

**THE EXPERIENCE OF LEADERSHIP THROUGH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS: WHAT
HELPS AND HINDERS**

by

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ABSTRACT

This research examined leadership in difficult situations using phenomenological and critical incident analyses of 14 interviews with respected leaders. Leadership in difficult situations was examined as a personal experience consistent with the perspective of counselling psychology. The phenomenological analysis has produced four voices. The first voice captures the participants' description of leadership as a paradox of personal and situational dynamics. The second voice forms an uncommon elucidation of the lived experience of leadership in difficult situations. The participants are seen to be striving in a resilient manner characterized by a sense of acceptance and authenticity. The third and fourth voices describe the means by which the participants are effective in difficult situations. The third voice captures the intra-personal process of resonance, personal and social awareness, personal supports, mastery of the issues, and the capacity to generate remarkable outcomes. The fourth phenomenological voice captures the participant's active engagement in connecting with people, shaping the work context and leading collaboration to develop a successful process.

Five categories have been produced by the Critical Incident Technique, which examined what helps and what hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The five categories are: being experienced, principled and self-aware; having personal supports and influences; being interested and skilled in connecting with people; being both energetic and able to withdraw appropriately; finally, actively cultivating their perspective or vision. These five categories indicate the capacity of the participants for diverse means of participation in difficult situations. Results are discussed in terms of implications for research and practice.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated with love to my husband, Michael Patterson.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the problem which the current study is intended to address. The research questions which have guided the current study are: *What is the experience of leadership through difficult situations?* and *What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations?* A brief background regarding the topic is provided, followed by a discussion of the context in which leadership is practiced today. This discussion will examine the current challenges in the workplace that leaders are responsible to address, the organizational chaos with regards to what is understood to be leadership and a brief introduction to what is currently needed in leadership. The link of the study of leadership to the work of counselling psychology is also discussed. Finally, the research question and the assumptions guiding the research are presented.

1.2 Background and Purpose of the Study

Within counselling psychology, the examination of leadership is uncommon. This fact is reflected in the January 2007 special issue of the *American Psychologist*. This issue of the journal was a dedicated issue outlining theory and research on leadership. Sternberg (2007) describes the lack of representation of leadership within psychology:

Despite its importance to the United States and the world, leadership has not been a leading topic in the field of psychology. Most psychology departments have no one doing research directly bearing on leadership. Among the highly

ranked psychology departments, leadership is scarcely to be found as a topic of research. Teaching of courses on leadership tends, on average, to occur in business schools, schools of public policy, or schools of education, not in psychology departments. Textbooks are oriented either to the business-school or the education-school market, because the psychology market is, relatively speaking, minuscule. Introductory psychology textbooks generally do not have a chapter on or even cover leadership. Curiously, most social psychology texts lack such a chapter as well. Even the American Psychological Association has no journal on leadership and no divisions on leadership. Those journals that do specialize in leadership studies tend to be interdisciplinary, with some but not much representation from departments of psychology both in terms of authors and readers. The result of this situation is that many students of psychology are relatively unfamiliar with the literature on leadership. (p. 1)

This observation suggests that a counselling psychology perspective in the form of exploratory research may be meaningful within psychology. Further, in reviewing the leadership literature, it appears that there is theoretical and conceptual compatibility between leadership and counselling psychology. For example, leadership as a manifestation of high performance appears to be consistent with the theoretical focus in positive psychology. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) note that in addition to the focus on mental illness, Psychology is also about “Making the lives of all people better and nurturing genius” (p. 6). They go on to note “Psychology is not just the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it

is also the study of strength and virtue. Treatment is not just fixing what is broken; it is nurturing what is best” (p. 7).

Further evidence of the relevance of investigation of leadership through the lens of counselling psychology includes the apparent overlap of the praxis of leadership and that of counselling psychology. Leaders are struggling significantly in grappling with their work, and the presentation and skills of counsellors have much to offer to leaders (Frost, 2003). Finally, the claim of Forsyth and Strong (1986) that “psychotherapy researchers and investigators in other areas of psychology share the superordinate goal of increasing our understanding of human behavior” (p. 26) suggests that leadership as a dimension of human behavior bears representation in clinical practice. It appears then, that the study of leadership can provide a meaningful contribution to the literature in counselling psychology and leadership.

There is gravity to the research question as well. The effective practice of leadership is a critical area of study at a global level. Bennis (2007) contends that effective leadership for our institutions is one of the major crises facing humans today.

