provided for ways to approach colleagues and trainees to check-in, rather than assuming all is well, or not addressing the concern at all.

Guiding supervisees' unique career trajectory. Lastly, participants described Guiding the Supervisee's Unique Career Trajectory as another aspect of Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development. This aspect pertains to the supervisor providing energy and attention to elucidating each participant's unique professional trajectory. Five participants reported Guiding the Supervisee's Unique Career Trajectory within their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. For example, Participant B (White, female) noted her supervisor intentionally discussed her career trajectory with her, and helped her discern her path by asking questions, and discussing options:

> I also think developmentally she is very attuned to like where I'm at in my, um, my professional development… I would say she created a space to have a conversation with me about, you know, what it was that I wanted to do……it's hard, I think, to see beyond the boundaries of your own stage…she never told me what I would be happy doing, but she asked me a bunch of questions and was like these are some options…her ability to provide perspective on what that might look like once I've got the doctorate role in place, um, was really useful…

B noted her strongly bonded supervisor was integral in helping her solidify her next steps after graduation as well as options for the future. Similarly, Participant G (White, female) reported her supervisor encouraged her to develop professional relationships to support her desire to do clinical work on a college campus "…I think she was also really helpful in, um, like really pushing me to like connect with and manage relationships with different offices on campus, which I think was really helpful in my professional development…".

G noted she felt better able to support her clients due to the on-campus relationships her supervisor encouraged her to cultivate. She noted she felt more prepared for referring clients to

different campus services when necessary. Particularly because G told her supervisor she was interested in university counseling center work, she noted her supervisor suggesting she cultivate on-campus relationships supported her unique professional development.

Summary. In summary, all nine participants reported Supervisors Guiding Supervisee Development within their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Participants reported supervisors Guided Supervisee's Professional Voice, Encouraging Self Exploration, Vulnerability was Encouraged not Forced, their supervisors guided through Modeling and Experiential Learning, and by Guiding the Supervisee's Unique Career Trajectory as aspects of Supervisors Guiding Supervisee Development. Within each of these aspects, participants described ways their strongly bonded supervisor guided (rather than dictated) and was tuned-in to the supervisee enough to support their specific professional voice, and unique developmental concerns.

Cultural Attunement

Cultural Attunement is the third theme that emerged as contributing to strongly bonded supervisory relationships for all nine participants in the study. Participants were specifically asked about the role of culture in their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. When describing Cultural Attunement, participants reported their Supervisor's Intentional and Open Discussion of Identities, Cultural Differences as Learning Opportunities, and Shared Identities.

Supervisor intentionally and openly discussing identities. Supervisor Intentionally and Openly Discussing Identities was an important aspect of developing the strong bond for six participants. This aspect included discussion of their own identities as well as the supervisee's identities. Participant D (Latino, male) reported discussing identities openly was an important aspect of opening up to his supervisor:

> …compared to other supervisory relationships…identities were a very clear part of this one…my identities were actually brought to the forefront, and not only mine but the supervisor's as well…it allowed me…to be more vulnerable and let my guard down. Which is a big deal for me personally, because I usually have my guard up pretty high…

Participant G (White, female) also felt her supervisor openly discussing identity was helpful for feeling safe in the supervisory relationship, particularly as she was experiencing difficult cohort dynamics related to identities:

> …it was helpful to be able to talk about [i.e. cohort dynamics due to identities] because otherwise I would have been carrying that weight by myself…I definitely think her being attuned to [i.e. identities] and creating the space to talk about that and her sharing her own experience[s]…was just a very powerful thing for me. I think it really set the tone for me to feel safe in the relationship.

A distinction within supervisor's intentional and open discussion of identities participants noted was the importance of supervisors initiating conversations about identities due to the power differential inherent to supervisory relationships. Because supervisors hold the position of power, some participants clearly stated the onus to initiate cultural conversations belongs to supervisors. Participant D (Latino, male) presented the meaningfulness of his supervisor initiating identities discussions:

> …talking about my own personal identities was really, really helpful. And I was only able to do that when I felt like the supervisor was forthright and honest and really set the tone…not that the supervisee can't do that, there's just something…empowering knowing…that a licensed person is going to take that onus and say, 'Okay, I'm the more

> senior, experienced person here, I am going to make this known [i.e. identity] is important to me…'.

Additionally, Participant F (Latino, male) discussed the difficulty associated with initiating identity conversations as a trainee in the position of lesser power. Here, F noted the importance of the supervisor being the one to initiate due to the position of power, and discussed the lost opportunities associated with previous supervisory relationships in which identities were not discussed:

> I really felt like it was a missed opportunity and with the power differential, I didn't feel like I could really bring up those kinds of conversations…especially as a trainee. I feel like sometimes the onus is on the supervisor to really address those differences…[i.e. their strongly bonded supervisor] was one of the first…supervisors that I have had that really owned up to [i.e. identities discussions], and I feel like that really helped us bond.

Further, Participant F noted his supervisor's privileged identities added to his sense of the power differential within the supervisory relationship until identities and culture were discussed, as initiated by the supervisor:

> I've also had a lot of White supervisors, but her being White and also willing to talk about it was…really, helpful…initially, it was really uncomfortable…because I recognized how many identities she had that were privileged over my identities…and so sometimes it can make the power differential feel a little bit stronger…I think she definitely tried to make it as egalitarian as possible and she did that successfully…

F noted he particularly appreciated his strongly bonded supervisor's willingness to acknowledge and discuss her privileged identities, as initiating the conversation helped him know she could be a "safe space" to discuss identity.

Cultural differences as learning opportunities. Cultural Attunement as described by participants also included Cultural Differences as Learning Opportunities. Five participants provided data for this aspect. While not every participant reported discussing cultural differences with their supervisor, *when* cultural differences were discussed in supervision, participants consistently noted these discussions as poignant learning opportunities. Participant F (Latino, male) noted this most thoroughly when he described discussing cultural differences with his supervisor, helping him to better connect with his White clients:

> …I think that…also kind of helped provide like a corrective emotional experience in a way…especially when it came to talking about not feeling connected to my White clients, then obviously that transitioned into a conversation about…how can I connect to her because she's White…how can I use those skills to then apply…to my clients, so actually…those differences were very helpful and the fact that we talked about them openly…[which] led us to really interesting and helpful growth…conversations.

F expressed appreciation for his strongly bonded supervisor being willing to discuss their differences in racial identity, as doing so helped him work through some of the previous blocks he experienced in connecting with White clients. He noted his supervisor's willingness to address cultural differences supported their strong bond, and F stated he was able to apply the learning he experienced in these conversations to his clinical work.

Shared identities. Lastly, Cultural Attunement described by participants included Shared Identities as supportive to the bond between the supervisor and supervisee. Six participants reported having a shared identity with their supervisor that supported the bond between them. For some participants, seeing some of their identities reflected in their supervisors was helpful for connection as well as having a role model. Participant I (White, female) noted cultural

similarities supported her bond with their supervisor when she noted, "…as people as well as just social locations, we are quite similar…so you know, the whole 'I can see myself in you' thing." Participant I noted being able to see aspects of her identities within the supervisor helped her feel more bonded to the supervisor. Participant F (Latino, male) stated he purposefully chose a supervisor with a shared identity and noted, "I think that's originally…why I picked her…that was initially what…helped bond us…having that role model was really helpful…and something I sought out." F reported his strongly bonded supervisor was the first time he experienced a supervisor with a shared marginalized identity, as all of his previous supervisors held predominantly dominant identities.

Shared Identities also helped some participants feel deeply understood because their supervisors were able to understand from their own lived experience, rather than merely empathizing from a different lived experience. Participant A (White, female) noted her supervisor deeply understood the culture of her upbringing in a military family:

> …he was military and I come from a military family…so he understood a lot of the language that I was using in like my organizing principles…like that altruistic rigidity in how to move about the world…it made it a lot easier to be open about because he understood…he was able to use, like, not just the language, but he like just understood the culture and so I felt really understood.

Participant A noted having her supervisor understand military culture from his own lived experience in the military supported their bond.

Participant G (White, female) felt deeply understood by her supervisor with a shared identity as she felt her supervisor knew what it was like to move about social situations within their shared identity:

> …having someone that like understood like what it meant to kind of have people react to you that way was really important…because even if people can empathize, like she…took it to another level, like she really got it…she really understood that perspective and what it meant to be…more fluid in your sexuality and not have to explain it…

G endorsed the relief she felt in not needing to "explain it" to her supervisor, which added to their bond, as G felt her supervisor deeply understood G's experiences from her own lived experiences.

Beyond feeling understood, one participant noted the shared identity with their supervisor assisted their clinical growth. Participant B (White, female) noted the marginalized identity she shared with her supervisor, and the understanding that comes from that shared lived experience helped her to challenge her clinical skills regarding multicultural competence:

> …there are some emotional layers that you can't replicate and I didn't have to explain that and so when certain things were maybe harder for me, she then knew to ask about that…I feel like the cultural similarities directly translated to her ability to…push me in terms of my competence and my level of understanding…I am a better clinician because I had someone who knew which questions to ask.

B noted because of their shared marginalized identity, her strongly bonded supervisor was able to anticipate potential blind spots, and supportively challenge B to widen her cultural gaze.

Summary. In summary, Cultural Attunement was an aspect of the strong supervisory bond reported by all nine participants. Within Cultural Attunement, having their Supervisor Intentionally and Openly Discuss Identities supported the bond for many participants. For some participants, having the supervisor, in particular, take the onus for discussing identities was beneficial to the bond due to the power differential within supervisory relationships. Having

Shared Identities also supported the bond within Cultural Attunement, as participants noted feeling understood and felt able to see aspects of their identities reflected in their supervisor. Lastly, although not all participants reported discussing cultural differences with their strongly bonded supervisor, those that did consistently described Cultural Differences as Learning Opportunities.

Supervisor Way of Engaging

The fourth theme participants reported was Supervisor Way of Engaging. All nine participants described this theme as an aspect of their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Included in this theme, participants reported Challenging with Support, Supervisor Encouragement, Nonjudgment, and Supervisor Interpersonal Style. Supervisor Way of Engaging describes supervisors' ways of interacting interpersonally within the supervisory relationship that added to the bond according to participants' descriptions. Participants acknowledge particular traits and particular ways of engaging with supervisees that supported the strong supervisory bond.

Challenging with support. One aspect of Supervisor Way of Engaging has to do with how supervisors approached supervisees' growth edges. All nine participants reported Challenging with Support as an important factor in their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Challenging with Support was described as a way to widen the gaze of supervisees, to help uncover blind spots, and improve clinical skills in a way that is compassionate, supportive, and digestible. Participant E (White/Latina, female) described how her supervisor provided challenge with support around some of her personal attributes:

> …she was able to look at the good and the bad sides of a quality. Like emotionality or something like that looking at how that can be a good thing and having compassion for

> that and saying…that was something that she liked about me, and then also kind of challenging, like providing other perspectives, like ways to temper that. So, um she was able to communicate that she saw and appreciated certain parts of me, and also kind of um gave suggestions as to other ways to kind of handle things…

Here, Participant E's supervisor was helping her to understand the strengths and barriers within her tendency toward "emotionality." She reported her supervisor helped her see ways this trait could be used therapeutically, and ways she could "temper" this trait when it was getting in the way of her work with clients.

Similarly, but focused on clinical skills instead of personal tendencies, Participant F (Latino, male) noted a time he was discussing his participation in a client's avoidant patterns. He described his supervisor helped him learn how to recognize it, and think through ways to avoid doing so in the future:

> …if I was saying something that… was contributing to the client's avoidant pattern or something, something that clearly was not helpful, um, she would help me point it out and help me kind of think about alternative ways that I could have responded or alternative interventions instead of saying, 'Welp, that was wrong you should have done this,' it was more so like what do you think you could have done differently or how do you think you were contributing, you know, recreating that person's dynamics that was maybe unhelpful or problematic, and so it was never about like you're dumb don't do that anymore. It was like yeah, you totally got sucked into this system, how can we make sure that you watch out for that next time…

F expressed appreciation for the ways his supervisor challenged him to avoid participating in clients' maladaptive patterns through asking questions and involving him in the process, which

created a learning opportunity. Participant D (Latino, male) experienced Challenging with Support when he and his strongly bonded supervisor would discuss clients in supervision:

> …the amount of information the supervisor would share about his own thoughts about the clients and my thoughts and whether we would have differing views and we can talk about our differing views…and discuss the merit for each in really strong detail. Seeing that repeatedly, was like, okay, well this is, this is a different experience.

D endorsed this exchange of ideas and discussion of differing views was one way his supervisor challenged him toward growth. He noted his supervisor's willingness to discuss his own thoughts and feelings, and openly discuss the "merit" of differing views, helped Participant D to more deeply understand his own views, and learn from the views of his supervisor. Challenging with Support for Participant D and his supervisor included deep discussion of views, and openness to either keep or shift views along the way.

Participant B (White, female) discussed ways her strongly bonded supervisor helped her to uncover blind spots:

> …she was able to say, you know, from the outside you might be missing something to identify…that also didn't feel great, but it was helpful and I never felt like I had to, like literally push in terms of my confidence in her, or like I had to agree with her, but it would be unwise not to consider it…

Here, Participant B noted although it "didn't feel great" to have her supervisor point out blind spots, it was helpful for her. She noted she continued to feel supported in those challenges as her supervisor never pressured her into feeling like she had to take up her point-of-view. Rather, B noted she had so much confidence in her supervisor she felt it would be "unwise" to not consider the challenges her supervisor was suggesting.

Participant C (White, male) described his experience of Challenging with Support from his strongly bonded supervisor:

> …it would be a space characterized by, um, openness, curiosity and caring, um, with a, with undertones of, of gentle, of a, of a gentle push, if you will, you know, a push? Kind of pushing me down the path just with a hand on my back…

Participant C described his supervisor challenging him as a "gentle push" suggesting gentle guidance without force. The metaphor of the hand on his back also suggests C felt supported by his supervisor who would be there for him if he needed.

Supervisor encouragement. Another aspect of Supervisor Way of Engaging described by participants was Supervisor Encouragement. Six participants described instances in which their supervisor encouraged them by pointing out participants' strengths, offering encouragement during difficulties, and offering validation and normalization of participants' thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Participant F (Latino, male) noted ways his strongly bonded supervisor was encouraging by being strengths focused which helped him to decrease negative self-talk:

> …I think one thing she did really well was being strengths focused…I've had some supervisor experiences that maybe could be described as punitive in a way, um, or when we sat down and watched video it was very critical or overly critical, um, and I think with this supervisor in particular, she was really good at helping me identify what my strengths were, helping me kind of challenge my, you know, self, negative self-talk…

Through highlighting F's strengths, he felt his supervisor was encouraging to him and helped him deconstruct some negative self-talk he felt he had developed along the way. Similarly, Participant I (White, female) noted ways her strongly bonded supervisor encouraged her through pointing out her strengths and supporting her research-focused career goals:

> …she also you know made sure to tell me what she thought I was doing well and give me compliments…encouraged me to be open about my career goals, and um you know encouraged me to continue to engage with my research on internship year…has been really helpful…

Participant I expressed appreciation of her strongly bonded supervisor being supportive and encouraging of her career goals that leaned more toward research, rather than clinical work.

