

EXPERIENCES OF CAREER COUNSELORS IN GROUP SUPERVISION INTEGRATING
WORK-LIFE BALANCE

A Dissertation

by

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This dissertation meets the standards for scope and quality of
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ABSTRACT

This study explores the use of clinical supervision in the ongoing training and development of career counselors, as well as the application of work-life balance within the field of career counseling. Clinical supervision is an established practice in the training of counselors; however, there has been limited research related to the practice of clinical supervision within the career counseling specialty. Similarly, there has been little emphasis on the need for self-care practices for career counselors. Work-life balance is an area that spans career and personal issues for both career counselors and their clients.

A group supervision intervention including career counseling case consultation and personal work-life balance plans was implemented over a period of eight weeks at a university career counseling center. Four career counselors volunteered to participate in and completed the study. Using a qualitative case study research design utilizing a phenomenological approach, the researcher collected data from participants' journals, field observations, individual interviews, and a focus group.

Analysis of the data resulted in the emergence of seven themes describing the participants' experiences: awareness, importance of work, importance of relationships, importance of wellness, struggling for balance, work-life balance as a process, and learning from others.

The results of this study indicate that the use of clinical supervision in the training and development of career counselors is helpful. Additionally, the inclusion of work-life balance in career counseling research and practice may be beneficial in addressing counselor self-care and clients' career counseling needs.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents, Nels and Elsie Hammerstrom and Frank and Julia Pearl Alvarez, who instilled the value of education and the importance of dedication to a larger purpose within our family.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Counselor training typically extends beyond formal education programs to include at least supervision of initial fieldwork; however, ongoing supervision and lifelong learning are often emphasized (Grant & Schofield, 2007). Within the developmental framework for counselor training, different aspects of training and the focus of supervision can shift throughout the lifetime of the counselor. Skovholt, Grier, and Hanson (2001) noted that counselors often learn to take care of others during their graduate education programs; however, there is typically little attention given to self-care. Despite an increased focus on self-care and burnout in counseling in recent years, many practitioners avoid acknowledging problems and stress (Evans & Payne, 2008). Evans and Payne suggested a change in the way supervision is provided and an increase in the development of collegial networks to address the stigma of stress in the workplace and the tendency to minimize negative outcomes or problems.

A parallel to the increased focus on burnout within the counseling profession is the wider focus on work-life balance and the consequences for workers, organizations, and society. Despite the increasing interest in the concept of work-life balance, there are challenges related to the lack of a clear definition and the different terms used across disciplines (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). There has not been a large focus on work-life balance specifically within career counseling. However, there have been studies exploring the impact of work-family conflict on career exploration and development, particularly related to gender issues (Perrone, Ægisdóttir, Webb, & Blalock, 2006; Perrone, Webb, & Blalock, 2005; Slan-Jerusalim & Chen, 2009). The work-family conflict research builds from Super's life-span, life-space theory, but research has been confined to the work and family life roles (Perrone et al., 2006).

The changing nature of work in society indicates a need to change the way work and career counseling are viewed. Hansen (2001) called for an expansion of career counseling to assist clients in examining the relationship between work and other life roles. The recent focus on constructivist approaches to career counseling, which includes a contextualized view of career and explores the relationship between a variety of life roles, also creates a foundation for greater focus on work-life balance within career counseling (Brott, 2005). Career counselors are well-suited to assist clients at different stages in their careers to focus on navigating the natural variations in life role commitment, in order to alleviate the potential consequences of work-life conflict. Using supervision to encourage career counselors to consider work-life balance in their own lives, might assist them in gaining a better understanding of the concept that would encourage consideration of work-life balance within the complicated context of clients' lives and career paths.

Supervision is a less established practice in the training of career counselors, and there is limited documentation of the specific skills necessary in career counseling supervision or of the benefits of supervision to career counselors (Lombardo, 2008; McMahon, 2003; Parcover, 2000; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). Bernard and Goodyear (2008) list four functions of supervision: (a) acquisition and improvement of counseling skills and knowledge; (b) protection of the client; (c) transmission of professional culture, including professional ethics and ethical decision-making; and (d) professional development and growth. Due to the parallels between the process of career counseling and personal counseling and the necessity of learning the same basic skills, it is reasonable to consider there may be similar benefits in providing supervision to career counselors (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). However, there may be distinct benefits, concerns, or foci specific to the supervision of career counseling. Therefore, this study explored the

experience of supervision within the context of career counseling. Additionally, this study integrated elements specifically aimed at addressing the work-life balance of career counselors.

Statement of the Problem

Clinical supervision is emphasized as an important element of counselor training, which is evidenced by the frequent inclusion of clinical supervision in ethical, accreditation, and licensing (American Counseling Association, 2014; Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 2009). However, clinical supervision receives less attention and emphasis in the area of career counseling (McMahon & Patton, 2000). Supervision of career counselors is included in the National Career Development Association's *Career Counseling Competencies* (The National Career Development Association, 2009). Specifically, the role of supervision in career counseling is to allow career counselors to: recognize their own abilities and limitations, maintain and improve counseling skills, understand their role, understand legal and ethical obligations, consult in order to address client issues, and address personal and professional development (The National Career Development Association, 2009).

There has also been some discussion in career counseling and supervision literature regarding the need for clinical supervision (McMahon, 2003; McMahon & Patton, 2000; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999; Reid, 2010). Two quantitative studies examined the necessary competencies of a career counseling supervisor and the impact of supervision on the relationship between supervisor and supervisee (Lombardo, 2008; Parcover, 2000). However, there has been limited research exploring the process of career counseling supervision and experiences of career counselors during supervision. In particular, there has been limited research of the experience of career counselors as they participate in clinical supervision.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of career counselors participating in group supervision integrating aspects of work-life balance. The study utilized a phenomenological approach in order to access the lived experiences of the participants. Additionally, the study employed case study methodology to explore the specific case of this supervision model being applied in a career services center. The purpose of this study was to better understand how career counselors experience clinical supervision and how supervision with a focus on work-life balance impacts their work.

Research Questions

The primary research questions explored in this study were:

1. How do career counselors experience the integration of work-life balance in group supervision?
2. How do career counselors describe any effect on their career counseling of group supervision integrating work-life balance?

Significance of Study

The need for supervision in the field of career counseling has been noted in prior research and the National Career Development Association's career counseling competencies (McMahon, 2003; McMahon & Patton, 2000; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999; Reid, 2010; Skovholt, Grier, & Hanson, 2001; The National Career Development Association, 2009). However, there have been few studies exploring the salient aspects of supervision or describing application of supervision within the context of career counseling (Lombardo, 2008; Parcover, 2000).

Reid (2010) highlighted the fact that career counselors need counseling skills in order to be effective in working with clients. The goal of supervision in counselor training is to guide practitioners in their understanding of the overall counseling process and help to improve

counseling skills. This is often emphasized in clinical counseling; however, it has been frequently overlooked in the training and supervision of career counselors. There are often supportive aspects of supervision, which are emphasized more heavily in the context of clinical counseling. As the caseloads of career counselors increase and the stress related to outcomes similarly increase, the supportive aspects of supervision may become more important for career counselors as well (McMahon & Patton, 2000; Reid, 2010; Skovholt et al., 2001). This study added to the current research on counselor supervision by providing information regarding the specific application of clinical supervision within the context of career counseling. Additionally, the study addressed supportive aspects of supervision through the integration of work-life balance as a regular topic in supervision.

Methodology

Participants

The participants for this study were four career counselors from a university career services center at a medium-sized university in the southwestern United States. The career counselors at the career services center were master's-level practitioners. They provided a range of services to students enrolled at the university, including: career assessment, career counseling, resume assistance, job search skills, internship placement, interview coaching, and other related career services. All participants provided direct career services to students during the course of supervision. The career counselors typically participated in individual supervision with the career services assistant director. Participants were those who voluntarily agreed to participate in eight weekly group supervision sessions.

The Case Study Approach

A case study design utilizing journaling, individual interviews, field observations, and a focus group was appropriate to explore the proposed research questions. Yin (2009) defines a case study as, “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context” (p. 18). The context in this study was necessary to understand beyond the bounds of the supervision group to see the potential impact of supervision and work-life balance on the career counselors’ lives and work. Additionally, this was an exploratory study into a previously limited area of knowledge in the field of career counseling. Thus, it was difficult to anticipate specific outcomes. Case study design allows the researcher to provide a description, which can inform an explanation of how a process occurred when a specific set of outcomes is not available (Yin, 2009).

After receiving permission from the associate director of a career services center, I facilitated a group supervision experience integrating work-life balance for a period of eight weeks. Information regarding the implementation of clinical supervision in career counseling is limited. Additionally, there has not been a strong focus on work-life balance in career counseling. Therefore, this experience represented a unique case.

Supervision

All career counselors, who volunteered to do so and the associate director of career services participated in the weekly group supervision meetings. The meetings each lasted approximately one hour. The inclusion of the associate director allowed an additional perspective on participation in the supervision experience, as well as experience and knowledge of career interventions. Each group supervision experience included the following elements: discussion or an activity related to an area of work-life balance, group case consultation, and time for reflection and journaling at the end of the session. The activities and discussions related

to work-life balance allowed participants to personally reflect and address their own work-life balance (see Appendix A).

Data Collection

Basic demographic information was collected from all participants at the beginning of the study (see Appendix B). At the conclusion of the group supervision experience, I collected the completed journals, which included entries reflecting on each supervision session. Discussion and reflection on the work-life balance plans and current career counseling work was included in each session. Journal prompts (see Appendix C) were provided to allow participants to reflect and respond to each session. Individual interviews were completed after the conclusion of the group supervision experience with each participant to explore their experience with the group supervision process. A semi-structured interview format following an interview guide (see Appendix D) was utilized to allow a conversational tone and free exploration of the participants' experiences while focusing on the area under study (Patton, 2002). Transcriptions of the interviews were sent to participants for member checking. And finally, a focus group was conducted with all participants following the development of initial themes to allow for clarification and review by the group. I maintained a field journal to document observations throughout the process.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was established through the use of multiple data sources (Patton, 2002). Data was collected from participants through journals, interviews, and a focus group. Additionally, member checking was utilized to assure the accuracy of data collection following the interviews and to verify the initial themes during the focus group. I also maintained a reflective journal and rival explanations were sought throughout the study. I was also fully

involved with implementation of the supervision, interviews, and the focus group to allow prolonged engagement with the case (Yin, 2011).

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study integrated concepts and methods from Yin and Auerbach and Silverstein (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Yin, 2009). Yin outlines four principles for high quality data analysis (2009). First, the researcher should include all the evidence and the interpretation of the data should account for all the evidence. This study addressed data inclusion and interpretation by following established coding and data analysis procedures. Second, the researcher should address all possible rival or alternative explanations. If there is an alternative explanation, the researcher should address all possible explanations in interpretation of the data. Rival explanations were sought and included during the data analysis process, following the development of initial themes. Third, the researcher should address the most significant aspect of the case, which helps to address possible avoidance of negative findings. This was addressed in this study by outlining research questions and focusing on those original research questions throughout the data analysis process. Finally, Yin emphasizes using prior, expert knowledge (Yin, 2009). This can be achieved by becoming aware of recent research and knowledge in the area of study. For this particular study, I have prior knowledge and experience with clinical supervision, and I also included an extensive literature review related to career counseling supervision and work-life balance.

The coding process explained by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) was utilized during the initial stage of analysis. Auerbach and Silverstein recommend focusing on a general research concern at the beginning of the analysis. The primary research concern for this study was to understand the participants' experiences of the group supervision integrating work-life balance.

The focus during initial analysis was on reducing the collected data to relevant text in order to make it manageable for further analysis.

After the relevant text was identified, I re-examined the text to identify repeated ideas and look for patterns. The repeated ideas began to shed additional light on the research concerns and served as building blocks for overall themes. Then, I assembled a list of all repeating ideas and examined them to begin grouping repeating ideas into categories, which became themes. After initial themes were developed, potential rival explanations were explored. The initial themes were presented to participants through the focus group, and possible information related to rival explanations was pursued.

The final analytic process involved explanation building to construct the final case study report from iterations through the data. The process began by composing an explanation of how the participants experienced the group supervision process building from the initial themes. Then I reviewed the data and attempted to provide an explanation for units of meaning that did not fit initial themes, as well as potential rival explanations. The revision of the proposed explanation was then examined relative to the initial themes, and the process was repeated until a final, inclusive explanation emerged.

Ethical Considerations

The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi [April 29, 2013, #163-12]. Confidentiality was addressed by participants choosing a code name identifier for all data collection. The participation of the associate director in supervision caused additional concerns. The associate director provided individual supervision and guidance related to the work of the career counselors. Participants may have felt pressure to participate and share personal information during discussions and activities due to the

involvement of the associate director. Throughout supervision, I reminded participants that all activities were voluntary, and they could choose to participate at the level they felt comfortable. The associate director did not have access to the research data, outside of her own transcripts.

Basic Assumptions/Researcher Bias

Yin (2011) discusses the researcher as the research instrument in qualitative research. The researcher is responsible for collecting and filtering the data. Therefore, it is necessary to explain the lens through which the researcher designs the study and collects and examines the data.

As a researcher, I chose qualitative case study research methodology, which emphasizes and examines context. I believe that context is important in examining the interventions utilized in counseling, education, and supervision. I believe in the socially constructed nature of knowledge, and I therefore believe the inclusion of contextual variables and description is important to the counselor education knowledge base, particularly relevant to the implications for interventions.

I also brought certain beliefs and biases to the research topic. I hold the assumption that supervision is a necessary and helpful aspect of counselor education and training. I also believed that clinical supervision and discussion would be helpful to career counselors at a college counseling center. Based on my interests in the changing nature of work in society, as well as the change for workers and life roles, I thought it would be interesting and important to explore the area of work-life balance within the context of career counseling and supervision. Also, with the topic of self-care being emphasized in counselor education and supervision, I believed this would be a way to target self-care for career counselors and enhance their work with clients.

I tend to favor unstructured supervision and consultation; however, I also integrated structured activities and topics of discussion to help guide the sessions both for the purposes of research and possible preferences by participants. I assumed that participants would actively participate and find value in the activities and discussions during supervision. However, I was also open to the possibility that some counselors favor different styles of supervision and consultation.

My counseling experience has primarily consisted of community mental health work with children and families. Most of the clients I work with come from families experiencing intergenerational poverty. My work has caused me to examine the ways education and career impact mental health and social concerns for clients. In particular, I have noticed the way that work impacts other life roles, which led to my interest in work-life balance. I have found clinical supervision and consultation to be helpful in my own clinical training and work. Additionally, I have found it necessary to seek out structured ways of addressing self-care and burnout prevention due to some of the stressors associated with community mental health work. While my work setting does not specifically target career issues, I have integrated aspects of career counseling in my community work. I have education in career counseling and participate in available continuing education through the National Career Development Association. Expertise about the career services center was available through the participation of the associate director in the supervision sessions. Participants helped guide the focus of supervision beyond the planned work-life balance aspects.

Limitations

One limitation of the study was that the supervision group was limited to eight weeks. On-going supervision beyond eight weeks which maintained a focus on work-life balance could

have had different results. By definition, case study design involves examining a single unit or group; however, this case allowed in-depth exploration of the experiences within a single case of the supervision. It was hoped that the depth of the explained experience would be of value rather than a range of experiences with the intervention. Within the literature, a clear definition of work-life balance was lacking. In designing the intervention, I chose to focus on particular aspects of work-life balance; thus, the study was limited to those aspects of work-life balance addressed in the group.

Definitions of Key Terms

Certain terms were used throughout the study to describe the intervention and research design. The terms are listed and defined here to provide a clear understanding of the meanings within the context of the study.

Work-life balance. Waumsley, Hemmings, and Payne (2010) define work-life balance as the ability to achieve balance between both work and life away from work, which is acceptable to the individual and allows fulfillment in both domains.

Career counseling. The National Career Development Association (2009) defines career counseling “as the process of assisting individuals in the development of a life-career with focus on the definition of the worker role and how that role interacts with other life roles” (p. 1).

Clinical supervision. The National Career Development Association (2009) defines the purpose of supervision within the context of career counseling competencies as the process of evaluating career counselor performance and assisting career counselors in developing professional skills. The model of supervision adopted within this study follows a process proposed by McMahon and Patton (2000) for adopting clinical supervision within the field of

career counseling, which involves “counselors presenting their work to a supervisor for discussion, feedback, review, reflection, or guidance” (p. 157).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore how career counselors experience group supervision integrating work-life balance. Previous research has indicated that supervision may be helpful to career counselors by drawing on the common links between clinical and career counseling. Supervision has been a required part of training in counseling; however, there has been little documentation of the implementation of supervision within the career counseling specialization. This study sought to add to the literature in counseling supervision through a qualitative case study of a group supervision experience integrating work-life balance.

CHAPTER II: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a thorough examination of the literature related to the purpose of clinical supervision in counselor education and recommendations for the practice of clinical supervision in career counseling. Literature regarding the need to attend to career counselors' self-care and wellness is presented. Due to the limited availability of work-life balance research, particularly in the counseling field, similar concepts like occupational balance are included in this chapter. The areas covered in this review form the foundation for the current study and relate to the findings that emerged.

Clinical Supervision

Bernard and Goodyear (2009) explained that the training of mental health professionals includes two primary components: the theories and research that comprise the knowledge base of the field and practical knowledge from clinical experience. The focus of counselor education programs is to prepare practitioners by providing a foundation in the knowledge base of the field, which provides for training related to the first component. The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Programs (CACREP) currently provides accreditation for master's and doctoral level programs in counseling. The purpose of the CACREP 2009 standards is to ensure that counseling programs provide knowledge and training in the eight common core areas: (a) professional orientation and ethical practice, (b) social and cultural diversity, (c) human growth and development, (d) career development, (e) helping relationships, (f) group work, (g) assessment, and (h) research and program evaluation. The eight common core areas are intended to represent the necessary knowledge to successfully practice. Supervision of clinical work is included in CACREP-accredited counseling training programs during the practicum and internship experiences (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational

Programs, 2009). Supervision can continue for new professionals after the completion of a counseling program, particularly for clinical counselors, who are pursuing a license from a regulatory board. However, career counselors and school counselors are often not required to obtain post-degree supervised experience (Evans & Payne, 2008; Hoppin & Goodman, 2014; McMahon & Patton, 2000; Skovholt et al., 2001). Clinical supervision allows for the integration of knowledge and practice under the guidance of a trained and experienced supervisor (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Clinical supervision within the field of counseling has been defined as:

A didactic and interpersonal activity whereby the supervisor facilitates the provision of feedback to one or more supervisees. This feedback can pertain to the work in supervision, the supervisee(s), the supervisees' clients, or the supervisor, and can positively or negatively influence supervisee counselor competence and client outcome.

(Bradley, Ladany, Hendricks, Whiting, & Rhode, 2010, p. 3)

Bradley et al.'s (2010) definition of counselor supervision is inclusive of supervision in both individual and group forms. They also acknowledge the possibility that supervision could potentially have a negative influence due to the lack of clear, empirical evidence linking counseling supervision with counselor competence and client outcome. Bradley et al. (2010) listed "three main purposes of clinical supervision: facilitation of counselor professional and personal development, promotion of counselor competencies, and promotion of accountable counseling services and programs" (p. 6). The knowledge base of counseling is constantly expanding through new research in the field, which requires that counselors engage in lifelong learning. In addition to continuing education requirements, which are often associated with professional licenses, supervision can promote lifelong learning and development (McMahon & Patton, 2000; Skovholt et al., 2001). Additionally, Skovholt et al. (2001) highlighted that

counselor education programs cannot provide counselors with training in all the necessary areas for successful practice over the counselor's career. As counselors gain new knowledge, clinical supervision can help counselors with their training needs in application of the knowledge (Hoppin & Goodman, 2014; Lara, Kline, & Paulson, 2011).

Several existing models of clinical supervision are highlighted within the literature on career counseling supervision: Kagan's interpersonal process recall model, the integrated developmental model, the discrimination model, and the systems approach to supervision (Bronson, 2010; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). However, the suggestion to apply these models to career counseling supervision is only conceptual. There is no research examining the effectiveness of existing models of supervision in a career counseling setting. Additionally, group supervision is a specific supervision format and provides a different experience to supervisees than individual supervision; however, there is limited research describing the different experiences in or effective elements of group versus individual supervision (Rowell, 2010). Currently, CACREP-accredited programs are required to provide group supervision to students in practicum and internship, including students training to become career counselors (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, 2009). Thus, career counselors are likely to encounter group supervision through their education experience, as well as employment or licensure if pursued. However, career counselors' exposure to individual clinical supervision is likely more limited.

Career Counseling Supervision

There is a significant focus on the importance of supervision within the training of clinical counselors. However, there is a lack of research related to supervision within the field of career counseling (McMahon & Patton, 2000). Limited conceptual articles and book chapters

about the integration of career counseling competencies into existing models of clinical supervision have been published; however, there has been a lack of empirical research related to the training needs of career counselors or the provision of career counseling supervision (Hoppin & Goodman, 2014; Parcover & Swanson, 2013; Patton & McMahon, 2014; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). The limited research available concerning supervision of career counseling suggests similar areas to be addressed by both personal and career counseling supervision (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). The commonalities in the literature between career counseling supervision and personal counseling supervision include: (a) exploring attitudes toward counseling, (b) providing the opportunity to increase counseling self-efficacy, (c) providing support for counseling activities, (d) assisting supervisees in understanding the overlap between career and personal issues, and (e) developing specific counseling skills (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). Developing specific counseling skills includes both relationship building skills and skills related to specific effective interventions for the supervisees' population(s) (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). Bronson (2010) stated that no explicit career counseling supervision theories have been proposed. Furthermore, Bronson indicated the factors specific to the process of career counseling supervision and training have not been researched or described.

Supervision is recognized as an important competency within the *Career Counselor Competencies* identified by the National Career Development Association (2009). McMahon and Patton (2000) also suggested that career counseling supervision may help counselors with evaluation of their counseling skills and further development after they have completed their graduate education. Ongoing learning, training, reflection, and evaluation are particularly relevant to career counselors due to the changing nature of career and work (McMahon & Patton, 2000). Unfortunately, the majority of the literature in the career counseling field focuses on the

needs of clients, and there is very little information about the training needs of career counselors (McMahon & Patton, 2000). Without research on the training needs and possible interventions to promote the development of career counselors, ongoing learning for career counselors is inhibited. This ultimately affects clients, because career counselors are not able to provide optimal services to clients (McMahon & Patton, 2000). McMahon and Patton suggested that supervision can serve as a context for career counselors to become self-reflective and self-monitoring. A counselor can make observations regarding his or her interactions in the counseling session, his or her perception of the relationship with the client, and overall themes in his or her personal and professional development. Supervisors can assist career counselors in their development by providing additional perspectives, identifying blind spots, clarifying issues that arise, and providing feedback and recommendations for growth (McMahon & Patton, 2000). McMahon and Patton state that one of the primary purposes of supervision is to guide counselors toward achieving greater self-awareness. Stressful and demanding work conditions can distract counselors from the process of self-reflection necessary to move towards greater self-awareness. Therefore, supervision serves a necessary role in designating a learning environment to facilitate self-reflection and self-monitoring. Additionally, McMahon and Patton explained that uncovering learning needs during supervision can be a stressful process for supervisees, which can be addressed by a strong supervisory relationship based on warmth and trust. There is a link between supportive supervision and burnout prevention and stress relief (McMahon & Patton, 2000).

McMahon and Patton (2000) also discussed highlighting the importance of the counseling relationship and emotional content within the career counseling process. Supervision allows a context to monitor the overall development of counselors and their ability to exhibit

skills necessary to establish working relationships; however, training and supervision in career counseling have typically focused on career counseling on a case by case basis. Career counselors have also been encouraged to focus on the cognitive aspects of career counseling rather than the emotional and relational (McMahon & Patton, 2000).