I am convinced more than ever of two things: The first is that we are learning more and more every day about this most important and urgent subject. The second is my heartfelt conviction that the four most important threats facing the world today are: (a) a nuclear or biological catastrophe, whether deliberate or accidental; (b) a world-wide epidemic; (c) tribalism and its cruel offspring, assimilation (all three of these are more likely than they were a decade ago); and finally, (d) the leadership of our human institutions. Without exemplary

leadership, solving the first three problems will be impossible. With it, we will have a better chance. The noble hope of advancing the empirical and theoretical foundation of leadership...could influence the course of leadership and, eventually, the quality and health of our lives. (p. 5)

Bennis notes that while leadership remains a slippery and complex phenomenon for study, it will be the multi-disciplinary investigation of leadership that will illuminate the effective exercise of leadership. Such a comment forms an invitation for an exploratory examination using the perspective of counselling psychology.

To summarize, the current exploratory research examining the work of leadership in difficult situations emerged from the identified gap in the psychology literature regarding leadership. Using a lens of counselling psychology in an exploratory study of the experience of leadership in difficult situations and what helps and hinders in that experience is a needed avenue of exploration given the uncertain dimensions of leadership and the need for multi-disciplinary research. The question regarding leadership in difficult situations is relevant to the work of leadership, as well as to the theoretical and clinical practice of counselling psychology. Finally, there appears to be some overlap of praxis in the two areas.

1.3 Challenges of Leadership in the Workplace

While leadership is examined in this research in a variety of working contexts, leadership in the workplace captures a profile of the challenges leadership commonly faces. Today's organizations are often beset by the problems of workplace challenges as a result of the tremendous changes in the world of work. This has been the case for some time. Bennis (1989) commented:

Everything's in motion. Mergers and acquisitions, deregulation, information technologies, and international competition alter the shape and thrust of American business. Changing demographics, escalating consumer sophistication, and new needs alter the market place. Changing industry structures, new strategic alliances, new technologies and modes, and stock market volatility alter the ways we do business. Increasing competition, the shrinking of the world into one large global village. (p. 16)

These changes which continue to be observed (Bullock, 2004; Caritte, 2000) and the resultant challenges and uncertainty have implications for the practices of leadership in organizations. This is not to say which came first. The workplace and leadership are linked, but both are in transition. I begin the articulation of the problem to be addressed in the current study by looking at the difficulties that are commonly experienced in the workplace and the implications for leadership. The difficulties that leadership encounters are commonly systemically situated. Within an organization these involve problems at the level of the organization, and for the workers in their adaptation to the new work world, and the expectations of what leadership should be able to accomplish within this context.

From the perspective of the organization, Cooper Dewe and O'Driscoll (2001) observe that it is a new world, a postindustrial workplace, a new organizational reality. The impact of the global marketplace has led to a substantial reduction in workforce size. Unemployment and underemployment are new realities, fostering a tiered working hierarchy consisting of core and peripheral employees. The working day of employees is thus affected as they take on several jobs, or struggle with insufficient resources. Mergers, acquisitions and

downsizing have also contributed significantly to upheaval for those who stay, those who are required to leave, and the families of both groups. There are now many observations (Bijlsma-Frankema, 2001; Bullock, 2004; Caritte, 2000; Collins, 2001) that as a result of interpersonal issues, mergers do not work by some estimations over 60 percent of the time.

Taken as a whole, the changes in the marketplace have necessitated creativity in addressing organizational interests. For example, employee loyalty to the company has changed significantly. A company offering skills training today needs awareness that it may be training employees who will leave because of the new skills they have acquired. Poaching employees is an international problem that bears consideration. Further, organizations sometimes need to collaborate in order to compete in the market place. Some competing organizations within a community are now co-coordinating skills training or integrating the work of the organizations within school training programs. Another manifestation of this new work world is the increasing reliance on teamwork, and team based performance and productivity (Cooper, Dewe and O'Driscoll, 2001), even team leadership (Kofman and Senge, 1993). There are also "virtual teams" of which there is little known regarding effective modes of interaction and the stressors related to this mode of work (Cooper, Dewe and O'Driscoll, 2001).