Participant C (White, male) described an instance in which his strongly bonded supervisor was very validating during a struggle with a difficult client concern:

> I was kind of admitting to him like I think I really, I think I really messed up. I don't think I, maybe I'm not the right therapist for her or something like that and he didn't sit there and try and change my mind or anything, he just said, I mean, yeah, it sucks to be feeling that way…

C noted by staying with him and validating the feeling, rather than trying to "change his mind" his strongly bonded supervisor validated his difficult, yet real feelings. Similarly, Participant G (White, female) described ways her supervisor would validate through affirmation, and also normalize her experiences by sharing some of her own:

> …I think because she is like very like verbally affirming, um, and sometimes she would provide examples of like when she's messed up, um, you know, to kind of normalize the experience, to say like, look I'm a senior psychologist and I still mess up, you know, its like a thing, so I think that was helpful

By normalizing "messing up" Participant G noted her supervisor invited her to not be so "hard on herself," leaving her more freedom to learn and grow. Through supervisors' validation and normalization of supervisees' experiences, Participant F (Latino, male) poignantly stated, "I

think it really kind of normalizes this journey of becoming a confident clinician is a very long journey…" relieving him of the pressure to learn everything at once.

Nonjudgment. Nonjudgment was another aspect of Supervisor Way of Engaging endorsed by participants. Seven participants reported Nonjudgment from their supervisor contributed to the strong supervisory bond. Nonjudgment was often noted as the absence of criticism, and an absence of false assumptions. When discussing Nonjudgment, participants described supervisors presenting with curiosity and exploratory questioning when a concern arose, rather than a jump to corrective direction. Participant C (White, male) described Nonjudgment from his supervisor in that he knew, "…nothing is going to surprise him…nothing I say is going to make him go, 'Oh, that's bad'…". According to participants' descriptions, Nonjudgment and freedom from criticism left more room for the supervisee to grow. Participant D (Latino, male) reported he felt he could say anything to his supervisor without concern for being criticized which led to growth:

> …everything that was said and shared had some value to it and everything was appreciated and not condemned…knowing that I wasn't going to get judged harshly or, like, yelled at or anything…It was more about opportunities for growth and learning and whatnot or teaching moments and I really felt like there was that, uh, unconditional positive regard for myself as a developing student, professional…

D described Nonjudgment as a confidence that what he shared with his strongly bonded supervisor would be "appreciated and not condemned" which created space for him to learn and grow.

Similarly, Participant F (Latino, male) discussed a particular instance in which his strongly bonded supervisor's Nonjudgment helped him grow with regard to a multicultural concern:

> …there was one instance when I was talking about not feeling connected to White clients and she's White, so that was obviously a difficult conversation to have, um, and I have had supervisors in the past who maybe have responded with, you know, that's problematic, make sure, you know, you work through that, maybe you need some personal therapy, um, but…never helping me explore kind of what's going on. But with this, um, supervisor, she really helped me kind of explore the systemic issues going on and how power and privilege in the room, you know, plays out into what's going on, so it just made me not feel like I was making stuff up…just helped me feel, like okay, these feelings are normal, um, and now let's explore them and see what's going on because maybe they're not problematic, but they're getting in the way of you connecting with your clients and that's important, so it wasn't so much about like, you know, this is awful, correct it, it's about, you know, it's getting in the way of you connecting with your clients and of course you want to, so how can we help you do that…how can we make it stronger…

Here, F noted the lack of learning associated with the previous supervisors' jump to corrective direction. However, he experienced his strongly bonded supervisors Nonjudgement as normalizing which invited room to explore his thoughts, feelings, and experiences in order to learn and grow.

Participant G (White, female) described experiencing her strongly bonded supervisor's Nonjudgment as curiosity. She reported her supervisor, "…was always really curious, like even

if we like disagreed or we had a different perspective on things she was always really curious where I came from…". G expressed appreciation for the ways her supervisor avoided "jumping to assumptions" and approached G's experiences and perspectives with nonjudgmental curiosity to better understand, and to better support G's development.

Supervisor interpersonal style. Lastly, seven participants described Supervisor Interpersonal Style as an aspect of Supervisor Way of Engaging that felt supportive to the strongly bonded supervisory relationship. Some aspects that stood out to participants were supervisor's use of humor, calm and humble demeanor, intentionally clear communication, and warm nonverbals. Participants C and H (white, men) both described their strongly bonded supervisors' use of humor as "disarming" and a way to connect with their supervisor throughout the supervisory relationship. Participant H (White, male) described ways his supervisor used humor throughout their relationship:

> …we had had conversations about [e.g., difficult topics] in good humor…appropriate humor…around pretty fairly tense topics, I guess, but I think…because we had sort of [shared humor], I knew that we could navigate those conversations and…our relationship was really stronger as a result…

For H, his supervisor's use of humor was both a connecting point, and a source of strength in their bond to support more difficult conversations.

Similarly, Participant F (Latino, male) noted ways he and his supervisor connected through humor to support their bond:

> …we definitely enjoy humor and incorporating humor into our work, so, we were definitely silly with one another. Um, it felt like I didn't have to put on like a professional mask when I was with her and sitting down in supervision. Like, I could be silly, I could

> be goofy, which is very much who I am as a person, and I could just present as myself in supervision…

Participant F described the use of humor within the supervisory relationship helped give him "permission" to be himself, to let him know he could use humor and "still be professional."

Participants also reported a calm and humble demeanor as a Supervisor Characteristic that supported the strong supervisory bond. Participant E (White/Latina, female) noted her strongly bonded supervisor, "…was calm…[she] made me feel less crazy…she was always, always very calm, always able to, um, yeah, contain…," when E was in emotion. Similarly, Participant D (Latino, male) described his strongly bonded supervisor as both calm and humble:

> I think he was, I would say, he's a pretty humble person and that's, humility is a quality that I like in people…I think probably it was his demeanor, too, he's, he's a very calm person. He speaks really slow, he's very contemplative…

Participant D noted his supervisor's humility and calm were a source of affirmation for him when discussing clinical concerns in which he felt less sure of himself. Participant H (White, male) even noted he felt it was important to emulate his supervisor's humility when he was taking on the role of supervisor with his supervisees:

> …he modeled that kind of humility, like I think it probably made it easier for me to be humble too…it's really important to be humble and it's really important to care about…your supervisees and to show your supervisees that you really care about them…

Participant H discussed his strongly bonded supervisor's humility added to their bond so much that he wanted to carry that forward into his own approach to supervision.

While only one participant reported intentionally clear communication as part of their strongly bonded supervisory experience, Participant D (Latino, male) described his supervisor's

intentionally clear communication as an important aspect of his relationship with his strongly bonded supervisor. He described ways his supervisor not only talked about a wide variety of topics, but also left very little ambiguity for D to navigate:

> …we talked about a variety of things, including culture, uh, gender, sexuality, uh, professional stuff, personal stuff. Um, everything was explained very explicitly. There was not any kind of, uh, um, there was not any kind of anything left unsaid……making everything very explicit and not leaving things ambiguous… Being very clear about expectations, being very clear about what the relationship is, being very clear that he wanted it to be a relationship, that he wanted it to be a successful one. Um, that he was very, very clear and open with everything that what was going to happen, he was going to challenge me, he was going to encourage me, uh, he was going to be accepting. I think that can be very helpful and I think that is what set it apart from other relationships thus far…

Throughout the interview, Participant D discussed ways his relationship with his strongly bonded supervisor was supported through his supervisor's intentionally clear communication with him.

Warm Nonverbals was the final Supervisor Interpersonal Style described by participants. Supervisors whose facial expressions and ways of communicating nonverbally felt warm and welcoming to participants were noted. Participant C (White, male) stated his supervisor's warm nonverbals were an important part of feeling understood "…his nonverbals, the way…you expand it to the intonation in his voice and the soft way he says things, just kind of the powerful quality he brings to it, you just, you feel completely understood…".

C described appreciating the warmth and understanding his supervisor communicated through his nonverbal interaction. Participant E (White/Latina, female) elaborated further regarding the messages her supervisor's nonverbal communication sent to her:

> …she had like, she had like a, like a certain smile that was like a warm, real smile…and so, yeah, when I got that one…it felt…like she genuinely cared…I've had other supervisors who…don't show much facially or…I had one that always looked alarmed when she saw me, and so it was nice to have somebody look at me and seem to like what they saw, or at least look with warmth and with calm…

E perceived her supervisor to show care and approval in her strongly bonded supervisor's nonverbals, especially compared to other supervisory relationships without warm nonverbals from the supervisor.

Summary. In summary, all nine participants endorsed Supervisor Way of Engaging as an element of their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Supervisor Way of Engaging included Challenging with Support, Supervisor Encouragement, Nonjudgment, and Supervisor Interpersonal Style. Challenging with Support appeared to be an important aspect of Supervisor Way of Engaging as suggested by consistent endorsement from all nine participants.

Supervisor Integrity

The fifth theme, Supervisor Integrity was presented by all nine participants regarding their strongly bonded supervisor. When discussing Supervisor Integrity, participants noted a Felt Sense of Trust for Supervisor, Boundaries, and Supervisor as Advocate in the System. Participants reported feeling they could trust their supervisor to prioritize their best interests, they could trust their supervisor's personal and clinical judgement, and they witnessed their supervisor acting with integrity with colleagues and within the field.

Felt sense of trust for supervisor. One way Supervisor Integrity was described by participants was a Felt Sense of Trust for Supervisor. Eight participants described a Felt Sense of Trust as trust in their supervisor for guidance and feeling their supervisor could be relied upon for support. Participants also noted trust for their supervisor's personal and clinical judgement. Participants C and H noted they saw their strongly bonded supervisor as a high-quality clinician, which supported their trust in their supervisor's guidance. Participant C (White, male) stated his supervisor was "…just quite an amazing therapist in general…" while Participant H (White, male) noted his supervisor was "…a really good clinician…" which added to feelings of trust in their supervisor's guidance and judgment. Participant B (White, female) felt similarly, but further reported a sense of reliance: "…specifically, I trusted her judgment…like she shows up…I felt like I could rely on her…". For B, her supervisor's consistency in "showing up" continued to build a Felt Sense of Trust.

Participant A (White, female) reported a sense of trust in her supervisor as his actions consistently matched his words:

> [regarding emotionality in supervision]…not only was he saying that it is okay to be affective and be emotional and have these reactions, but also like his actions matched the words and like we sat in it until I was ready to come out of it.

B's supervisor telling her its "okay" to be emotional, and then treating her emotions as acceptable by "sitting in it" with her built a sense of trust in her supervisor—she could trust he meant what he said.

Participant E (White/Latina, female) described her felt sense of trust for her supervisor a little differently. She reported her supervisor, "was giving me all these indications that she had my best interests at heart and so I was just going to let her see kind of more of what I was

like…". E perceived her strongly bonded supervisor was showing her she had her "best interests at heart" which increased E's trust in her supervisor, leading her to show more of herself in supervision.

In yet another aspect of Felt Sense of Trust for Supervisor, Participant G (White, female) described trusting her supervisor due to the integrity she witnessed in her supervisor's dedication to social justice and multiculturalism:

> I kind of tie it with her integrity to the field and her integrity to social justice and multiculturalism… I think that there are some people who…maybe they're not as diligent about keeping up with certain cultural competencies, or they focus too much on intent rather than their impact on people…I feel like this supervisor…she was really like honest and on-top of [social justice and multiculturalism]…and I really like respected that because I think…if you hold a lot of privileged identities I think it's easier to let some of those things slide…and I think for her she was really intentional about not being a part of [letting cultural competencies slide]…

G reported a felt sense of trust in her supervisor due to her supervisor's dedication to social justice and multiculturalism despite holding multiple privileged identities.

***Borrowed confidence*.** Three participants discussed a sub-set within Felt Sense of Trust for Supervisor—Borrowed Confidence. Because these three participants trusted their supervisor's judgement, *and* their supervisor had confidence in the participant's clinical skills, the participants were able to borrow a sense of confidence in themselves from their strongly bonded supervisor while they were developing their own sense of confidence in themselves. For Participant E (White/Latina, female), Borrowed Confidence was talked about frequently in her

interview regarding her experience with her strongly bonded supervisor. E described "leaning on" her supervisor's confidence in her while she was gaining her confidence:

> [regarding supervisor having confidence in her]…I'm not really 100% sure where she was coming from with that, but I figured if I trust her, I… should just take her word for it…I knew that she believed in me and that she felt that I wasn't a bad therapist…and so I would kind of just take her word for it when I was having trouble believing it…she believed in me…I very much needed to know that somebody that I respected, um, believed…that I actually could be a good therapist…I still lean on that…less so, but, but yeah, that's, that's kind of (pause) yeah, where I go when I'm feeling less [i.e., confident]

For E, her supervisor believing in her helped her to begin to believe in herself and continued to be a source of support for her when her confidence is rocked. Further, Participant E noted she "…kind of internalized parts of her. Um, like saying her words to myself when I'm not feeling so great…" as another way she described borrowing confidence from her strongly bonded supervisor, despite the completion of their supervisory relationship. Similarly, Participant H (White, male) discussed drawing on his experience with his strongly bonded supervisory relationship during difficult subsequent supervision experiences:

> …he felt like I, I was, um, you know, a good developing clinician, um, and so I think when I was getting a lot of critical and constructive feedback, like that was really hard and certainly like sort of remembering (Supervisor's) feedback was certainly like a foothold…

Participant H reported he found it helpful to remember his strongly bonded supervisor's feelings about him as a "good developing clinician" during successive experiences of difficult feedback. He described his strongly bonded supervisor's feelings about his clinical skill as a "foothold" suggesting something secure to hold onto during difficulties.

Lastly, Participant D (Latino, male) discussed Borrowed Confidence from his strongly bonded supervisor during a difficult experience with a supervisee. Participant D described an experience he had with a supervisee whose clinical skill was found to be below developmental expectation. D noted how difficult it was for him to give his supervisee this very difficult feedback due to strong feelings of empathy and sympathy. Ultimately, D reported he was able to clearly provide his supervisee that difficult feedback when he reflected on what his strongly bonded supervisor might do with him if he were performing below developmental expectation:

> Knowing that the supervisor here would have told me the same thing. If I was not very good and if I was not good at what I was doing, he would tell me straight up. Uh, and, so knowing that that would happen…if he could do that to me, then I can do that for somebody else…

Participant D borrowed from his strongly bonded supervisor's confidence during a difficult task in order to provide for his supervisee, the "straight up" feedback he would have expected from his supervisor if he were in the same position as his supervisee.

Boundaries. Participants also mentioned Boundaries as another aspect of Supervisor Integrity that supported the strongly bonded supervisory relationship. Three participants reported on the contribution of Boundaries to the strongly bonded supervisory relationship, though in two ways. Participant B (White, female) reported her strongly bonded supervisor set up and maintained Boundaries within their relationship, adding to their bond. B discussed asking her supervisor to dinner since she was new in town and did not know anyone yet. She reported her supervisor maintained Boundaries by turning down her offer for dinner:

> [Participant B's Supervisor responded]…even though I really enjoy spending time with you, that doesn't make sense right now because of the multiple roles that would create,

> and I was just like floored, like, I had never heard that before. I was like, oh, wait, like you give a shit about what we're doing, and I wasn't even thinking about it…I didn't feel like I had to, I didn't feel like I had to like remind her and monitor that type of role in that relationship…

B noted having her supervisor turn down her offer in order to maintain boundaries was a first-time experience, and let her know her supervisor cared about B's supervisory experience and training. Further, Participant B noted appreciating the care for her training her supervisor displayed to her with setting boundaries:

> …if she didn't have those abilities, like that could have really, um, could have like influenced or like maybe changed the way that she evaluated me later, so it was really like protecting my career. I really value my career, so I was like, thanks…

Participant B reported her supervisor acted with integrity when she was careful about maintaining Boundaries around the supervisory relationship. She stated by creating structure around their relationship through Boundaries, her supervisor protected their strongly bonded relationship, allowing her training to go on unencumbered by permeable Boundaries.