Currently, many students graduate from counseling programs with limited training in career counseling, which leaves many new professionals unprepared to handle the career counseling concerns of real clients. Most master's-level counseling programs only offer one course in career development, and many counseling programs lack faculty with a specialty in career counseling (Hoppin & Goodman, 2014). Lara, Kline, and Paulson (2011) found in a qualitative study of students' attitudes toward career counseling and their experience in a career counseling course that students did not feel prepared to deal with the issues of career counseling based on their limited training within their master's program. Students described a supervised career-specific internship as "valued, necessary, and lacking" (Lara et al., 2011, p. 437). Students believed that their training was incomplete without supervision of the application of career theory and interventions to actual cases (Lara et al., 2011). They welcomed the feedback and guidance of a more advanced practitioner or faculty member.

A final need, which can be addressed through supervision, is self-care. Career counselors can experience professional isolation, particularly during periods of stress. Similar to the lack of research related to supervision in career counseling, little has been written about self-care needs of career counselors. Supervision can be an ideal environment for addressing the self-care and support needs of career counselors (McMahon & Patton, 2000). McMahon and Patton (2014) noted the importance of balancing challenge and support within the environment of career counseling supervision. Supervisors need to create a challenging environment for learning and

discovery in supervision; however, they can also serve as a supportive consultant to career counselors.

Hoppin and Goodman (2014) developed an overview of suggested strategies for providing clinical supervision to career development practitioners for the National Career Development Association. They noted that career counselors had additional needs beyond those typically addressed with counselors in clinical supervision (Hoppin & Goodman, 2014). Hoppin and Goodman highlighted the complex nature of career needs and career counseling in the 21st century as a significant reason for the need for specialized career counseling supervision. However, they also noted that historically career counseling practice has been oversimplified (Hoppin & Goodman, 2014). They explained that career counseling supervisors require specialized skills beyond those of a typical clinical supervisor in order to assist career counselors negotiating the complex interactions inherent to career counseling (Hoppin & Goodman, 2014). Additionally, due to limited career counseling training in counseling programs, new professionals may be unaware of some of the career counseling tools and resources available on the internet or in print. Career counseling supervisors can also provide guidance related to career decision-making theories, research, and appropriate career assessment (Lara et al., 2011).

Methods of Career Counseling Supervision

Prieto and Betsworth (1999) proposed the application of the integrated developmental model (IDM) as an appropriate conceptual framework for career counseling supervision. The integrated developmental model was chosen because it is an empirically supported developmental model of counselor supervision, and the developmental stages and professional domains closely align with the training needs of career counseling supervision (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). Within the integrated developmental model, counselors move across three

stages of development from Stage 1, which captures the developmental level of a novice counselor to Stage 3 – Integrated, which describes an advanced counselor, who is capable of integrating necessary skills to function at a high therapeutic level (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). The three developmental structures within which growth is monitored and evaluated are: autonomy, motivation, and self and other awareness (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). The developmental structures capture developmental tasks that are necessary for professional development within career counseling similar to clinical counseling. Motivation specifically relates to a counselor’s understanding of his or her role, and the counselor’s confidence in his or her professional identity. Autonomy and awareness relate to separate aspects of the counselor’s ability to function within the therapeutic relationship. The goal of supervision is for the counselor to gain knowledge, skill, and feelings of self-efficacy in order to become more autonomous in counseling practice and clinical decisions. Additionally, the emphasis on self and other awareness through IDM provides a way to address self-reflection and build relationship skills within career counseling supervision. The only adaptation of IDM for career counseling supervision would be to the professional domains; however, career counseling professional domains closely align with those proposed within IDM: “professional ethics, treatment plans and goals, theoretical orientation, individual differences, client conceptualization, interpersonal assessment, assessment techniques and intervention skills competence” (Prieto & Betsworth, 1999, p. 178).

Bronson (2010) developed an outline of effective career counseling supervision by integrating career counseling theory and research with existing research and models of counseling supervision. Effective career counseling attends to ten areas: (a) the supervisory relationship, (b) counseling skills, (c) case conceptualization, (d) assessment skills, (e) resources

and information (knowledge of basic career resources), (f) the interconnection between personal issues and career issues, (g) promoting supervisee interest in career counseling (modeling quality career counseling and addressing myths about career counseling), (h) addressing career issues in developmentally and age appropriate ways, (i) multicultural issues, and (j) ethics (Bronson, 2010). Bronson included the supervisory relationship first in the list of components of career counseling supervision to emphasize the importance of the relationship to the effectiveness of supervision. Similar to the process of clinical counseling supervision, Bronson noted the importance of the building of the working alliance in supervision as a parallel process to relationship building within the counseling relationship. The importance of the acquisition and development of counseling skills within supervision was also indicated (Bronson, 2010). Bronson suggested that the interpersonal process recall model is a particularly useful method to facilitate supervisees' counseling skill development. Interpersonal process recall allows supervisors and supervisees to use audio or video recordings to explore the use of additional and alternative counseling skills within the context of actual counseling sessions. In the same way Hoppin and Goodman (2014) emphasized the importance of career counselors learning and applying counseling skills within the context of career counseling, Bronson specifically noted that career counselors can only provide effective career counseling when they develop counseling skills as they specifically relate to career issues. Assessment is included in the career counseling supervision components as a particularly complex task; however, it is often overlooked in the training and practice of career counselors. The selection of appropriate assessment methods and integration of assessment results within the counseling process are issues that need to be addressed within supervision. Bronson also highlighted the lack of specific research related to the effective training and supervision of counselors in assessment methods.

Didactic training, role play, and monitoring assessment sessions with clients are included as ways to address assessment in supervision.

The overlap of career and personal issues is a particularly relevant area to career counseling supervision. Bronson (2010) emphasized the need for holistic counseling even within the career counseling context. Supervisors can support career counselors' development by attending to the whole client in supervision. Career development is impacted by a myriad of personal characteristics and social context factors. Additionally, career and work issues can impact aspects of the client's life and well-being. Bronson suggested that clients are best served when supervisors and counselors avoid the tendency to split client issues into personal and career domains. Supervisors can create an atmosphere for the integration of career and personal issues by encouraging counselors to treat "people presenting with career concerns" and taking into consideration all the personal and social factors that impact the person and the career concern (Bronson, 2010, p. 272). A major implication of the emphasis on the overlap between career and personal counseling is that supervisors need to ensure supervisees are competent to "recognize, identify, and diagnose mental health concerns and be able to refer the client for proper treatment" (Bronson, 2010, pp. 272-273). Career counselors do not necessarily have to be competent to treat presenting mental health concerns; however, they should be able to recognize those concerns, as well as be able to consider their relation to the presenting career concerns in order to proceed effectively. Bronson suggested the discrimination model of supervision as a useful intervention to promote a holistic view of clients in career counseling supervision through the use of the three roles of teacher, counselor, and consultant. Through the teacher role, the supervisor can provide the supervisee with additional knowledge and expertise in new areas or more complex client presentations, such as those integrating personal and career presenting

concerns. The supervisor can assist the supervisee in exploring his or her own thoughts, feelings, and past experiences that may be impacting the counseling process through the counselor role. Finally, the supervisor and the supervisee can collaborate to explore a holistic case conceptualization of the client, as well as consider possible interventions and future interactions with the client.

Bronson (2010) also emphasized the importance of attending to client characteristics in the consideration of the developmental and multicultural context of career counseling and supervision. Career issues are impacted by personal characteristics, developmental stage, and wider social contexts including multicultural issues. Bronson also suggested the discrimination model in the consideration of multicultural issues in career counseling supervision. The supervisor as a teacher can educate and provide the supervisee with resources in areas of limited cultural understanding. The supervisor can also demonstrate skills or questions to assist the supervisee in exploring multicultural issues with the client. In the counselor role, the supervisor can assist the supervisee in exploring beliefs and feelings related to multicultural issues and cross-cultural counseling with clients. Finally, the supervisor can partner with the supervisee as a consultant to establish goals related to expansion of multicultural competence as a part of supervision.

Bronson (2010) highlighted the importance of promoting interest in career counseling in supervision. Promoting interest in career counseling can motivate supervisees to develop career counseling competencies and provide quality career counseling services. Additionally, promoting interest in career counseling assures that counselors are more likely to attend to career issues within the counseling context. Bronson noted research and trends within the fields of counseling and psychology that indicate students and professionals are less interested in career

counseling than clinical counseling. Additionally, some counselors have inaccurate views of career counseling as being less challenging, less lucrative, and only relating to career placement. Bronson explained that supervision can serve as a context to motivate new professionals and dispel inaccurate beliefs regarding career counseling. Bronson also explained that supervisees were positively influenced by enthusiastic supervisors who communicated the interrelation between career and personal counseling.

The importance of the supervisory relationship, developing counseling skills, and the intersection of personal issues and career issues are areas that are sometimes overlooked in career counseling. Additionally, counselors may hold inaccurate beliefs about career counseling, and they may not take ethical and multicultural considerations as seriously within a career counseling context (Bronson, 2010). Bronson noted that in order for career counseling to move beyond attending to the technical aspects of career, career counselors need to develop counseling skills, which will form the basis of their relationship with clients. Within career counseling supervision, supervisors can focus specifically on the application of basic counseling skills to career issues.

Patton and McMahon (2014) presented a model of supervision from a systems theory perspective with an emphasis on experiential learning. A systems theory perspective encourages supervisors and supervisees to consider the interrelated systems involved in the delivery of services to clients. Patton and McMahon emphasized that career counselors should develop into self-directed lifelong learners through the guided process and learning environment co-constructed by the supervisor and the supervisee within supervision. A number of influences from different stakeholders impact the content of supervision: “the profession’s requirements for training, the organization’s policies and needs, the supervisee’s learning requirements, the

supervisor's teaching objectives, and the consumer's need for effective professional service" (Patton & McMahon, 2014, p. 318). Patton and McMahon paid particular attention to the impact of the counselor's immediate social system, past personal and career experiences, and wider environmental-social system on his or her work with clients. The recursive and nonlinear nature of supervision was also highlighted. Counselors bring particular issues, questions, and challenges regarding their work to supervision, while the information being discussed within supervision also impacts the content of counseling sessions, as well as the personal and professional development of the counselor (Patton & McMahon, 2014). Additionally, due to counselors' participation in the constantly changing social system, they are continually subjected to new influences and experiences (McMahon & Patton, 2000). Similar to other models of career counseling supervision, Patton and McMahon noted the importance of developing counseling skills and techniques, gaining an understanding of career theory, and developing the supervisee's personal and professional development. However, they also placed particular importance on supervisee self-reflection on aspects of practice and enhancing self-awareness. Patton and McMahon stated that supervisors should assist supervisees in processing their emotional and cognitive experiences of themselves and clients during counseling so they can move toward a process of self-monitoring.

Self-Care Needs in Career Counseling

Burnout is not typically considered a risk for career counselors as it is with clinical counselors. However, according to Skovholt, Grier, and Hanson (2001), career counselors engage in the same caring cycle as other helping professionals. Career counselors are also exposed to other risk factors for burnout, such as: (a) assisting clients with unsolvable problems; (b) working with clients with low resources; (c) dealing with a gap in readiness to change

between client and counselor; (d) difficulty with personal boundaries and saying no; (e) large amounts of time spent engaged in empathy and one-way caring; (f) difficulty measuring success; and (g) the need to accept normative failure (Skovholt et al., 2001). The exposure of career counselors to these risk factors highlights the need for attention to self-care. Skovholt et al. (2001) noted that “balancing the four personal dimensions of wellness – physical, spiritual, emotional, and social” is vital to counselor self-care (p.4). An additional element of self-care for counselors is balancing relationships in their personal lives with the consideration that they engage in so many one-way caring relationships professionally (Skovholt et al., 2001). McMahon and Patton (2000) also addressed the need for attention to counselor well-being and support as a part of supervision with career counselors; however, they noted the potential professional isolation and stressful work environments within career counseling. Career counselors have less access to supervision and consultation, as well as resources to support those activities than clinical counselors (McMahon & Patton, 2000). Additionally, career counselors often practice in university settings, and increasingly, universities are expecting counselors to work harder and provide better outcomes while simultaneously cutting resources and budgets. McMahon and Patton explained that work environment is one of the factors that contributes to burnout.

Work-Life Balance

A review of the literature indicated that researchers have yet to come to a clear consensus on the definition of work-life balance (Christiansen & Matuska, 2006; Kalliath & Brough, 2008; Reiter, 2007). Work-life balance has become a topic of interest within psychology and health professions as a result of the heavy demands placed on individuals living in the developed world. A lack of lifestyle balance has been documented as a contributor to stress in American society.

Christiansen and Matsuka (2006) indicated that over half of U.S. workers reported experiencing moderate or a lot of stress while nearly half of U.S. workers also reported that their work interfered with their personal lives. Research has particularly highlighted the link between a balanced lifestyle and both health and coping ability (Christiansen & Matuska, 2006). Changes in the structure of modern society and modern work require individuals to adapt in order to cope with the demands and maintain healthy lives (Christiansen & Matuska, 2006).

Due to a lack of research, theories identifying the specific components of a balanced lifestyle have not been proposed. However, Christiansen and Matsuka (2006) posited that a life pattern of activities consistent with an individual's values, skills, and interests will positively contribute to life balance and well-being. They also suggested that a balanced lifestyle will include daily, healthy habits, as well as low levels of ongoing stress. Christiansen and Matsuka also explained that healthy lifestyle balance will improve health and increase positive coping. Backman (2010) indicated that work-life conflict often arises from role overload and work-family conflict. Contributing factors to role overload include: "too many demands for the time available, tight production schedules, lack of support in the workplace, and escalating technological complexity" (Backman, 2010, p. 239).

Historically, there is a link between life balance and mental health in the mental hygiene movement (Christiansen & Matuska, 2006). Adolf Meyer, who was a champion of the mental hygiene movement and helped establish the foundation for occupational therapy, proposed that lifestyle and biological factors interacted to impact mental health (Christiansen & Matuska, 2006). When the mental hygiene movement started in the early twentieth century, it was a response to rapid industrialization and its perceived link to mental illness through individuals' inability to cope with the changes (Christiansen & Matuska, 2006). Meyer (1922) explained

human health as related to a kind of rhythm and highlighted the big four rhythms, which humans must balance as: work, play, rest, and sleep. He further emphasized that humans must be able to balance these aspects even under stress. The only way for humans to be able to achieve lifestyle balance was through practice and attending to an intentional program of healthy living (Meyer, 1922). Unfortunately, there has been little attention paid to the concept of life balance or efforts to assist individuals in developing skills to address their life balance within mental health fields since Meyer's contribution. Suggested concepts for addressing work-life balance from Amundson (2001) will be covered in this literature review; however, there have not been any research advancements related to interventions or a clearer understanding of the concept. Literature has been primarily concerned with the general concepts of wellness and self-care. Occupational therapy literature has advanced the understanding of the balance concept; however, within this field, that understanding has also been primarily conceptual in nature without supporting empirical research.

Occupational Balance

Work-life balance is not well researched and addressed in the counseling literature; however, a similar concept occupational balance is an integral concept to the field of occupational therapy (Backman, 2004). Occupational therapy developed in the 20th century with the purpose of advancing health through the use of occupations (Jarman, 2010). Occupational therapists believe that being involved in a variety of occupations assists people in experiencing a variety of benefits, including: educational, health, and social (Jarman, 2010). Occupation includes all "the daily pursuits of humans" and refers to "more than engagement in work" (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010, p. 2). Occupational balance includes both paid and unpaid employment, as well as other occupations necessary to meet the needs within an

individual's life. Therefore, it is a more broad, inclusive concept than work-life balance or work-family balance (Backman, 2010). Christiansen and Townsend explained that occupations provide meaning to people's lives, and humans construct their identity from the occupations in which they choose to participate. Occupations serve as a context for social interaction, and occupations are also influenced by social, cultural, and economic factors (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010). Christiansen and Townsend explained that people often use "an occupational lens to understand what people are doing, or want and need to do to survive, be healthy, and live well as valued citizens" (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010, p. 2).

Backman (2010) defined occupational balance as "the extent to which [people] are able to organize and participate in occupations in a manner congruent with their aspirations and values" (p. 232). People engage in a variety of occupations to support their various life roles. The occupations chosen are shaped by environmental demands, as well as personal needs and desires (Backman, 2010). Occupational balance is a perceived state, because people experience it, and it cannot be directly observed. Additionally, occupational balance is an individualized, dynamic process (Backman, 2010). The subjective and dynamic nature of occupational balance have contributed to difficulty in defining and studying it. Occupational balance is most accurately conceptualized as a relative state on a continuum anchored by occupational imbalance on one end and ideal occupational balance on the other end. Backman (2010) explained that occupational balance is similar to "life balance, lifestyle balance, work-life balance, role balance, and work-family balance" (p. 233). However, each term is shaped by the relevant field in which it is used and the assumptions that underlie it. Occupational scientists have criticized work-life balance and work-family balance as being dichotomous concepts, as well as focusing on interventions and research that benefit the employer or organization rather than the individuals

within the organization and their well-being (Backman, 2010). Occupational imbalance is used to describe the “inability to juggle competing demands,” and occupational imbalance arises due to different circumstances: “an overabundance of occupations, incompatible occupations, or a lack of participation in meaningful occupations” (Backman, 2010, p. 232). The perception of occupational balance has an influence on “happiness, stress, health, and well-being” (Backman, 2010, p. 232).

Occupational therapists have typically viewed occupational balance as balance across the areas of “self-care, productivity, and leisure” (Backman, 2010, p. 234). However, this view of occupational balance has been criticized due to potential oversimplification of the range of occupations, as well as a focus on the temporal dimension (Backman, 2010). Increasingly, occupational therapists are beginning to consider the impact of systemic factors and developmental stage on occupational balance (Backman, 2010). Similar to the contribution of role overload to work-life balance, role overload is seen as contributing to occupational balance. However, with consideration of systemic factors, Backman (2010) highlights the interaction between demands placed on the individual to fulfill both personally valued roles and the demands placed on the individual to live up to external expectations. Unfortunately, individuals tend to internalize these competing demands and ultimately explain inability to meet the demands with self-blame and explanations of not keeping up. When occupational balance and work-life balance are conceptualized as achievable, static states, this can lead to policies and interventions that contribute to increased role strain and occupational imbalance (Backman, 2010). Additionally, due to the emphasis on the necessity of play and self-care as occupations within occupational therapy, occupational therapists do not necessarily view work and leisure as separate, contrasting categories of occupation.

Occupational balance is often explored by observing how people allocate their time across occupations; however, occupational balance is impacted by more than just time (Backman, 2004). Backman (2004) explained that occupational balance is internally defined and perceived by individuals from personal attitudes, values, goals, and perspectives while interacting with time and systemic expectations. Backman (2010) suggested that self-reflection can be used to identify an individual's position on the continuum of occupational balance. Then, an individual could seek strategies to resolve potential imbalance. One of the challenges associated with addressing occupational balance is that it has remained an abstract and evolving concept. Due to the nature of the concept and the lack of a clear, accepted definition, occupational balance has been difficult to research and create empirically based interventions to address (Backman, 2004).

Psychological Detachment from Work

High workload is associated with negative emotional and physical consequences for workers. The negative association between high workload and psychological detachment indicates that excessive workload interferes with workers ability to detach from work at home (Sonnentag & Bayer, 2005; Sonnentag, Kuttler, & Fritz, 2010). Lack of psychological detachment is related to job stressors negatively impacting overall well-being of workers (Sonnentag et al., 2010).

Sonnentag, Kuttler, and Fritz (2010) found in their study with clergy that a particular job stressor, emotional dissonance, was negatively associated to psychological detachment. Emotional dissonance occurs when work requires the worker to express specific emotions at work that may differ from genuinely felt emotions. Sonnentag et al. noted that work that

requires compassion and authenticity may make it particularly difficult to emotionally detach from the work, because the worker may feel they have not delivered good service.

Individual Factors

People vary in the degree to which they can psychologically detach from work. Two individual traits are associated with low psychological detachment: negative affectivity and high job involvement (Sonnentag, 2012). Negative affectivity describes people who tend to react strongly to negative events. Sonnentag suggested people who have high negative affectivity may continue to ruminate on events from the workday and anticipate future work days, which would interfere directly with psychological detachment. High job involvement means that the job plays a central role in the person's identity, which also may interfere with the ability to detach from work during non-work hours. People, who engage in meaningful off-job activities like volunteer work are better able to detach from paid work (Sonnentag, 2012).

Situational Factors

Situational factors from the work environment carryover into non-work hours and impact recovery experiences. Typical job stressors include: workload in terms of the amount of work expected to be completed during the work day and the number of hours worked; role ambiguity; and situational constraints (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). A positive resource from the work environment that may aid workers in self-regulation is job control, which is the ability for the worker to determine the timing and methods to complete work tasks.

Sonnentag (2012) found the strongest predictors of low detachment to be heavy workload and high time pressure at work. The strong influence of situational factors on a worker's ability to detach from work during non-work hours indicates the strength of the work environment in relation to work-life balance and well-being. People who are given more work than they feel

they can accomplish during the workday have less psychological detachment when at home. Sonnentag proposed that heavy workload and high time pressure may increase workers' general level of arousal, which may contribute to difficulty relaxing and detaching from work at home. These factors may also lead workers to continue to think about work-related issues due to unfinished work from the workday, as well as mentally preparing or worrying about work for the next day.

Recovery is particularly important at a high stress job; however, the impact of situational factors that interfere with psychological detachment indicates that recovery is likely impaired at high stress jobs (Sonnentag, 2012). Job stressors may make it more difficult to relax after prolonged activation (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007). Sonnentag suggested that the prolonged arousal that results from reaction to an immediate stressor without the recovery that occurs during detachment may lead to significant health impairments in the long-term. Job stressors also increase fatigue in workers. Fatigue can make it more difficult to participate in leisure activities outside of work. Workers may also have more difficulty with self-regulation in non-work hours due to fatigue (Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007).

The environment outside of work also impacts the ability to which people are able to detach from work and engage in recovery. One particular factor related to the ability to recover from high stress work is that the environment allows the individual to engage in fascination, which is the ability to provide effortless attention. While working, workers have to engage inhibitory mechanisms to allow them to provide directed attention to work tasks. A rich, natural environment allows a worker to provide effortless attention to his or her setting, which provides time for restoration of the faculties necessary to focus attention during the next work day (Sonnentag, 2012).

Addressing Work-Life Balance

From the perspective of life or occupational balance, physical and mental health problems are seen as problems of living or problems of adaptation (Meyer, 1922). One of the ways to address these problems of living is to assist people in learning to organize their time. Within the field of occupational therapy, people organize their time by the occupations in which they choose to engage (Meyer, 1922). People often become trapped between all the pursuits they wish to pursue in limitless time contrasted with the reality of actual time (Meyer, 1922).

Amundson (2001) discussed the challenge of adapting to life balance within a systemic context and addressing the unpredictable nature of life within a physics-based metaphor addressing the dimensions of living: length, width, and depth. Length referred to the length in terms of years of life. Width referred to the busyness of occupations or activities included in daily living, and depth referred to the purpose or meaning of life (Amundson, 2001). Amundson used the three dimensional concepts of length, width, and depth to describe how people create the shape of their lives. Within the width concept, Amundson described social and cultural messages that contribute to too much busyness within a life, such as the perceived indication of importance of an individual based on how busy he or she is. Amundson also highlighted the need for variety and meaning within chosen activities and roles as in the field of occupational therapy.

Amundson acknowledged the importance of awareness of the roles we are engaged in, and the tendency for busyness to distract people from conscious reflection and choice regarding their activities when they are too busy. People need to find a balance between busyness and an absence of activity, but it is also important that people are able to find meaning, which reflects their values in their occupations. Amundson described life balance as encompassing “four sets

of contrasting factors: work and play, physical and spiritual, social and personal, and emotional and intellectual” (p. 123).