Bringing the organizational perspective down to the scale of the individual, Maglio and Butterfield (2004) have reviewed the impact of organizational change in the personal lives of employees:

The rate of change has affected people's personal, social and work lives at unprecedented rates (Borgen and Hiebert, 2002; Patterson, 2001; Sonnenberg,

1997). Sonnenberg argues that we are in a transitional stage such that many entry-level and mid-career workers are not prepared, either educationally or emotionally, for the changes in working patterns they are facing. There is a disconnect between what is being asked of people and their ability to respond. This is leading to increased distress among contemporary workers in industrialized economies, with evidence suggesting that the majority of people are not handling change well (Kirk, 1996). According to the human resource and business literature, absenteeism related to stress and psychosocial issues is on the rise as a result of both organizational factors and the fact that people are overloaded, trying to juggle jobs, families, and other priorities (Bauer, 2000; Disability management, 2001; Dorrel, 2000; Keeping employees at work, 2001; Workers' Compensation Board, 2001). One estimate suggests one-third of all absences from work are for psychosocial reasons (Bauer, 2000). According to Dorrell (2000) "mental health claims are the fastest growing category of disability costs in Canada today"(p. 36). Similar trends can be seen in the United States, Australia, and Great Britain (Anonymous, 2002; CCH, 2003; Della Rocca and Kostansi, 2001). The World Health Organization estimates depression, which is already the number one reason for non-physical disabilities among workers, will reach epochal levels by 2020 and become the greatest source of worker lost time through disability and early death in developed economies (Dorrell, 2000). (p. 2-3)

The employees who have engaged the boundaryless career (Littleton, Arthur and Rousseau, 2000), or the protean career (Hall and Moss, 1998) provide another perspective. These employees take personal responsibility for their career paths and are assertive in making their way through their careers. In Vancouver, B.C. in February, 2004, the symposium of BC's career development and employer partnership roundtable sponsored by the BC Chamber of Commerce and BC Career Information Partnership Career Development Committee discussed some the implications of the boundaryless career for leaders in organizations. Most notably, the boundaryless career creates a new challenge for leaders in corporations who are often unprepared for the assertiveness of the questions and concerns of these employees. There is an awareness that leadership entails the responsibility to create sufficient motivation in employees for them to stay and engage purposefully in their work.

The personal upheaval which is fostered within the workplace is the experience of leaders, it is affected by leaders and it needs to be addressed by leaders (Wheatley, 1991a). The cost to organizations is in addressing the unanticipated social impact of these changes. Identifying the need to address personal issues however is not generally conceived of within the organizations (Frost, 2003). Cooper, Dewe and O'Driscoll (2001) note that "work today is driven predominantly by the technological imperative rather than by a holistic perspective that also takes account of personal, social, and cultural issues within societies" (p. 235). The leader in this situation is giving shape to this depersonalized reality and suffers the lack of holism that the employees suffer; yet the leader has the responsibility to foster given outcomes. The leader is situated between the fast-paced changes and the organizational

culture around productivity (Alvesson, 1991), and a workforce that is demoralized and resistant. This is truly a challenge for leadership.

As an example of the responsibility of leaders in this context, Bridges (1991) describes how leaders need to be prepared to deal with the survivors of a downsizing who are in a process of grieving the loss of a trusted context. In this circumstance, it is possible that employees' ethics and loyalty are affected, which can have a distinctly negative impact in the work place. Leaders need a relational sensitivity to understand the time that people will need to go through this grieving process and they need the personal and social skills to affect these situations in a fitting direction.

Rosen (1998) reported that in a survey of 25, 000 workers, the leadership skills of their managers are the single biggest influence on employee commitment and performance. Similarly, Butterfield (2006) has found that management style is influential in employees' experience of doing well in handling workplace change. Further, management style is a predominant hindrance in workers' capacity to do well with change.

As the work world changes, there are demands upon leadership to be creative, that is, generative in finding solutions and communicating vision to galvanize the interests of workers and to effectively shape a productive and mutually beneficial mode of participation in the global marketplace. The current study, having examined practices of leadership in such difficult situations, has significance for the well being of the organization (Peterson, Smith, Martorana and Owens, 2003) and the employees.

Many of these issues are familiar within counselling psychology: depression, personal agency, grief, motivation are all found within the theory and practice of counselling

psychology. The suggestion here is that counselling psychology has the capacity to recognize and address many of the issues that leadership is confronting.

1.4 Leadership is Grappling Poorly with a Paradigm Shift

Within the challenges and uncertainty of the workplace, leadership has developed a bad reputation. “After so many years of being bossed around, of working within confining roles, of unending reorganization, reengineering, down-sizing, mergers and power plays, most people are exhausted, cynical, and focused only on self protection. Who wouldn’t be?” (Wheatley, 1999b, p. 32). Leadership in today’s corporate context is difficult and at times undermines its own best intentions.