Conversely, Participant I (White, female) expressed appreciation for her strongly bonded supervisor, whom she perceived to have "less boundaries" than other supervisors. She noted her strongly bonded supervisor, "shared more of her whole self." Participant I compared her strongly bonded supervisor to a previous supervisory experience she perceived as "more boundaried" as that supervisor kept his self-disclosures focused on clinical concerns. She stated her strongly bonded supervisor would share more about herself, while continuing to remain focused on the participant's professional development:

> …the boundaries were a little bit less in that we would talk a little bit more about life in general as it relates to professional development and you know where we see ourselves in you know places in our life, traveling, career, just it was a lot more open and fluid that the personal and professional were a little bit more blended in our conversations as opposed to a more stark boundary between personal and professional… so talking about work-life balance…my supervisor would ask me what my plans were for self-care every weekend, or we would talk about what I'd done for self-care over the weekend…

Participant I expressed appreciation for the "lesser" boundaries she perceived from her strongly bonded supervisor. As with the example she gave of exploring self-care, her supervisor's "lesser" boundaries helped her to think more broadly about ways professional development can pertain to the whole self, rather than just the professional self.

Supervisor as advocate in the system. The final aspect of Supervisor Integrity is the Supervisor as an Advocate in the System. Three participants discussed ways their strongly bonded supervision was supported by their supervisor advocating for them within systems. Participant B (White, female) stated the concept directly:

> …she made herself very available, not just to me, but for our whole cohort, and so we really felt like we had…an advocate in the system and we had someone who would be able to…help us kind of navigate the year in a way…

B endorsed feeling her supervisor acted as an advocate in the system not only for her, but for her cohort members as well. She reported feeling her supervisor could help her understand the particular system in which they worked, as well as encouraged her to think ahead regarding other systems she might encounter in the future.

On a more personal level, Participant E (White/Latina, female) described an instance in which her supervisor acted as an advocate for her interpersonally. She reported her supervisor witnessed an interaction in which a staff person made a joke at the participant's expense. She stated her supervisor confronted the individual:

> …my supervisor noticed that and, and talked to the office person about it, um, which is, yeah, different and not really like something I had experienced a lot…it was different that like she picked up on…that that might not have felt okay for me and that she did something about it…

Participant E's strongly bonded supervisor recognized E may not feel as jovial about the interaction as the person who made the comment. E noted in speaking with the person, her strongly bonded supervisor was advocating for her, which E perceived to be supportive to their bond. Her supervisor kept the communication clear by discussing the interaction with E, furthering the integrity of the strongly bonded supervisory relationship.

Summary. In summary, all nine participants endorsed Supervisor Integrity as part of their experience of strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Within Supervisor Integrity, participants described a Felt Sense of Trust for Supervisor, Boundaries, and Supervisor as Advocate in the System. Felt Sense of Trust for Supervisor also provided participants with a sense of Borrowed Confidence. Participants reported the trust that developed through experiencing Supervisor Integrity supported both the bond and the learning experience associated with their strongly bonded supervisory relationships.

Positive Outcomes

The sixth and final theme reported by participants was Positive Outcomes. All nine participants described this theme in relation to their strongly bonded supervisory relationship.

Positive Outcomes were often described by participants after being asked about changes in self-perceptions, and about information they will apply going forward associated with the strongly bonded supervisory experience. Positive Outcomes included Increased Self-Acceptance and Self-Trust, Increased Experience of Authentic Self, Increased Openness and Willingness to Take Risks, Driven to Provide a Similar Experience for Clients and Supervisees, and Increased Connection to Profession. The Positive Outcomes affected participants, their relationships with others, and their relationships with the field of psychology. Participants described the ways their strongly bonded supervisory relationship changed their perceptions of themselves, particularly in relation to others and the field.

Increased self-acceptance and self-trust. One aspect of Positive Outcomes was Increased Self-Acceptance and Self-Trust. Six participants described ways they were more accepting of themselves and their imperfections as a result of their deeply bonded supervisory relationship experience. Participants also reported a felt sense of being able to trust themselves and their own clinical judgement in a wider variety of situations. Participants D and H reported feeling they could trust themselves more, and as Participant D (Latino, male) put it, "allow myself to make mistakes, [and] allow myself to do well." Participant F (Latino, male) described releasing the idea of perfection in order to learn:

> I'm never going to have it all together, and that's okay…you need to own [the] fact that you don't feel confident in this area, um, and you need to be able to have conversations about it, because otherwise you're not going to learn, so I think that's a key piece that's really important to me…

Similarly, Participant B (White, female) reported the importance of accepting and "owning" successes and failures when she said, "I think that everyone messes up and I think having the

ability to own when you've messed up is as important as having the ability to recognize when you've done correctly…". These examples highlight Participants' Self-Acceptance and Self-Trust through ownership over both successes and failures, and being able to learn from each. In a slightly different way, Participant G (White, female) discussed Self-Acceptance and Self-Trust through releasing her pull to make a plan for any clinical situation in which she may find herself:

> …I think I just left a little bit more, um, like confident in like being me, you know, for better or worse… also just giving me permission that sometimes if it does come out and I just did it because it was like my intuition at the moment to trust that (chuckle) because sometimes, you know, you can't plan everything…

Increased Self-Acceptance and Self-Trust were described by participants as a way of embracing both success and imperfection as a way to learn more as well as to navigate clinical situations spontaneously.

Increased experience of authentic self. Six participants reported an increased experience of their authentic self as an outcome of their strongly bonded supervisory relationship. Participants described Increased Experience of Authentic Self as both elucidating their authenticity, and allowing their authenticity to come through in a wider variety of spaces. As Participant G (White, female) noted, "…I was just completely myself…" in the strongly bonded supervisory relationship. For Participant A (White, female), this meant a deeper understanding of who she is at her most authentic state of being. She describes how her experience in her strongly bonded supervisory relationship helped her to understand her authentic self more deeply:

> …I think that [Supervisor's] supervision taught me in so many ways, like it's kind of insane, um, because I do feel like a completely different person than what I was at the

> start of my graduate program, so it's pretty wild when I try to think about just the differences. Um, like people pleasing was a big one…I always tried to be a people pleaser, never tried to rock the boat, and realizing that that's not authentic to what's actually going on and what it would be like to stir the pot, so to speak, by just giving my opinion or speaking up or, um, [pause] like people are able to contain what I have to say and like it will be fine, and just to be more vocal whereas before I would very rarely talk, like I would rarely share my opinion and just, like, not only to be able to do all that, but do it without the associated anxiety with it, too, so just a very liberating experience.

She reported her experience with her strongly bonded supervisor helped her connect to the part of herself that could "stir the pot" and speak her truth.

For other participants, increased experience of their authentic self meant feeling freer to be their authentic self in a wider variety of spaces. These participants suggested having a stronger connection with their authentic self, yet feeling they were not previously permitted to show their authentic selves in clinical settings. Participant F (Latino, male) describes his process for removing the "mask" of inauthenticity, to connect with others through his authentic self:

> I think that's really important that I show up as I am as a person because it would be so…it was so difficult to connect to clients because I was putting on this mask that was not me, so of course I'm not going to feel like I can connect to clients, so I think [i.e., supervision with strongly bonded supervisor] had huge repercussions on how I've been able to connect with clients, make effective interventions and take more risks…I feel more connected to the staff in general and I just like the work that I do more in general because I'm showing up to work instead of this idea of what a therapist should be and

> what a professional should be. All of that has been deconstructed and I get to kind of create what that is…

Participant F discussed his process for deconstructing what he thought a professional clinician "should" look like, and instead found ways to show up authentically in a clinical setting. Similarly, Participant C (White, male) described getting rid of the idea of what he thought he needed to be:

> I think, personally he has helped me recapture me a little bit…in that process of, of trying to be much more authentic and genuine…he's helped me recapture a lot of what actually makes up me because for whatever reason I thought should I be stuffing some of this away…and it's like, no, this is, you come with all this. This is all that makes me up. You don't have to make huge, sweeping changes…

In this way, Participant C reported his supervisor encouraged him to keep the parts of himself he thought he needed to hide or get rid of in order to be a quality clinician.

For three participants, the increased experience of their authentic self came from a de-fragmentation of themselves. As Participant I (White, female) noted, she felt more able to bring her whole self to her role as a supervisor after experiencing her strongly bonded supervisory relationship:

> …my big take away has been…to bring who I am to my supervisory relationships…I would say my supervisor here on my internship has taught me how to bring who I am into my supervisory relationships. So you know not being afraid to engage in appropriate self-disclosure, you know to engage in casual person-to-person conversations about the things that are important to us…and to help utilize that to help…the supervisee become who they are and to increase their skills. It's not just about firm boundaries and being the

> good supervisor, it's about being who I am in that relationship and allowing the other person to flourish in that, in that space.

Participant I described experiencing increased authenticity in her role as a supervisor because her strongly bonded supervisor helped her learn *how* to bring her authentic self to supervision. She helped Participant I learn how important it can be to the relationship for the supervisor to be authentic, and then taught her how to bring her authenticity to supervision in an adaptive way.

Participant A (White, female) described her meaning-making associated with her process for learning to be her authentic self, rather than fragmented versions of herself:

> …you don't get to wear a specific hat in session, you don't get to be therapist [self] and then like every day [self], like, just be a human and be authentic…don't be fragmented, and so being able to piece that together, like, just be yourself in session and be yourself kind of everywhere and be authentic and that's what makes [i.e., connection] meaningful, that's what makes the experience meaningful, that's what allows you to relate to people…

For A, learning to be her authentic self in a wider variety of spaces not only taught her she *could* be herself, but also taught her that being herself helped create meaningful connection with others.

Lastly, Participant F (Latino, male) noted his strongly bonded supervisor helped him live his culturally authentic self in professional spaces. He stated previous messages led him to shut-down his cultural ways of being, which he described as putting on a "professional mask" making it hard for him to connect with others:

> …I grew up in an environment where I feel like maybe education wasn't valued…talking a certain way that I think people might consider like ghetto or uneducated, and I think there was…a side of me because I grew up living like that until like very recently…there was this idea that I had to hide that side of me, that basically I had to Whitewash my

> identity in a way. I couldn't talk the way I talked growing up or I couldn't show that to staff members nor could I show it to clients. I kind of convinced myself that I couldn't do that…

Participant F noted he was working from the assumption that in order to be regarded as professional by clients and colleagues, he would need to Whitewash and repress several aspects of his identity. He described this assumed persona as a "mask" he felt he needed to wear in clinical settings. He continued to describe his process for "unmasking" himself through his connection with his strongly bonded supervisor:

> …so a lot of the work with this particular supervisor was kind of challenging that belief that I can't show this to anyone, um, but really helping me realize that this is a part of who you are and you can use this to connect with people, um, and so that was part of like kind of the unmasking…feeling like I can't show my humorous side because I can be really silly, um, and again, there's this idea that that's not professional, so a lot of exploring what does professional mean and how is professional really created by people who are in power and since I have a lot of identities that aren't, um, privileged, um, then how do I get to kind of construct my own idea of what it means to be professional…how do I, you know, present as my authentic self?...But when I sat down with [my strongly bonded supervisor] in supervision from the get-go, I didn't really feel like I had to do that and part of a lot of our work was really taking that mask off…

For F, his strongly bonded supervisor's ability to recognize and address culture and identities helped him to de-construct the idea that he needed to Whitewash his identity in order to be considered professional by colleagues and clients. F discussed how important it was to him that his supervisor recognized the professional "mask" he was wearing, and helped him to cultivate a

more culturally authentic way of being in professional spaces. She helped him to see he could live his identities and still be considered professional. While Participant F was the only participant to describe the idea, he discussed his experience of cultural authenticity as a central aspect of his strongly bonded supervision experience. He noted the work he and his supervisor put in to the removal of his professional mask held massive, positive effects for his self-outlook and his connections with clients and colleagues.

Increased openness and willingness to take risks. Another way participants experienced Positive Outcomes for Supervisees was Increased Openness and Willingness to take Risks. Eight participants reported an increased openness to sharing a wider variety of thoughts and feelings with others, as well as an increased willingness to take risks in supervision and in therapy associated with their strongly bonded supervisory relationship. Here, Openness and Willingness to take Risks is more about venturing out from a safe base to try out new experiences, which is differentiated from Increased Experience of Authenticity which is more about being the true self in a wider variety of spaces. Participant G (White, female) noted, "…it was easier to take risks because I knew if I flubbed up, it wouldn't be a big deal. I got to like take ownership of it and…it felt safe, like I had a safety net to catch me…". For G, she felt like she could address her mistakes because she knew her supervisor would support her growth:

> …I think sometimes there is a tendency whether we intend to or not to kind of try and minimize [mistakes] and I think…the only way you grow is by taking ownership of it and I feel like by being in a bonded relationship I feel safer to be like, you know what, I missed that or you know what, yeah, I did make that assumption, so I think I felt…less defensive and more okay with being vulnerable because I knew I could trust that space.

G discussed her strongly bonded supervisory relationship helped her to feel "safe" enough to directly address her mistakes, rather than "minimize" them because she knew her supervisor would help her growth.

Likewise, Participant E (White/Latina, female) described an increased willingness to share her thoughts and feelings more genuinely with her supervisor and with clients, knowing her supervisor would support her:

> I shared riskier stuff with her…I definitely was more open, probably used more humor…I cried more with her…I felt like she believed in me, like she had my back and, and so I could kind of feel comfortable to experiment more…and like take more risks……I think that being in a place that felt safe allowed me to take more risks and be more…genuine and more spontaneous with my clients…

Here, E felt more willing to try new interventions with clients, or try new approaches in therapy because she felt supported by her supervisor who "had her back." For these participants, this Increased Openness and Willingness to Take Risks seemed most closely associated with knowing their supervisor would support them through clinical hits and misses.

In a slightly different manner, other participants associated their Increased Openness and Willingness to take Risks with readiness to discuss areas in which they felt less competent. Participant I (White, female) noted she was able to "…be open and vulnerable and be authentic and kind of delve into areas where I'm not competent [because] I know I have my supervisor on my side." She also described the feelings she experienced within her strongly bonded supervisory relationship that helped her be more open and willing to take risks:

> …so feeling that sense of ease and comfort…as opposed to feeling activated…I would feel comfortable and not feel defensive or…questioning or anything like that. And if I

> had those moments [of questioning], I felt comfortable…bringing up what it was I was questioning.

For Participant I, her strongly bonded supervisory relationship was a space she felt free from "feeling activated" or "defensive" which helped her feel comfortable to address the areas in which she felt less competent. She noted being able to address her growth edges added to her learning.

Participant F (Latino, male) also described feeling he could address the areas in which he felt less competent because he knew his supervisor would support his growth:

> …because I felt safe and less defensive, I was more willing to go to kind of to uncomfortable places in supervision…I felt more willing to talk about areas that I was struggling with clinically, like I would show tape of things, where I know with other supervisors I might be afraid to because I felt like well, here's another video where I'm screwing up and this is just going to give them more kind of ammo to fire at me…

Here, F described his willingness to directly address his growth edges with his supervisor, because he knew she would help him to grow in a way that felt "safe" but was also productive. For the participants who reported Increased Openness and Willingness to Take Risks, their strongly bonded supervisory relationship helped them learn more by taking more risks either emotionally or regarding clinical work.