Amundson (2001) described the process of establishing boundaries as shaping and creating identity. Establishing boundaries and shaping an individual’s life according to length, width, and depth is a lifelong process that requires energy and active engagement. (Amundson, 2001). Amundson also emphasized that establishing boundaries is a skill that requires development and practice. Amundson described how boundaries are established for individuals according to their needs and values; however, boundaries must also be negotiated and established within a wider social system. Individuals are the active agents who establish and maintain boundaries; however, the shape of their lives is impacted by the interaction between individuals and their social systems. Additionally, Amundson described how boundaries for lives change over time and with new life experiences. It is necessary for individuals to consider flexibility when establishing boundaries for their lives due to the dynamic nature of life as addressed within occupational balance.

Amundson (2001) provided five areas to explore to create a greater awareness of life balance and assess willingness and motivation for change. First, individuals need to consider the available evidence related to their perceived balance or imbalance. Individuals need to consider if examples or experiences in their lives match their perceived level of life balance. Second, Amundson suggested a historical view of how balance and imbalance have developed and shifted over time. Life balance is a dynamic concept so it is likely that individuals can obtain evidence of emotional, behavioral, and systemic circumstances surrounding both balance and imbalance from a historical viewpoint. Third, individuals can consider the feedback they have received from others regarding life balance or imbalance. Individuals consider both their own

perception of balance, as well as messages received from the social system regarding balance. Fourth, individuals consider the impact of life balance on their physical and psychological well-being. Finally, Amundson builds to questioning an individual's satisfaction with his or her life balance to allow individuals to consider if they are ready and willing to actively engage in the process necessary to change their life balance.

Career Counseling Theory and Work-Life Balance

New theories of career counseling emphasize holism and moving beyond a matching approach to career counseling. Hansen (2001) noted that one force in postmodern career counseling is a growing focus on "holistic human development, balance, and career development over the life span" (p. 262). Changes within society, including changes in the nature of work, career patterns, and diverse types of family indicate a need for more integrative approaches to life and work. Hansen (2001) also suggested the growing number of companies that address human needs through human resource initiatives and employee benefits indicates a growing desire amongst workers for more emphasis on relationships, balance, and community. The goal of career counseling within Integrative Life Planning (ILP) is to assist a client in exploring work in relation to other life roles to provide a more holistic view of the client's world (Hansen, 2001). Counseling within ILP attempts to draw connections between the multiple dimensions of a client's life: body, mind, and spirit; life roles: love, learning, labor, leisure, and citizenship; culture; gender, including: self-sufficiency and connectedness for both women and men; community; ways of thinking: rational and intuitive; ways of knowing: qualitative and quantitative; and personal and career issues within a client's life (Hansen, 2001). Integrative Life Planning focuses on six critical life tasks necessary to weave a cohesive whole within the lives of career counseling clients. Two of the six life tasks are particularly relevant to the

discussion of work-life balance and career counseling: attending to physical, mental, and emotional health; and connecting family and work (Hansen, 2011). Hansen noted that work and family roles have a reciprocal effect on each other.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview of the existing research related to career counseling supervision, work-life balance, and related concepts. Research from this chapter will be referred to again in chapter five to support the discussion of this study's findings. The next chapter will provide a discussion of the qualitative methodology utilized in this study as well as a description of the instrumentation of the study, data collection methods, and data analysis methods.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to explore the experiences of career counselors participating in group supervision integrating aspects of work-life balance. Through this study, I (the primary researcher) sought to gain an understanding of how career counselors experience supervision integrating aspects of work-life balance. In order to answer the research questions I designed a study in which I implemented a group supervision experience integrating aspects of work-life balance. This chapter describes in detail the design and methodology that were used to facilitate the exploration of this phenomenon.

Qualitative Design Rationale

Few studies exist that explore the use of supervision in career counseling. Additionally, there is little research exploring how work-life balance relates to career counseling. This study contributes to the body of knowledge pertaining to counselor education by exploring how career counselors experience group supervision integrating work-life balance. Based on the exploratory nature of the study and the research questions driving the study, a qualitative research approach seemed the best fit for the study. Specifically, a phenomenological approach utilizing case study methods was employed in order to examine the lived experiences of participants in the group supervision experience. Phenomenology is the attempt to arrive at the deeper meaning or nature of human experience through systematic methodology (Van Manen, 1990). This phenomenological study is concerned specifically with the experiences of the participants in the case of the application of this supervision model in a career services center. Phenomenology is particularly appropriate for this case study, because phenomenology involves “the taking up of a certain attitude and practicing a certain attentive awareness to the things of the world as we live them rather than as we conceptualize or theorize them, and as we take them for granted” (Van

Manen, 2014, p. 41). The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of the participants in the group supervision experience. Despite the suggestion of the need for supervision in career counseling in the literature, there is limited information regarding the structure or process of supervision with career counselors. Therefore, it is vital to access the experiences of career counselors as they participate in a group supervision intervention. This chapter includes a detailed narrative of the study's design, the methodology used during the study, the role of the researcher, data collection methods, and data analysis procedures.

The study was driven by two primary research questions: (a) How do career counselors experience the integration of work-life balance in group supervision? and (b) How do career counselors describe any effect on their career counseling of group supervision integrating work-life balance? The sources of data for the study came from participants' journals, individual interviews, my field journal of observations during and following each session, and a focus group.

Design Methodology

The study was implemented during the summer of 2013 at a university career services center. As primary investigator for the study, I facilitated eight weekly group supervision sessions, including: (a) clinical supervision and case consultation of the participants' work at the center, (b) discussion of work-life balance issues, and (c) work on an individual plan to address work-life balance. The group supervision sessions were scheduled for one hour in the morning during work hours and were held in the computer lab of the career services center. Results of the study were derived from: (a) the participants' views of the experience, which participants spoke to through individual interviews and weekly journal entries at the conclusion of each supervision

session; (b) confirmation and clarification of initial themes through a focus group; and (c) my research journal.

Role of the Researcher

Van Manen (1990) explained that phenomenological research is by its very nature always connected to a particular person, the researcher, who attempts to make sense of human experience within a particular set of individual, social, and historical circumstances. Therefore, the role of the researcher within phenomenological research is deeply connected to data collection and analysis. Further, the researcher typically selects an area of interest that has special significance or meaning to explore. Van Manen emphasized the importance of a strong and oriented relation to the phenomenon during data analysis and writing in order to maintain focus on the fundamental notion of the phenomenon and research questions guiding the analysis. A researcher's orientation to the phenomenon allows for full, rich description of the lived experience, and a strong orientation also avoids potential pitfalls, such as shallow description or distraction by preconceived notions. My role was as a participant-observer in the study. I designed all the sessions included in the intervention and participated as the facilitator of the group supervision experience. Additionally, I conducted all the individual interviews and the focus group. My involvement in the group sessions as facilitator was necessary so that I could enter into the world of the supervision group and maintain a connection with the experience of which the participants were also a part. Within phenomenology, the researcher's direct involvement allows access to the shared experience and facilitates an eventual grasping and description of the essence of the phenomenon (Van Manen, 1990).

Phenomenological research requires the researcher to return to a natural attitude when approaching the world to allow direct contact with the experience. Prior knowledge, existing

theories, and assumptions related to the phenomenon may prevent thorough investigation and analysis of the phenomenon by predisposing the researcher to make a premature interpretation of the data (Van Manen, 1990). Fortunately, as previously stated, there is very limited research or literature related to supervision in the field of career counseling. Additionally, the application of work-life balance from a positive standpoint of balance within a counseling, counselor education, or supervision context is also limited. I came into this research project with an open perspective regarding the experience of the group, because I did not have any specific, past experience to inform it. However, I have had prior experiences with clinical counselor supervision, both as a supervisor and a supervisee. My experiences have for the most part been extremely positive. I believe in the importance of supervision in counselor development, and I believe my clinical skills, ability to reflect, and ability to conceptualize cases have been improved by participation in supervision. Although I did not have specific expectations of the group, I did hope that it would be a positive experience for the participants. However, I was also aware that there was the possibility that some of the participants would not enjoy the supervision group or have a negative experience.

Van Manen (2014) described phenomenological reflection as reductive rather than inductive or deductive. Reduction is the process by which the researcher places himself or herself in the open so the phenomenon can be directly and naturally experienced (Van Manen, 2014). There are two specific types of reduction related to the role of the researcher in this study: the heuristic epoché-reduction and the hermeneutic epoché-reduction (Van Manen, 2014).

The heuristic epoché-reduction is explained as awakening “a profound sense of wonder” (Van Manen, 2014, p. 223). Van Manen advised that a sense of wonder should remain throughout the phenomenological inquiry. Wonder in a phenomenological context involves

stripping away preconceptions to allow the researcher to discover the phenomenon with a natural or clear mind (Van Manen, 2014). I have a natural inclination to wonder in general. As a counselor, I often employ wonder in my investigative role when I am trying to develop explanations for behavior or problems clients are experiencing. I have found that suspending my own beliefs or preconceived notions is often necessary, particularly in my work with clients from significantly different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds than me, as well as children, who tend to challenge and diverge from an adult's view of the world. It is difficult to enter a client's world when you are trapped behind your own assumptions and beliefs. Also, I tend to find a natural view helpful when confronting difficult or frustrating problems.

My interest in career counseling supervision started with a former professor and supervisor, who included me in a presentation about career counseling supervision at a national conference. My conversations with career counselor supervisors who participated in our roundtable discussion alerted me to some of the assumptions I took for granted about the work of career counselors. Through my own clinical counseling work, I had developed an interest in the intersection of clinical counseling and career counseling issues. However, until that presentation, I held the assumption that career counseling was not typically as stressful or prone to burnout as clinical counseling. Discussions from that presentation allowed me to see that career counselors faced significant challenges in the areas where clinical counseling issues and career counseling issues were difficult to distinguish and separate. Additionally, career counselors in some roles and settings faced significant stress and similar issues related to burnout, particularly as funding was reduced and expectations by clients and funders increased with the recent economic recession. I found supervision to be helpful in dealing with stress and

issues of burnout in my work as a clinical counselor, and I wondered if supervision might similarly be helpful to career counselors in personal and professional development.

Hermeneutic epoché-reduction is stated plainly as openness (Van Manen, 2014). The researcher needs to remain aware of the tendency to be led by presumptions and theories during data collection and analysis, which prevent the researcher from “coming to terms with a phenomenon as it is lived through” (Van Manen, 2014, p. 224). Hermeneutic reduction can be accomplished through careful reflection and note-taking during data analysis, as well as establishing a clear chain of evidence. Additionally, layers of meaning identified within the experience or alternative explanations should be included in the phenomenological narrative (Van Manen, 2014). The primary assumption I struggled with during the intervention and data collection process was that the participants would not be interested in the intervention or find it helpful. However, I tried to remain aware of my tendency to lean toward this thought during initial stages of the intervention and then the interviews. Additionally, this assumption led me to elicit formative data during the supervision group to try to inform the process in ways that would engage the participants.

Population and Setting

Study Participants

Five participants agreed to participate in the study at the beginning of the group supervision experience; however, only four of the five volunteers completed the entire group supervision experience and participated in an individual interview and the focus group. The fifth participant withdrew from the study prior to the start of the fourth week of supervision. The participants were all self-selected and were not pressured to participate in the study. All of the participants were career counselors within the same university career services center, and they all

provided career counseling services to students. One participant also served as the career services assistant director in addition to providing career counseling services. The ages of the participants ranged from 27 to 53. All of the participants identified as female. Three participants identified themselves as White or Caucasian and one participant identified as Hispanic. One participant was married and three participants were single. All of the participants held master's degrees, including three in the field of counseling and one in business. Only one participant held a professional license in counseling. The participants' experience in career development, including counseling, advising, and coaching, ranged from one year to seventeen years.

The counselors were invited to participate in the study during a meeting scheduled at the career services center. At the meeting, I provided an explanation of the purpose of the study and an overview of the planned supervision experience and the other aspects of the study: journaling, individual interviews, and focus group. The counselors were informed that participation in the group supervision experience and study was voluntary, and that they could withdraw at any time without any consequence. After all questions regarding participation in the study and clarification of aspects of the study were answered, the counselors were provided with a copy of the consent form. The counselors who agreed to participate in the study read, signed, and returned the consent form indicating their consent to participate in the study through participation in the eight group supervision sessions, completion of journal entries to be read and analyzed by the primary researcher, and participation in an individual interview and focus group. They were then provided with a second copy of the consent letter to keep.

Participant protection. This research project was designed with participants' confidentiality, safety, and well-being in mind. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi [April 29, 2013, #163-12]. Every

effort was made to protect participants' confidentiality. Participants' journals, transcriptions of interviews and the focus group, my field journal, and any additional information pertaining to participants were stored in a locked filing cabinet. During the study, journals were collected at the end of each session and stored in a locked filing cabinet until the next session. A code name created by each participant was used to identify journals and interview transcripts. The participants were also encouraged to only share information they felt comfortable sharing during the group supervision sessions. The associate director, who was the supervisor of the other three participants, also participated in the group, and she did perform work evaluations and other administrative duties. However, she also provided individual supervision to the participants, and she also dealt with some wellness and stress related issues during individual supervision. My dissertation chair and I did not anticipate delving into any serious or deeply personal issues during the course of the group supervision sessions. However, participants were warned about possible limits to confidentiality during the meetings and were reminded throughout the group that participation in discussion and activities was voluntary and up to their discretion.

Setting

The study took place at a medium-sized public university, which offers bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees, in the southwest United States. The university is mainly a Hispanic-serving institution and also serves a large proportion of first generation college students as well as non-traditional students. The career services center, where the study was carried out, provides career development services to both undergraduate and graduate students in all five of the colleges within the university: (a) Business, (b) Education, (c) Liberal Arts, (d) Nursing and Health Sciences, and (e) Science and Engineering. Five career counselors work in the career services center, and they each provide career development services to all the students in one

assigned college. One of the career counselors also serves as associate director for the career services center and provides individual and group supervision to the other career counselors. Additional professional staff at the career services center include: (a) the director, (b) an internship and work-study coordinator, and (c) an administrative assistant. The career services center also employs six to eight student workers and several interns each semester.

The group supervision experience took place in the computer lab of the career services center, which was the typical location of meetings within career services. Upon entering the career services center, there was a waiting area with comfortable chairs and a television to the left, three offices to the right, and the administrative assistant and student workers' desk straight ahead. The computer lab, where the group met was at the end of a long hallway lined by offices on the left and right. Only the offices on the right had windows. Office doors were usually left open unless there was a meeting in one of the offices. The participants would usually emerge from their offices off the hallway after they saw me arrive and follow me to the computer lab for our meeting.

The computer lab was a large, rectangular room with two large windows on the wall to the right of the door leading into the room. The two windows looked out onto an open plaza area and two other buildings set in the middle of the university campus. Three full walls and half of the wall with the door leading into the room were lined with about 20 computers on wall-mounted desk shelves, which were setup for student access to the career assessment tools utilized by career services, and 20 rolling office chairs. The wall with the door to the room also had two filing cabinets lined on the opposite side of the computers with a clock mounted on the wall over one of the filing cabinets. In the middle of the room were four medium, round tables forming a square formation. Each of the tables was surrounded by four chairs.

For our first meeting I entered the room first, and I chose to sit in a chair at one of the two round tables closest to the door. My chair faced the door and the clock on that wall so that I could keep track of the time during our supervision session. The participants entered the room, and two sat next to each other at the other table closest to the door, next to the table I chose. The final two participants sat across from me at my table. Our tabletop would wobble when we rested our hands on it or wrote because of uneven legs. Everyone continued to sit in the same positions for the remainder of the sessions, as well as during the focus group, which was held in the same meeting room.

All of the supervision meetings were held for an hour in the morning on Tuesdays. I would turn the lights on when I would enter the computer lab; however, the room still remained dimly lit. The participants would enter, grab their journals, and then sit at the tables. Despite the large size of the room, the participants and I sat within close proximity in a casual, conversational space, forming a circle between the two tables. The participants would typically bring drinks to the meetings and would sit comfortably in the chairs. Most of the supervision sessions started with small conversations between the participants about events that had taken place during the morning or prior day. After our meetings, the participants would return to their offices and resume their work.

Instrumentation

The study took place over eight weeks during the summer of 2013. Before beginning the group supervision experience, I created an outline of the eight planned supervision meetings (see Appendix A). Each meeting was organized to include three areas: (a) discussion and activities related to a work-life balance topic, (b) case consultation and supervision of the counselors' work at the career center, and (c) completion of a journal entry in response to a prompt. The

planned work-life balance topics and discussion for each session were designed to facilitate the development of a personal work-life balance plan. Later sessions allowed participants to revisit, assess progress towards, and possibly revise their work-life balance plans. As the group progressed, additional work-life balance material was added to address specific concerns and areas relevant to the participants. Information, questions, and activities to promote self-reflection and facilitate discussion during case consultation and clinical supervision were also added to supplement the outline of planned sessions.

Group Supervision Experience

Session 1. The first session was primarily designed as an orientation for the participants to the group. Beyond some discussion of work experience and organization and focus of the career center, case consultation and clinical supervision were not included in this session. The session started with introductions of the participants, including their education and background in counseling, current work at the career center, and future career and counseling interests. The participants were all familiar with each other because they worked together at the career center; however, this primarily offered me a chance to get a sense of the group, and their experience and interest areas. I also asked the participants to share their experience with supervision and if they had a preferred style of supervision which they considered most helpful. Overall, the group reported limited experience with clinical supervision outside of supervision during practicum and internship experiences in their graduate programs. The primary mode of supervision utilized by the associate director in the career center was person-centered, unstructured, and non-directive. I also presented an overview of the planned sessions and topics for the group. I invited the participants to help contribute to the planned itinerary for future sessions by stating their preferred level of structure and types of discussions or activities. Finally, I presented the

following definition of work-life balance to stimulate a discussion of the participants' understanding of work-life balance. "Work-life balance is about being able to achieve a balance between working life and life away from work that is acceptable to the individual; a balance which allows the successful fulfilment of potential in both domains with minimal stress" (Waumsley, Hemmings, & Payne, 2010, p. 247). The participants shared prior experiences with work-life balance and wellness through prior wellness interventions during graduate training and at the career center. The career center and other associated student services at the university have attended to wellness through in-service trainings and on-going staff events. We discussed the individual nature of views of ideal work-life balance, and the importance of awareness and maintenance even during times of perceived balance. Participants also shared past negative experiences of feeling overwhelmed by focusing on wellness or work-life balance when there was a significant disparity between their actual state and ideal state of wellness or balance. Participants felt comfortable using the terms work-life balance and wellness interchangeably, and they also could see a link between the two terms.

After the discussion of work-life balance, I introduced the role pie activity. Participants were provided with a copy of a role pie page (see Appendix A). Then, I instructed the participants to think about the various roles they identify in their life currently. They could list them on the page prior to drawing on the circle if necessary. Once the participants had an idea of their roles, they divided the circle on the page according to the energy they were devoting to the different roles in their lives. I emphasized that participants should consider energy rather than simply time, because some roles and activities had a greater impact on personal energy and resources in addition to available time. After the role pie was complete, each participant considered her personal satisfaction with the overall balance represented in the role pie, and she

made a note about that at the bottom of the page. I invited the participants to share their role pies if they felt comfortable with the group. Three of the four participants stated being generally satisfied with their role pies; however, as one participant stated, “there is always room for improvement or the possibility of change.” We also returned to a prior point from the discussion of work-life balance regarding awareness and maintenance during periods of satisfaction with work-life balance. The participants each shared some of the areas that contributed to their level of satisfaction.

The final activity for the group was the journal response. I provided different colored journals to the participants and instructed them to write their chosen code names on the interior of the front cover. Each journal could then be identified both from the outside by the individual color and the inside where the code name was written on the cover. I read the first journal prompt, which was also included on the first page of each journal: What was the role pie experience like for you today? The participants had the final ten minutes of the meeting to respond to the prompt, and then they could return their journals and leave after their response was completed. I informed the participants I would review the journal entries between sessions to allow me insight into how the process was developing and assist me in adding relevant content to future supervision sessions. The participants stored their role pie in their journal so that they could use this activity as a reference during the development of a personal work-life balance plan.

Session 2. The focus of the second session was development of personal work-life balance plans. As participants arrived in the meeting room, they collected their journals prior to sitting at the tables. The session started with a discussion of values and beliefs related to work-life balance based on the questions included in the outline of planned sessions (see Appendix A).

However, discussion was slow to start. So I provided an activity to help stimulate discussion by allowing participants to reflect on their values and beliefs about work-life balance and the sources of those values and beliefs. I led the participants through consideration of messages from self, family, friends, and community regarding: work, leisure, family, self, and life overall. As I stated an area, starting with work, participants had one to two minutes to write messages and beliefs that came to mind regarding that area on a piece of paper. After we completed thinking about each of the areas, participants were invited to share their values and beliefs. Discussion moved to the topic of how various roles relate to each other. Finally, I included a discussion of self-compassion and kindness towards the self when considering personal work-life balance based on discussion from the prior session and journal entries. Some of the participants were harsh when assessing their satisfaction with their personal work-life balance. Participants also shared past stress during experiences that led to awareness of the disparity between their actual and ideal level of wellness. After the discussion, I invited the participants to choose one area or role to focus on for their personal work-life balance plans. Participants were encouraged to consider their values and needs in selecting one specific area. The participants then responded to the second journal prompt by describing their plan for addressing work-life balance in the chosen area. Participants wrote in their journals for ten minutes prior to commencing the period of case consultation and supervision.

For the start of the clinical supervision, I included an activity to assist the participants in considering their definition of career counseling and the role of a career counselor in the career center. The participants were instructed to write an advertisement for their ideal of their current position. Prior to writing the ad, I encouraged the participants to consider what they valued about their job and how they considered themselves most helpful to the students and college

community. I also told the participants they did not have to abide by the typical restraints of their current position, because they were focusing on how they viewed the role of a career counselor in this setting. Participants were then invited to share their ads with the group if they felt comfortable. This led to further discussion of the participants' views of the role of a career counselor, and how this aligned with or deviated with the perceived view of a career counselor by others in the university and the public at large. We also discussed how meeting the needs of their clients (the students) sometimes came into conflict with the mission of their employer (the university). At the end of the clinical supervision period, I collected the participants' journals, and they returned to their offices.

Session 3. The topic for the third session was goal setting. Participants collected their journals as they entered the group for the meeting. I started the group by opening discussion about their understanding of goal setting, and how they have used goals personally and professionally. The participants shared some of their past successes with wellness related goal setting. They also explained how they will work with students on long-term career goals, which will also involve short-term steps and tasks to progress towards the long-term goal. I encouraged the participants to review what they wrote last week during the journal prompt for their work-life balance plans. Then they started to think about a specific area they would like to work on or change. After a brief period of time to read and reflect, we returned to discussing goal setting with each participant's focus in mind. For the purpose of the work-life balance plan, I encouraged the participants to focus on a specific area and set one goal related to that area. I reminded the participants that we would be working on these goals for the next five weeks, and they should consider the time frame and think realistically about what was possible. We discussed how focusing on small, attainable goals and making changes can trigger other positive

changes, which accumulate and lead to larger changes. I also discussed positive, action-oriented goals and explained that participants should write their goals in positive, behavioral terms, which would allow them to increase or add rather than behaviors or problems they want to eliminate. Participants took a few minutes to reflect and write a goal. Then I instructed them to spend some time and write out the necessary steps or sub-goals necessary to achieve that goal in the five week period. After the participants were finished writing their goals, I encouraged them to focus on what they would do in the next week to start moving toward their goals. Participants were invited to share their goals with the group. We finished the work-life balance portion of the meeting by discussing possible ways to measure the goals or start to notice positive changes in those areas of work-life balance.