In the first place, the nature of leadership has changed considerably in the past century, reflecting the evolving needs of the culture and the workplace (Leonard, 2003; Alvesson, 1992). In the 1920s leadership was focused on the tasks and structures within a given company (Kay, 2003). At this time leadership was characterized as being out in front, separate from the “masses”. This approach still permeates the understanding and practice of leadership and contributes to the current failure amongst leaders to effectively engage the relational necessities of leadership within the corporate context. As an example, McLelland (2003) has found that executives typically don’t see themselves as their employees see them. This is an illustration of the disconnect between leadership and the employees in corporations. McLelland speculates that this disconnect has to do with a kind of intimidation factor between executives and employees, or a lack of opportunity for open communication. What seems likely, given this and the foregoing discussion, is that leaders (and probably employees as well, (Leonard, 2003)) often conceive of leadership in a way that allows for

disconnection from employees. In contrast, McLelland notes that high performing employees have a comparatively accurate perception of how they are seen. This finding creates compelling questions such as--What is the relationship between performance and interpersonal connection?--What is it about leadership versus performance that inhibits such connection? and finally, --Are leaders not focused on performance or, as many theorists would argue (cf. Wheatley, 1999a; Senge, 2002; Leonard, 2003), are leaders missing out on the importance of connection?

Traditional, more directive forms of leadership are generally outdated and insufficient in meeting the current demands of the marketplace. According to Wheatley (1999a), in traditional models of leadership the corporation was like a machine and problem solving was a linear process. When difficulties arose, the problem was isolated and fixed. This does not work in today's work world. For example, if the software is out of date, getting new software is a direct solution to the problem. Yet the broader issues of having the right technology, employee willingness, differences in employee skills or aptitudes, job losses or new jobs created by the change are some of the meaningful elements of the change. A domino effect exists whereby a seemingly straightforward change has potentially numerous unforeseen implications that are not readily addressed by organizational structures or planning.

Further, efforts at more relevant practices of leadership seem to fall short of expectations. Too often executives attempt to make changes without addressing leadership issues (McLelland, 2003; Wheatley, 1999a). Greenleaf (1977) points out the tendency in organizations of fostering change by either trying to do more of the same thing, or by throwing out older models presuming that new models are inherently preferable.

In a different vein, numerous authors (Alvesson, 1991; Leonard, 2003; Roth, 1994) argue that leaders are too often chosen for their technical skills, yet they have few or no relational skills which the literature frequently identifies as central to the task of leadership (Leonard, 2003; Wheatley, 1999a; Senge 2002, Peterson et al., 2003). Further, Roth (1994) points out that the competitive mode by which leaders achieve a leadership position in the organization leaves them ill prepared to take on the relational role of leadership. Roth observes, “When it’s time to walk the walk as well as talk the talk, the best approach to do so is unclear [to the leaders]. The problems here have been literally, centuries in the making. They are reinforced by our economic, value and education system[s]” (p. 47). Apparently Roth sees that the problems in leadership are systemically situated, implying they will not be readily transformed.

Finally, in the literature there are any number of summaries of the skills needed for leadership, but while these identify key issues they often fail to translate the effective application or use of these within the uncertainty and challenges of the workplace (Dionne, Yammarino, Atwater and James, 2003; VanDierendonck, Haynes, Borrill and Stride, 2004). In essence they neglect the fundamental engagement of the leader with the issues, which is needed to foster initiative and creativity for a leader (Paulus, Horth, Selvin and Pulley, 2003). As one colleague has observed “You could starve on that stuff” (Butterfield, personal communication, July, 2004). In summary, the transformation of leadership needed to address the issues of today’s organizations is too often framed in ways that are superficial or otherwise shortsighted and ineffectual (Wheatley, 1999a, Senge, Wheatley and Mcleod,

1996). Adding to the challenge of changing their practice of leadership, Wheatley (1999a) observes that the language of corporations is highly defended against change.