Driven to provide similar experience for clients and supervisees. Participants described feeling Driven to Provide Similar Experience for Clients and Supervisees as an aspect of Positive Outcomes. Eight participants described ways they felt driven to provide clients and supervisees an experience similar to their strongly bonded supervisory relationship. They noted wanting to support others as their supervisors have supported them through the strong

supervisory bond. Participant A (White, female) noted her experience with her supervisor, " was what I wanted my therapy to be like, I wanted my patients to feel that, too." Participant B (White, female) reported she, "felt very inspired to…give that energy back…I feel more like I want to provide this for other people…" when talking about her experience of feeling supported by her supervisor. Participant G (White, female) noted her Drive to Provide Similar Experiences specifically with supervisees:

> I would want like future supervisees to also feel like really heard and understood by me and that they have like an advocate in me, um, while also maintaining like a sense of practicality…creating a sense of safety and like them really leaving with the feeling like they can come to me, um, and that they can take risks, and it's going to be okay short of them doing harm, um, and, and that we'll figure it out…

Participant G's description of the type of supervision she would like to provide for her supervisees matches her description of her experience with her supervisor. Participant I (White, female) described her hopes for future supervisees: "I hope my supervisee gets from our experience together…whole person, positive benefits," which is similar to her described experience of being able to share both personal and professional (i.e., whole person) information with her strongly bonded supervisor.

Increased connection to the profession. Lastly, some participants reported an Increased Connection to the Profession, typically the provision of clinical services. Five participants described feeling more connected to the profession of psychology as a "calling" and feeling an increased sense of belonging to the wider field. When asked about any changes to his professional identity as a result of his strongly bonded supervisory relationship, Participant D (Latino, male) noted, "…I want to have one now…". He described ways his supervisor

cultivated his connection to professional identity by supporting his authenticity and genuineness in professional spaces. Similarly, Participant A (White, female) noted her strongly bonded supervisory relationship, "helped me feel like this was more of like a…calling…it's not just a 9 to 5 job." Participant B (White, female) noted feeling a sense of belonging, "it's like you feel like you're a part of something…". Participant F (Latino, male) described the meaning-making associated with his supervisor helping him remove his professional "mask" and enact his culturally authentic self in professional spaces. He noted his supervisor helped him to see himself, and be himself in the field:

> …it made me feel like I deserved to be here…I made assumptions that, well, because I don't see other people like me, that I must have gotten here by accident or I don't belong…in terms of a career choice, you know, did I make a mistake…will I have to wear this mask like forever…it feels so…relieving and great and empowering…I can feel happy about going into this field…it feels like I made a good decision…and I think part of that, again, just has to do with how authentic I feel like I can be now. It just makes me enjoy the work that I do and makes me enjoy the field more.

Participant F described ways his strongly bonded supervisor helped him to see that he could be "a professional" and still be himself, leading him to feel like he chose a career in which he could be happy.

In a slightly different way, Participant I (White, female) described herself as a "researcher" instead of a "clinician," though her experience within the strongly bonded supervisory relationship helped her to feel more connected to clinical aspects of the field. She noted, "…this supervisory relationship really helped me realize that I enjoy clinical work more than I thought I did…it…makes me more open to clinical work in the future." Participant I

reported although her strongly bonded supervisor was very supportive of her desire to continue to follow a research-focused career path, Participant I stated her strongly bonded supervisory experience helped her to feel more connected to clinical aspects of psychology.

Summary. All nine participants described Positive Outcomes that they experienced associated with their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. These positive outcomes ranged from individually-focused outcomes such as Increased Experience of Authentic Self, and Increased Self-Acceptance/Self-Trust to more other-focused outcomes such as Increased Openness and Willingness to Take Risks and feeling Driven to Provide Similar Experience to Clients and Supervisees. Lastly, some participants discussed the broader outcome of Increased Connection to the Profession. Participants described Positive Outcomes as bits of wisdom and learning—a new way of being they will carry with them as they continue their development.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the results of qualitative analysis of interviews with nine doctoral-level interns at APPIC-accredited university counseling centers. Some diversity was reflected among the participants (five female, four male; six White, one White and Latina, two as Latino). Sexual orientation demographic information was not collected, though two participants disclosed their sexual orientation identity in their interviews, one as gay and one as bi-sexual. The participants reported demographic information on their strongly bonded supervisors. Some diversity was reflected among supervisors (five female, four male; seven White, one Native American, one Pacific Islander). Seven supervisors were reported to have received training on the provision of supervision, and two were reported as "unknown."

The themes that emerged from participants' descriptions include Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development, Cultural Attunement,

Supervisor Way of Engaging, Supervisor Integrity, and Positive Outcomes. Participants' descriptions of least strongly bonded relationships were antithetical to their descriptions of strongly bonded relationships, supporting the presence of the listed themes in strongly bonded relationships. Intimacy in the supervisory relationship emerged as a core theme, the essence of the strong bond that set it apart from other bonds. Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development and Cultural Attunement emerged as ways the strong bond is supported by interaction between supervisor and supervisee. Supervisor Way of Engaging and Supervisor Integrity emerged as ways the supervisor presented in supervision to support the bond. Lastly, Positive Outcomes emerged as the outcomes participants associated with the strongly bonded supervisory experience. Variation within the themes reflects the variation in the identities and experiences of the participants and supervisors.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

In the following chapter, I will discuss the results as they relate to the research questions as well as the current literature within the field. In the first section, I provide a summary of themes that emerged from the data. In the next section, I explore the core theme of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, RCT tenets related to the results, and the importance of supervisor multicultural competence. Each of these topics is connected to the current literature. In the next sections, I explore implications for training, practice and research based on the findings of this study. Lastly, I address the limitations of the current study followed by a brief chapter summary. To review, the primary research question for the current study is: How do supervisees experience deeply connected supervisory relationships? The secondary research question is: How do these strongly bonded supervisory experiences correspond with existing relational constructs of vulnerability and mutuality as defined by relational-cultural theory?

Summary of Themes

Six major themes emerged from the data reflecting the essence of supervisees' experiences of strongly bonded supervisory relationships. All themes were endorsed by all participants, with variation among participants' descriptions within each theme. The first theme is Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, including elements of Feeling Known, Feeling Valued, Mutuality, and Supervisor Handled Supervisee's Vulnerability Responsibly. Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship comprises the variety of ways participants felt especially bonded in their strongly bonded supervisory relationships, and the ways they knew their strongly bonded supervisory relationship was "different" from other supervisory relationships. Feeling Known is described as a sense of understanding and accurate knowing between participants and their

respective strongly bonded supervisors. Along a similar line, Feeling Valued is described as a deep sense of care and acceptance as perceived by participants between them and their strongly bonded supervisors. Mutuality is described in the variety of ways participants and their strongly bonded supervisors were open to being influenced by one another, and ways they both came to the relationship with their whole selves. Supervisors Handling Supervisee's Vulnerability Responsibly, noted by all participants, is described as ways supervisors consistently met supervisees' vulnerability with intentional compassion and empathy. Participants discussed the compassionate ways their strongly bonded supervisor approached their vulnerability aided their openness and willingness to approach growth edges.

The second theme is Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development, including elements of Vulnerability was Encouraged Not Forced, Guiding Supervisees' Professional Voice, Modeling and Experiential learning, Encouraging Self-Exploration, and Guiding the Supervisee's Unique Career Trajectory. Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development describes participants felt sense of their supervisor valuing and focusing on the development of the supervisee. Vulnerability Encouraged Not Forced describes supervisors encouraging vulnerable discussion while allowing participants to approach vulnerable topics at their own pace, in their own time. Guiding Supervisees' Professional Voice includes ways strongly bonded supervisors were curious and asked exploratory questions regarding participants' approach to clinical work, in order for them to formulate their own clinical ways of being. Participants describe Modeling and Experiential Learning as ways their strongly bonded supervisors helped them learn clinical skills and therapeutic ways of being by modeling in the supervisory relationship, and in creating experiential learning opportunities in supervision. Supervisors Encouraging Supervisee Exploration describes more personally-focused exploratory questions asked and explored within

the strongly bonded supervisory relationship to elucidate participants' internal blind spots, thoughts, feelings, and reactions. Different from Guiding Supervisees' Professional Voice, Encouraging Self-Exploration was reported to be more internally focused, deeply exploring the supervisee's past and present internal experiences to more thoroughly understand how they might be affecting time with clients, supervisees, and colleagues. Guiding Supervisees' Unique Career Trajectory describes supporting and offering guidance for the unique career-trajectory of each supervisee.

The third theme is Cultural Attunement, including elements of Supervisors Intentional and Open Discussion of Identities, Shared Identities, and Cultural Differences as Learning Opportunities. Participants endorsed appreciation for supervisors who intentionally and openly discussed identities: the supervisor's identities, the supervisees' identities, and client identities. Two participants who reported their strongly bonded supervisor intentionally and openly discussed identities, endorsed the onus for initiating cultural conversations should be on the supervisor due to the supervisor's position of power in the relationship. Further, one of the two participants noted the power differential in supervisory relationships is enhanced when the supervisee identifies as a minority and the supervisor identifies as part of the majority. Per participants' descriptions, intentional and open discussion of identities, initiated by the supervisor support strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Shared identities also support strongly bonded supervisory relationships due to a deep understanding based on lived experiences, rather than an empathic, outsider's understanding of a lived experience. Several participants reported appreciating Shared Identities with their strongly bonded supervisor because it meant there was a lot they did not have to explain to their supervisor for them to deeply understand. Participants noted supervisors with shared identities understood from an

insider's perspective, and were therefore able to make connections, ask questions, and support growth from a place of commonalities. While not every participant reported discussing cultural differences with their strongly bonded supervisor, those that did consistently perceived the experience to be a learning opportunity. Participants who reported discussing cultural differences with their strongly bonded supervisor felt their discussions widened their cultural and clinical gaze and supported the growth of their multicultural competence.

The fourth theme is Supervisor Way of Engaging, including elements of Supervisor Interpersonal Style, Supervisor Encouragement, Challenging with Support, and Nonjudgment. Participants described Supervisor Way of Engaging essentially as their supervisors' ways of being and ways of doing—traits and behaviors supporting their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Supervisor Interpersonal Style includes ways participants' strongly bonded supervisor interacted with them that was helpful to the bond. Supervisor Encouragement includes elements of supervisors being positively affirming, validating, and normalizing of participants' experiences throughout the supervisory relationship. Challenging with Support, reported by all participants, describes ways supervisors challenged supervisees to approach their growth edges and grow beyond them, and illuminated supervisees' blind spots while also being compassionate and supportive. Nonjudgment describes the absence of criticism, assumptions, defensiveness, or insensitivity within interactions in the strongly bonded supervisory relationship. Nonjudgment also includes the absence of supervisors rushing to corrective direction at the point of a learning opportunity.

The fifth theme is Supervisor Integrity, including Felt Sense of Trust for the Supervisor (including Borrowed Confidence), Boundaries, and Supervisor as an Advocate in the System. Supervisor Integrity was essentially described as feelings of trust in the supervisor to act in the

best interests of the supervisee and their clients, trust in the supervisor's personal and clinical judgment, and feeling that the supervisor is a "good clinician." A Felt sense of Trust for the supervisor includes an element of Borrowed Confidence for some participants—because they trusted their supervisor, *and* because their supervisor believed in them, they could then take a chance on believing in themselves. For those who described it, Borrowed Confidence was something to "lean on" while they were in the process of building their own confidence, or during times in which their confidence was shaken. Boundaries were reported as supportive to the bond when approached with thoughtfulness and in the best interests of supervisees. Also, some participants stated their strongly bonded supervisor acted as an advocate for them in the systems in which they were working at the time. For some participants, it meant advocating for trainees in general within the system, while for others it meant advocating specifically for the individual participant within the system. Within Supervisor Integrity, participants reported feeling their strongly bonded supervisor was someone they could trust to act, think, and guide with integrity.

The last theme described by participants was Positive Outcomes, which includes elements of Increased Experience of Authentic Self, Increased Self-Acceptance and Self-Trust, Increased Openness and Willingness to Take Risks, Driven to Provide a Similar Experience to Clients and Supervisees, and Increased Connection to the Profession. Overall, Positive Outcomes for Supervisees describe the ways participants were different as a result of their experience of the strongly bonded supervisory relationship. The Positive Outcomes describe the growth participants associated with their experience of strongly bonded supervision. Increased Experience of Authentic Self describe a deeper understanding of the authentic self, and showing up authentically in a wider variety of spaces. Some participants reported they were still getting to

know their authentic selves, and their strongly bonded supervisor helped them to know their authentic self more thoroughly. Other participants discussed knowing, but hiding their authentic self in professional spaces. These participants noted their strongly bonded supervisor helped them merge their authentic and professional selves. For one participant, Increased Experience of Authentic Self supported by his strongly bonded supervisor helped him to realize he could be culturally authentic and still be considered professional in professional spaces, which was particularly freeing for that participant. Increased Self-acceptance and Self-Trust describe ways participants let-go of perfectionism and embraced life-long learning associated with professional growth and increased trust in their own clinical judgment. Increased Openness and Willingness to Take Risks describe ways participants shared more openly with their supervisor, clients, and colleagues, as well as felt more willing to risk sharing vulnerability, sharing authenticity, and trying new ways of being with clients. Driven to Provide a Similar Experience for Clients and Supervisees describes ways participants wanted to provide their clients and supervisees a similar experience as the one their strongly bonded supervisor provided for them. Increased Connection to the Profession describes participants' sense of belonging to the field, excitement and hope for bringing positive change to the field and seeing the profession as "a calling" as opposed to "a job."

The themes from the current study reflect previous research that demonstrates quality supervisory relationships increase openness to learning, enhance professional development, and increase self-efficacy (Bucky et al., 2010; Slavin, 1998; Strozier et al., 1993; Weaks, 2002; Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Wulf & Nelson, 2000). These themes reflect and extend previous research that demonstrates the supervisory relationship is a central component to supervisees' learning experiences (Holloway, 1987; Loganbill et al., 1982; Nelson, 1997; Worthen &

McNeill, 1996). Specifically, the results of this study extend the current research through the emergence of the Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship theme, as it describes a central element in strongly bonded supervisory relationships.

Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship a Core Theme for Strongly Bonded Supervisory Relationships

Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship emerged as a core theme throughout the data. This core theme and associated aspects emerged as what set strongly bonded supervisory relationships apart from other supervisory relationships. Participants described Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship as the essence of the strong bond. The remaining five themes reinforced this core theme as they described concepts that supported Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, and concepts that were experienced as a result of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship. The list of themes that emerged from the data, and the emergence of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship as a core theme provide an answer to the primary research question. These results suggest that Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship is the difference between a strongly bonded supervisory relationship and other supervisory relationships.

The results of the current study reflect and extend existing literature on positive supervisory relationships and positive supervisory experiences. Existing literature concerning supervisees' experiences of effective supervision utilizes the terms "good" or "positive" supervision to describe these experiences. For example, "good" supervisors were described as having above-average intelligence, positive attitude toward self, ethical intelligence, and above-average listening skills (Bucky et al., 2010). Good supervisors also were tolerant of mistakes, gave clear and direct feedback, confronted resistance safely, and honored exclusive time for supervision (Allen et al., 1986). Effective supervisor behaviors included engaging in empathy and encouragement, empowering the supervisee, relevant self-disclosure, and providing positive

and challenging feedback (Ladany et al., 2013). Other supervisor behaviors found to be helpful included investment in the supervisory relationship, modeling clinical skills, and providing clear, affirming, challenging feedback (Wulf & Nelson, 2000).