At the start of the clinical supervision part of the meeting, I returned to discussing the participants' views of supervision and areas they would like to explore or would consider helpful during our meetings. After personal reflection on the prior supervision sessions, I was frustrated by the case consultation and clinical supervision portions, because it seemed difficult to encourage the participants to delve into self-reflection, to increase their awareness of themselves and clients, and to consider alternative possibilities in their work. A significant portion of our time was spent in past sessions discussing their frustrations with their role and university policies and politics. The participants returned often to the obstacles they encounter in their work. When we did discuss students, it was often frustration without consideration of approaching issues in another way. I understood the importance to the participants to have an outlet to vent their frustrations; however, I also wanted the group to be able to provide an opportunity for growth through clinical supervision and case consultation.

The participants started by reminding me that summer is a slow time for Career Services, because less students are on campus, and there are less events. In the past, they have used the summer as a time to reflect on successes and problems of the past year. They also would try to organize and prepare for the next academic year. I invited the participants to share areas they thought might be helpful to explore or possible changes they wanted to make in their work or events and services provided at Career Services. We discussed the possibility of reviewing case studies from a career counseling casebook. I also asked the participants to share their views on how people make career decisions or describe career development theories, which appealed to them. Then we discussed possible career theories or areas of research they may want to know more about during our supervision. I introduced the possibility of discussing and sharing information related to current issues and needs in career development and planning. I also shared the possibility of resolving some of their concerns with their work. Each career counselor could share information about how she resolves issues, needs, and challenges with the students and faculty within her college. We could also discuss the various roles they fill as a part of their work and explore the division of time and energy within those roles. At the end of the clinical supervision, participants spent 10 minutes responding to the following journal prompt: What is it like to think through a plan for strengthening work-life balance?

Session 4. The fourth session started with a discussion of any success or changes so far related to work-life balance. The participants started by reviewing the goals they wrote in their journals as a part of Session 3. None of the participants were able to identify any success or changes in their work-life balance. However, during a discussion of how the participants feel about their focus within work-life balance or work-life balance in general, all of the participants were neutral or okay with their current status. The participants discussed how activities and

proportions of time within work and personal life change during the summer and throughout the year. Work-life balance is always changing, and the participants shared that it can be difficult to set or focus on a specific goal for a length of time. They also shared insight that feelings about work and personal life, as well as what you derive satisfaction from changes over time. We discussed possible revisions to the goals. I reminded the participants that we will be working on the goals for another four weeks and to focus on something realistic for that time frame. The participants reviewed their goals again for possible revision. Then participants were instructed to consider the next step they needed to make toward the goal. Participants shared any changes to their goals with the group and their next steps in working on the goals.

Then, we started the clinical supervision portion of the meeting. I developed some questions to prompt case discussion by the participants. I started by eliciting descriptions of the types of clients the counselors see at the career services center. Most of the clients are traditional college students; however, there are also some non-traditional students, who seek services. Several of the participants noted that increasingly more students were working while attending school full-time. The counselors focused more on time management and academic planning issues to assist working students with navigating the additional demands of work hours with academic load. They discussed the challenge of the conflict between the university encouraging heavier academic loads to ensure timely degree completion while simultaneously increasing the promotion of internships for students. I followed up the initial discussion by inquiring about the differences between internships and jobs, and how the counselors approach planning for each with students. We also discussed some of the differences between the students within the different colleges. One of the primary areas of discussion was the special needs of international students. The College of Business has a large proportion of international students, who seek

assistance through the career services center. We discussed some of the challenges that international students encounter at the university and in relation to career development goals. Often the international students will seek assistance through Career Services for additional issues after they establish a relationship and become comfortable with the staff. We discussed some of the discrimination and difficulties the international students specifically face in seeking internship sites and making decisions about employment after graduation. The counselors also discussed some of the differences between the needs of the colleges. There are only two majors within the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, whereas the College of Liberal Arts has fifteen majors within a wide range of disciplines. Additionally, the faculty within the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the College of Science and Engineering prefer to provide career development assistance to students directly, whereas the counselor for the College of Liberal Arts seemed to have the most collaboration with faculty. At the conclusion of the clinical supervision portion, the participants responded to their fourth journal prompt: How can you envision using the work-life balance concept in your work with clients? The typical scheduled meeting time for the supervision session for the following week fell on a holiday. So I provided the participants with some homework to prepare for the fifth session in two weeks. I encouraged them to plan and engage in some leisure activities over the upcoming weekends and holiday. The counselors would also consider how leisure factors into their life and current work-life balance plan for the work-life balance discussion during Session 5.

Session 5. Supervision resumed with the fifth session after 2 weeks off due to a holiday on the typical meeting day and another scheduling conflict with a university event. The participants grabbed their journals and sat at the tables. Then, I instructed them to read through their work-life balance plans and goals over the last four weeks. During my review of the

journals and work-life balance goals after the fourth session, I noticed a lot of confusion and frequently changing goals. During the work-life balance discussions, I had also noticed that participants had not been able to share any specific progress or steps towards their goals. I discussed with the participants that from my review of the journals I was confused about what some of the participants were working on or their specific goals. I also inquired if they were also possibly confused about their plan or goals. Several of the participants stated that they were in fact confused about their exact goal. I provided the participants with some time to pick one specific goal from their already established plans or possibly revise an unclear goal and make a note of it in their journals. Then we discussed ways they could monitor themselves related to their goals or notice any progress. I noted that in the past it had been difficult for anyone share any specific goal or plan progress. The participants shared that some of that was related to constantly changing goals or focus due to changing needs and demands in their lives. We returned to prior discussions of work-life balance constantly changing or being in flux. The participants also shared that they did not like setting specific goals. We discussed that goals could be revisited and revised; however, in general but also specifically related to this study, it was helpful to have a goal to stay focused on the area of work and change and also to keep the participants accountable. After the discussion, I instructed the participants to write about their progress in relation to their clarified goals and the way they are monitoring their progress.

We continued with the planned discussion related to leisure. The participants shared their definitions of what leisure time encompasses. One particularly important area to the participants, which I had also planned to discuss, was “me time” as an element of leisure time. The participants enjoy spending time with their family and friends; however, they also noted that family and friends can bring additional demands and stress. Sometimes they needed time away

from everyone to unwind, relax, and potentially do nothing. I reminded the participants of the homework from the last session. The participants did not specifically remember the homework from the prior session. Also despite insistence from the participants that they had plenty of time and low stress, it was difficult for them to describe recent, specific instances of leisure time. Some of the participants did share plans for later in the summer, which led to discussion of the added stress some leisure activities can add. I emphasized the importance of setting aside and potentially scheduling time for leisure activities when necessary. Then, we discussed ways the participants ensure they have time for leisure, and how they separate work and leisure time or protect time in their schedule for leisure.

Due to the additional time spent on the work-life balance discussion this week, there was less time for clinical supervision than in prior weeks. However, I believed the extra time spent on the work-life balance discussion was beneficial for the participants. We transitioned into the clinical supervision by discussing how leisure appears in the counselors' work with students. The counselors returned to prior discussion of time management issues with the students, particularly as they related to necessary hours for classwork, work hours, and internship demands. The counselors stated that typically the students seem to have a problem with too much leisure time or too much of a focus on leisure. They explained that some of the students come in with misconceptions about how much time they will have for leisure activities. The counselors often have to address time demands within various academic programs and internships with students during the course of career development services. We also returned to another topic, which is that students often seek career development assistance too late in their academic career. I encouraged the counselors to consider possible ways they could utilize some of their experience with students, time management, and leisure expectations to develop ways to

reach those students, who often prove difficult to help once they seek services. At the conclusion of the clinical supervision portion, the counselors responded to a journal prompt reflecting on ways they could address leisure in their own lives.

Session 6. The sixth session started with a review of progress on the recently revised goals. It appeared from discussion and review of the journals that the participants had a clearer work-life balance plan. The focus of the work-life balance discussion for this session was addressing possible obstacles or challenges related to the work-life balance plans. I opened the discussion by inquiring about current or previously encountered roadblocks or difficulties in addressing their goals or making progress. Some of the issues included procrastination, changing life circumstances, and initial confusion or lack of focus regarding the goal. Some participants shared that they simply were at a place where they did not have much control over the areas that bothered them related to work-life balance. We also discussed the ways they have overcome past obstacles when faced with similar challenges. The participants discussed some of their past focus on wellness issues. They indicated that in the past simply having a time and specific tasks or meetings with the goal of focusing on wellness was helpful in addressing those areas. They also shared that despite not liking goals as expressed last week, having clear goals was a reminder of objectives they know they need to address or complete. Then, I encouraged the participants to share their available internal and external resources as they relate to their work-life balance plan. We concluded with a discussion of positive steps thus far or known strengths in relation to work-life balance, as well as planned next steps in their work-life balance plans.

Then we started clinical supervision by discussing how the counselors address goals and obstacles when working with the students related to their career concerns. Some of the frequent

roadblocks the counselors stated they saw with students were: defensiveness, procrastination, a lack of awareness of work values by the students and how they influence their career decisions, and inaccurate perceptions of a career, particularly influenced by prestige or financial decisions. The counselors also shared that families and parents often exert pressure on students to follow certain academic paths and careers, which may not be a good fit to the skills, interests, and values of the student. We moved into a discussion of the goals and purposes of higher education, historically and currently, as well as the goals and purposes of Career Services. The counselors repeated the idea that the actual goals and purposes of Career Services deviate from individual ideals of the counselors, the University, the faculty, the students, parents, and outside companies. We explored ways that the current academic environment and Career Services fits and does not fit students' needs and overall career development needs in modern society. We concluded the session by participants responding to the journal prompt: In what ways, does discussing roadblocks and obstacles effect work-life balance efforts?

Session 7. For the seventh session, we returned to a review of the original role pie activity. I instructed the participants to remove their previous role pie from their journal and review it as the activities included and goals related to their current status. Some of the participants shared how their current role pies would look different than the original role pie completed at the start of supervision. Some of the participants stated that their pies would look the same; however, they felt better about how the pies would look and the status of work-life balance in their lives. We explored work-life balance through several more discussion questions related to a review of roadblocks or areas where the participants might feel stuck, as well as a discussion of easy and difficult elements of work-life balance.

After a review of the clinical supervision from prior sessions, I decided to provide information on a career counseling theory for discussion within the group, as well as possible case conceptualization of a case study example or as it related to their work in Career Services. I presented information to the group on Integrative Life Planning (ILP). I provided a brief overview of the theory to the counselors through the Six Critical Life Tasks: (1) finding work that needs doing; (2) weaving lives into a meaningful whole; (3) connecting family and work roles; (4) valuing inclusivity and social justice; (5) managing personal and organizational transitions; and (6) exploring spirituality, meaning, and purpose (Hansen, 2001). I also discussed how ILP differs from traditional career development theories by broadening the concept of career. Additionally, a weakness of ILP is that it does not attend to the issues of finding a job. Therefore, it is a career development theory that builds upon traditional trait and factor and developmental career theories. I also explained why I chose ILP to present to the group for discussion, because it had a particular emphasis on issues related to our work-life balance discussion, and the deviation from traditional career theories. None of the counselors were familiar with Integrative Life Planning prior to our discussion. We discussed how the Six Critical Life Tasks related to or could be applied to their work at Career Services. The counselors also discussed the necessity within their setting of career development theories, which provided concrete steps and knowledge related to career exploration and decision-making. We discussed the relevance of ILP throughout the career lifespan, and I also noted that Hansen added a life task related to managing health, including: personal, emotional, and physical after initial publication of the theory (Hansen, 2011).

I also opened a discussion of career theory and values with the counselors. Based on information from prior sessions and the participant journals, I believed it was important to

encourage the counselors to continue to explore and reflect on their own career values, thoughts about career development or career path, and how those areas interact when they work with students. The counselors engaged in discussion of the conflict and difficulty between generational cultures, characteristics, and values. They also shared the difficulty they have teaching certain students useful career skills and soft skills when they do not display any of these skills already or a foundation on which to build skills. Finally, they discussed the importance of adapting or taking on a new perspective when they find that they are stuck with a particular student. We concluded the session by the participants responding in their journals about what has been meaningful to them about the overall supervision experience.

Session 8. The final session focused on a review of progress on the participants' work-life balance plans and termination of the supervision experience. The participants started by completing another role pie activity reflecting their life currently. Participants were provided with a copy of a role pie page (see Appendix A). Then, I instructed the participants to divide the circle on the page according to the energy they were devoting to their life roles currently. After the role pie was complete, each participant considered her personal satisfaction with the overall balance represented in the role pie, and she made a note about that at the bottom of the page. I invited the participants to share their role pies if they felt comfortable with the group. We discussed how the participants felt about their current role pies and any changes they noticed from their initial role pie. All of the participants stated feeling better about their role pies than previous discussions during the course of supervision; however, there was not necessarily change in everyone's role pies or noted progress on their work-life balance plans.

Then I facilitated a discussion to help close out the work-life balance aspect of supervision. We started by exploring how their perspectives on the work-life balance concept

had changed, or if they considered anything as a part of work-life balance that they did not prior to the group. We discussed other systems or areas of life that potentially had an impact on their work-life balance during the group experience. We also discussed how awareness changed their perspective or outlook related to work-life balance, as well as how change in one area of their work or life potentially had an impact on other areas. Finally, we concluded with a discussion of possible future plans in their various life roles.

We concluded clinical supervision through a discussion of the supervision experience and the counselors' perspectives on professional identity. The counselors described their view of an ideal career development center within a college campus, as well as the strengths they see within career counselors and themselves. We also reviewed the counselors' career values and views of how people make career decisions, as well as how the counselors conceptualize their career development work. We discussed some of the challenges they face in their setting and possible ways they can adapt their work or collaborate to overcome some of those issues. Finally, I asked the counselors to share universal skills they believe are necessary for a successful or meaningful career path. The session concluded with the participants responding to the final journal prompt: What has it been like for you to focus on your work-life balance? Prior to turning in their completed participant journals, I also asked the participants to submit a separate sheet with their preferred contact information to schedule their individual interview and correspondence regarding their interview transcripts, which I would destroy after our contact was completed.

Data Collection

Data collection within a phenomenological study involves borrowing the experiences and reflections of the participants to assist the researcher in developing an understanding of the deeper meaning of the experience (Van Manen, 1990). Phenomenological studies emphasize the

importance of utilizing a phenomenological stance while making methodological choices and utilizing other social science data collection methods, which allow the researcher to access the participants' experience. This study utilized participant journals, individual interviews, and a focus group to access the experiences and reflections of the participants. The researcher's journal served as an additional source to record my personal experience of the group and to record my observations and reflections during the group experience, data collection, and data analysis. Yin (2009) recommends the following three principles for data collection within a case study: (a) utilize multiple data sources, (b) create a case study database, and (c) provide a chain of evidence. A case study database was not specifically needed in this study, because there was not a large collection of data as might be seen in an extensive case study. However, data collected from all four sources was maintained electronically in the unedited form and organized according to source with all identifying information removed except for the chosen code name. Notes maintained electronically within data analysis files and the researcher's journal also serve to maintain a chain of evidence from the source to the resulting theme and phenomenological narrative.

The Researcher's Journal

The first source of data was my research journal. Van Manen (2014) stated that the researcher's personal experience with the phenomenon under study is the starting point of research. I used the journal to record my preparation for each supervision session and my reflection and insight after the conclusion of each session. I tried to include thoughts or steps that led to my decisions to include particular questions, discussion topics, and activities. I noted concerns or frustrations I had with the supervision process. I also used my reflection time after each session to complete a response to the journal prompt to maintain a record of my experience

of the group and my own experience with work-life balance. I made notes of observations of the participants in my research journal during and following sessions. Van Manen (1990) explained that close observation is particularly useful in phenomenological studies to provide a different form of experiential material. Close observation in a phenomenological context indicates that the observer has entered into the life world of the participant. Within this case study, the life world and phenomenon of interest was the supervision group. My role as facilitator of the supervision group required that I observed and reflected on the verbal and non-verbal responses of the participants in the context of the group. In order to successfully participate in close observation, a researcher must be both a participant and an observer at the same time while remaining aware and vigilant against formation of interpretation (Van Manen, 1990).

Participant Journals

Another source of data was the journal responses completed during each supervision session in response to the prompts (see Appendix C). The journal responses allowed data collection from the participants throughout the experience. Van Manen (1990) stated that a weakness of participant journal data is that many people may find the process of writing difficult, which may lead to limited data. Additionally, Van Manen explained that the act of writing may prompt a certain reflectivity. The participant journals produced less voluminous data than the interviews; however, the thoughts expressed in the journals were dense, well-constructed, and expressed reflection and meaning. The journals also served as a formative data source as the group progressed. I informed the participants at the beginning of the experience that I would be collecting the journals and reading them after each supervision session. The journals were helpful in allowing insight into the participants' experience of the group as it progressed. My insight into the participants' experiences informed the structure and process of the remaining

sessions of the group experience. The participant journals also served as the only data source from the participants during the experience rather than reflection on the experience after it was completed through the individual interviews and focus group.

Individual Interviews

The third source of data was the individual interviews conducted with each of the participants following the conclusion of the group supervision experience. The interviews were semi-structured and were guided by the questions outlined in Appendix D. However, one of the critical components of an interview in a phenomenological study is the development of a conversational relationship with the participant (Van Manen, 1990). The context of the interview with the individual participants required different wording of questions and different follow-up questions due to the nature of their personal experience. Van Manen explained that it is important to elicit specifics of the lived experience from participants rather than a shallow or vague explanation. This may not require a lot of questions but rather assisting participants in focusing and elaborating on responses provided through prompts using parts of the participants' own responses. One of the challenges during the interviews was trying to keep some of the participants focused on their own experience in the supervision group. Information from the larger context of participants' lives was also helpful; however, it was difficult at times to establish balance between the research concerns of this study and the relevance of additional information and outside context. It was helpful to review the participant journals prior to interviews to make note of particularly relevant events or statements for clarification during the course of the interview.

The Focus Group

During a phenomenological study, the interview can serve as a data collection method to gather data about the participants' experience or as an occasion to invite participants to reflect on their experiences and become collaborators in the research (Van Manen, 1990). The focus group served to allow participants to clarify information previously gathered through the participant journals and individual interviews. The participants shared additional information through follow-up questions I developed to clarify points and add additional data to previously unconsidered areas. They also shared new insights developed through reflection after the conclusion of the group and related experiences after the group, because the focus group was completed 12 weeks after the conclusion of the group. In addition, the focus group also allowed the participants to reflect on the initial identified themes and provide clarification, elaboration, or additional insight. An outline of the initial themes and a list of clarifying questions served as my guide in moderating the focus group (see Appendix E). One participant was not able to participate in the focus group; however, I corresponded with her via email to elicit further information and insight related to the outline utilized in the focus group.

Data Analysis

After collecting data from the four sources used in the study, I started the process of organizing and analyzing the data. The first step in organizing the data was to transcribe the individual interviews. The process of transcribing the interviews allowed me to begin to hear relevant themes describing the participants' experiences. I also reviewed participant journals in preparation for each of the interviews. I identified relevant, repeating ideas and events for each participant that informed each interview. The interviews were transcribed and sent to the participants through their chosen emails so they could review and correct any mistakes in the transcription. After the interviews were completely transcribed, I returned to the journals. I

decided to transcribe the participants' written journals into Word documents similar to the interview transcriptions to aid in data analysis. I maintained notes during the transcription and data analysis process in my research journal, as well as notes of relevant and repeating ideas in the interview and journal documents to maintain chain of evidence during the data analysis. Data analysis proceeded in two phases, before and after the focus group. An initial list of repeating ideas and questions needing further clarification were developed from an analysis of the participant journals, individual interviews, and my research journal. The information from the focus group then informed a deeper analysis of the data. The nature of the research questions lent itself to qualitative analysis methods. A phenomenological approach to the data informed the process.

Initial Analysis

During the initial analysis of the data, my primary goal was to develop an initial set of repeating ideas to present to the participants for further exploration and clarification. It was important as a part of the phenomenological process that the participants be included in the meaning making process of developing themes to describe the experience (Van Manen, 1990; Yin, 2011). Auerbach and Silverstein's (2003) approach to data organization and analysis was utilized, because phenomenological theory provided an approach and attitude toward data analysis; however, practical methods to organize data analysis were limited.

The first step in the data analysis was to state the research concerns and then read through the available data to select relevant text (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003). Auerbach and Silverstein suggested focusing on research concerns rather than questions, because they are more inclusive at this stage of analysis. I wrote my two primary research concerns on a notepad to

return to prior to reading each document: (a) describing the participants' experiences in the supervision group and (b) describing any changes in the participants' work with clients.

After reviewing the research concerns, I read through each participant's collective data, the interview and the participant's journal, to select relevant text. I decided to begin data analysis at an individual level based on recommendations from Moustakas (1994) to create an individual description of experience, and then work towards a collective description of the experience by reviewing individual descriptions for repeating ideas. I created a new Word document titled relevant text for each participant. As I read through the interview and journal transcripts, I copied passages to the relevant text documents. It was difficult during this process to balance the inclusion of relevant text with the need to reduce the text to a manageable level. I tended to be more inclusive of data rather than eliminate potentially relevant text at this stage.

The next step in data analysis was to identify repeating ideas. The first step was to identify repeating ideas within each participant's data. Then, repeating ideas could be identified for the group experience by considering all the participants' lists of repeating ideas (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003; Moustakas, 1994). I created a new document for each participant titled repeating ideas. Then I began the process of searching for and organizing repeating ideas by starting with the first piece of relevant text from the participant journal, a process suggested by Auerbach and Silverstein. I decided to start with the journal, because the entries tended to be more thoughtful and denser as a result of the process of reflection and writing. This made it easier to identify clear ideas and potential themes from this source material and search for support for these ideas and additional material within the interviews. I copied the first piece of relevant text from the participant's journal to the repeating ideas document. I made a note through the comments tool in the Word document about why the text was important or the

possible wider theme with which it connected. Then I continued reading through the relevant text document looking for similar ideas. As I identified similar ideas, I copied them under the initial text in the repeating ideas document. At the conclusion of each reading of the relevant text document, I would return to the next relevant text, which had not yet been organized. I would then review the document for possible connections to other relevant text and group them together. Eventually, the repeating ideas document was organized to include all the relevant text from the participant's data. I would then review the repeating ideas and re-organize text as necessary into new or existing categories, noting in comments why I believed data fit together. After I had a complete, organized list of repeating ideas for a participant, I would create a phrase or sentence to describe the concept to which these ideas related. Finally, I repeated the process of searching for repeated ideas by creating a document titled master list of repeating ideas, which was constructed by following a similar process with each of the participant's repeating ideas lists. I started with the participant, Egg's list of repeating ideas as it was the most concise and organized as the base for my master list of repeating ideas. I then moved through the participants in the order: Daisy, Gypsy, and Adads. The order of the participants' addition to the repeating ideas document was based on the difficulty presented by the analysis of their data. I started with the easier data analysis to create an established structure to which I could add the more difficult data.

Initial analysis of repeating ideas for the group experience resulted in the following: (a) awareness; (b) stress, discomfort, or frustration; (c) obstacles; (d) work-life balance is constantly changing; (e) managing life roles; (f) importance of family; (g) importance of wellness; (h) experiential learning; and (i) addressing work-life balance with students. These ideas were presented to the participants during the focus group completed approximately twelve weeks after

the completion of the supervision intervention. I also decided to explore some questions as a part of the focus group that arose for me during the review of the interviews and participant journals (see Appendix E). These questions were intended to target areas participants addressed that needed further elaboration or clarification. During the focus group, the participants primarily affirmed the initial findings as presented. They also shared a process of positive reflection on the intervention and the period of time following it. The focus group was audio recorded and then transcribed to be included in the next phase of data analysis. One participant could not participate in the focus group. She was provided with the list of repeating ideas via email for her clarification or confirmation. She was also provided with the list of questions to respond to as appropriate. Her responses were consistent with those of the other participants.