Reflecting the tremendous lack of effective leadership in the workplace is the reality within the literature that while leadership is a major topic of research interest, it is not clearly understood. Looking at the work of Bennis for example, in 1959 he observed:

Of all the hazy and confounding areas in social psychology, leadership theory undoubtedly contends for top nomination. And, ironically, probably more has been written and less is known about leadership than about any other topic in the behavioral sciences. Always, it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. (p. 259-260)

In a recent article, written almost 50 years later, Bennis (2007) outlines an urgent need to have a clear understanding of leadership. The problem of understanding leadership has not been addressed in the intervening years. He notes in 2007 that the way to build clarity regarding leadership will be through inter-disciplinary study. “The study of leadership will be increasingly collaborative because it is precisely the kind of complex problem—like the genome—that can only be solved by many fine minds working together” (p. 3). Bennis refers to leadership in a variety of working contexts. This is the broad representation of leadership that is employed in this research.

This history of leadership as a directive process that renders leaders at times unable to recognize a connection with the people they give leadership to is distinct from the history of

counselling psychology which holds an understanding of the normal functioning of people as central to the work of counselling.

1.5 What's Needed For Effective Leadership?

A final element of the problem indicating the need for the current study is the recognition that there are subtle dimensions of leadership which seem less concretely linked to outcomes. In reading the leadership literature, there is a subtlety of understanding in the work of leadership, that is particularly poignant in leading through difficult situations. The subtlety seems to have to do with the self-experiences of the leader and the processes of relationship. Workplace challenges and uncertainty can foster personal defensiveness, reactivity and interpersonal friction, as has been illustrated. On the other hand, difficult situations can inspire substantial learning regarding effective practices of leadership. Greenleaf (1977) and Bennis (1989), for example, observe that leadership is learned through experience and it is learned best in the context of difficult situations, as in the current study. I will briefly summarize these more ambiguous elements here and return to them in the following chapter.

Reading through the literature on leadership, the capacity for relationship resonates as a tool of central importance (Wheatley, 1999a; Alvesson, 1992; Bennis, 1989; Borgen, 2003; Dionne, Yammarino, Atwater and James, 2002; Frost 2003; Galanes, 2003; Greenleaf, 1977; and so on). From a practical standpoint, in the information age it is no longer possible to operate without the shared input of all persons involved (Wheatley, 1999a). There are simply too many elements for one person to orchestrate single-handedly. Wheatley (1991) notes that

the fulcrum upon which effective leadership rests is the capacity to be in relationship with each other.

What is critical is the *relationship* created between two or more elements.

Systems influence individuals, and individuals call forth systems. It is the relationship that evokes the present reality. Which potential becomes real depends on the people, the events and the moment. (p. 36)

Expressing interpersonal mattering (Amundson, 1998) is an important dimension of effective relating. The intention of building relationships can be challenging in the face of workplace challenges without the capacity for a broader or perhaps more differentiated personal perspective.

Wheatley (1999a) also presents a model of “quantum thinking”. Essentially, this has to do with a minimization of problem focus in preference for being present through a process. She discusses that a river will get where it’s going without planning and structures. Similarly, an organization can focus less on structures and planning and like a river, it can flow with a process towards an outcome. Process for Wheatley places a priority upon relationships. She sees the leader’s role as expressing confidence and faith in employees. Within this model, workplace challenges are not a problem to be overcome, they are a part of a process.

Senge (2002) makes a distinction between committed leadership and fanatical leadership. Committed leadership according to Senge has the capacity for uncertainty, which requires self-knowledge and adaptability in the context of decisive action. While a fanatic and a committed leader may share the same values and objectives, a fanatic believes absolutely in their actions, with potentially disastrous results. Uncertainty goes against

managerial approaches to leadership as Bennis (1989) has described it, because it minimizes a structured approach. In the face of difficult situations, uncertainty is challenging because of the sense of defensiveness that workplace challenges can foster.

In a different vein Greenleaf (1977) describes “organic” leadership. Leadership that people naturally are drawn to, as opposed to “coercive” leadership which needs to be maintained by force and has no staying power beyond the end of force.