These previous findings overlap with themes and aspects of themes in the current study. For example, the Challenging with Support aspect of the Supervisor Way of Engaging theme seems connected to confronting resistance safely (Allen et al., 1986), tolerant of mistakes (Bucky et al., 2010) and providing positive and challenging feedback (Ladany et al., 2013). The Guiding Supervisees' Professional Voice aspect of the Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development theme seems connected to empowering the supervisee, and empathy and encouragement from previous literature (Ladany et al., 2013). The theme of Supervisor Integrity seems to overlap with previous descriptions of "good" supervisors including above-average intelligence, ethical intelligence, and positive attitude toward self (Bucky et al., 2010). The aspect of Mutuality of the Intimacy in the Supervisory relationship theme seems to overlap with relevant self-disclosure (Ladany et al., 2013), and investment in the supervisory relationship from previous literature (Wulf & Nelson, 2000). Further, the Positive Outcomes theme and associated aspects in the results of this study extend the existing literature that suggests positive supervisory experiences support the development and self-efficacy of supervisees (Fukuyama, 1994; Gunn & Pistole, 2012; Hill et al., 2016; Ladany et al., 1999; Ladany et al., 2013; Lerner, 2008). Participants in the present study cited multiple Positive Outcomes including Increased Experience of Authentic Self, Increased Self-Acceptance and Self-Trust, Increased Openness and Willingness to Take Risks, Driven to Provide Others a Similar Experience, and Increased Connection to the Profession, and highlighting the importance of positive supervisory experiences and supervisory relationships.

Reflected in these descriptions of "good" or "positive" supervision are the themes of Supervisor Integrity, Supervisor Guiding Supervisee Development, and Supervisor Way of Engaging that emerged from the current study. What is missing from these descriptions of "good" or "positive" supervision is the Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship theme that emerged from the current study. Because participants were specifically asked about strongly bonded supervisory relationships, it appears Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship is the difference between "good" supervision and strongly bonded supervision. Some participants even briefly mentioned having a handful of "good" supervision experiences, but their strongly bonded supervisor stood out, even from their experience of "good" supervisors. As such, the results of this study suggest that Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship is the essence of strongly bonded supervisory relationships and is likely the difference between strongly bonded supervision, and "good" supervision. While strongly bonded supervision appears distinct from "good" supervision, we do not yet know if it is more effective for promoting development or clinical outcomes.

Participant G's story serves as an example of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship as a core theme. She directly stated her supervisor intentionally cultivated intimacy in their relationship. She was the only participant to describe all aspects of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship when she talked about her experience, suggesting the depth of intimacy she felt. She discussed ways she felt accurately known and valued, and ways her supervisor supported her through validation and appropriate self-disclosure. She felt her supervisor was empathic with her vulnerability and also offered practical support. Participant G referenced other supervisory relationships she experienced as positive, yet her strongly bonded supervisor stood out from those relationships. She referenced ways her strongly bonded supervisory relationship positively

affected her personal and professional growth as well as her self-view. As such, Participant G's example illustrates Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, and reflects the potential power of intimacy on Positive Outcomes and supervisee satisfaction.

These results suggest the importance for clarifying the bond aspect of the SWA. The relationship between supervisor and supervisee appears significant to supervision outcomes, as suggested by previous research and the results of this study. However, the most popular quantitative measure for the SWA is the SWAI, which does not directly correlate with the three components of the SWA. Specifically, the SWAI measures "rapport" instead of "bond." It is possible a good amount of data about the bond is being missed by measuring it as "rapport." Further, the results of this study support the possibility that a significant amount of data about the bond is being missed by quantitative measures that leave out important qualitative aspects of the bond.

In conclusion, Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship emerged in the results as a core theme. Participants described ways intimacy set their strongly bonded supervisory relationships apart from other supervisory relationships. The remaining themes in the results describe ways the relationship dyad supported intimacy, ways supervisors' ways of being supported intimacy, and the perceived outcomes of intimacy for participants.

Relational-Cultural Constructs within Strongly Bonded Supervisory Relationships

Without existing research concerning an RCT approach to supervision, I looked at related supervision literature to see what was already known that could support an RCT approach to supervision. Worthen and McNeil (1996) emphasized "good" supervision as emphatic, nonjudgmental, validating, encouraging of exploration, normalizing, and included a sense of freedom that supported reduced self-protection and increased openness to input. This literature

illustrates and overlaps with RCT tenets. Mutual empathy is connected to the description of "good" supervision as empathic and nonjudgmental. Authenticity is connected to normalizing, validating, and encouraging of exploration. Mutuality and connection mirror the inclusion of freedom that supported reduced self-protection and increased openness to input. The connection between existing research and RCT tenets is reflected and expanded by the results of the current study. The aspects of Supervisor Encouragement and Encouraging Exploration are connected to validation and normalization in the existing literature and the RCT tenet of authenticity. The aspects of Nonjudgment and Supervisor Handles Vulnerability Responsibly are connected to nonjudgement and empathy from the existing literature and the RCT tenet of mutual empathy. The theme Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship and associated aspects connect to the inclusion of freedom that reduced self-protection and increased openness to input is connected to RCT tenets of connection and mutuality. The overlap among existing literature, RCT tenets, and the results of the current study suggest RCT could be an effective approach to supervision.

Vulnerability

As described in the literature review, vulnerability in RCT is defined as uncertainty and risk to genuinely see and be seen by others (Jordan, 2003). In my own experiences as a supervisee described in chapter one, vulnerability was the phenomenon that made the strong bond possible in my strongly bonded supervisory experience. Specifically, my strongly bonded supervisor's willingness to share vulnerably with me, which led me to feel I could share vulnerably with her. Because of this lived experience, as well as Brene Brown's (2012) research on vulnerability, I was curious if others would include vulnerability as a key facet within their strongly bonded supervisory relationship. I intentionally did not specifically ask about

vulnerability in the interview for this study, because I wanted to see how participants would describe their experiences, and see if vulnerability would emerge without prompting.

Vulnerability did emerge from the data, but not in the way I anticipated. I thought perhaps *some* participants would describe mutual vulnerability in their strongly bonded supervisory relationships, but none described mutual vulnerability, per se. Transparency, mutuality, and self-disclosure were mentioned, which *could* be associated with mutual vulnerability. Some participants reported their supervisor was willing to make themselves uncomfortable, which could also suggest vulnerability. However, participants mostly spoke about vulnerability in a somewhat one-sided manner. Specifically, the way their strongly bonded supervisor treated participants' vulnerability emerged from the data. Participants did not seem to describe mutual vulnerability as I had experienced, rather they expressed appreciation for how their strongly bonded supervisor handled the supervisee's vulnerability. For participants, it seems it was not necessary that supervisors share their vulnerability, only that the supervisor would consistently treat the supervisee's vulnerability with compassion and care. These results reflect and extend the RCT literature that suggested the importance of the presence vulnerability in growth-fostering relationships, particularly as the construct of vulnerability supports the core tenets of the theory (Jordan, 2008; 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Rosen, 2004; Walker, 2004).

Participants' descriptions of strongly bonded supervisory relationships also reflected an encouragement of vulnerability from strongly bonded supervisors. First, participants noted ways their strongly bonded supervisors made room for emotional processing and discussion of reactions in supervision. They noted ways their strongly bonded supervisors demonstrated interest in their thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Participants also reported ways their strongly bonded supervisors intentionally, yet respectfully approached participants' vulnerabilities

without force. In these ways, their supervisors encouraged vulnerability, which seems important. Reflecting on my own experiences, my strongly bonded supervisor demonstrated similar encouragement of my vulnerability, that felt similarly intentional and respectful to me. Conversely, I have experienced less bonded supervisory relationships that felt either indifferent to my vulnerability, and in some instances discouraging of vulnerable processing. Considering participants' descriptions, my own experiences, and the application of an RCT approach to mentorship-style relationships (Liang et al., 2002; Spencer et al., 2004) it is possible encouraging vulnerability and handling vulnerability responsibly with compassion is important in supervisory relationships.

Participant A provides a good example of the role of vulnerability in supervision. Approaching emotions was vulnerable for Participant A. She reported she initially came to her strongly bonded supervisory relationship with a plan to avoid emotions and vulnerability. This strategy reflected her experience in her family who strictly did not discuss emotions. She explained ways her supervisor encouraged her vulnerability by asking exploratory questions, encouraging her to approach her emotions, and giving her the option to choose whether or not she was ready to approach her emotions. Participant A went on to describe ways her supervisor created a corrective emotional experience around sharing her emotions. She noted he asked her directly, yet gently about her emotions. He "sat in the suck" with her during her disclosures and did not "ask to be excused." She reported his words matched his actions when it came to vulnerable emotional processing—her emotions were acceptable in supervision, and he would hold them empathically. Participant A noted her experience with her supervisor experientially taught her *how* to process in this way with her clients and helped her to more deeply understand herself—as a person and as a clinician. The way her supervisor handled her vulnerability made

this deep learning experience possible for Participant A. Her experience reflects the importance of her supervisor's encouragement of vulnerability, and responsible and empathic handling of her vulnerability.

Mutuality

Relational-cultural theory posited mutuality as a core tenet and described mutuality as both parties in a relationship bringing their whole selves and being open to being influenced by the other (Surrey, 1991; Jordan, 2010). Mutuality does not mean equal and it does not mean sameness; indeed, equality and sameness would negate personal contexts and specific roles of each person in the relationship (Jordan, 2010). In the results of this study, Mutuality was either directly or indirectly described by all participants, suggesting mutuality as an important facet of strongly bonded supervision. Mutuality emerged as a facet of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, which participants described as a core theme of their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. These results reflect and extend the current RCT literature that posits mutuality is a core tenet of growth-fostering relationships (Jordan, 2010; Surrey, 1991; Walker, 2004). These results also reflect and extend the current literature on an RCT approach to mentorship-style relationships that posits mutuality along with other RCT tenets support learning and growth (Liang et al., 2002; Spencer et al., 2004).

When I began this study, I was curious if mutuality would be present in participants' descriptions of their strongly bonded supervisory relationships. As previously mentioned, RCT has not yet been studied specifically regarding supervision. Due to the specific focus on supervisee development, supervision can be seen as an example of the kind of growth-fostering relationships described in RCT (Jordan, 2010; Miller & Stiver, 1997). Because mutuality is part of growth-fostering relationships, and strongly bonded supervisory relationships could be

considered growth-fostering relationships, I was curious if mutuality would show up in strongly bonded supervisory relationships.

Without being asked specifically about mutuality, all participants in the current study either directly or indirectly described instances in which their strongly bonded supervisory relationship included mutuality. Participants acknowledged ways they and their supervisors brought their whole selves to the relationship, influencing and being influenced by one another. The findings in this study indicate that supervisees experience the relational-cultural tenet of mutuality as a facet of Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship in strongly bonded supervision. This provides empirical support for the concept of mutuality being present in growth-fostering relationships, including strongly bonded supervision (Jordon, 2001; 2010; Miller, 1976; Miller & Stiver, 1997; Walker 2004).

Looking at Participant H as an example, he described a variety of ways he and his strongly bonded supervisor connected. Participant H reported he and his supervisor connected through shared humor, topical discussions, appropriate self-disclosure, and mutual empathy. He noted they talked to one another about their respective cultures and some of their viewpoints about current events in the field. Participant H described ways he felt like he really knew his supervisor, and that his supervisor knew him as well. Participant H discussed times he and his supervisor had opposing viewpoints. He appreciated his supervisor's way of *really listening* to him, making it clear he was reflecting on H's viewpoints, even if they continued to agree to disagree. Participant H's story reflects mutuality, as he and his supervisor brought their whole selves to the relationship and each was open to being affected by the other. Participant H stated his strongly bonded supervisory relationship made him feel valued as his supervisor valued what he had to say. He noted feeling valued increased his confidence, which was beneficial to his

learning process. He noted ways he held on to his experience with his strongly bonded supervisor during a subsequent difficult supervisory experience. He also described ways he intentionally emulates his strongly bonded supervisor when he takes on the supervisor role, which he perceives as beneficial to his supervisees. Participant H's story reflects the presence of mutuality in strongly bonded supervisory relationships and potential associated outcomes.

In the absence of research on an RCT approach to supervision, the results of this study suggest RCT could serve as a model for developing an effective supervision process. These results suggest the presence of the core RCT tenet of mutuality, and the RCT construct of vulnerability in strongly bonded supervisory relationships, which addresses the secondary research question. The examples of Participant G and Participant H suggest the meaning-making participants derived from their experience of the constructs of vulnerability and mutuality in their strongly bonded supervisory relationships.

Supervisor Cultural Competence Matters

The results of this study further suggest that the multicultural competence of supervisors matters for the development of supervisees. Within the theme of Cultural Attunement, participants reported their strongly bonded supervisor intentionally addressed identities, those who discussed cultural differences experienced the process as a learning opportunity, and discussion of similar identities between supervisor and supervisee added to the strong bond. These results are reflective of the current supervision literature that highlights the importance of multicultural competence in supervision (e.g., Arnold, 1993; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Hird, Tao, & Gloria, 2004; Inman, Meza, Brown & Hargrove, 2004; Killian, 2001; Ladany et al.,1997). However, it is not enough for supervisors to be knowledgeable about multicultural issues, they must also be able to directly address multicultural concerns with supervisees.

Fukuyama (1994) recommended supervisors receive multicultural training and receive specific training for initiating multicultural discussions with supervisees. Particularly due to the power differential within supervisory relationships, researchers recommend that supervisors be the ones to initiate multicultural discussions (Fukuyama, 1994). The results of this study support the existing literature suggesting that addressing multicultural concerns in supervision is additive to the strong bond, and the onus for initiating cultural discussions is on supervisors due to the power differential.

Participants in this study who identified as racial and sexual minorities found it particularly supportive to the strong bond when their supervisors addressed identities openly and initiated cultural discussion. Further, participants noted the strong bond they experienced with their supervisor may not have been possible without the supervisor directly discussing identity. These results extend previous research that pointed to a symbiotic relationship between supervisor multicultural competence and the supervisory working alliance (Inman, 2006). In this study, direct multicultural discussions in the supervisory relationship paved the way for Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, making the strong bond possible. The results of the current study reflect and extend the current literature that posits culturally relevant supervision is key to multicultural competence, supervisee satisfaction, and the supervisory working alliance (Fukuyama, 1994; Helms & Cook, 1999; Killian, 2001). Inman (2006) found that supervisor multicultural competence was “directly and positively associated with supervisory working alliance and supervision satisfaction” (p. 80) for supervisees. These previous findings are consistent with the findings in the current study that multicultural discussions in supervision support and make a strong bond possible.

Looking at Participant F as an example, his supervisor's multicultural competence was an important factor in their strongly bonded supervision. Not only did his supervisor recognize culture would be important to discuss, she was also supportive to F's process for unpacking the disconnect he was feeling with White clients. He mentioned she was integral in his process of removing the Whitewashed mask he was wearing in professional spaces and guided him to cultivate his own culturally authentic professional voice. Further, he noted several outcomes supported by his strongly bonded supervisory relationship including increased capacity to connect with a wider variety of clients, increased cultural authenticity in professional spaces, and an increased sense that he has a place and sense of belonging to the field he had not previously experienced. Imagine how these outcomes may have looked different if his strongly bonded supervisor was not as multiculturally competent as she was. What learning might Participant F have missed out on, and what implications might there be for him and his future clients? Supervisor multicultural competence is integral to the supervisory working alliance, and to the development of supervisees.