Thematic Analysis

It was difficult to proceed from the repeating ideas to theme development following the process initiated during the initial data analysis. Within a phenomenological study, the themes serve as the foundational elements from which a phenomenological description of the participants' experience can be constructed (Van Manen, 1990). However, it was difficult for me to envision the process to move from the current repeating ideas to a thematic description. Unfortunately, phenomenological literature provides broad guidance on the philosophy of phenomenological research, but there is not specific guidance on concrete data analysis methods. I decided I had not been selective enough during the first step of selecting relevant text prior to proceeding with data analysis. The broad inclusion of text resulted in lengthy passages that were difficult to organize as they often encompassed more than one idea. I also thought a process that allowed me to consider all the relevant text from all of the participants' data sources collectively when looking for repeating ideas would be beneficial. The previous process was too narrow

during initial data analysis stages, which constricted my ability to develop a collective description of the experience. The initial analysis allowed me to have a working mental framework of possible themes as I sorted through the full data text a second time. However, I needed to develop a process that would allow me to develop a thematic understanding of and describe the meaning participants ascribed to the experience (Van Manen, 1990).

In order to facilitate the second round of data analysis, I printed out the transcriptions of the relevant text from the individual interviews, the journals, and the focus group. I then went through each transcript further breaking them down by cutting out individual units of meaning and gluing them on index cards. The index cards were color coded by participant and a note indicating the location of the data in the original source material was written on the back so that each selection could be traced back to its original source. After all the printed transcripts were transferred to index cards, I started the process of reading the cards and sorting them into piles according to repeating ideas. The isolation of units of meaning on the index cards meant I was able to consider just those pieces and how they fit into patterns of emerging ideas. However, at times I would also consult the original text if context was required to understand meaning. After all the index cards were sorted into initial piles, they were grouped together with rubber bands.

I went through each grouping of index cards, and I wrote words or phrases on the back of the cards indicating possible themes. As I read through each group of cards, some of the cards were moved between groupings in order to find a better fit. As themes began to emerge, cards within that grouping could all be laid out to get a better overall picture of the theme. The process of examining themes collectively assisted in moving individual units of meaning to better fit within an individual theme and the emerging overall description. The initial themes developed were: stress, important aspects of work, struggling for balance, awareness, learning from others,

work-life balance is a process, and wellness. However, these themes did not seem to completely and accurately describe the complete data set.

After reviewing the initial themes, I returned to the process of data analysis to clarify the boundaries between groupings of data and produce better thematic descriptors of those categories. Some of the units of meaning seemed to fit within more than one category. One of the initial themes, stress had a number of pieces of data that could fit across other categories like awareness, struggling for balance, or wellness. As I came across pieces of data that could fit in more than one area, I placed all the cards from the relevant categories on the table, and I moved the cards until I found the best fit. Eventually, an additional category, importance of relationships was created from pieces of data that could not fit into existing categories. The process of placing all related cards on the table and sorting them into distinct themes was repeated until all the cards found a home. Pieces of data that were determined to pertain to a single participant's experience or an isolated incident were put aside as orphans. This data was not included in the thematic description but was used to supplement the description by including pertinent information about individuals' experiences during the intervention.

Awareness encompassed a particularly large set of data. I looked within the awareness category and organized data according to repeating ideas within the category. Three subthemes emerged within awareness: discomfort accompanying awareness, identifying aspects of work-life balance, and the impact of increased awareness on work with students. I also reviewed the included pieces of data and the notes written on the backs of the cards about the data for each of the categories. Reviewing the data and notes led to revision of the thematic descriptors to more accurately reflect the content. Eventually all of the relevant data fit within the following seven themes: awareness, work-life balance is a process, struggling for balance, importance of

wellness, importance of work, importance of relationships, and learning from others. After reviewing these themes, I felt comfortable that these themes encompassed the full experience of the participants. I knew that I could use these themes to move forward with the next step of constructing a phenomenological description of the experience, which is included in the next chapter (Moustakas, 1994; Van Manen, 1990, 2014).

Summary

This chapter described the study's research design and methodology. This chapter included a rationale for the study's design, a description of the role of the researcher, an overview of the population and setting, the instrumentation of the study, and a description of how the data was collected and analyzed. The following chapter will provide the findings from the study through a description of the experience utilizing the voices of the participants.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

After becoming familiar with the data through a thorough process of data analysis as described in chapter three, seven themes were identified to describe the participants' experience of the integration of work-life balance in the career counseling supervision group. The seven themes include: *awareness, importance of work, importance of relationships, importance of wellness, struggling for balance, work-life balance as a process, and learning from others.*

Awareness

The first theme, *awareness*, includes the following three subthemes: *discomfort accompanying awareness, identifying aspects of work-life balance, and the impact of increased awareness on work with students.* The participants noted that one of the most rewarding aspects of the group was that it resulted in greater awareness. "Yeah, just probably the whole awareness thing was the most rewarding of it. Whether it was my personal stuff or just, you know, coworkers stuff" (Eggs). Additionally, Eggs explained her belief during the interview that awareness of work-life balance was more essential than actual achievement of work-life balance:

Well, I think even though if someone was balanced or not balanced, I think just being aware of it. Definitely, I'm big about awareness. So, it was nice just kind of thinking about it, and it gets you to think about things, you know, what you're currently thankful for, things you want to change, those kinds of things.

Some of the participants were not aware of the imbalance in their lives prior to the group experience and specific discussion of work-life balance. Adads shared the realization of imbalance during her interview: "First of all, it brought the awareness to me, because I did not realize *how much* I was carrying on my shoulders."

The group experience created an environment that allowed participants the space and time to focus specifically on work-life balance. This idea is reflected in Daisy's journal: "It's been great having some time set aside in my busy life to just think about me and strategies to balance my work & life. It's come at a good time when I needed to have this self-reflection." Gypsy also expressed an appreciation for increased focus during her interview, "I actually think it was interesting, because it did make me focus a little more on the issues of not having [work-life balance]." Another participant wrote in her journal about how focusing on work-life balance led to a process of self-reflection: "Having to focus on WLB made me really look at myself & evaluate my life events" (Adads). Daisy described a process of awareness unfolding over time as we examined work-life balance during her interview: "Right and I think at first, when you first look at a topic you look at it very superficially." She also explained how personal awareness during the group experience differed from and added to her prior knowledge of work-life balance. "Well, I had that benefit of studying it before. I don't think I was personally aware of applying it to myself. So I think that was really helpful" (Daisy).

The participants described how the visual of the role pie and writing about work-life balance and their goals increased their awareness and focus on work-life balance. Gypsy explained that the journaling assisted her in focusing on her work-life balance plan: "I think that being able to write out some stuff allows me to focus more efforts on them." Adads also believed the process of writing was helpful, "Oh, making us write things down. I think, because it holds me accountable. I have to write it down." The other participants primarily focused on the role pie as a visual tool for maintaining awareness. Daisy discussed the importance of a visual representation to thinking about work-life balance during her interview: "We had times of

thinking about, charting our own, where we saw ourselves.” Another participant explained how the visual of the role pie assisted with maintaining awareness when reflecting on goals:

Right, so [the role pie] kind of served as like a visual when I was like, oh yeah, because I know sometimes our assignment was to reflect on our goal or whatever that is, and then I just had that image of the pie when we would be like oh yeah, I’ve got to work on that.

(Eggs)

Eggs also shared that the role pie served to create greater awareness of valued aspects of her life, which contributed to work-life balance:

I’ve changed in the fact that like oh, I should do this, because I remember from my wellness wheel or when we made those charts that this was something that was clearly important to me. Like working out, for example, like if I’m like, “eh, I don’t want to.” Well, clearly when I was doing it a lot before, it was important to me.... So I know like oh, I need to keep that chunk of the pie there and keep working at it. Because I know that’s what helps me be that currently satisfied.

Finally, the participants explained how the awareness of work-life balance led to beginning to consider steps or strategies to improve their work-life balance. Eggs wrote in her journal about how increased awareness positively impacted her work-life balance goals. “But overall, [awareness of obstacles to work-life balance] helped strengthen the steps to get there by becoming more aware” (Eggs). Another participant discussed how the group forced her to think about difficult and stressful circumstances in her life, but this ultimately led to considering the steps necessary to work towards work-life balance. “So this was like, okay, really hard for me because I had to, it forced me to really think about what was going on and how are we going to balance it. What are we going to do now?” (Adads). Daisy discussed how improved awareness

contributed to better decision-making related to her own work-life balance: “And I think I was a little more mindful of making better decisions for myself having gone through the experience.”

Discomfort Accompanying Awareness

The first subtheme of *awareness* is *discomfort accompanying awareness*. Although the participants recognized the importance of awareness, they made statements about the discomfort that accompanied some periods of awareness. After the first supervision session, Adads wrote in her journal, “The pie experience made me realize ‘stress.’” Daisy also experienced some discomfort related to the awareness brought about during the role pie activity. “While I’m already aware that my life is out of balance, it kinda made me frustrated to see it on paper” (Daisy). Discomfort was particularly noticeable when the participants became aware of imbalance in their lives. “I think it's a little uncomfortable, because you're really doing some reflection on what's going on and obviously when things aren't as balanced as you would like, it's not fun to look at” (Daisy). Gypsy also shared her emotional reaction to the realization of her unhappiness with her work-life balance during the interview:

I think that in a sense I became more angry, which bothered me, only because I realized when your life is work and then you started examining how even that part wasn't working for you, you become like what the heck am I doing?

Daisy explained how feelings of stress started to surface as she engaged in the process of looking deeper at her work-life balance. “And then you really start thinking about [work-life balance] so that’s when you maybe get a little bit more stressed out on it like maybe things aren’t really the way I want them to be” (Daisy). Feelings of discomfort also arose during the process of revisiting and monitoring progress on personal goals related to work-life balance. After the session discussing roadblocks and resources related to goals, Eggs wrote in her journal:

“Addressing roadblocks creates feelings of guilt & struggle since I feel I haven’t been successful in the pursuit of my goal.”

The discomfort, which accompanied awareness, also served as a motivator for participants to start thinking about strategies to start working towards their desired work-life balance. Eggs explained how the stress of her unbalanced role pie led her to consider actions to move closer to her desired balance:

For me, I really just did sort of drill down and focus on this wheel is not balanced. And in a sense, it sort of stresses you out. And in this sense, it kind of makes you think, well, how do I balance it? And in that kind of subconscious way, I guess you make goals.

Gypsy described a similar experience from her perspective:

And I do think that helped a lot. But as I said, I think that it, in a sense, brought out. It made me write out my unhappiness. So from a counseling point of view that’s perfect, because that’s the steps. And I do think that was meaningful. I do think...I start to recognize what I need to do from my point of view.

Identifying Aspects of Work-Life Balance

The second subtheme of *awareness* is *identifying aspects of work-life balance*. Ideal work-life balance is unique to each individual, although there may be common elements. One participant spoke about this idea in the interview, “it sort of forces you to think about your own situation and what’s a healthy balance. Proportions of time weren’t the same for everybody. And what you perceive as a healthy balance for you” (Daisy). The activities and discussion during the supervision group allowed the participants to explore the areas of their lives that contributed to work-life balance. In a journal response regarding the role pie activity, Gypsy wrote: “I think it was interesting trying to understand where I fit into the roles I have for myself and the roles

others have for me.” Eggs also wrote about exploring and assessing the different areas of her life after the session focused on goal setting:

When thinking about worklife balance & setting goals causes my mind to race. Not in a bad way, but it causes my mind to quickly run through all the aspects of my life & either I find myself thinking I’m content or I find myself wondering “am I doing enough, am I making the most out of things?”

The process of addressing work-life balance requires individuals to make choices about the time and energy they will devote to areas of their lives. By identifying the areas related to personal work-life balance, participants were able to consider areas with which they were satisfied or where possible changes could be made. Daisy wrote about this process during the group: “I believe it’s made me evaluate aspects of my life and really determine what my priorities are.” After the conclusion of the group, one participant was able to clearly map out the major components of her work-life balance: “I know I need to devote this much time to work, this much time to school, and to have peace of mind, I need to do those: hang out with friends or exercise” (Eggs).

The Impact of Increased Awareness on Work with Students

The third subtheme of *awareness* is *the impact of increased awareness on work with students*. The participants discussed some of the ways that their own awareness contributed to their work with the college students. One participant wrote in her journal, “When you have WLB you automatically use it with students” (Adads). Gypsy shared how her own awareness of work-life balance influenced her to consider areas outside of career matching and job finding:

So I do think when those students tell me that I could probably relate a little more to help them figuring out what kind of life they want outside of the eight to five. And I think

that's something I probably talk about a little more now than I used to, recognizing it myself.

She also provided examples of questions she now asks of students related to the life area of work-life balance:

I mean even one student I constantly ask him like, "Where do you want to work? What's your ideal geographic location? How close do you want to be for family?" And I don't know that I asked those questions before. (Gypsy)

The college students are at a stage where it is necessary to develop skills to make choices about and manage time related to work, relationships with friends and family, and leisure activities.

Daisy explained how the career counselors encounter work-life balance issues with the students:

But I think we're all a little mindful of hearing what the student is telling us in terms of is this a multi-tasker type of person? Is this a person that already sounds like they don't have a handle on their time?.... [They really need to have] a true sense of time that needs to be for studying, time that needs to be for hanging out with your friends eating pizza, things like that.

Increasingly students are taking on work roles while in school through part-time or full-time jobs and internships. Daisy continues to explain how jobs and internships factor into the need to address work-life balance with the students:

And definitely, work, a big part of what we do is help students find part-time jobs and internships before they graduate. And one thing that we really kind of go through with them is how many hours are you taking in school and did you know that you need to be studying 3 to 4 hours for that class? And then you decide how many hours you can work. And so kind of helping students get a grasp on that.

The participants also discussed how awareness of work-life balance related to challenging areas with students. The counselors discussed the challenge of expanding students' perspectives when engaging in career exploration beyond consideration of prestige and income. Eggs wrote about utilizing work-life balance with students in this way: "I would incorporate work-life balance in working with students when dealing with career explorations. A lot of times students are focused on one thing when it comes to career choice (e.g. \$)." Another concern the career counselors dealt with, with students was when emotional strain or stress from personal issues was expressed during career counseling. Career counseling intersected with issues arising from family expectations and values, anxiety about academic concerns, and stress over financial problems. Adads explained how her work with students was affected by the group experience, "If anything, I've learned to listen really clearly to my students *more*. Because sometimes.... I've noticed there will be some that will break down." The career counselors had the ability to refer students to the counseling center for personal or emotional problems; however, they also recognized how some issues were intertwined with career concerns and could be approached from that position. Eggs explained how work-life balance could be used as a strength-based intervention with the students to help them cope when they are stressed by a certain area of their life:

But if they come in, and they're overstressed about one element of a test or something. I think maybe helping them identify the great things in their wellness, for using those elements as an example of you know what's working, what's balanced there. Are you making time for all those other things in your life too to help you with whatever currently is happening?

Importance of Work

The second theme is *importance of work*. The participants described the important role work played in their lives. Eggs explained how work was an important aspect of her satisfaction with her overall work-life balance:

I would like to continue my worklife balance, my current happiness/piece of mind. In order to do those things I need to feel I'm making accomplishment @ work, make meaningful connections with family/friends/coworkers & always incorporating humor into my life.

Work provided the participants with a sense of accomplishment. The participants described feelings of accomplishment and worth derived from their work with students. Adads discussed an example of a positive acknowledgement from a faculty member, with whom she had collaborated. She then shared her reaction, "And it was really good to hear that, I heard from another professor. So I was like yes, God, thank you. So all your efforts don't go unnoticed... that was really good" (Adads). Eggs also explained how she derived motivation and a sense of satisfaction by witnessing the growth within the students. During the interview, she stated:

I feel like it's, it's, not that I need to be consistently have a gratifying experience, but it is nice and rewarding when you're working with a student and they're like, oh, they see like all the dynamics of their resume, or what they can do better in a mock interview. And you're like, oh great, you see this kind of self-confidence boost now that they know.

They have the tools, because they already know their skills, qualifications, and just how to approach them. You see that kind of okay, well, I can really do this now. (Eggs)

An important part of the career counselors' work was their direct work and contact with students and faculty. Gypsy described this during her interview, "I love working with the students, like I love this building, because the students know me, they come. The professors know me. The

faculty know me. I am in like heaven when I am in this building.” A meaningful aspect of the counselors’ work with students was the sense that they were helping people. Adads explained how accomplishing tasks at work and helping students contributed to her positive perception of the work aspect of her life during the interview. “And when I come to work, I’m just trying to...okay, I say now this is my sanctuary, because I know I’m going to do things. I’m helping people, and I’m doing what I’m supposed to do” (Adads). Eggs also wrote in her journal about the importance of helping people to her work satisfaction, “I enjoy my job because it allows me to help students.”

Work provided the participants with a sense of meaning and purpose. Eggs wrote about this in her journal: “work helps me feel I’m contributing to society in some way while still being able to make a living and do the things I like to do in my free time to create balance.” Work also provided consistency and structure to the participants’ lives. Eggs described how the structure afforded by work contributed to her work-life balance: “having a job helps create that balance in my life & to give structure to my life.” Adads also described how the consistency and predictability of her work environment provided her with some relief from unpredictable stress in her personal life. During the interview she stated, “And I always say, ‘work is my sanctuary, because here I know what I need to do, when I need to do it’” (Adads). The work environment provided Adads with the opportunity to take a break from the chaos and stress of her personal life and gain a sense of satisfaction from work accomplishments. “Right, it kept me on my straight and narrow. Here is where I feel like everything’s fine... I flourish. I can work with my students, do what I need to do, get it done, and seize the day” (Adads).

Importance of Relationships

The third theme is *importance of relationships*. The participants discussed the importance of relationships to their overall work-life balance through: work relationships, the importance of a personal life outside of work, and specifically the importance of family. As discussed previously, the participants were able to meet their need for relationships and social needs partially through their work. Eggs expressed this in her journal, “I enjoy my job because it allows me to ... work with coworkers which satisfies my social needs.” Gypsy also described the strength of past work relationships she had during her interview, “even like those friends that I made on the job, I still write them most every day or we talk all the time.” She also discussed how work relationships provided her with opportunities for leisure activities, “I had friends inside of work that we would go out and do things and have lunches and stuff” (Gypsy).

Participants also discussed the importance of a personal life outside of work. Eggs explained how personal relationships contributed to her work-life balance, “and to have peace of mind, I need to do those: hang out with friends or exercise.” Gypsy discussed how a lack of satisfaction with her personal life contributed to overall dissatisfaction with work-life balance: “because I do not have much of a personal life, not from area etc., work becomes all I have and am unsatisfied now.” As a part of her work-life balance plan, Gypsy was working on improving her personal life, because she believed that would contribute to her overall work-life balance. “I need to establish and grow a better personal life because if I had an environment outside of work that was more meaningful work would become just work and I would be better able to deal with the situation” (Gypsy).

Family was highlighted by the participants as a special relationship. Adads described family as “[her] grand joy.” Eggs wrote about “supportive family” as an important resource in

working toward her work-life balance plan. Gypsy described in detail the difficulty she faced currently due to a lack of family support and the imbalance between work and personal life:

I actually think it was interesting, because it did make me focus a little more on the issues of not having [a personal life]. And honestly, I think the hardest thing for me is I don't have any family [here]. I didn't grow up here, and so I have no life. And so when work becomes your life, it makes it very difficult. And so because I don't have the family or the support outside of these four walls, I can honestly say I don't really have much of that life that I would like.

All of the participants discussed the importance of and their desire to spend time with their families. Daisy stated an observation she made of how members of the group described the way they preferred to spend their free time: "But for the majority of us it's spending time with family and friends and more enjoyable, not necessarily meaningful but what's great and enjoyable." So a lot of the participants' time outside of work was spent engaged in personal relationships, particularly with family. Despite not having family readily available, Gypsy wrote about the strong value she placed on family and spending time with them in her journal, "Be a family. Spend precious time together and always say I love you. Even when parents were both working opposite shifts, we always had family dinner." Daisy wrote during an early journal entry about the importance of time spent with family, "Quality time with family ... [is] very important to me." During the post-intervention interview, Daisy spoke about how focusing on work-life balance helped her become more aware of the importance of spending time with her family. "And I think it was helpful, because it made me think of aspects like spending time with my kids. They're grown, but I still want to spend time with them and things like that" (Daisy). Similarly, Adads discussed how focusing on work-life balance reminded her of the importance of

spending time with her family, “I was just like, you know, okay, this brought me back to this is why you have to slow down. So being able to spend time with my family and not take work home or worry about work.” However, Adads also wrote about the challenge of balancing time between family and other important personal relationships, like her boyfriend in her journal, “My boyfriend & I are constantly trying to give our time to our families & ourselves.” Finally, Eggs described how focusing on work-life balance reminded her to maintain time for family:

So, it makes you think oh, I need to make an effort to talk more with my family members or call my dad and keep doing what I’m doing, because clearly, I’ve recognized previously that, that was a big part of, something that’s important to me and contributes to that whole satisfaction thing.

The way family was defined differed somewhat between participants. For Eggs, her family also included her dog, which was a large part of her life. During her interview she described their relationship:

Yeah, yeah, he would, I would just hang out with him and maybe watch TV, or we’d go for, not for long walks, because he was a big, fat dog. But we’d spend a lot of time together and play with his toy. And he was a huge part. Every time I came home. Every time I left. So, it was just like losing a family member. (Eggs)

Despite the importance of family relationships and spending time with family, at times, there was conflict between the demands of work and family. Focusing on work-life balance, brought awareness to the conflict between work and family for Adads, “Having to focus on WLB made me really look at myself & evaluate my life events. My family is very dear to me. Yet my work is just as important.” Later in her journal, she also wrote about the role planning and scheduling played in attending to the conflict between work and family demands, “Sometimes

work interferes with family.... Scheduling work around family events is important” (Adads). Despite the value Adads placed on her family relationships and time, it was difficult to navigate the conflict between the two.

Daisy highlighted the importance of work in providing for her family, “Working a lot means providing a better life for my family.” However, she also wished that she had more time available to spend with her family. This is reflected in a statement about values learned from her parents, “Both my parents worked very hard outside of the home, but family and church were all they did on weekends. I wish I had that option” (Daisy). This conflict led to feeling pressed for time between work obligations and the desire to spend more time with her family, as expressed by a statement from her journal regarding her work-life balance plan, “In next week: still working both jobs but going to try to squeeze in going to the movies with my kids” (Daisy).

Importance of Wellness

The fourth theme is *importance of wellness*. The participants discussed the importance of physical and emotional wellness in their lives, and the methods they used to cope with stress and work towards personal wellness. Eggs discussed how maintaining a positive attitude and using adverse circumstances as a growth opportunity helped her to cope with difficult situations and stress:

And I feel even whatever I went through a couple years ago. So I feel like even though that was such a terrible time, I feel like you can always see. Once the smoke clears, you can kind of see a good element of that. I’m a believer in that you can always find something good out of a bad situation. I feel like that helps. My philosophy is that helps someone get through it.

Eggs also highlighted the value of utilizing humor in coping with stress as a part of her work-life balance plan writing, “humor is a great coping mechanism.” Adads shared the same idea of humor as a coping mechanism during her interview stating, “I think laughter is really good for the heart and the soul.”

Adads also discussed the importance of setting boundaries with work in order to cope with workload and protect recovery time to maintain physical health. She shared an example of a time period when she was not protecting her personal time, “way back when I had the heart attack, I was doing way too much here at work. I was pulling the slack for coworkers. I was just doing quite a bit. I wasn't taking care of me” (Adads). Contrasted with her new approach to unfinished work tasks, “and being able to say you know what, it's okay. I can leave work and go home” (Adads).