The trouble with coercive power is that it only strengthens resistance... And, if successful, its controlling effect lasts only as long as the force is strong. It is not organic. Only persuasion and the consequent voluntary acceptance are organic. Since both kinds of power [coercive and persuasive] have been around for a long time, an individual will be better off by at some point being close enough to raw coercions to know what it is. One must be close to both the bitterness and goodness of life to be fully human. Servants, by definition, are fully human. Servant-leaders are functionally superior because they are closer to the ground—they hear things, see things, know things, and their intuitive insight is exceptional. Because of this they are dependable and trusted, they know the meaning of that line from Shakespeare’s sonnet: “They that have power to hurt and will do none.” (p. 42)

In a context of difficult situations, coercion can seem a direct means towards an end and leaders by their role, do have the power to be coercive. Greenleaf’s suggestion of an “organic” character to leadership, essentially, leadership which is self-perpetuating, is of interest. In Greenleaf’s terms leadership is very much a personal resource and skill. Further,

Greenleaf is the source for the widely used cliché “you can’t lead if you don’t serve”. He discusses the personal initiative necessary for leaders, the need for listening, understanding, imagination, influence, faith, consistency, conceptualization and the use of “servant power” to enhance the autonomy of people.

Greenleaf (1977) and Bennis (1989) highlight the fundamental connection of leadership with a personal process of engagement. For example, Bennis (1989) reports “Robert Terry, an executive at the Hubert H. Humphrey institute of Public Affairs, defines leadership as ‘a fundamental and profound engagement with the world and the human condition’” (p. 139). Bennis (1989) draws out this element of personal engagement by contrasting a management approach and a leadership approach:

- The manager administers; the leader innovates.
- The manager is a copy; the leader is an original.
- The manager maintains; the leader develops.
- The manager focuses on systems and structure; the leader focuses on people.
- The manager relies on control; the leader inspires trust.
- The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective.
- The manager asks how and when; the leader asks what and why.
- The manager has his [sic] eye always on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon.
- The manager imitates; the leader originates.
- The manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it.
- The manager is the classic good soldier; the leader is his own person.

- The manager does things right; the leader does the right thing. (p. 45)

The leader is engaged in the task of leadership using personal resources to interpret and shape a meaningful direction for a company. One manifestation of engagement is Peters (1996) prioritizing the importance of spontaneity, and the integration of thought and action in responding to the work environment.

Further elucidation of the self-knowledge required of a leader is expressed by Borgen (personal communication, March 26, 2004) who observes that the leader trusts him or herself that he or she can make informed judgments when they have the relevant information. A leader needs a conviction of the personal capacity for action. She or he maintains a clear sense of perspective. The leader is able to monitor personal “noise levels” which affect one’s confidence. They can connect to the necessary people for help. They can also care for themselves in a way that allows them to continue. At times leaders are able to act “as if” a situation is not as it is. A leader does not stand in the judgment of other people. Instead he or she is connected within their own personhood, content within their own experience. A leader has self-respect, foresight, persistence and a belief in worthy goals. Borgen also notes the substantial generative capacity of an effective leader.

As a final illustration of the less concrete dimensions of leadership, the Center for Ethical Leadership in Seattle, Washington, endorses a number of practices that seem to highlight the more spontaneous and relational practices of leadership which would be difficult to link concretely to the productivity and profit priorities of many organizations. One such practice is inviting the stranger. Another is the practice of learning in public. These practices seem to endorse a kind of vulnerability in a public context which may be

meaningful and possibly influential in the broader context of the community or organization. Such activity suggests the personal and social engagement of leadership that has been discussed. Leadership is enormously challenging.

The current discussion of what is needed in leadership outlines meaningful links to counselling psychology and suggests thereby the relevance of an exploratory study examining the experience of leadership through difficult situations. Self-experience, relationship, co-ordinating shared input, social systems, the practice of uncertainty, engagement, self knowledge, self efficacy, these are often the substance of counselling work and the premises of effective practice in counselling. Further, however, the discussion of what is needed in leadership seems to push at the boundaries of discussions in counselling regarding human potentiality. Of note in this regard is Greenleaf's discussion that leaders seem to have a fundamental connection to human processes, a deep way of knowing human experience and living in the acceptance of that. Further, Bennis' discussion contrasting leadership and management suggests a form of engagement in life, not just leadership, that is quite distinct. What seems possible here is that leadership in difficult situations may be in some ways a manifestation of the best of human functioning, a lived expression of what the perspective of positive psychology anticipates. Situating such an individual in the challenging context of a difficult situation and examining their experience seems to suggest a potential for meaningful research information regarding optimal human functioning that is not only informed by using a counselling psychology perspective, but that may also inform counselling psychology theory and practice.

In this section I have introduced current ideas that leadership entails a process of self-experience including self-knowledge, differentiation, and a capacity for uncertainty. This introduction to what is being discussed regarding core elements in leadership suggests a platform for the examination of leadership within the discipline of counselling psychology. Leadership is also about mattering, a capacity for relationship, a fundamental connection to human experience and a willingness to be a public learner. That leadership merits an examination within the discipline of counselling psychology which is also centrally focused on the processes of being and relating seemed relevant and timely.