Only two participants discussed their supervisory relationship without much focus on culture and identity. While identities and culture were addressed at some points along the way, they did not necessarily have culture and identities as central components to their discussions. In these instances, both the participants and the supervisors were identified as White. This is concerning due to potential implications for these two participants and other White supervisees with similar experiences. This reflects my own experience as a supervisee. Prior to my doctoral training, all of my supervisors were White. Culture was addressed in supervision, but was less of a focus. As I stated in the introduction, my early thinking in the development of this study reflected White cultural norms that assumed others' experiences were similar to mine. I was

working with the assumption that other supervisees' needs and preferences for supervision would be closely related to mine. As my multicultural competence developed, I realized I needed to create more room for others' culture and context, and made changes to the design of my study accordingly. This experience exemplifies that supervisor multicultural competence matters for White supervisees in order to encourage their multicultural competence. Had I missed out on the multicultural development encouraged by my doctoral program, I might still be working from false assumptions perpetuated by White cultural norms. Missing out on rich multicultural discussions could negatively affect other supervisees similarly to the two participants from this study, their future clients, and future supervisees.

Supervisor cultural encapsulation and lack of processing culturally informative material intrapersonally and interpersonally can lead to ineffective supervisory processes (Killian, 2001; Sue & Sue 2003). This process of supervisor cultural encapsulation is detrimental to the supervisory working alliance, to the development of supervisee multicultural competence, and to supervisee satisfaction with supervision (Fukuyama, 1994; Inman, 2006; Ladany et al., 1997). It is possible this cultural encapsulation can be passed on from supervisor to supervisee and perpetuated as the supervisee continues working with future clients and supervisees, particularly for those with multiple dominant identities. Because of the importance of multicultural discussions to the supervisory working alliance (Fukuyama, 1994; Helms & Cook, 1999; Killian, 2001), and to the multicultural competence of supervisees (Constantine, 1997; Killian, 2001; Lawless, Gale, & Bacigalupe, 2001; Leong & Wagner, 1994), it is vital that supervisors be multiculturally competent, and know how to initiate and maintain cultural conversations throughout supervision. Particularly because supervision is the primary space where the process of therapy is learned (Bernard & Goodyear, 20014; Holloway, 1992), it is vital that supervisors

are multiculturally competent to best support the supervisory working alliance and the multicultural competence of supervisees.

Implications for Training

The results of this study suggest implications for training future supervisors. First, the results of the current study suggest supervisors in strongly bonded supervisory relationships have quality relational skills. Supervisor relational skills are reflected throughout the themes that emerged from the data (e.g., empathy, mutuality, encouragement, compassion). Supervisors-in-training could benefit from direct focus on the development of relational skills for future supervisory relationships. Participants in this study noted their supervisors' relational skills cultivated intimacy in the relationship. They further noted ways intimacy subsequently made a difference for their supervisory experience and learning. The Positive Outcomes theme references participants' perceived benefits of experiencing a strongly bonded supervisory relationship. Because the literature has widely determined the importance of positive supervisory relationships (e.g., Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bordin, 1983; Ladany et al., 2013; Wulf & Nelson, 2000), development of quality relational skills of supervisors seems important in order to foster positive supervisory relationships for a wide variety of supervisees. If supervisors-in-training were provided with specific relational skill development, more strongly bonded supervision could be possible for future trainees.

Second, the results of this study emphasize the importance of cultural concerns in supervision. Supervisor multicultural competence is necessary for building a quality supervisory working alliance, and for supporting the multicultural competence of supervisees (Fukuyama, 1994; Helms & Cook, 1999; Inman, 2006; Killian, 2001; Ladany et al., 1997; Sue & Sue, 2003). The importance of supervisor multicultural competence is reflected in the themes of Cultural

Attunement and Positive Outcomes in the current study. Participants repeatedly noted the importance of their supervisor addressing identity and culture by initiating and engaging in multicultural discussion. Participants reported a perceived sense of increased multicultural competence and confidence as a result. One participant, in particular, stated he learned he could enact his culturally authentic identities in professional spaces because of multicultural discussions with his strongly bonded supervisor. He noted this experience was transformative for developing his professional identity and professional voice. As a result of these discussions, he stated he was subsequently better able to connect with clients. These results, along with the previous literature continue to support the importance of supervisor multicultural competence for supervisory relationships and outcomes. As such, continued training toward multicultural competence of supervisors-in-training seems important. In particular, training specific to initiating and maintaining an on-going multicultural dialogue could be especially important to supervisors-in-training. It is not enough to be knowledgeable about multicultural issues, supervisors-in-training also need to know how to discuss multicultural issues with future trainees.

Third, the results of this study emphasize the importance of skill development for supervisors-in-training. Being a quality clinician does not automatically translate into being a quality supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). Specific training is necessary in order to develop quality supervisors. Current APA requirements stipulate doctoral students must demonstrate knowledge of supervision models and practices, and pre-doctoral interns must apply this knowledge in direct or simulated practice (American Psychological Association, 2016). This means that currently, there is no specifically mandated class or specific skill development process for supervision training. Because quality clinical skills do not equate to quality

supervision skills, it seems a required course specific to the provision of supervision could be beneficial. Including components of theory, skill-development, and practicum components could support the development of quality supervisors-in-training. Skill development and practicum components, in particular, could be especially beneficial for learning how to put theory into action. Because of the aforementioned implications for training regarding relational skills and multicultural competence, including specific development of relational skills and multicultural discussion skills could be especially beneficial for supervisees-in-training. The participants in this study have experienced at least one strongly bonded supervisory relationship, and their perceived benefits from such a relationship. In that way, they have a lived experience to serve as a reference point for the important skills that create quality supervision experiences. However, not all supervisees are exposed to such experiences, and hence would not necessarily have an automatic reference point for certain important supervisory skills. A required supervision class that includes relational skill development and multicultural skill development could ensure more supervisors-in-training have a references point from which to grow quality supervisory skills.

Implications for Practice

The results of the current study suggest several implications for the practice of supervision. First, the themes that emerged from the results of this chapter imply the importance for intentionally cultivating intimacy in supervisory relationships. Participants reported sharing more deeply, interacting more authentically, and sharing more vulnerably in their relationships with their strongly bonded supervisors. Participants also acknowledged the Positive Outcomes they experienced personally and professionally related to their strongly bonded supervisory experience. Because the data elucidated Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship as a core theme for strongly bonded supervision, and participants reported deep sharing and deep learning

in their strongly bonded supervisory relationships, it is possible that supervisors intentionally cultivating intimacy in supervisory relationships could be beneficial to supervision outcomes. This implication is supported by previous research that posits the perceived quality of supervisory relationships effects supervision outcomes for supervisees and is a core factor in supervisees' satisfaction with supervision (Allen et al., 1986; Bucky et al., 2010; Gray et al., 2001; McMahon, 2014; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Weaks, 2002). Because a quality supervisory relationship appears to impact supervision outcomes, and because the participants in the current study endorsed Positive Outcomes associated with their strongly bonded supervisory relationship, current supervisors could benefit from intentionally cultivating intimacy in their supervisory relationships to support supervision outcomes.

Second, the results of the current study imply the importance of current supervisors to address culture and identities in supervision. The participants in this study repeatedly reported their strongly bonded supervisor addressing culture and identity in supervision was meaningful, specifically, when supervisors initiated the conversation. When supervisors initiate multicultural dialogue, an implicit and explicit message is given to supervisees that this supervisory relationship is a place where identities are valued and addressed. Previous research supports this implication, as supervisees have reported increased quality of the supervisory working alliance, and increased satisfaction from multiculturally competent supervision (Gatmon et al., 2001; Fukuyama, 1994; Inman, 2006). Research also posits that supervision that encourages and promotes multicultural exploration supports supervisees' multicultural competence (Constantine, 1997; Killian, 2001). Additionally, a symbiotic relationship exists between supervisory working alliance and supervisor multicultural competence where a quality supervisory working alliance supports multicultural exploration in supervision, and multicultural exploration in supervision

supports a quality supervisory working alliance (Inman, 2006). Because ongoing research, including the current study, continues to posit the importance of supervisor multicultural competence, current supervisors could benefit from continuing to build multicultural competence to best support their supervisory relationships and supervision outcomes, particularly for initiating and maintaining ongoing multicultural discussions in supervision.

Third, results of this study imply the potential benefit of current supervisors consulting with other supervisors in order to elucidate blind spots, and to extend learning. Because supervision training experiences seem quite varied based on specific doctoral program requirements, career trajectory, and exposure, it is possible current supervisors supporting one another through consultation could work to fill in gaps. Particularly because the supervisory relationship has repeatedly been shown to be a key factor in supervision outcomes (e.g. Allen et al., 1986; Bernard & Goodyear, 2014; Bucky et al., 2010; Goodyear & Guzzardo, 2000). It could be beneficial for current supervisors to utilize consultation to sharpen and maintain relational skills for bond development. Similarly, because research has repeatedly shown the importance of supervisor multicultural competence related to supervision outcomes (e.g., Fukuyama, 1994; Inman 2006; Killian, 2001), current supervisors could benefit from utilizing consultation to support multicultural competence. Consultation with fellow supervisors could be a particularly rich space for interapersonal and interpersonal exploration related to multicultural concerns.

Implications for Research

This is the first study to focus specifically on elucidating the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance through the lens of RCT. Previous studies tend to focus on all aspects of the supervisory working alliance (agreement on goals, agreement on tasks, and the bond), or on characteristics of supervisors and supervisees in positive and negative supervisory

experiences. Relational-cultural theory has not yet been studied in relation to supervision. Since this study is the first of its kind, it could serve as a starting point for future research about the supervisory bond.

One point for future research could be repeating this study specifically with a number of identity-diverse groups of supervisees. This research design would allow deeper exploration of the role of diversity in the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. Particularly as the field continues to diversify, it is important to have a deep and diverse understanding for how culture and identity relates to perceptions of the supervisory bond. The results of this study reflect and extend the current literature that posits culture matters in the supervisory relationship (Constantine, 1997; Fukuyama, 1994; Gatmon et al., 2001; Inman, 2006; Killian, 2001). As such, continued research of the bond through diverse lenses could further elucidate the make-up of strong bonds. The current study did not intentionally recruit diverse participants, and thus left a gap in the literature as a result.

Another point for future research could be repeating this study with participants who are supervisors that have experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship with a supervisee. It could be helpful to continue demystifying the bond aspect of the supervisory relationship from the perspective of supervisors. The findings of this study were based only on the perspectives of supervisees who had experienced strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Including the perspectives of supervisors who experienced strongly bonded supervisory relationships with supervisees could serve to further demystify the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. The differences in roles between supervisors and supervisees may contextualize what each perceives as strongly bonded supervision, and what each perceives as necessary for strong bonds. Gathering more demographic data regarding supervisors' supervision training, multicultural

training, and when their degree was conferred could also be helpful in tracking changes in supervision training and outcomes. It could also be informative to understand the variety of types of bonds supervisors perceive having with their supervisees. For example, do strongly bonded supervisors perceive themselves to have strong bonds with all of their supervisees? If there is variation, what determines the type of bond they have with supervisees?

Another point for future research could be studying strongly bonded supervisor/supervisee dyads. Focusing study on the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance in real-time could shed light on the formation, development, and maintenance of the strong bond over time. Studying the bond in dyads could also elucidate two perspectives (supervisor and supervisee) of the same bond, rather than focusing on one perspective as did the current study. Studying dyads could also further elucidate patterns in communication, interaction, or ways of being that set strongly bonded supervision apart from "good" supervision. Researching supervision in dyads could also illustrate the effects of rupture and repair on the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. Working alliance literature suggests the working alliance tends to strengthen after the repair of a rupture (Horvath & Symonds, 1991; Safran, Crocker, McMain, & Murry, 1990). As such, it could be informative to explore the effects of rupture and repair in the moment within supervisory dyads. In dyads, it is possible to explore two sides of the same coin, which could further elucidate specifically what makes up both sides of the strong supervisory bond.

Another area for future research is in relation to role induction for supervisees. Role induction is a process for educating supervisees about roles and expectations of supervision in order to provide structure and decrease anxiety (Bernard & Goodyear, 2014). I became curious about this future research when I reflected on my own experience of role induction I discussed in

chapter one. I explained I was taught how to be a supervisee before I started my first supervision experience. Previous research has found role induction provides clearer conceptualization for supervisees and increases willingness to share concerns with supervisors (Bahrick, Russell, & Salmi, 1991). It could be informative for future research to see if there is any connection between role induction for supervisees and strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Especially because beginning trainees have been found to benefit most from role induction (Chapin & Ellis, 2002), it could be beneficial to see how early role induction for supervisees affects subsequent supervisory relationships.

Lastly, an important point for future research is studying outcomes related to strongly bonded supervision. The participants in the current study reported a perception of deep learning experiences and Positive Outcomes related to their strongly bonded supervisory relationship. However, it could be beneficial to measure supervision outcomes and therapy outcomes related to strongly bonded supervisory relationships compared to "good" supervisory relationships. The results of the current study reflect and extend existing literature that indicates positive supervisory relationships tend to yield supervisee satisfaction (Allen et al., 1986; Bucky et al., 2010; Gray et al., 2001; McMahon, 2014; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001; Weaks, 2002) and therapy outcomes (Hill et al., 2016; Patton and Kivlighan, 1997). It is possible comparing outcomes of strongly bonded supervision and "good" supervision could help determine if strongly bonded supervision is more effective than "good" supervision.

Limitations

The current study reflected the typical limitations of qualitative research including limited transferability of the results, the potential for researcher bias, and challenges associated with repeatability (Banister et al., 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merrick 1999). Beyond these

usual boundaries of qualitative research, it is also important to acknowledge the limitations and boundaries of this specific study, and the potential effect on research outcomes. First, the boundaries of the sample from which participants were pulled are important to acknowledge. Participants were doctoral interns from APPIC-accredited university counseling centers who had experienced multicultural training either from their home program or internship site (or both). No stipulations were set regarding demographics of participants.

Although I did not actively recruit for diversity due to the limitations of the intended sample size, it still felt important to me that the recruitment process was inclusive and clearly included cultural elements. With this in mind, I added an inclusion criterion that participants needed to have experienced multicultural training at either their home program or internship site. I also chose to recruit from APPIC-accredited university counseling centers as they tend to focus on diversity when recruiting interns. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the results of the current study are only reflective of the specific participants involved. The obtained sample of nine participants included six participants who identified as White, two who identified as Latino, and one who identified as White and Latina. It is possible results would be different had the participants been a more diverse group, particularly given the clear evidence that cultural aspects mattered to the current study. Further, a RCT approach intends a frame that incorporates difference, however, applicability of the theory to diverse groups is not well explored in the literature (Liang et al., 2002, Spencer et al., 2004). It is also possible the results would be different if participants included post-doctorate supervisees, or practicum supervisees as the developmental stage of supervisees could affect the perception and experience of strongly bonded supervision.