Leisure activities and personal time were also important contributors to personal wellness. Daisy wrote in her journal about the importance of setting boundaries with work so that she had adequate time for leisure and personal time when writing about her work-life balance plan: “intentionally making time to just veg and do things I enjoy doing like going for a walk, taking care of my plants, going to the movies with my family.” Gypsy was also working on increasing her personal life outside of work as a part of her work-life balance plan. She wrote in her journal about increasing her leisure pursuits as a part of the overall plan, “Find things that make me happy and expand those. I would like to start taking advantage of what the Island has to offer as far as activities instead of staying in the house” (Gypsy).

All of the participants emphasized the importance of physical wellness in their lives. Daisy explained the importance of aspects of physical wellness to managing your daily life roles during her interview:

Did you get enough sleep last night? Are you able to tackle the multiple tasks and multiple roles that you have to play? If I didn't get enough sleep, I'm brain-dead. Or if I'm hungry, I'm angry. That kind of plays into how well you're able to juggle those different things. In the best of all possible worlds, you got enough sleep, your diet's okay, you know. You didn't have a fight with your kids! Those kinds of things.

Adads wrote about physical health in response to a prompt about obstacles to achieving work-life balance, "health could be a big factor. Working on becoming healthier!!!" She recognized that potential health problems could serve as obstacles to her progress towards greater satisfaction with personal work-life balance. Eggs' personal work-life balance plan was primarily concerned with addressing elements of physical wellness and their impact on her work-life balance. In a journal entry outlining her work-life balance plan she wrote:

These help contribute to how good I feel about myself & function. My goal is to work on 3 things: continue to exercise regularly, start eating healthier & smaller portions, get at least 8-10 hrs. of sleep per night (I too can only function & think clearly when I've slept this much). (Eggs)

Exercise was a way participants were able to both address physical wellness and cope with emotional stress. Eggs explained during her interview how exercise was an important part of her overall satisfaction with work-life balance:

Like working out, for example, like if I'm like, 'eh, I don't want to.' Well, clearly when I was doing it a lot before, it was important to me, and if you see on my thing it was like, 'I'm satisfied. I'm currently satisfied!' And all that stuff so I know like oh, I need to keep that chunk of the pie there, because and keep working at it. Because I know that's what helps me be that currently satisfied.

During her interview, Adads shared her realization that in addition to physical health benefits, exercise was a helpful coping method. “Sometimes you just have to de-stress and do something. And I started working out and I actually realized with working out, you do release some of that stress” (Adads). She also found that exercise had a beneficial effect on her energy during the work day, writing “Working out at 5 a.m. jumpstarts my workday” (Adads).

Struggling for Balance

The fifth theme identified is *struggling for balance*. The participants described challenges they faced as they worked toward or tried to maintain satisfactory work-life balance. One of the major challenges for the participants was trying to keep work and thoughts of work from intruding on other areas of their life. Gypsy’s major achievement from the intervention, which she discussed during her interview, was being able to stop working and thinking about work. However, she acknowledged that despite her progress, it continued to be a challenge with which she struggled. “So yeah, I do think and again I am learning to cut myself off. It’s not working all the time. But it is working” (Gypsy). Adads also discussed past history of routinely allowing work to take over large amounts of personal time, “and I used to take everything home. Anything I didn’t finish at work I was on my computer at home finishing it up. And before I knew it, it would be 3 o’clock in the morning.” Then, she described her new process for dealing with unfinished work tasks. “So I don’t do *that* anymore. I just, I’ll get to it in the morning. And if I can get to it during the day, as soon as I get to it, I’ll send it to them” (Adads). Daisy wrote in her journal about conscious efforts she needed to make in order to protect her recovery and leisure time from the intrusion of work. “Being mindful of my ‘me time’ and not allowing other obligations to encroach on my time. Sticking to boundaries – keeping work (and thoughts of work) in the time allotted for it” (Daisy). Gypsy also explained how being mindful of the

importance of keeping work in work time so personal time could be maintained, "But as far as how it's helped and carried over to the work, I really do actually think about how, I'm cutting myself off." Finally, Daisy discussed during her interview how communication technology can be an added barrier to separating work and personal time:

A couple of the counselors have chosen not to put their work e-mail on their smart phone.

That's a really great idea. Once you do, you're really kind of, you know, connect yourself to it, and it's harder to get away from it. Don't go there.

Another challenge for the participants as they struggled with work-life balance was feeling like they were stretched across multiple roles or feeling like they did not have enough time to attend to all their responsibilities. Adads discussed a period of time when she struggled with balance, because she had responsibilities and demands in a number of different areas of her life. "Four years ago, I had a really bad heart attack, because I was carrying the weight of the new job and doing everything, doing so many different things, being pulled in so many directions" (Adads). When responding to the journal entry regarding roadblocks to work-life balance goals, Daisy wrote about how additional responsibilities within her work role were a challenge to her efforts towards balance. "One roadblock that comes to mind is being too busy. With the changes to our dept. and the addition of duties to my life, I need to be mindful of taking 'me time' where I can" (Daisy). An additional challenge to Daisy's work-life balance was the added stress that accompanied being overly busy and not feeling she had the time to accomplish necessary tasks. Daisy wrote in her journal, "I feel that I don't have the stamina to keep going" in reference to feeling overwhelmed in her work roles. However, she believed if she could attain her work-life balance goals, "[my] stress level will go down. I feel stressed because I'm pressed for time" (Daisy).

One specific challenge between multiple roles that was noted by the participants for themselves, as well as students, was working while attending school. Adads shared her own experience with the challenge and stress of working while attending school during the interview. “So you're working full-time and you're going to school. And work goes over into extra, extra hours trying to pull the weight for others. Then, you know, it just all blew” (Adads). Eggs discussed the increased frequency of working with students through the career center, who were working while attending school. “So there’s a lot of that going on right now, especially with the students, who want to work at the same time as going to school. And I think that’s going to be a common theme” (Eggs). She also discussed the added strain to time for non-traditional students, who may also have a family, “They work. They have kids, a family. And then they go to school too.... So, I feel like it’s going to become a norm over time. It pretty much is. So I see us getting busier in the future” (Eggs).

Work-Life Balance as a Process

The sixth theme is *work-life balance as a process*. The participants expressed the idea that work-life balance is a process, because it is susceptible to changing life circumstances. Daisy wrote about the mutable nature of work-life balance in her journal, “I’m still a little frustrated that my work/life balance isn’t exactly what I want it to be. But, I’ve come to terms with the fact that it is what it is for now and it will continue to change.” Adads also discussed the continuing challenges she faced with work-life balance due to ongoing changes around her, “WLB will always be my challenge with family balance. Since life constantly changes & my family will always be my focal point, balance may never be achieved.” The concept of work-life balance was not necessarily a static endpoint, but rather, it was something constantly being re-evaluated and defined by individuals, as their lives and environments changed. Satisfaction and

frustration with work-life balance were framed as temporary and open to change in the future. During the interview, Eggs shared how past periods of struggle or frustration with work-life balance allowed her to appreciate her current satisfaction with work-life balance, as well as prepare her for future challenges. “So it’s helped me feel more appreciative now of having not too much on my plate and like kind of enjoying that time. Because I know it’s not always going to be that way” (Eggs).

Participants explained how unpredictable life changes impacted work-life balance, because they were impossible to plan for or anticipate. Daisy shared her perspective on an unexpected loss one of the other participants experienced and how that can impact work-life balance:

I think you kind of hit on it in that the environmental, things happening in your life kind of thing, you know. One of the other counselors talking about her dog dying and how that impacted her. And that's definitely something you don't plan for, and you don't really even realize how big of an impact that's going to have on your life. And how it changes your work life balance.... What do you do with your time? You have to restructure it. It's definitely not something you go in planning. So it's kind of along that whole chaos theory sort of thing. As your path forms, what do you do with it? And do you go with it kind of thing?

Eggs also explained how the unpredictable nature of life requires flexibility and adaptation to work towards work-life balance goals. “When uncontrollable life events happen it causes a shift & I have to adjust the aspects of my life balance” (Eggs). She also explained during her interview how having the time, energy, and resources to deal with unpredictable stressors that arise helps to maintain satisfactory work-life balance:

Now, I'm like oh, my plate's not so full. I really feel like I have a lot of control over my schedule for the most part. And there aren't any other, for now, any external things that I need to dedicate my time to that are out of my control. So, I feel like if I had a huge stressor come my way or something, or if I had all these other, different assignments that needed to be completed, whether it was in work or out [of] work. And I do have the time to get them done currently. (Eggs)

In addition to possible added stressors, Adads explained how positive, unexpected events or changes could also shift one's perspective on work-life balance satisfaction. "And then I come over here and it's a new week, and something good happened in my life so hey! It changes up. I feel what was doom and gloom last week is hey! Good today!" (Adads). Adads noted that journaling about the goals during the process helped her keep track of the positive events.

Although flexible time and control over one's schedule were viewed as supporting work-life balance efforts and challenges, participants also discussed how busier time periods with reasonable work demands encouraged a more mindful approach to planning and scheduling with necessary aspects of work-life balance incorporated. Gypsy explained during her interview how having a busy schedule at work encouraged her to also consider and schedule her time for other parts of her life as well:

During the school year when you're so scheduled, like sometimes, in this building especially, I'll literally have a student every half an hour from one to five.... You don't have that idle time. So you really schedule your life as well as your work, which for me works really good. Like I like having that schedule.

Eggs expressed a similar thought during her interview, "My thought is the busier someone is the more they're going to really, really pay attention to those pieces [of work-life balance]."

Learning from Others

The seventh theme is *learning from others*. The participants described the group as allowing them to learn from the others in the group and gain a better understanding of their colleagues. Part of the learning process within the supervision group included a process of verifying or solidifying knowledge participants already had. This process was expressed by Eggs in her journal: “but hearing my colleagues’ (and Courtney’s ☺) perspectives have been enlightening & helps me shape, validate, change my perspectives.” Another participant shared a similar idea during the interview, “sometimes it's just hearing it from someone else and going oh yeah, and then you get it” (Adads). Eggs provided a detailed explanation of learning from others: “It’s interesting to hear others’ perspectives & evaluate if it coincides with what I believe, do I disagree or does it help me understand something that I previously didn’t understand.”

Another aspect of the learning process was insight other participants could provide from another perspective on a situation within the group. This idea was reflected in the following statement from Adads’ interview when she was discussing the difficulty of resolving a stressful situation while in the middle of it: “It’s always easier for the person on the outside looking in to tell you how to do things.” Gypsy also described how gaining insight from other participants helped her in a journal entry: “the good thing is it has given me insight to what others think as well as how to change my scenario both here and at home.”

The group supervision process allowed each of the participants to provide their own background and personal experience to the group’s knowledge base regarding work-life balance. Daisy explained how hearing the experiences of the other participants added to her own process during the interview: “But I also really appreciated hearing from the rest of the group and seeing where they were coming from.” Participants were able to learn from the life experience and

successes of other participants. Eggs described this aspect of the group in response to a journal prompt exploring resources relevant to working toward her work-life balance goal. “Learning techniques, what’s led to success in others & tailor to myself to help me attain goal” (Eggs). Eggs further elaborated on how observing others cope with difficult circumstances helped her modify her own perspective regarding work-life balance during the interview:

But like I think it’s like really helpful to see people, who are going through a lot, and then still maintaining you know a positive attitude. Still themselves for the most part. And I think that’s inspiring to help put perspective

A part of the group supervision experience also included a process of normalizing the thoughts and feelings they experienced as they performed their work. Adads discussed this feeling during her interview, “you know, it's just different. Because in group counseling, you know, it's like group counseling. I'm trying to say like gah, so they do go through some things too. It's not just me.” Similarly, Daisy discussed the support colleagues could provide in the supervision group when experiencing an unresolvable problem. “You feel like there’s some support there. There may not be a solution for that problem, but other people understand it” (Daisy).

Group supervision allowed the participants to bring challenging situations to the conversation and gain insight from colleagues, who have encountered those situations in the past and have the knowledge and skills to resolve them. Gypsy described this process during her interview, “Because if I had a situation that another counselor dealt with six years ago or whatever then it's nice to be able to throw that back and forth.” One of the participants discussed how listening to other participants added to her knowledge of the career counseling process. “In terms of talking about career development, I enjoy hearing my colleagues’ experiences . . . , it

helps me develop more understanding in career counseling & how we work with students” (Eggs).

The group provided the counselors with a space to have discussions outside the areas typically covered in their group supervision, which allowed them to learn new things about their coworkers. Eggs explained during her interview that the group “got us all thinking about conversations we probably normally wouldn’t have.” Another participant shared a similar thought:

Yeah, I mean you have those little chit chat, we chit chat all the time. But for them to really do that kind of reflective thinking out loud and kind of really saying this is where I am. It was like, oh, okay. This is where I’m at. And I appreciated that. (Daisy)

The participants shared aspects of their lives in conversation with co-workers as a normal part of their day; however, the group allowed them to have deeper conversations about their lives and how they managed balance. The group also provided a break in their busy schedules and lives to share with and listen to others about a common area. “Just, sometimes, that little break and being able to discuss and listen to other people and their whatever it may be, what have you” (Adads).

The participants described how understanding their colleagues better through the group process impacted their work at Career Services. Eggs stated, “I feel like it helped me understand my coworkers better.” Daisy also shared an appreciation for a better understanding of her coworkers during the interview:

But I also really appreciated hearing from the rest of the group and seeing where they were coming from. I think that was kind of important Hearing and them knowing no judgment here. I think it helped me get a little deeper understanding of where they are in

their own work-life balance, or where they perceive themselves. So I kind of appreciated that.

Adads expressed feeling closer to her co-workers as a result of sharing their personal struggles with work-life balance in the group. “But I liked this, because it was different, and I know some of them in the group, like myself, I could've bawled like I did like, oh my gosh, I didn't know you were going through that” (Adads). Eggs further explained how a better understanding of co-workers’ personal struggles improved working relationships:

But you know, hearing what they’re going through or how much is on their plate or what they’re currently struggling with. I think it helps kind of step back and understand oh, okay, they’ve got a lot on their plate or So it’s just good to keep that in mind. So you can work better with each other and understand each other I think.

Summary

A description of the themes that emerged from the participants’ experiences in the supervision intervention implemented in this study was presented in this chapter. The themes emerged from the participants’ descriptions in the individual interviews, participant journals, and focus group. These findings pertain to how the participants experienced the supervision group, as well as the impact of the group on their work as career counselors. The resulting themes are *awareness, importance of work, importance of relationships, importance of wellness, struggling for balance, work-life balance as a process, and learning from others*. The following chapter will provide further discussion of these findings including how they relate to existing research, implications for counselor education and practice, and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

This study sought to explore the application of clinical supervision within a career counseling setting. Examination of career counseling supervision interventions is currently lacking in counselor education research, which detracts from effective preparation and training of career counselors. My own interest in exploring the practice of career counseling supervision was initiated by my discovery of my own stereotyped beliefs regarding the career counseling profession. Interest within the counseling profession to pursue career counseling and address career issues with clients has been waning at a period in history when clients are facing increasingly stressful career and work environments. Career counseling is a complex, necessary, and potentially stressful field; however, empirically validated methods of training career counselors to encounter these challenges are missing from counselor education research. Additionally, work-life balance seems like an appropriate concept for the field of career counseling to expand upon the counseling profession's wellness orientation; however, there has been limited research exploring the inclusion of work-life balance in counseling interventions. This study sought to explore the application of these two concepts, clinical supervision and work-life balance, in a career counseling setting. A career counseling supervision intervention focusing on addressing personal work-life balance was implemented and explored to determine possible benefits to career counselors and career clients.

The primary research questions for this study were directed at exploring the experiences of career counselors in a supervision group integrating work-life balance and addressing how the supervision group affected their career counseling work. These research questions provided a framework for the current study. Due to the limited existing research, the current study was primarily exploratory in nature and lent itself well to qualitative methodology. In particular, the

phenomenological nature of the work-life balance concept and the primary interest in the experiences of the counselors in the supervision group fit well with a phenomenological approach. The study consisted of the implementation of a clinical supervision group in a career counseling setting with an emphasis on addressing personal work-life balance. Career counselors at the career services center volunteered to participate in the eight week supervision group. Each supervision meeting consisted of a discussion about a work-life balance concept, development of a plan to address personal work-life balance, and case consultation of the career counselors' work. The phenomenological study utilized data gathered from participants' journals, individual interviews, my own observations recorded in my research journal, and a focus group to access the lived experience of the participants in the supervision intervention. Findings derived from these sources of data supported previous research suggesting the need for clinical supervision within career counseling, as well as the benefits of addressing work-life balance. Due to the limited amount of research related to both these concepts in career counseling literature, the findings from this study added to and expanded on both these concepts as they relate to the field of career counseling. This chapter provides a discussion of these findings and how they fit within existing research. Implications for practice and recommendations for future research are also discussed.

Findings

Awareness

The theme of *awareness* related to the participant's description of the process toward greater awareness of personal work-life balance during the supervision experience. *Awareness* included three subthemes: *discomfort accompanying awareness*, *identifying aspects of work-life balance*, and *the impact of increased awareness on work with students*. Despite an initial focus

on working toward increased personal satisfaction with work-life balance during the supervision group, participants believed that one of the most valuable outcomes of the group was awareness of personal work-life balance. These findings support the suggestion by Backman (2010) that self-reflection regarding an individual's position within the continuum of occupational imbalance to balance is a necessary step prior to resolving any potential imbalance. The participants explained how greater awareness of work-life balance, as well as the associated factors of identified life roles, desired work-life balance goals, obstacles, and resources assisted in developing strategies for addressing their work-life balance. The inclusion of the range of contributing factors and barriers to work-life balance support a complex and systemic view of work-life balance (Backman, 2010). The work-life balance intervention included in this study's supervision intervention was based on limited research related to individual work-life balance interventions. Most of the work-life balance literature pertains to interventions at an organizational level. However, due to a lack of consensus in the literature regarding the definition of work-life balance and the importance of awareness to participants in the current process, greater focus on the process of self-reflection and awareness of personal work-life balance is valuable to addressing individuals' work-life balance.

Participants noted that self-reflection moved deeper as the intervention progressed. Initially some participants were not consciously aware of the imbalance or conflict between roles in their lives. Participants noted the importance of an environment that provided the time for and encouraged self-reflection regarding work-life balance. These findings relate to the suggestion from McMahon and Patton (2000) to create an environment in supervision for critical self-reflection, because the stress and demands of the work environment can lead to burnout and distraction from self-monitoring. Some of the participants in the study had ongoing stress and

conflict that slipped from detection under the busyness of their work and lives; however, after periods of focusing exclusively on work-life balance, they became aware of the stress and sources of conflict. Amundson (2001) also described how the busyness of life can specifically distract people from awareness and self-reflection of the life roles in which they are engaged. People need opportunities to examine their lives and become aware of the life roles in which they are engaged. Additionally, Amundson suggested it is important to also examine the cultural and systemic values which influence our attitudes regarding life roles and busyness.

Personal application and awareness of work-life balance added new and different knowledge for participants than prior conceptual knowledge of work-life balance. The supervision intervention provided the participants with the opportunity to personally experience the challenge of trying to attain balanced living. The participants were able to experience the challenge and discomfort of becoming aware of their actual work-life balance and trying to address areas of dissatisfaction. Through this process, the participants were able to become aware of and examine their own values and beliefs related to work-life balance. The participants' personal knowledge and awareness of work-life balance resulting from the supervision intervention relate to Patton and McMahon's (2014) proposed systemic approach to career counseling and the importance of exploring the counselor's personal experiences, beliefs, and feelings related to career issues and interventions. Beyond conceptual knowledge of work-life balance, the participants were able to experience firsthand and reflect on the challenges, thoughts, and feelings that emerged from confronting issues of work-life balance. Work-life balance is an issue fraught with individual, systemic, and multicultural implications. The supervision environment provided a learning context to share personal experiences, listen to other perspectives, and discuss systemic challenges and barriers related to work-life balance.

The participants noted how the visual tools of the role pie and the journal entries assisted in focusing on work-life balance and increasing personal awareness. The importance of visual tools for maintaining awareness has not previously been addressed in the work-life balance literature. Other methods have been proposed in working towards awareness of current work-life balance; however, the participants in this study noted that the visual tools were particularly effective for maintaining awareness throughout the study and providing personal accountability. The participants' engagement and satisfaction with the journal entries was surprising. The original planned journal entries were kept to a minimum due to prior experience with participants' resistance to completing journal entries and the expectation that the counselors would already be occupied with work-related paperwork. However, the journal entries provided the participants with a more private mode of communication with the researcher and group facilitator, as well as a personal record of goals, thoughts, and feelings during the process. By reviewing the journal entries throughout the process, I was able to gain feedback related to the group supervision process as well as gain clarity regarding the participants' understanding of work-life balance and perceived status related to their goals. The journal entries allowed me to steer the discussion and group activities toward areas where the participants needed clarity. The group intervention included more exploration and reflection regarding elements of work-life balance, as well as revisiting previously discussed concepts due to a lack of clarity in the work-life balance goals as stated in the journals. The group was initially prompted to establish a work-life balance goal too early in the process of exploration. We eventually returned to and revised work-life balance goals for greater clarity after the consideration of factors related to work-life balance, including values and beliefs, as the process of awareness unfolded.

Discomfort accompanying awareness. The participants shared how periods of increased awareness were at times accompanied by discomfort. The subtheme of *discomfort accompanying awareness* relates to the findings from McMahon and Patton (2000) that development of self-awareness and uncovering personal deficits can be difficult and stressful for supervisees. McMahon and Patton emphasized the importance of the supervisory relationship and an environment of warmth and trust to support supervisees during this process.

Feelings of discomfort often arose during awareness of personal imbalance, dissatisfaction with personal work-life balance, or dissatisfaction with progress toward goals. One of the participants shared feelings of guilt and struggle related to her lack of progress on her work-life balance goals. These findings support similar findings from Backman (2010) that despite external and systemic factors contributing to work-life imbalance and the elusive nature of ideal work-life balance, individuals often attribute the inability to attain work-life balance as a personal failure. Finally, participants described how discomfort with their work-life imbalance motivated them and led them to consider strategies to create greater work-life balance in their lives. The process of increased personal awareness of work-life balance leading to motivation for and consideration of methods of changing personal work-life balance is similar to the work-life balance interventions suggested by Amundson (2001) and Backman (2010).

In order to support individuals in addressing their work-life balance, it is important to emphasize that actual work-life balance is a dynamic concept which realistically occurs somewhere along the continuum from work-life imbalance to ideal work-life balance (Amundson, 2001; Backman, 2010; Christiansen & Townsend, 2010). Interventions can also provide individuals with the opportunity to examine how personal as well as external demands impact life roles (Backman, 2010). Individuals can work toward an awareness of contributing

factors to their work-life balance and how to negotiate conflicting demands and life roles in an effort to move towards greater personal satisfaction with work-life balance.

Identifying aspects of work-life balance. The subtheme of *identifying aspects of work-life balance* related to the participants' descriptions of the process of identifying life roles in which they engaged as a part of their overall work-life balance. Participants expressed similar ideas regarding the individual nature of work-life balance as stated in existing literature (Backman, 2010). As we processed individuals' work toward their work-life balance goals, participants noticed that work-life balance consisted of different roles and different proportions of time for each person.

Participants also noted the important role personal values and priorities played within decisions and actions related to work-life balance. These findings support existing definitions of life balance and occupational balance. Christiansen and Matsuka (2006) defined life balance as a pattern of activities consistent with an individual's values, skills, and interests. Similarly, Backman (2010) defined occupational balance as "the extent to which [people] are able to organize and participate in occupations in a manner congruent with their aspirations and values" (p. 232). Amundson (2001) described values as providing meaning to people's lives through the variety of occupations in which they choose to engage. The findings in this study support the importance of assisting individuals in exploration of their values and priorities in addition to role exploration as a part of efforts to improve work-life balance.