1.6 Rationale for the Study

In this chapter I have outlined the importance of leadership as an area of research and the opportunity to examine leadership within counselling psychology. I have also illuminated the challenges facing leadership by discussing the current difficulties in the workplace. Leadership practices are commonly undermined by historical practices, as well as individual and cultural beliefs about leadership. In the failure to recognize dimensions of effective leadership in difficult situations, organizational systems tend to minimize relational processes, and the more nuanced elements of leadership, in favor of technical expertise or other primarily instrumental operationalizations of what's needed in leadership. The capacity of leadership to galvanize interests and forge a direction is a meaningful issue that merits understanding in the rich descriptive terms of a qualitative analysis which outlines the elements that help and hinder in the experience of leadership in difficult situations. In an effort to contribute to the discussion of what effective leadership practice is, the current study examined two research questions The first is *What is the experience of leadership through*

difficult situations? The second is *What helps and hinders in this experience?* These questions have been undertaken in research from within the academic discipline of counselling psychology. By this means Bennis' (2007) call to examine leadership using interdisciplinary perspectives is addressed. In consequence, the examination of leadership in difficult situations including the representation of what helps and hinders in that experience can inform the leadership literature as well as the literature in counselling psychology.

1.7 Assumptions

The research questions; *What is the experience of leadership through difficult situations?* And *What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations?* are based on several assumptions that need to be addressed. The central assumption is that against a background of diversity of opinion regarding the effective operationalization of leadership, a phenomenological approach by its property of returning the phenomenon unto itself, can form a meaningful conceptualization of leadership in difficult situations. From this premise of a phenomenological understanding, a Critical Incident Technique (CIT) analysis asking what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations is a meaningful applied extension of the research.

Using an experience focused approach to examining leadership raises a variety of possible perspectives of leadership. For example, if the experience of leadership is the object of discussion, then leadership is not role-bound, it is rather an action or activity. This conceptualization seems consistent with the literature (Greenleaf, 1977, Bennis, 1989, Wheatley, 1999a). Within this perspective then, leadership is as it is experienced by the individuals within a particular context. If leadership is examined as an experience however,

the problem arises as to how the parameter of non-leadership might be delineated.

Furthermore, it seems that it is highly possible to include those leaders whose leadership is in fact questionable. Leaders are often people who are inclined to get involved with people, so there would be the potential to interview people who were not in fact able leaders but enjoy discussing their strengths with an attentive audience.

This problem was addressed in the current research using a process where the participants were recruited by approaching selected people who could make referrals to people who in their estimation were effective leaders. Another way of doing this could have been to approach widely recognized leaders, an approach which is also used in the literature. The remaining facet of addressing the phenomenological question of “what is leadership” was getting from the participants a representation of what leadership is from their perspective. It is for this reason that the study opened with the question of the participant’s experience of leadership.

By using a system of referrals to identify effective leaders, there was a representation of followers built into the research design. As will be discussed further in chapter two, the influence of followers on leadership forms a reciprocal process which is meaningful in the understanding of leadership in difficult situations. An alternate research design examining leadership in difficult situations using a dyadic model to interview leaders and followers could have been used. In getting referrals to effective leaders however, it was assumed that a representation of followership was incorporated into the design. Further, the validation of the findings by experts in leadership also captures an indication of the representative capacity of the findings regarding effective leadership in difficult situations.

A further problem in addressing the research questions was the issue of what would constitute “difficult situations”. Against a background of wanting to examine difficulties in the workplace, the original intention was to highlight workplace issues such as change, mergers and acquisitions. From the research presented in this chapter this is clearly a salient area for examination of leadership. In considering this problem the contextual influences that shape and affect the leadership experience were reviewed. The literature suggests that as leaders affect the people they are leading, the people being led also affect the leadership and furthermore, the dynamics of the situation also impact the leadership (VanDierendonck, et al., 2004, Dionne et al., 2002, Alvesson, 1992). Given these contextual influences and that I had already situated the focus of the research within the experience of leadership, it was logical to also situate difficulties within the experience of the leader. Indeed in the findings of the current research, there was a range of the participant’s responses to what may appear to be difficult situations. Some of the participants thrived on the challenge of difficulties, some were personally impacted by the difficulties they encountered, some minimized the experiences that another might find tremendously difficult, and some valued their experience of failure as important to growth in leadership. These various experiences of difficult situations could occur in combination within one difficult situation, or they could occur for one participant in various situations.