Another limitation of the current study was the lack of productivity of follow-up interviews. Only seven of the nine participants provided a follow-up interview. The follow-up interviews that did take place were not as information-rich as desired despite adjusting strategies for follow-up questions in an effort to increase productivity. There could be several causes for this. One thought was perhaps follow-up interviews were scheduled too soon into the analysis process, leaving me less time to deeply analyze the data before performing the member check of the follow-up interview. Should I have had a clearer grasp on the final themes, and core themes associated with each participant before performing the member check, it is possible follow-up interviews could have been more fruitful. Another thought was perhaps participants did not spend much time reading their transcripts or thinking deeply about the information in their transcripts in relation to their lived experience of strongly bonded supervision. Participants were instructed to read their transcript prior to the follow-up interview to see if they had told the full story they wanted to tell, and they would be able to add or change anything in the follow-up interview. Participants did not offer much in follow-up interviews beyond affirming the themes and denying the need to add or change information in their transcripts (other than changing wording here-and-there). Asking participants about their least strongly bonded relationship also did not yield much information beyond antithesis of strongly bonded relationships. Looking back, I could have asked participants to journal about their thoughts and reactions to reading the transcript from their initial interviews. Journaling could serve as a priming exercise for the follow-up interview to create an opportunity for deeper reflection for participants, and potentially add richer data to the study.

Lastly, one of the interview questions I was most excited to ask participants was “If you had to name the phenomenon within the supervisory relationship that made the strong bond in

the supervisory relationship possible, what would it be?" I anticipated potentially creating a clear theme from the data to reflect participants' answers to this question, getting to the essence of strongly bonded supervisory relationships. However, participants' answers were so varied no theme emerged from that particular question. Further, participants seemed to have trouble answering the question as many commented on what a "hard question" it was to answer, and answered in paragraphs rather than in phenomena as the question stipulates. It seemed like participants knew they experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship, but had a hard time naming a phenomena that made that strong bond possible. The difficulty participants had in answering the question likely reflects the complexity therein—the essence of their strongly bonded supervision was hard to describe with a name or label, which is also supported by the variation in their answers. Though the data emerged the essence of strongly bonded supervision as Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship, it took qualitative analysis to uncover this essence, rather than participants being able to reflect and plainly offer intimacy as an answer. Asking participants to journal their answer to this interview question could have been a helpful priming exercise to give them more time to reflect and process before providing an answer. It is possible answering on the spot during the initial interview did not provide enough reflection time for such a complex question. Another option for encouraging more reflection would be to have participants journal about the phenomenon after the initial interview, using the discussion of the initial interview and participant review of the initial transcripts and themes as the priming exercise.

Summary

This chapter has explored ways the results of this study reflect and extend the current literature, and explored several key ideas. Intimacy in the Supervisory Relationship emerged as a

core theme, setting a distinction between strongly bonded supervisory relationships and "good" supervisory relationships. RCT constructs of vulnerability and mutuality were present in participants' descriptions and noted as additive to the strong bond, suggesting RCT could be an effective approach to supervision. Participants' descriptions also highlighted the importance for supervisor multicultural competence, and particularly noted ways supervisor multicultural competence was additive to the bond, paving the way for strong supervisory bonds to form. As such, continued focus on developing the multicultural competence of supervisors and supervisors-in-training is important. In particular, skills associated with initiating and maintaining an on-going multicultural dialogue are especially pivotal. Multicultural knowledge is not enough, supervisors and supervisors-in-training must know how to address multicultural concerns in supervision. Implications for training include the importance of relational skill development, multicultural competence development and related skills for engaging in multicultural dialogue; a required supervision class that addresses skills and practice as well as theory could be beneficial for increased instances of strongly bonded supervision for future supervisees. Implications for practice include the importance of intentional development of intimacy in supervisory relationships, the importance of intentionally addressing culture and identity in supervisory relationships, and the importance of supervisors supporting one another in on-going development through consultation. Implications for research suggest future studies focus on identity-diverse participants to more deeply understand a wider variety of perspectives, studying supervisors' perspectives on strongly bonded supervisory relationships, and studying supervision dyads to more deeply understand the bond as it is happening.

In conclusion, the stories shared by participants reflect the importance of the supervisory relationship and the expansive impact of strongly bonded supervision. Participants' stories

created a picture of strongly bonded supervision where they felt seen, supported, challenged, encouraged, authentic, and connected. The importance of these relationships is reflected by the enthusiasm in participants' voices during the interviews, and the learning and growth they associated with the supervisory experience. Continuing to more deeply understand the nuance, implications, and outcomes of the supervisory bond seems vital in order to support the processes of training in the field of psychology.

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APPENDIX A: Email to Training Directors

Hello, Dr. _____:

I am a doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Western Michigan University (WMU) and I am recruiting participants for my qualitative dissertation on strongly bonded supervisory relationships. My study has been reviewed and approved by HSIRB at WMU.

My dissertation committee has encouraged me to recruit participants face-to-face as much as possible. In that light, I am hoping to join a regularly scheduled meeting at your site attended by pre-doctoral interns to quickly discuss participation in my study. I expect my presentation would take approximately five to ten minutes, after which I would be on my way so you may continue as scheduled.

If it is not possible to join you in person, I am hoping you would be willing to forward the attached recruitment materials to your current pre-doctoral interns.

Attached, you will find details of the study as well as the consent document, so you are able to view the information ahead of time.

Should you find my materials acceptable to provide your interns, would it also be possible to send a follow-up email to be forwarded to the interns a week after the initial invitation has been given?

Lastly, it would be so helpful if you could let me know whether or not you would like to assist in getting my recruitment materials to your interns. If you would kindly contact me to let me know your decision it would be helpful so I may pursue other data collection options if necessary.

You are welcome to contact myself or my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D., for additional information. I appreciate your time and consideration, especially because I understand how busy you and your colleagues are with counseling center work.

Melissa Heinrich, M.S.: melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu
Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D.: mary.anderson@wmich.edu

Sincerely,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M.S.

c.c. Mary Z. Anderson

APPENDIX B: Presentation to Potential Participants

Hello,

I am conducting a qualitative dissertation on strongly bonded supervisory relationships from the perspective of supervisees. The study has been approved by HSIRB. If you have experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship that stands out to you, I am interested in speaking with you more to learn about your experience of the relationship. It could be a current or previous supervisor within your graduate-level training. Your identity and the identity of your supervisor will be kept confidential throughout the data collection process and in the final write up. It is my hope that findings from this study will inform improvement in training of supervisors, supervision for clinicians-in-training, and subsequently supporting improvements in clients' experiences in therapy.

Participation in this study will include:

- demographic questionnaire and informed consent (via online survey, 8-10 min)
- initial face-to-face or Zoom interview that will be recorded (audio-only, approx. 60 min)
- reviewing transcript prior to follow-up interview (approx. 30 min)
- follow-up interview via phone to deepen the researcher's understanding of participants' experiences (recorded, audio-only, approx. 60 min)
- email containing the results chapter with direct quotations of each respective participant, to provide participants the opportunity to ensure confidentiality was not inadvertently compromised in the final write up (approx. 20 min).

You are eligible for the study if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are a pre-doctoral intern currently on internship at an APPIC site
2. You have experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship that stands out to you
3. You have received multicultural training from your doctoral program or internship site

Your choice in participating in this study will not have any effect on your standing at your internship site.

Participants for this study will have the opportunity to win one of three $50 Amazon gift cards to be chosen at random at the end of the study.

If you would like to consider participating, please contact me for further information at Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu or by phone at 248-330-5569.

If you contact me to express interest, I will email you a link to the survey containing the demographic questionnaire and informed consent. We will then schedule either a face-to-face interview, or Zoom interview at a time that matches both of our schedules.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration!

APPENDIX C: Informed Consent

Western Michigan University
Counselor Education and Counseling Psychology

Principle Investigator: Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D.
Student Investigator: Melissa T. Heinrich, M.S.
Title of Study: Exploration of the Bond in Supervisory Relationships

You have been invited to participate in a qualitative research project titled "*Exploration of the Bond in Supervisory Relationships.*" This project will serve as Melissa Heinrich's dissertation project for the requirements of the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. This consent document will explain the purpose of this research project and will go over all the time commitments, the procedures used in the study, and the risks and benefits of participating in this research project. Please read this consent form carefully and completely and ask any questions if you need clarification.

What are we trying to find out in this study?
The supervisory working alliance is made up of agreement on the goals and tasks required of each person and the bond they share. While the process for developing agreement on goals and tasks seems clear, the process for developing the bond seems less clear. What makes the bond? How is it developed and maintained? This study is trying to demystify the bond aspect of the working alliance in an effort to support the process and outcome of supervision and the training of supervisors.

Who can participate in this study?
The student researcher is looking for participants who meet the following criteria:

- Current pre-doctoral interns on internship at an APPIC site
- Previous experience of a strongly bonded supervisory relationship that stands out from other supervisory relationships
- Have received multicultural training from your doctoral program or internship site

If you do not fit criteria, or if you contact the student researcher after sufficient data has been collected, you will be provided with an email explanation thanking you for your interest and time.

Where will this study take place?
There will be multiple points of data collection: (a) demographic questionnaire and informed consent (online survey), (b) face-to-face initial interview, (c) over-the-phone follow-up interview, (d) results review (over email). In-person interviews will be set up in a convenient and confidential space near you, which will be negotiated at the time the meeting is scheduled. During phone meetings, the student researcher will set up in a private office, and will require participants do so as well.

What is the time commitment for participating in this study?
Participants will participate in an online survey, two interviews, and a results review email. Filling out informed consent and the demographic questionnaire survey will take approximately 8-10 minutes. The first interview (in person) will last approximately 60 minutes, and the second interview (over the phone) will take 60 minutes. The second interview will require you to review the transcript (30 minutes) from your first interview prior to participating in the second interview. Once the results have been written up, you will have an opportunity to review the results (over email), and view any of your direct quotes to ensure anonymity has not been inadvertently compromised (20 minutes). Altogether, you will be asked to dedicate a total time of approximately 3 hours, which includes all interviews and document review.

What will you be asked to do if you choose to participate in this study?
You will be asked to complete a demographic questionnaire followed by two recorded interviews that focus on your experience of a strongly bonded supervisory relationship. The recordings and your identity will be kept confidential. Following initial data analysis, you will provide feedback on initial findings (member check). At the conclusion of the study, you will be given the option to review the use of direct quotes from your interviews in the study write-up (results check).

What information is being measured during the study?
The focus of the data is your experience of strongly bonded supervisory relationships. Your description of the relationship, characteristics of the relationship, and the impact of the relationship on your professional development will be explored. To a lesser extent, some exploration will take place on your least strongly bonded supervisory relationship.

What are the risks of participating in this study and how will these risks be minimized?
Possible risks of participation in the study include potential for mild distress in recalling supervisory experiences. Should you feel significantly upset, the interviews can be stopped at any time.

Your confidentiality will be protected throughout the study. Your choice in participating in this study will not have any effect on your standing at your internship site. Names will be left out of transcripts, notes, and final write up. Interview recordings and transcripts will be saved on a password-protected computer and a private, password-protected Cloud drive maintained by Western Michigan University. Surveys and consents will also be stored on the password-protected Cloud drive maintained by Western Michigan University.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?
You may benefit from participating in this study should you go on to become a supervisor, as it may inform your future work as a supervisor. The potential benefit to the professional knowledge base may support supervision experiences for future clinicians-in-training. You may also appreciate contributing to a study which may support the type of supervision what was meaningful to you. By clarifying the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance, future supervisors may be more able to intentionally develop and maintain the bond in the supervisory working alliance.

Are there any costs associated with participating in this study?
Costs associated with the study include your time devoted to participating.

Is there any compensation for participating in this study?
While there is no direct compensation for participation, you will have the chance to win one of three $50 Amazon gift cards which will be randomly chosen and given at the end of the study.

Who will have access to the information collected during the study?
The primary researcher and the student researcher will have access to the informed consent and demographic questionnaire, which will be saved on a private, password-protected Cloud drive maintained by Western Michigan University.

The primary researcher, the student researcher, a research auditor, and a transcriber will have access to transcripts. Names of participants will be left out of recordings, off of transcripts and out of the write up to protect confidentiality. Interview recordings will be deleted once interviews are transcribed. Transcripts will be saved on a password-protected computer and a private, password-protected Cloud drive maintained by Western Michigan University. The final write up of the study will be submitted to Western Michigan University.

All study data will continue to be stored on the password-protected computer and password-protected Cloud drive for a minimum of three years and up to seven years after publication if the study is published in accordance with practices of the American Psychological Association.

You will also have the option to review the results which use your respective direct quotations to be sure your confidentiality was not inadvertently compromised in anyway before the final write up is submitted. You will have two weeks to respond to the result review email once it is sent. If you do not respond within the two-week period, submission of the final write up will proceed.

What if you want to stop participating in this study?
You may choose to stop participating in the study at any time for any reason. You will not suffer any prejudice or penalty by your decision to stop participation and experience *no* consequences either academically or personally if you choose to withdraw from this study. The researchers may also decide to discontinue your participation in this study without your consent.

Should you have any questions prior to or during the study, you may contact the student researcher (primary data collector), Melissa Heinrich, M.S., at 248-330-5569 or melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu. You may also contact the primary researcher, Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, at 269-387-5100 or mary.anderson@wmich.edu. You may also contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 269-387-8293 or the Vice President for Research at 269-387-8298 if questions arise during the course of this study.

Participating in this survey online indicates your consent to participate in the study and of use to the answers you supply.

This study was approved by the Western Michigan University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) on (date). Please do not participate in this study after (one year after approval).

Thank you very much for your time and consideration!

To accept, please click here:

To decline, please click here:

APPENDIX D: Demographic Questionnaire

Please complete this demographic questionnaire to the best of your ability and email it back to me as soon as possible.

Regarding yourself

Name:

Preferred contact information:

Gender:

Race:

Ethnicity:

Current employer (internship site location):

Program of study (clinical or counseling psych):

Number of supervisors you have had thus far in your training:

Number of supervisory experiences you have had thus far (semesters of practicum/internship):

Please briefly describe your multicultural training as a doctoral student:

Regarding the specific supervisor with whom you experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship

Please provide the following information to the best of your ability. You may answer "unknown" if desired.

Gender:

Race:

Estimated age range: _____ 30-40 years old
_____ 40-50 years old
_____ 50-60 years old
_____ Over 60 years old

Degree (Ph.D., Psy.D., etc.):

Focus of degree (clinical, counseling, etc.):

Received training on the provision of supervision (yes/no/unknown):

APPENDIX E: Email to Schedule Initial Interview

Hello, _____:

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study! This first interview will either be in-person or over Zoom, for which I will provide a link to the meeting once we've scheduled a time. If you could give me a few options that would work for you either this week or next, I will find a corresponding time that matches my schedule as well. Thank you, again, for your interest, I look forward to meeting with you!

Best,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX F: Initial Interview Protocol

Tell me about a supervisory relationship in which you felt strongly bonded with your supervisor. Possible prompts: How did you feel? How did you experience…? What sense did you make of…?

Tell me what the supervisor did or did not do that made strong bond possible. Possible prompts: What did that look like/sound like? How did you feel? How did you know…? Give me an example.

How did you behave differently in the strongly bonded supervisory relationship as compared to less bonded supervisory relationships? Possible prompts: What did that look like/sound like? How did you feel? How did you know…? Give me an example.

If you had to name the phenomenon within the supervisory relationship that made the strong bond in the supervisory relationship possible, what would it be? Possible prompts: How did you experience it in the moment? How did you know it was present?

Were you aware of any cultural similarities or differences between you and your supervisor that may have contributed to the strength of your relationship? Possible prompts: How did sameness or difference in your supervisor's race affect your relationship? How did sameness or difference in gender affect your relationship? What did that mean for you? How did you feel? Give me an example.