When designing the intervention, I limited exploration of roles to primarily the first two sessions. However, participants expressed how activities and discussion throughout the intervention contributed to their consideration of the value and impact of their engaged roles. Consideration of the importance and depth of engagement of life roles is an ongoing process.

Similar to existing literature regarding the systemic nature of life roles, participants discussed how external forces and social influences impacted their expected life roles (Amundson, 2001; Backman, 2010; Christiansen & Townsend, 2010). Backman (2010) also discussed how acknowledgement of external demands regarding life roles assists individuals in overcoming self-blame and feelings of failure in their efforts toward improved life balance. The findings in this study support the importance of exploring life roles within a systemic context when assisting individuals in working toward improved work-life balance. The participants in this study explained how a process of exploration involving their values, life roles, and systemic influences contributed to identifying aspects of their work-life balance.

The impact of increased awareness on work with students. The third subtheme related to participants' descriptions of how their increased awareness during the supervision experience contributed to their work with students. The participants explained how their perspective regarding their work expanded during the supervision intervention. Participants shared how they started to ask questions targeting life planning goals when meeting with students to move beyond simply career matching and job finding. They also paid greater attention to the systemic influences and personal issues which intersected with the students' career presenting concerns. These findings relate to the recommendations for career counseling supervision in the existing literature (Bronson, 2010; Patton & McMahon, 2014; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). There is a heavy emphasis placed on the importance of highlighting and exploring the areas of crossover between personal issues and career issues. Work-life balance is a topic that lends itself to a point of intersection between work and personal issues. Bronson (2010) also specifically explained how supervisors should ensure that a holistic perspective is taken when discussing clients in supervision. Patton and McMahon (2014) similarly

recommended recognition of the interrelated systems that impact the client, as well as the career counseling services he or she receives. Work-life balance is also an area that creates an opportunity to discuss how family, peer, and wider systemic influences impact client values, needs, and decisions. The counselors discussed how they started to consider and address the nonlinear impact of personal values and expectations, family values and expectations, financial needs, contextual factors, and career goals on each other.

Throughout the supervision experience, the counselors shared their struggle and frustration to assist students in considering factors outside of prestige and income related to career choice. The participants shared exploration of work-life balance as an opportunity to invite students to consider their other needs and values as they relate to career choice. Work-life balance is a particularly relevant topic to college students, because the participants shared that often students need to develop skills in decision-making and time management related to their various life roles. Additionally, increasing financial demands placed on students and an increasing number of nontraditional students, has led to a larger proportion of students, who need to work full or part-time during college. Participants shared other systemic demands on student's time and decision-making process through increased pressure from university administrators on students to participate in internships and take large course loads to complete degrees in a timely manner. These findings support the inclusion of work-life balance as a topic to explore with clients in order to address some of these issues in career development and counseling.

Importance of Work

The importance of work to the participants and their overall work-life balance was repeated throughout the interviews and journal entries. Work was clearly a valued and

meaningful part of the participants' lives. Meyer (1922) included work as one of the four rhythms of human life within occupational therapy. Additionally, Amundson (2001) included work as contrasted with play as one of the four sets of factors within life balance. Participants described work as providing them with a sense of meaning, purpose, worth, and accomplishment. The contribution of work to overall work-life balance is consistent with findings from occupational therapy regarding the importance of meaning within life roles and occupations (Christiansen & Townsend, 2010). Amundson (2001) also discussed the importance of finding meaning and purpose in chosen life roles as a contributing factor to overall life balance. Participants discussed the necessity of work in order to meet financial needs, as well as some additional benefits that accompanied their work, such as access to the university gym to address physical wellness. However, they acknowledged that work also allowed them to express their values, such as the ability to help others. Participants specifically noted the sense of satisfaction they derived from the belief that they were able to help students. This finding was not surprising given that one of the core ethical principles of the counseling profession is beneficence, working for the good of clients (American Counseling Association, 2014). Therefore, it seems reasonable that professional counselors would value the ability to help people, and they would be able to enact that value through their work. One of the participants specifically noted the importance of seeing growth and development in some of her clients over time to her satisfaction with work. This finding specifically relates to the research on burnout prevention in counseling. Skovholt, Grier, and Hanson (2001) discussed how frequent work with difficult clients and unsolvable problems contributes to burnout. The ability to see growth, development, and resolution of presenting career concerns in some clients provides counselors with the opportunity for restoration and renewal.

Another aspect of work that contributed to participants' overall sense of work-life balance was the structure and predictability work provided to their lives. Work provided a structured schedule, which they were able to use as a foundation for scheduling and including other life roles. Participants also appreciated the predictability and consistency their work provided to their lives. One participant contrasted the consistency of her work environment with the unpredictable stressors which arose in areas of her personal life. These findings are related to Amundson's (2001) discussion of the importance of boundaries in shaping life balance. Amundson was primarily concerned with individuals learning to shape their lives and establish boundaries according to their needs and values as they relate to the roles in which they engage. However, the participants in this study noted how a structured, consistent work environment and schedule assisted them in some ways in establishing boundaries and providing shape to their lives.

Importance of Relationships

Participants explained the value of engagement in relationships to overall work-life balance, including: relationships at work, personal relationships outside of work, and time spent with family. The participants shared how they could meet some of their social needs through their engagement in relationships at work. Counseling is a social profession, which emphasizes the importance of relationships to change within the counseling and supervisory context. Therefore, the congruence between the participants' value of social relationships and the profession's emphasis on the value of social relationships is consistent with the existing literature on the importance of engaging in life roles and occupations that are congruent with an individual's values as a part of life balance (Amundson, 2001; Backman, 2010; Christiansen & Matuska, 2006). Additionally, supportive relationships within the counseling work environment,

as established through supervision can be helpful in assisting with professional development and learning, as well as meeting relationship needs as a larger part of work-life balance (Bronson, 2010; Patton & McMahon, 2014; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999).

Participants placed particular emphasis on the importance of engaging in family relationships. Beyond participants' identification of their engagement as family members, they also discussed how family could serve as a resource for support while pursuing other areas of life and coping with stress. Participants shared how exploration as a part of the intervention assisted them in becoming more aware of the value of their family and the importance of time spent with family to their overall work-life balance. This finding supports the life balance interventions recommended by Amundson (2001), Backman (2010), and Meyer (1922). The busyness of life can distract individuals from the importance of various aspects of their work-life balance, and it requires focus and active engagement in order to live a life congruent with valued roles that match individual's needs and aspirations. One of the participants became aware during the intervention that a contributing factor to her stress and dissatisfaction with her work-life balance was the conflict between the importance she placed on family and relationships contrasted with the lack of time spent engaged in personal relationships and lack of family support. This was an example of the work-life imbalance that can occur when actual life roles and personal values are incongruent. Additionally, this participant exemplified the kind of distraction busyness can provide from work-life imbalance as suggested by Amundson (2001), because this participant started the intervention without any awareness of the work-life imbalance or stress, which later emerged.

Family involvement is a complex role which the participants discovered can encompass conflicting needs or demands. The process of awareness involved with the intervention required

participants to recognize conflicting demands within realistic time demands. Participants discussed a process of prioritizing values, needs, and demands as they tried to negotiate life roles and conflicts related to family and work. One of the issues that arose for participants was that they placed a value and found meaning in both work and family; however, there were times when they had to make choices regarding conflicting demands between the two. Additionally, participants recognized that work and family were interconnected, because their support of their family was dependent on their income from work. The complex and interconnected relationship between family and other roles, such as work lends itself well to exploration within a systems perspective that acknowledges external demands placed on individuals as related to work-life balance (Backman, 2004; Christiansen & Townsend, 2010). The role of relationships within work-life balance is a topic with abundant opportunity to explore systemic and social demands and influences as they relate to individual's career and work decisions. Work-life balance can provide the opportunity to expand discussion in career supervision and career counseling beyond the focus on individual influences to a more complex consideration of nonlinear and external influences on career development (Bronson, 2010; Patton & McMahon, 2014).

Importance of Wellness

The fourth theme, *importance of wellness*, emerged from the participants' statements about the importance of wellness to their overall work-life balance and well-being. Skovholt, Grier, and Hanson (2001) included four dimensions of wellness within their discussion of counselor self-care: physical, spiritual, emotional, and social. The participants specifically addressed the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of wellness; however, spiritual wellness was not included in participants' responses. Amundson (2001) also included spiritual factors as the contrasting element to physical factors in the list of four contrasting factors that

influence life balance. Spiritual aspects of life were also not discussed as a part of work-life balance within the study's intervention. Within career counseling, recent career theories, particularly postmodern theories note the importance of attending to spiritual factors as they relate to career development; however, spirituality is not a commonly considered element of career guidance in current practice.

Participants discussed coping strategies and activities in which they engaged to maintain physical and emotional wellness. Although specific statements were made regarding attending to physical and emotional wellness separately, the different aspects of wellness were also presented as interrelated. The participants viewed wellness as a contributing factor or obstacle to work-life balance while also recognizing the impact perceived work-life balance could have on physical and emotional wellness. Participants described two specific coping strategies for addressing stress and emotional wellness: using humor and setting boundaries with work and time spent at work. Amundson (2001) described the importance of boundaries in shaping people's lives in an effort to work towards life balance. The participants described a similar process to Amundson's suggested process of shaping their lives using boundaries to regulate commitments and time devoted to life roles. Participants were able to learn from past experience where they may not have been as active in determining the shape of boundaries between life roles and how that impacted life balance and well-being. As a result, participants learned the importance of proactively and personally determining boundaries as they related to their personal values, interests, and goals, particularly as related to boundaries on work time and commitments.

Amundson (2001) included work and play as contrasting factors that contribute to life balance. In setting boundaries around work time, participants categorized time outside of work primarily as leisure and personal time. Leisure time included a variety of activities that

participants enjoyed, such as: going for walks, beach activities, gardening, photography, and watching movies. Personal time consisted of time typically spent alone relaxing and recovering. Participants stated explicitly that some time needed to be spent just relaxing and recovering without the need to be engaged in active pursuits with meaning and purpose. They referred to this recovery time as time to “veg” or “me time” (Daisy). Within this study’s findings, leisure time supports the play dimension and personal time supports the rest dimension of Meyer’s (1922) four rhythms of life. Additional occupational therapy literature supports play or leisure as an important part of overall occupational or life balance (Backman, 2010; Christiansen & Matuska, 2006; Christiansen & Townsend, 2010).

Participants described attending to physical wellness as an important part of work-life balance, and they also acknowledged that a lack of wellness could serve as a potential barrier to satisfaction with work-life balance. Participants listed several areas to attend to related to physical wellness: sleep, nutrition, impact of stress on physical health, and exercise. Exercise was a highly valued activity, because participants understood the benefit to their physical health as well as the role exercise could play in helping them manage and cope with stress. Christiansen and Matsuka (2006) stated the importance of including and attending to daily healthy habits as an aspect of maintaining satisfaction with work-life balance. As suggested by both Amundson (2001), satisfaction with work-life balance requires individuals to be aware of and actively attend to their chosen life roles in order to assure they are able to meet their needs and desires within available time. The findings of this study are consistent with Amundson’s suggestions, because as the participants discussed, it was important to schedule time for personal health needs in addition to leisure activities to maintain satisfactory balance and avoid potential problems.

Struggling for Balance

The fifth theme, *struggling for balance*, encompassed participants' challenges in working toward or maintaining satisfactory work-life balance. The two primary challenges to work-life balance efforts were maintaining a boundary between work and non-work time and coping with busyness and too many demands across life roles. The value of maintaining realistic boundaries between work and non-work time or life role demands has been addressed in the literature regarding burnout prevention, occupational balance, and life balance (Amundson, 2001; Meyer, 1922; Skovholt et al., 2001). Difficulty saying no to demands for time and setting realistic limits on dedicated time for work contributes to burnout, increased stress, and work-life imbalance (Backman, 2010; Skovholt et al., 2001). Participants shared the difficulty they had ending the work day with unfinished tasks while also acknowledging that often it was impossible to resolve all work tasks by the end of the workday. Often, thoughts regarding upcoming deadlines and events or unfinished work would spill over into non-work time. After the intervention, participants described the process of awareness regarding work stress and unfinished work, and the efforts they took to actively manage time allotted for work and maintain all thoughts and stress about work within that time. These findings support the life balance interventions suggested by Amundson (2001) and Meyer (1922). Particularly with the increased demands for busyness from external systems, work-life balance interventions need to focus on developing awareness and strategies to actively organize time according to the context of external demands and personal needs, interests, and values (Backman, 2010; Meyer, 1922).

The second main challenge to work-life balance efforts was expressed by participants as being too busy or feeling pulled in too many directions. Role overload is a term used in occupational balance literature to describe a situation where too many demands are made of an

individual or an individual is participating in too many roles for the time available (Backman, 2010). Backman (2010) described role overload as a contributing factor to work-life conflict. Work-life imbalance is associated with trying to engage in incompatible roles, as well as too many roles. Conflict between life roles arises when individuals try to negotiate demands on limited time between personally valued roles and externally imposed roles and expectations (Backman, 2010). Backman warned that work-life balance interventions need to avoid presenting ideal work-life balance as a static, achievable state. Additionally, the external and systemic contributions to role demands have often been absent from discussion of work-life balance (Backman, 2010). Similarly, early in the intervention the participants processed feelings of disappointment regarding their initial role pie and discussion of areas they would like to see included in ideal work-life balance. Participants' judged personal healthy balance and wellness based on external recommendations from experts and past education experiences about ideal wellness. Guidance regarding ways to negotiate ideal recommendations for healthy activities with personal needs, desires, values, and time available would have been helpful in positively resolving the participants' negative appraisals of their role pies.

Work-Life Balance as a Process

Participants described work-life balance as a process rather than an endpoint. This theme supports Backman's (2010) definition of a similar concept, occupational balance as a dynamic, relative state. Backman cautioned practitioners to avoid conceptualizing ideal occupational balance as an achievable, static state, because this could lead individuals to feel frustrated and engage in self-blame when unable to attain balance. Perceived occupational or work-life balance is best conceptualized on the continuum from total work-life imbalance to ideal work-life balance. An individual's perceived state of work-life balance is somewhere along the continuum

between those points, and movement along the continuum can occur as life changes occur. In viewing work-life balance as a process, it is important to consider the systems and environmental context surrounding the individual. The participants made changes intended to impact personal work-life balance as a part of the intervention, and they also acknowledged that life events affected their work.

Participants explained that flexibility and adaptation were important when addressing work-life balance because of the dynamic nature of the concept. This supports Amundson's (2001) suggestion that individuals consider flexibility when setting boundaries for life roles because of the unpredictable and dynamic nature of life. Participants noted that unexpected events occurred during the intervention, which they did not necessarily account for in their initial work-life balance goals or plan. We revisited, reviewed, and revised goals several times during the first half of the intervention. Similar to the view of work-life balance as a process, goal setting is an ongoing, dynamic process. Participants indicated that flexibility and adaptation were key to adjusting to and moving forward positively when faced with unexpected life events. However, participants also noted that busy times with external demands on their schedules and personal resources contributed to improved work-life balance by increasing their awareness and encouraging a more mindful approach to work-life balance and scheduling. Amundson (2001) cautioned against the drive to be overly busy, because it may lead to distraction. The experience of participants in this study suggested that there is a balance point related to busyness. Busyness helped participants with awareness of work-life balance to an extent during certain periods. However, participants also explained how busyness was related to stress and the importance of time for relaxation and recovery as well. The field of occupational therapy encourages engagement in a variety of occupations within the areas of "self-care, productivity, and leisure"

(Backman, 2010, p. 234). From the perspective of occupational balance, people need a certain level of busyness to meet productivity needs; however, excessive busyness can take time and resources away from the areas of self-care and leisure. Additionally, the cultural importance placed on productivity and busyness can encourage individuals to sacrifice self-care and leisure time for productivity as indicated by Amundson.

Amundson (2001) also suggested that work-life balance and establishing healthy boundaries for life roles was a lifelong process. Similarly, participants stated they would always face challenges with work-life balance. Both positive and negative experiences related to work-life balance were temporary. Amundson included a period of reflection on an individual's history of managing boundaries and work-life balance as a part of the intervention to address work-life balance. The participant's experience in the current study supports the inclusion of a historical perspective toward work-life balance to acknowledge past challenges and successes. By examining past experiences, participants learned that it is important during periods of healthy, effortless work-life balance to consider the necessary time, energy, and resources to cope with possible unexpected, negative stressors.

Learning from Others

The final theme, *learning from others*, was related to both learning about career counseling and learning about work-life balance. Career counseling and the personal work-life balance plans were the two primary areas covered during the supervision intervention. Additionally, the participants explained that the supervision group allowed them to gain a better understanding of their colleagues, which contributed to improved working relationships.

Participants described two ways the additional perspectives of other participants in the group added to their career counseling knowledge and work-life balance strategies: by

solidifying prior knowledge and by adding new insight or perspectives. The experience of solidifying prior knowledge supports Bernard and Goodyear's (2009) description of supervision as a process that allows for integration of knowledge from training and education with practical knowledge. Participants specifically described how additional perspectives and feedback from colleagues within supervision created the context within which they could solidify their career counseling knowledge. The social atmosphere of supervision added additional elements to professional development which participants could not gain through individual reflection and development. McMahon and Patton (2000) suggested that career counseling supervision was necessary, because supervisors can promote career counselor development by providing additional perspectives, identifying blind spots, clarifying issues, and providing feedback and recommendations for growth. Within this study, the supervision intervention was characterized by consultation with colleagues rather than the hierarchical relationship between supervisor and supervisee, which led to less emphasis on specific corrective feedback or confrontation of possible deficits. However, participants still highlighted the contribution of feedback and additional perspectives provided by colleagues in the group. Participants were able to add new knowledge to their existing understanding of career counseling, gain greater awareness of personal blind spots, and gain clarity on career counseling issues or clients with which they struggled.

The findings from this study support counseling literature, which highlights the importance of ongoing or lifelong learning through supervision (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009; McMahon & Patton, 2000; Skovholt et al., 2001). Additionally, McMahon and Patton noted that ongoing learning is particularly important to career counselors due to constant innovations and new career tools being developed. Lara et al. (2011) also explained that limited exposure to

career counseling experts and knowledge during training programs leads to a need for greater training and supervision of new professionals within career counseling than other counseling specialties. Participants shared an appreciation for the ability to share challenging situations with their work within the supervision group. Participants were able to learn from the knowledge and experience of more experienced colleagues, and they were able to work together to resolve common challenging areas within their work. One participant, who was a new professional, highlighted the way hearing from more experienced colleagues supplemented her own knowledge and experience with career counseling. Lara et al. and Hoppin and Goodman (2014) explained that the current conceptualization of career counseling training is incomplete without a postgraduate supervision component. The current study and existing literature demonstrates counselors are able to solidify existing knowledge and integrate practical knowledge within a supervision environment. The practice of career counseling and the application of career counseling theory and interventions is complex. Consultation with colleagues in this supervision group allowed participants to sort through the complexity and share perspectives and knowledge.

Additionally, participants shared feelings of relief and the experience of normalization as they discovered colleagues faced similar challenges and obstacles in their own work. Skovholt et al. (2001) specifically addressed the role supervision can play in addressing unresolvable problems in the counseling setting and preventing burnout. Participants explained that some of the problems they faced did not have solutions; however, they were able to find some relief by sharing them with colleagues, hearing their perspectives, and realizing they were not alone in facing these challenges. Similar to the lack of research related to the training needs of career counselors, there has been little acknowledgement of the self-care needs of career counselors (McMahon & Patton, 2000). The participants in this study experienced work stress, factors

contributing to burnout, and personal stress and adversity. They were able to find some relief from these problems through the supervision component in addition to the work-life balance intervention. McMahon and Patton acknowledged that uncovering deficits and learning needs during supervision can be a stressful experience. Supportive supervision and a strong relationship between supervisor and supervisee can support counselors as they address these issues. Prieto and Betsworth (1999) also included support of counseling activities as a necessary component of career counseling supervision, and Bronson (2010) specifically highlighted the importance of the relationship between supervisor and supervisee to the success of supervision. Within this study, the participants described a process of building stronger relationship with the other members of the group. The supportive relationships from the supervision group helped to provide support to the individual participants; however, participants also described how they believed the stronger relationships positively affected their overall work at Career Services.

The inclusion of the work-life balance component to the supervision group allowed participants the context to have discussions with co-workers they normally would not have had. The participants explained how this allowed them to develop stronger relationships with their co-workers as they gained a greater appreciation of the struggles and challenges they faced personally and professionally. Career counseling supervision literature indicates that attention to the supervisory relationship and the counseling relationship has been lacking within career counseling (Bronson, 2010; Hoppin & Goodman, 2014; Lara et al., 2011; Patton & McMahon, 2014). Participants recognized the knowledge and experience their co-workers provided to the group as they gained a better appreciation of their own personal and professional experiences. There has been less emphasis on development of self-awareness and self-reflection within the field of career counseling; however, career counseling supervision literature notes the importance

of the development of these skills as a part of supervision (Bronson, 2010; Patton & McMahon, 2014; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). Working on personal work-life balance plans and discussing them within the supervision context, allowed participants the opportunity to engage in examination and self-reflection of their personal values, interests, and experiences related to work-life balance and career. The participants indicated that having these conversations with co-workers and other career counseling professionals was a new experience; however, they appreciated the depth it added to their relationships. Examination of these concepts within supervision also addresses concerns raised by Patton and McMahon that career counselors do not necessarily have an environment in which to engage in ongoing reflection regarding the impact of personal characteristics, systemic factors, and multicultural considerations in the practice of career counseling. Within this study, the participants shared an appreciation for the varied experiences, knowledge, and perspectives their fellow group participants added to the conversation regarding work-life balance and career counseling.

Conclusions

This study sought to explore the experiences of career counselors participating in group supervision integrating work-life balance. The study included an intervention that allowed participants to discuss their career counseling work in a consultation environment and develop plans to address their personal work-life balance. The study was driven by two primary research questions: (a) How do career counselors experience the integration of work-life balance in group supervision? and (b) How do career counselors describe any effect on their career counseling of group supervision integrating work-life balance? The findings of this study support the use of career counseling supervision to develop career counseling knowledge and skills. Participants improved their understanding of and ability to conceptualize complex, challenging career issues

through a process of consultation and feedback. They were also able to engage in a process of self-reflection and increase their self-awareness, which has not been emphasized within career counseling to the extent it has been in clinical counseling. The inclusion of work-life balance in the supervision intervention created an ideal context for the participants to consider the overlap of career and personal issues, as well as the impact of systemic factors. The experiential process of engaging in personal work-life balance issues allowed the participants to move beyond conceptual knowledge, address self-care issues, and develop stronger relationships with co-workers through a deeper understanding of personal and shared strengths and challenges.

Supervision was helpful in assisting participants in developing awareness as it related to both work-life balance and career counseling issues. Initially, some of the participants were unaware of the busyness that distracted them from awareness. As the intervention progressed, I could observe a process of awareness unfold through the journal entries and group discussion as participants struggled to establish appropriate and realistic work-life balance goals. Participants also discussed the importance of the process of increasing awareness to the group experience during their interviews, and they particularly highlighted how the intervention and self-examination forced them to move deeper in considering their work-life balance goals. A structured intervention like supervision provided consistent time, space, and accountability necessary to continue through the process of increasing awareness. The participants explained that at times increased awareness was uncomfortable. A structured, consistent intervention provided them with a context to move through the discomfort and continue working. They also believed that writing and reviewing goals held them accountable to accurately examine their perceived work-life balance.