Tell me how this supervisory relationship affected your professional growth. Possible prompts: How has it affected your work with clients? How did it change your thinking about yourself? How did it change your feelings about yourself as a clinician? Give me an example.

What is your big take-away from your experience in this supervisory relationship? Possible prompts: What did you learn? How did it change you? How did it change your perspective of self and others?

Is there other information that seems important to share or expand on that we have not discussed already? Possible prompts: What did that mean for you? Give me an example. How did it change you? How did it change the way you see yourself? How did it change the way you see clients?

Thank you for your time and for sharing your experiences. Within 2-4 months, you will receive an email from me to set up our next interview which will take place over the phone. Please confirm the email address to which you would like this to be sent. The email will include a transcript of this interview. Please review your transcript prior to our phone meeting to discern whether the information therein reflects your experience, and to see if there is anything you would like to add or change.

If you know of anyone that may be interested in participating who is also a pre-doctoral intern at an APPIC accredited university counseling center, would you be willing to pass on my contact information to them? Thank you very much, I appreciate your time.

APPENDIX G: Email to Schedule Follow-Up Interview

Hello, _____:

Attached you, will find the transcript from our first interview. Please review this transcript to ensure the information reflects your experiences, and look for anything you might want to add or change. I would also like to schedule our second interview, which will be over Zoom. I will provide a link to the meeting once we've determined a meeting time. If you would provide several meeting times that would work for you this week and next week, I will confirm a corresponding time in my schedule. Please be sure you are in a confidential space at the time of the meeting. Thank you, again, for your time and participation. I look forward to speaking with you!

Best,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student-Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX H: Follow-Up Interview Protocol

After reviewing the transcript from our first conversation, have you told me the story you wanted to tell? Is there anything you want to change? Is there anything you want to add? Possible prompts: What else do you want me to know about your experience? What feelings did that bring up for you? What sense do you make of…?

The themes which emerged from the data include_____. Do these results seem reflective of your experience with a strongly bonded supervisory relationship? If yes, in what ways are the results reflective of your experience? If no, in what ways do the results not reflect your experience? Possible prompts: Are there any themes that are less present in your experience? If yes, can you say more about that? Do these initial themes pull you to add anything to your description? Is there anything that appears to be a misunderstanding in the themes? Would you revise the themes in any way?

Now, think of your least strongly bonded supervisory relationship. What can you tell me about your least strongly bonded supervisory relationship? How is this least bonded supervisory experience connected (or not) to the initial themes? Possible prompts: How does this contrast with your strongly bonded relationship? What was missing/present? How did you know? How did your least strongly bonded supervisory relationship effect your professional growth?

Thank you for your time and for sharing your experiences. Prior to the submission of the final write up, you will be emailed a copy of your direct quotations as they appear in the final document, so you may review your quotations to ensure your confidentiality has not been

inadvertently compromised. You'll have a two-week window to do so. Should I not hear from you within that time, I will proceed with submission. Thank you, again, for your time.

APPENDIX I: Result Check Email

Hello, _____:

Attached you will find the results chapter for the study in which you participated on strongly bonded supervisory relationships. You will see your direct quotations in context with the chapter, and you will see others' direct quotations redacted. Please review the use of these quotations to be sure your confidentiality is not inadvertently compromised. If there are other issues or concerns, certainly let me know and they will be addressed. Please respond within two weeks of receipt of this email. If I do not hear from you in that time, I will continue with the process of submitting the final write up.

Thank you, again, for your participation in this study. I appreciate your time and willingness to share your experiences. I am truly grateful for your dedication of time and thought to this study.

Best regards for your future endeavors!

Sincerely,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student-Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX J: Email to Potential Participants Who May Need to Be Interviewed Later if Additional Data is Necessary

Hello, _____:

Thank you very much for your interest in participating in this study! Currently, an initial round of interviews are being conducted, and you were not selected for this first set of interviews. If collection of additional data is necessary, you may be contacted to see if you are still interested in participating. If you have any questions in the meantime, certainly feel free to email me.

Thank you, again, for your interest, I appreciate your valuable time. Have a wonderful day!

Best,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX K: Email to Potential Participants Waiting to be Interviewed, but No Further Data Collection is Necessary

Hello, _____:

Thank you for your patience while the initial round of interviews were conducted. At this time, all necessary data has been collected, and no further interviews will be conducted. Your interest and consideration is appreciated, especially knowing your time is valuable. Best of luck with the remainder of your internship year!

Best,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX L: Email to Potential Participants Expressing Interest After Data Collection is Complete

Hello, _____:

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study! At this time, all necessary data has been collected, and no further interviews will be conducted. Your interest and consideration is appreciated, especially knowing your time is valuable. Best of luck with the remainder of your internship year!

Best,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX M: Follow-up Email Sent to Directors to be Forwarded to Interns

Hello, Interns:

I recently came to your internship site to present the option to participate in my study on strongly bonded supervisory relationships. This email is to answer any questions you may have and to remind you of the invitation to participate. Thank you, again, for your time and consideration.

Have a wonderful day!

Best,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX N: Script for Follow-up Phone Call to Training Directors

Hello, Dr._____:

My name is Melissa Heinrich, I am a doctoral student at Western Michigan University. I emailed you last week to ask your permission to contact your pre-doctoral interns either in-person or through your forwarding my email to them. I just wanted to follow-up with you to see if you had any further questions or thoughts as you are making your decision. [If we are talking in real-time I will leave them room to respond here.] [If I am leaving a voice mail I will state: Please feel free to contact me with any questions. My phone number is 248-330-5569 and my email address is melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu. If you would let me know either way, whether or not you can assist with my recruitment it would be appreciated, so I may move forward accordingly.] Thank you, I appreciate your time and consideration.

APPENDIX O: Follow-up Email for Potential Participants Who Have Expressed Interest in Participation, but Have Not Completed the Survey

Hello,_____:

Thank you, again, for your interest in my study. If you are still interested in participating, please use the following link to direct you to the survey that includes the informed consent and demographic information. Once the survey is completed, I will contact you shortly with the next steps in the process. Thank you for your time and consideration!

[link to survey]

Best,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M. S.
Doctoral Student, Counseling Psychology
Western Michigan University
Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu

APPENDIX P: Recruitment Request to Post on LISTSERVs

Hello,

My name is Melissa Heinrich, I am a doctoral student at Western Michigan University and I am hoping to recruit for my dissertation on your LISTSERV. My study has been approved by HSIRB at Western Michigan University (Project #17-04-26).

My project is a qualitative design focused on demystifying the bond aspect of the supervisory working alliance. I plan to interview supervisees regarding their most strongly bonded supervisory relationships to uncover what exactly made that strong bond possible. I hope the results of the study can inform supervisors and the training of supervisors to increase the likelihood for strong bonds and create positive training experiences for future supervisees.

Below you will find the recruitment information I am hoping to post to your LISTSERV to connect with potential participants. Included is a description of the study, participation requirements, and directions for contacting me via email if interested. Certainly, let me know any suggestions you might have, or other requirements that need to be met in order to comply with your recruitment posting policies. You are welcome to contact myself or my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D., for additional information. Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Melissa Heinrich, M.S.: melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu
Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D.: mary.anderson@wmich.edu

HSIRB Contact Information:
Office of the Vice President of Research
1903 W. Michigan Ave. M.S. 5456
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269)387-8298

Sincerely,

Melissa Heinrich, M.S.

c.c. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D.

APPENDIX Q: Posted Recruitment Materials to the LISTSERV

I am conducting a qualitative dissertation on strongly bonded supervisory relationships from the perspective of supervisees (as supervised by Dr. Mary Z. Anderson). The study has been approved by HSIRB at Western Michigan University (project #17-04-26). If you have experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship that stands out to you, I am interested in speaking with you more to learn about your experience of the relationship. It could be a current or previous supervisor within your graduate-level training. Your identity and the identity of your supervisor will be kept confidential throughout the data collection process and in the final write up. It is my hope that findings from this study will inform improvement in training of supervisors, supervision for clinicians-in-training, and subsequently supporting improvements in clients' experiences in therapy.

Participation in this study will include:

- demographic questionnaire and informed consent (via online survey, 8-10 min)
- initial face-to-face or Zoom interview that will be recorded (audio-only, approx. 60 min)
- reviewing transcript prior to follow-up interview (approx. 30 min)
- follow-up interview via phone to deepen the researcher's understanding of participants' experiences (recorded, audio-only, approx. 20 min)
- email containing the results chapter with direct quotations of each respective participant, to provide participants the opportunity to ensure confidentiality was not inadvertently compromised in the final write up (approx. 20 min).

You are eligible for the study if you meet the following criteria:

1. You are a pre-doctoral intern currently on internship at an APPIC site
2. You have experienced a strongly bonded supervisory relationship that stands out to you
3. KH You have received multicultural training from your doctoral program or internship site

Your choice in participating in this study is entirely voluntary and will not have any effect on your standing at your internship site.

Participants for this study will have the opportunity to win one of three $50 Amazon gift cards to be chosen at random at the end of the study.

If you would like to consider participating, please contact me for further information at Melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu or by phone at 248-330-5569. Any questions or concerns for my supervisor, can be directed to Dr. Mary Z. Anderson at mary.anderson@wmich.edu.

If you contact me to express interest, I will email you a link to the survey containing the demographic questionnaire and informed consent. We will then schedule either a face-to-face interview, or Zoom interview at a time that matches both of our schedules.

HSIRB Contact Information:
Office of the Vice President of Research

1903 W. Michigan Ave. M.S. 5456
Kalamazoo, MI 49008
(269)387-8298

Thank you so much for your time and consideration!

APPENDIX R: Email to Training Directors to Request Recruitment Materials be Forwarded to Interns by Email Only

Hello, Dr. _____:

I am a doctoral student in Counseling Psychology at Western Michigan University (WMU) and I am recruiting participants for my qualitative dissertation on strongly bonded supervisory relationships. My study has been reviewed and approved by HSIRB at WMU.

I am hoping you would be willing to forward the attached recruitment materials to your current pre-doctoral interns.

Attached, you will find details of the study as well as the consent document, so you are able to view the information ahead of time.

Should you find my materials acceptable to provide your interns, would it also be possible to send a follow-up email to be forwarded to the interns a week after the initial invitation has been given?

Lastly, if you would kindly let me know your decision on whether or not you choose to forward my materials, it would be helpful so I may pursue other data collection options if necessary.

You are welcome to contact myself or my dissertation committee chair, Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D., for additional information. I appreciate your time and consideration, especially because I understand how busy you and your colleagues are with counseling center work.

Melissa Heinrich, M.S.: melissa.t.heinrich@wmich.edu
Dr. Mary Z. Anderson, Ph.D.: mary.anderson@wmich.edu

Sincerely,

Melissa T. Heinrich, M.S.

c.c. Mary Z. Anderson

APPENDIX S: Notes from External Auditor

External Auditing by Kyrai Antares for Melissa Heinrich

What I did:

- I read three of the interviews in full (A, E and F) and skimmed three of the second interviews (A2, E2, and F2)
- While reading, I made some notes, and referred back to the list of themes at the front of the binder
- I read the entire section of the binder that contained the super-ordinate themes and the associated quotes to support each theme. I made notes in the margins of this section for you to read, and dog-eared the pages that contain these notes
- I skimmed the research journal

What I saw:

- Strong connections between what was shared in the interviews and the themes
- The research journal seemed thoughtful and useful as part of the dissertation process
- The notes in the margins of the transcripts were good to read, because it really showed what you were thinking as you read them
- The results really do answer the main research question
- Each interview I read seemed exhaustive – as though participants were given ample opportunity through the different questions and the length of the interviews to share everything they were thinking about the research question
- I also did not see any cohesive way to bring together the responses of participants in the document in which you asked them to name the phenomenon. They each seemed unique.

Things to consider:

- Questions about themes:
    - Would you say that the participants were driven to provide that which was provided for them to future supervisees, or to clients or both? I wondered if a distinction was needed here.
    - I was unclear about the reason for the word “Unique” in the subtheme name “Guiding Supervisee’s Unique Development”
    - I wondered about the reason for both Supervisor Encouragement and Supervisor Encouraging Supervisee Exploration. Could these be combined, or is there some reason the type of encouragement in the latter is unique enough to be in its own subtheme? As I read the quotes, I wondered if perhaps changing the second subtheme to “Supervisor Encouraging Supervisee Personal Exploration or Personal Discovery?
- The notes in the section of the binder with the quotes are mostly my wonderings related to possible other subthemes that could fit better for some quotes

- Here are some things I wrote down as I read the interviews that popped out to me – I thought I would share them with you in case you felt any of it did not already fit into the themes and subthemes you have:
    - Trust within conflict
    - Freedom
    - Nothing "off-limits"
    - Expansive rather than constricting
    - Brave and safe space
    - I was important, and my training was important
- When reading interview F, I wondered about a couple of things:
    - There were two references to exploring what it means to be a professional (page 4), and deconstructing what a professional should be (page 16). This seemed very important to this participant based on his culturally informed ways of being, and his past experiences of feeling as though those ways of being were not welcomed or encouraged in professional spaces. He made references several times to wearing a mask, and how the supervisor helped him see that he would not in fact have to wear "the mask" for his whole career, which is a potential he dreaded (p.17). I wondered if this piece fit into the existing themes, or if it was unique. It made me wonder if other participants of color had expressed something similar. This feels distinct to me in terms of the three sub themes under Cultural Attunement. It felt bigger than professional identity, as well…so I wasn't sure exactly what to suggest – but I just wanted to mention that it stood out to me strongly.

APPENDIX T: Response to External Auditing

Response to External Auditing

What I did:

- Met with Kyrai Anteres (external auditor) and Dr. Mary Z. Anderson (internal auditor) to discuss Kyrai's findings
- Made notes for items to address, follow-up, or change
- Asked questions for clarification

Items Addressed as Discussed:

- Changed name of sub-theme from "Driven to Pay-It-Forward" to "Driven to Provide Similar Experience to Clients and Supervisees"
- Changed name of sub-theme from "Supervisor Encouraging Supervisee Exploration" to "Encouraging Self Exploration"
- Looked for suggested list of subthemes within the transcripts—most were addressed within the themes and subthemes, no changes were made
    - Discussed "Trust within Conflict" with internal auditor, decided we've named and included that concept among other themes, no changes were made
- Read over margin notes, any suggested changes had either already been changed, or did not fit the direction of the themes, no changes were made based on margin notes
- Added paragraph to "Increased Experience of Authentic Self" regarding Participant F's experience of cultural authenticity, included associated quotation
- Looked for cultural authenticity in other interviews to see if others should be added to the cultural authenticity paragraph—more so associated with personal authenticity, so no other participants were added to the cultural authenticity paragraph

APPENDIX U: HSIRB Approval Letter

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Date: May 2, 2017

To: Mary Anderson, Principal Investigator
Melissa Heinrich, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number 17-04-26

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project titled "Exploration of the Bond in Supervisory Relationships" has been **approved** under the **expedited** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note: This research may **only** be conducted exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project (e.g., ***you must request a post approval change to enroll subjects beyond the number stated in your application under "Number of subjects you want to complete the study***)." Failure to obtain approval for changes will result in a protocol deviation. In addition, if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

Reapproval of the project is required if it extends beyond the termination date stated below.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: **May 1, 2018**

1903 W. Michigan Ave., Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456
PHONE: (269) 387-8293 FAX: (269) 387-8276
CAMPUS SITE: 251 W. Walwood Hall