Awareness and self-reflection were more important to the supervision intervention than I initially considered. We spent time exploring the participants' understanding of work-life balance concepts, their values, interests, needs, and roles prior to goal setting. However, additional exploration of these topics later in the intervention as awareness of conflicts and challenges arose would have been helpful for participants. Exploration of external, systemic influences on role demands and perceived work-life balance would have also been helpful to participants. Participants were individually focused when considering and developing their work-life balance plans, and consideration of obstacles to work-life balance goals would have been assisted by consideration of external demands that may arise. We spent some time during the second and third sessions processing the participants' feelings regarding perceived work-life balance and goals. I made the decision to incorporate a discussion of self-compassion after listening to participants and reading journal entries that were very self-critical regarding their work-life balance and wellness choices. Participants had very high expectations for ideal work-life balance and wellness based on past experiences and conceptual knowledge. Eventually as participants struggled with work-life balance and became aware of resolving conflicts in priorities, they gained an understanding that prescribed components for a healthy life did not necessarily contribute to personal satisfaction with work-life balance. Ideal work-life balance and wellness were not attainable. Participants needed to work towards a healthy balance that felt right for them and fit their priorities. The process of addressing work-life balance was more about awareness and finding ways to manage life as stressors and conflicts between priorities arose. Within the journal entries and the individual interviews, participants expressed the idea that ideal work-life balance was never achievable, and they would always struggle to maintain

satisfactory work-life balance. An ongoing process of reviewing and revising goals during a longer intervention period may better address a dynamic concept like work-life balance.

Participants identified three main contributors to work-life balance: work, relationships, and wellness. Relationships included time engaged in family roles and relationships, which participants considered particularly important. Wellness included time for leisure activities, rest, and recovery. Despite discussion of the importance of time for wellness, work and family relationships seemed to be the main priorities when conflicts or challenges arose within work-life balance. Participants struggled to determine priorities and make decisions when demands from work intruded on family time, or vice versa. They seemed conflicted about which area of life, work or family should take priority. Focus on work and family time detracted from personal and leisure time. Cultural messages regarding the importance of work and productivity to a meaningful life with purpose, as well as social messages about the importance of family certainly influenced participants' decisions in shaping their lives. Additionally, participants noted the external demands from work on their schedule helped impose structure on their lives. External demands from work and family relationships also seemed to outweigh the internal voice and needs to attend to the self through leisure and recovery.

The findings of this study support the existing conceptual knowledge and limited research regarding work-life balance and similar concepts like occupational balance. Work-life balance has been a difficult concept to research, which has contributed to a lack of research exploring interventions to address work-life balance. However, the experiences of participants and their descriptions of personal work-life balance are consistent with existing definitions of work-life balance as a dynamic, relative, individual concept (Amundson, 2001; Backman, 2010; Christiansen & Matuska, 2006; Christiansen & Townsend, 2010). The current study also

supports suggested interventions for addressing work-life balance that emphasize the importance of awareness and self-reflection when examining contributing factors to work-life balance (Amundson, 2001; Backman, 2010). Awareness and self-reflection related to both career counseling skill development, as well as personal development, were facilitated by the clinical supervision intervention in this study as suggested within existing career counseling supervision literature (McMahon & Patton, 2000; Patton & McMahon, 2014).

Existing research related to both work-life balance and clinical supervision are limited within the field of career counseling. The findings from this study added to the understanding of work-life balance and supervision as they relate to career counseling. Currently, work-life balance is not well addressed within the field of counseling. There are some shared concepts between wellness and work-life balance; however, there are distinctions, which indicate that the addition of work-life balance to counseling research and practice would be beneficial. The experience of participants in this study demonstrated that work-life balance is a useful concept for addressing the overlap between personal and career counseling issues. Existing literature has called for greater attention to this area in the field of career counseling (Bronson, 2010; Patton & McMahon, 2014).

This study also highlighted the self-care needs of career counselors. Several studies have proposed that attention to self-care needs and support of career counselors is a necessary component of career counseling supervision; however, there has been limited research demonstrating the stressors and burnout career counselors face (Bronson, 2010; McMahon & Patton, 2000; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). Within this study, even the participants initially were not aware of the stressors they experienced, which also meant they were not aware of the impact of that stress on their work as career counselors. This study provided examples of the stressors

these career counselors faced, including: pressure from university administrators, pressure from students, conflict within the work environment, and personal stress that carried over into the workplace.

The findings from this study added to existing research regarding effective work-life balance interventions, particularly interventions addressing the needs of the individual and his or her well-being which is lacking. Amundson (2001) proposed an intervention utilizing self-reflection and an ongoing learning process to address individual work-life balance. However, there is not existing research examining the effectiveness of individually targeted work-life balance. There has been limited research examining organizational policies intended to address work-life balance issues. The findings from this study support individually targeted interventions to address work-life balance. The experience of participants in this study suggests that individuals benefit from a process of exploration and self-discovery related to individual work-life balance rather than externally imposed ideas of what constitutes healthy work-life balance.

The findings from this study also added to limited research exploring the application of clinical supervision to career counseling. Despite conceptual articles suggesting necessary components of career counseling supervision based on effective, existing models applied in clinical counseling supervision, there has been little evaluation of the practice of clinical supervision within career counseling. The participants in this study benefitted from a context that allowed consultation with and feedback from other practitioners, including more senior members of the profession. The findings from this study support proposed components of career counseling supervision, including: development of self-reflection and self-awareness, exploration of cultural and systemic factors related to career, support for stress and career counseling

challenges, and improved relationship skills within the supervision setting (Bronson, 2010; Hoppin & Goodman, 2014; McMahon & Patton, 2000; Prieto & Betsworth, 1999). There has been much less emphasis on social learning processes and the importance of a supportive relationship between supervisor and supervisee within career counselor training than clinical counseling. Supervision has primarily been relegated to administrative supervision and tasks within career counseling. However, the experiences of the participants in this study indicate that a social context for reflection and learning offered by supervision is also beneficial to training career counselors.

Implications for Practice

This study demonstrated the beneficial environment supervision can offer to the training and development of career counselors. Career counselors are currently not required to participate in postgraduate clinical supervision unless they decide to pursue a license. However, career counselors would likely benefit from postgraduate clinical supervision as a part of their training and development. Only one of the participants in the current study had previous postgraduate clinical supervision in pursuit of a license as a Licensed Professional Counselor. The participants were previously participating in weekly administrative supervision; however, clinical supervision provided benefits to the participants beyond their experience of administrative supervision. The experiences of the participants in the supervision group and their description of the impact of their work as career counselors demonstrate that the differences between clinical counseling and career counseling are not as stark as they are sometimes perceived. The clinical supervision environment is particularly conducive to a process of self-reflection and examination related to personal beliefs and factors that contribute to the counseling relationship. Career counselors would benefit from greater exploration of the impact

of their own thoughts and beliefs, as well as systemic and cultural factors that impact the counseling relationship. The positive impact of strong counseling and supervision relationships contribute to improved career counseling similarly to clinical counseling. Supervision provides a context to explore and improve factors contributing to positive relationships. Additionally, supervision promotes counselor development through the integration of conceptual knowledge gained during graduate education with practical experience working with clients. The current model of career counselor training prematurely ends with the completion of a counseling degree without the opportunity for advancing counseling skills through supervised clinical experience. Career counseling supervision would support the professional development of career counselors as they are able to develop and establish a process of ongoing learning by identifying deficits and addressing them through consultation with and feedback from more senior members of the field.

The findings from this study also illustrate the value of the concept of work-life balance to the work of counselors. Work-life balance is a useful complement to the wellness orientation of counseling, and career counselors are well positioned to assist clients in considering and addressing work-life balance in their lives. Career counseling research and practice has acknowledged the additional challenges and stresses of the modern career environment; however, within the field of counseling, there has been less emphasis on assisting clients in addressing the ongoing stress and demands of the work environment. Counseling clients could benefit from ongoing, holistic assistance in negotiating conflicts between and shaping their lives according to work, as well as non-work demands. Based on the findings from this study, as well as existing research, it seems that current work-life balance interventions do not meet the needs of individuals. Counselors would be better equipped to assist clients presenting with stress from work-life balance concerns if their education and training included a better understanding of

work-life balance and the struggles individuals encounter as they attempt to resolve conflicts in that area. Within this study, participants got stuck or became frustrated when they tried to deal with stress and work-life balance problems within an individually driven and controlled orientation to work-life balance. Clients may present with issues that seem to be out of their control or unresolvable. The ability to explore the process of resolving conflicts between external demands at work or in social roles through the concept of work-life balance may help clients understand and develop strategies for managing areas of their lives where external demands interfere with personal needs and interests.

In addition to the benefit of work-life balance to work with clients, the focus on self-care through the work-life balance component of the supervision intervention was helpful to the career counselors personally. Career counselors need to attend to their own needs and develop self-care plans in the same way that clinical counselors are encouraged to attend to self-care. Career counseling is personal work, and clients struggling with career issues can present in distress and experience negative emotions just as clients seeking personal counseling. Career counselors are also subjected to other stressors like responsibility for a high number of clients, pressure for positive results, and limited resources. The findings from this study also demonstrated that career counselors bring their own stress into their work and the counseling relationship. Career counselors need to be trained to maintain awareness of their own needs and how their level of wellness may be impacting their effectiveness as a counselor.

Recommendations for Future Research

This qualitative study utilized phenomenological inquiry to explore work-life balance and career counseling supervision and add to the existing understanding of these concepts within the field of counseling. This study was primarily exploratory in nature due to the lack of a clear

definition of work-life balance and a lack of validated components of career counseling supervision. Further research is needed to explore and define effective career counseling supervision. In general, greater attention needs to be paid to the training of career counselors as demonstrated by the lack of existing research related to effective training methods for career counselors. The complexity of modern career issues indicates the need for well-trained, effective career counselors to assist clients in navigating the modern career environment; however, interest in the career counseling field and dedication to the training of career counselors has been waning.

Additionally, practicing career counselors would benefit from acknowledgement of and greater attention to self-care, stressors, and contributors to burnout. This study demonstrated that contrary to myths about career counseling, career counselors face challenging, complex issues in assisting clients. Many of the factors that influence work with personal counseling clients and are examined through clinical supervision within personal counseling are applicable to career counseling. Increasingly, career counselors have suggested the need to pay greater attention to the overlap between career and personal issues. Further research is needed regarding training career counselors to address this overlap, as well as effective interventions for addressing this area with clients. Additionally, the career counselors in this study carried their own personal issue and stress into their work with career counseling clients. Currently, there is less emphasis on personal exploration and reflection on the impact of personal issues, values, and beliefs on work as a career counselor. Additional research exploring the impact of the process of self-reflection and awareness in supervision on work with career counseling clients would be helpful in establishing the benefits of supervision to the field.

Further research regarding the application of the work-life balance concept within career and general counseling is needed. Work-life balance as demonstrated in this study is related to wellness, which has a growing body of research in counseling; however, work-life balance is a unique concept that may add to the work of career counselors. Career counselors are well positioned to assist clients in managing the issues that arise related to work-life balance. However, career counselors need a clearer definition of this concept and a better understanding of what constitutes effective intervention in order to be helpful to clients. In addition to clarity and consensus regarding a definition, there needs to be greater exploration of the successful ways people negotiate conflicts and challenges to work-life balance. The findings from this study supported the idea that work-life balance is an ongoing, evolving process. In addition to the need to define what constitutes healthy balance, it is important to describe the successful ways people are able to negotiate challenges in this area.

Career counseling training and supervision, as well as work-life balance would benefit from greater exploration of systemic factors. Increasingly, career counseling theories are acknowledging the impact of systemic factors on individual career paths; however, historically, career counseling has primarily been conceptualized by a focus on the individual's interests, decisions, and career path. Similarly, much of the existing work-life balance literature has focused on identifying how individuals can navigate work-life balance and include desired components, with little acknowledgement of the external demands on those individuals. Further research on interventions that assist individuals in exploring and resolving external career and work-life balance demands would be beneficial to practitioners. As this study demonstrated, negative self-evaluation and stress can arise when individuals are not able to identify and work towards successful resolution when individual and systemic factors come into conflict.

Summary

The phenomenological approach to the exploration of the areas of clinical supervision and work-life balance within career counseling yielded a rich description of the participants' experiences with the work of career counseling, the impact of their work and stress on their lives, the impact of non-work stressors on their work, and how they negotiated the overlap and conflicts between these areas. Although there are some distinctions, the challenges career counselors face, and the processes they employ to conceptualize their work appear to be quite similar to those of clinical counselors. Career counselors would benefit from greater focus and research on their training and professional development needs; however, application of existing models of training and supervision should also be explored. By maintaining a limited view of the role of career counselors, counselor educators may be limiting the ways that counselors can assist clients. Work-life balance is an appropriate concept for addressing the overlap between personal and career issues. The findings of this study indicate that the career counselors benefitted from the clinical supervision experience, as well as the attention to personal work-life balance issues.

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APPENDIX A

Supervision Session Outline

Session 1

Topic: Purpose of group supervision. Discuss participants' questions and what they hope to include in supervision process or gain from supervision.

- I. Introductions
 - A. Background and interests. Current focus of work.
 - B. What would you like to gain from supervision?
- II. Discuss purpose of group
 - A. Define work-life balance.
 - B. Review overview of supervision sessions.
- III. Role Pie Activity: Participants will divide the circle into different wedges or sections according to the energy they are currently devoting to different roles. Then rate their satisfaction with the overall balance they see represented in the role pie.
- IV. Discuss role pie activity as a group.
 - A. How do you feel about your overall satisfaction?
 - B. How do you feel about particular roles?
- V. Journal Prompt: What was the role pie experience like for you today?

Session 2

Topic: Discuss personal work-life balance and develop a plan to improve work-life balance.

- I. Discuss values and beliefs related to work-life balance.
 - A. What motivates you in your worker/family/leisure role?
 - B. What is important to you about work/family/leisure?

- C. What does work/family/leisure mean to you?
- II. Discuss how roles relate to each other.
 - A. Are there roles that enhance other roles?
 - B. Are there roles that detract or take time away from other roles?
 - C. Are there roles that compensate for other roles?
- III. Participants will choose one area of work-life balance on which to focus.
 - A. Where would you like to see a change? What area do you think is most in need of a change?
 - B. In which area, could a change have the greatest effect on your overall work-life balance?
 - C. What area of work-life balance do you feel you have control over/ it would be possible to change?
- IV. Case Consultation/Supervision
- V. Journal Prompt: Describe your plan for addressing work-life balance.

Session 3

Topic: Discuss goal setting and taking action towards goals.

- I. Focus on one area each participant would like to change.
 - A. Discuss importance of specificity and focusing on one area.
 - B. Discuss how small changes can lead to big changes.
- II. Discuss action-oriented goal. It is important to describe goals in positive terms, something that can be done or increased, rather than something that needs to be eliminated or decreased.
- III. Discuss time frame and realistic goals.

- IV. List possible steps necessary to achieve the goal. What can be done in the next week?
- V. Discuss measurement of goals. How will you know when balance is improving?
How will you know when you feel better about this area of your life? How will you know when you are doing more of this? How will you know things are starting to change?
- VI. Case consultation/Supervision
- VII. Journal Prompt: What is it like to think through a plan for strengthening work-life balance?

Session 4

Topic: Review work-life balance goals and progress.

- I. Discuss what has changed for participants related to their goals.
 - A. Were they able to see/make any changes so far?
 - B. How do they feel about that area of work-life balance?
 - C. How do they feel about their overall balance currently?
- II. Possible revision of goals if necessary. Or possible clarification or change to goals if necessary. Emphasis on time-frame, specificity, and being realistic. How do they see the goal/steps relating to their overall vision of ideal work-life balance?
- III. What are the next steps to the goal? How will they notice change in work-life balance?
- IV. Case consultation/Supervision
- V. Journal Prompt: How can you envision using the work-life balance concept in your work with clients?

Session 5

Topic: Work-life balance and leisure time. Discuss satisfaction with leisure time and work-life balance plans.

- I. Discuss personal definitions of leisure time.
 - A. Describe how leisure is currently a part of your life.
 - B. How do you separate work and leisure time?
- II. Discuss “me time” as a potential aspect of leisure time. Leisure time does not necessarily have to be spent with friends and/or family.
- III. How can you make sure leisure is a part of your life? Discuss importance of boundaries between work and leisure time.
- IV. Case consultation/Supervision
- V. Journal Prompt: Reflect on ways you could address leisure in your own life.

Session 6

Topic: Discuss obstacles to work-life balance and ways to address obstacles and work with potential challenges. Discuss internal and external resources participants have which can assist in navigating obstacles.

- I. Review progress on goal.
- II. Discuss previously/currently encountered obstacles to goal. Discuss any predicted obstacles to goal. Extend to next step participant may take and discuss any predicted obstacles.
- III. How have you overcome obstacles so far or in the past?
- IV. Discuss/list internal and external resources relevant to work-life balance and goal.
- V. Discuss strengths or positive steps witnessed so far in relation to work-life balance. How do you feel about your ability to manage work-life balance or this role?

- VI. What are steps you could take in the next week to overcome/resolve potential obstacles?
- VII. Case consultation/Supervision
- VIII. Journal Prompt: In what ways, does discussing roadblocks and obstacles affect work-life balance efforts?

Session 7

Topic: Discuss progress on work-life balance plans.

- I. Discuss current status of work-life balance. Review and reflect on original role pie activity and goals related to current status.
 - A. Where do participants find themselves getting stuck with work-life balance?
 - B. What is easy or hard about work-life balance?
- II. Case consultation/Supervision
- III. Journal Prompt: As you think about this overall supervision experience, what has been meaningful to you about the process?

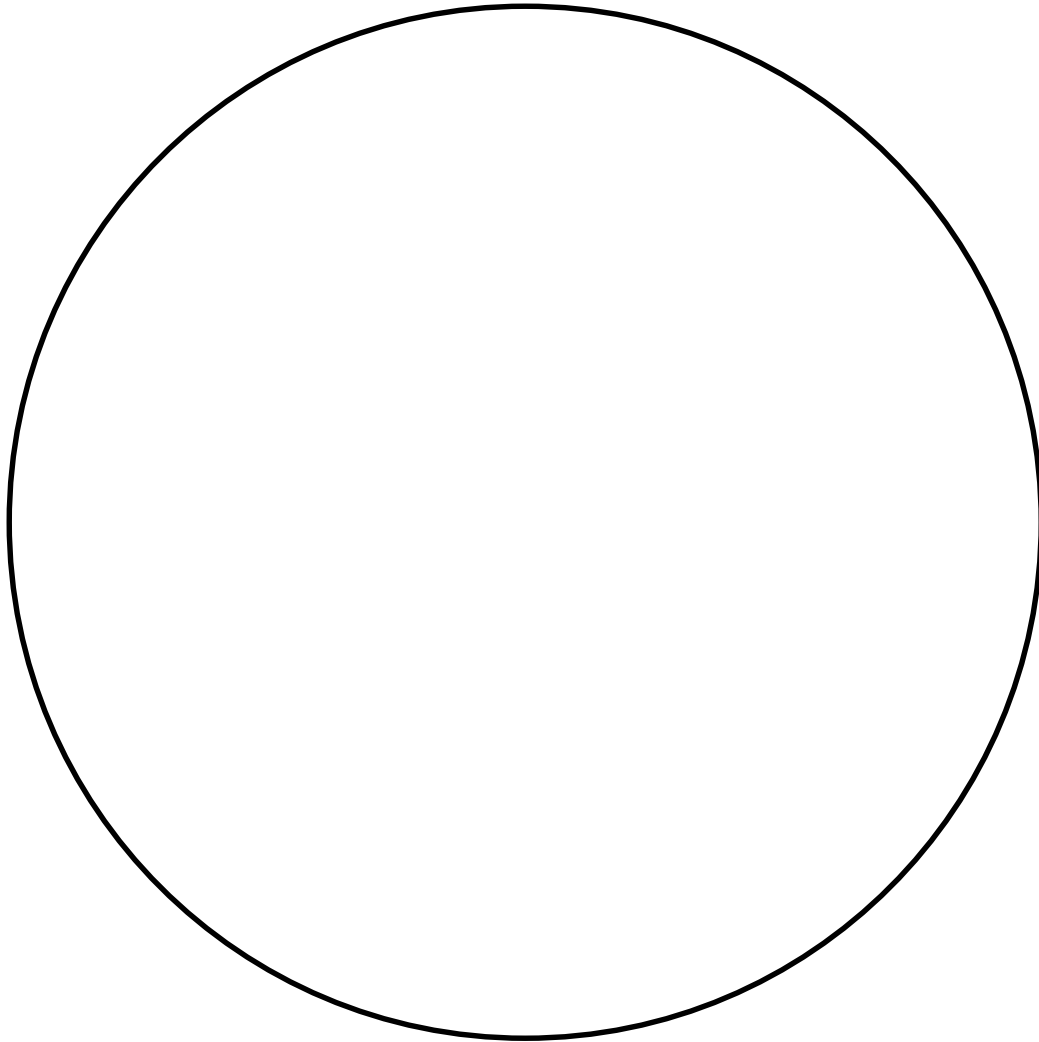
Session 8

Topic: Review progress and terminate/close group supervision experience.

- I. Review role pie activity. Participants will repeat role pie activity and divide circle according to current division of time and energy among roles. Participants will rate their satisfaction with overall work-life balance currently.
- II. Case consultation/Supervision
- III. Discussion of end of group supervision experience.
- IV. Journal prompt: What has it been like for you to focus on your work-life balance?

Role Pie

Divide the circle into different wedges or sections according to the energy you are currently devoting to the different roles in your life.



Rate your personal satisfaction with the overall balance you see represented in your role pie.

APPENDIX B

Demographic Sheet
Career Counseling Supervision Integrating Work-Life Balance

Code Name: _____

Gender _____ Male _____ Female

Age _____

What race/ethnicity do you consider yourself? _____

Marital Status: _____

List your education or degrees obtained:

Please specify your major or field of study:

How many years of experience do you have in career counseling, development, advising, or coaching?

List any license or certification you hold related to career counseling or general counseling.

APPENDIX C

Journal Prompts

1. What was the role pie experience like for you today?
2. Describe your plan for addressing work-life balance.
3. What is it like to think through a plan for strengthening work-life balance?
4. How can you envision using the work-life balance concept in your work with clients?
5. Reflect on ways you could address leisure in your own life.
6. In what ways, does discussing roadblocks and obstacles affect work-life balance efforts?
7. As you think about this overall supervision experience, what has been meaningful to you about the process?
8. What has it been like for you to focus on your work-life balance?

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions

The following questions will be used to guide the individual interviews. The interviews will be semi-structured and conversational in nature; therefore, further questions may arise during the interview based on participant responses. Examples of potential follow-ups have been provided.

1. What was it like to focus on work-life balance for 8 weeks?
Possible follow-ups: What experiences, if any, have you had with work-life balance? How is this like or unlike other supervision experiences?
2. Tell me about any meaningful or helpful experiences in group supervision.
Possible follow-up: Tell me more, or in what was that meaningful/helpful?
3. Tell me about any experiences in group supervision that were not meaningful or helpful.
Possible follow-up: Tell me more, or in what was that not meaningful/helpful?
4. Describe any carry over into how you approach work-life balance.
Possible follow-up: Tell me more or what have you noticed about your approach to work-life balance?
5. In what ways, if any, did focusing on work-life balance carry over into your work with clients?
Possible follow-up: Tell me more (referencing specific areas of carry over in participant answer), or what have you noticed in your work?
6. Describe any aspects of work-life balance you think are particularly relevant to the work you do.
Possible follow-up: Tell me more about (specific aspect(s) mentioned by participant), or how do you see that relating/connecting to the work you do?

APPENDIX E

Focus Group Questions

1. What gives you purpose or drive in job/work?
2. How does your work or life values orientation affect how you view work-life balance? How does it impact work with students?
3. How does humor relate to work-life balance or how you address work-life balance?
4. What does burnout look like in career counseling?
5. How do you explain the transition from frustration to relief or vice versa?