The next reasonable question then is, why bother highlighting difficult situations at all? There are at least two perspectives on this issue. From the literature it was apparent that difficult situations are salient points in the experience of leadership (Bennis, 1989). On the other hand, there is also discussion in the literature regarding circumstances when leadership

is not needed. Hoggs (2005) for example, suggests that highly salient teams do not require active and involved leadership. Focusing the discussion around difficult situations then, the experience of leadership is perhaps more poignant.

Having addressed the elements of the experience of leadership in difficult situations, it was decided to have the participants outline what is it that helped and hindered within the experience of leadership through difficult situations? Certainly it appears that there is room for a representation of the experience of leadership as in a phenomenological study. This needs to go further however to make in Flanagan's (1954) terms, "the determination of critical requirements" (p. 329) of the work of leadership in difficult situations. This aspect of the research was relevant to the original personal premises of the study and more importantly, it was relevant to the articulation of effective leadership practices for the benefit of leaders and a culture that finds so much of the leadership literature is not sufficiently enabling of effective practice in difficult situations.

Finally, leadership is commonly discussed with reference to the context of an organization (Goleman, 1998; Kets De Vries, 2007; Kouzes and Posner, 2002). It is also commonly discussed in theory development without reference to the working context. A notable example of this is the articles in the special issue of the American Psychologist in January 2007. For the current research, the conundrum that this creates is an uncertainty regarding the implications of the given context for the experience of leadership in difficult situations. Using the precedent of Kouzes and Posner (2002) in interviewing many kinds of leaders in public and private organizations, the current research has assumed that the experience of leadership in difficult situations can be meaningfully captured by including an

array of leaders in diverse leadership contexts. Leadership is taken to be a work in itself that is used in varying contexts to address the demands of the situation. This is consistent with the perspective of leadership as an action as previously discussed. As a result, this study has included leaders in business, government, education, volunteer organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

1.8 Chapter Summary and Overview of the Dissertation

This chapter has outlined the problem which the current study was intended to address. The research questions which have guided the current study are *What is the experience of leadership through difficult situations: What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations*. The background to the problem was discussed including the approach to the question from within the discipline of counselling psychology. The current challenges facing leadership in terms of the demanding issues in the workplace, the social and institutional failure in understanding leadership and some preliminary discussion of what's needed in leadership were also introduced. The chapter concluded with a description of the rationale for the study and the assumptions underlying the study.

In the second chapter, the literature on leadership will be reviewed, including a discussion of leadership in the scholarly and professional literature, the models that are commonly used to represent leadership, the research that is related to the current study and a broad consideration of the links between the leadership literature and that of counselling psychology. The third chapter outlines the methodology of the study including the development of the interview, the recruitment of participants and the process of both the

Phenomenological analysis and the CIT analysis. The fourth chapter presents the results of the study in a comprehensive narrative. The fifth and final chapter summarizes the results and considers their place in the current leadership literature and the counselling psychology literature. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and the implications for future research, for organizations, for leaders and for counselling practice.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Chapter Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to review theory and research which indicate the relevance of the current research examining *the Experience of leadership through difficult situations: what helps and hinders*. The introduction in the previous chapter highlights a two-fold problem which the current research was intended to begin to address. In the first place, leadership is experiencing enormous and diverse challenges in the workplace which it seems unable to address consistently (Bullock, 2004; Caritte, 2000). One reason for this appears to be a prevailing uncertainty regarding what leadership is, which permeates individual, situational, organizational and social levels. The result is the failure of leadership in difficult situations such as mergers and downsizing, as well as a general disillusionment with leadership (Wheatley 1999a). The current discussion of what to do given this situation has strains that suggest the relevance of a contribution from counselling psychology both in terms of the capacity to represent lived experience and the clinical responsibility of outlining the concerns of this population (Blustein, 2001). That counselling psychology has a meaningful role to play in the effort to adequately represent the effective practice of leadership in difficult situations forms the second element which the current research was intended to address.

Within the literature on leadership, the current examination of leadership in difficult situations is an expression of the common discussion regarding what leadership is. There is any number of references in the literature that, foundational to the study of leadership is the

question of what leadership is (Bennis, 2007, Sternberg, 2007, Goleman, 1998). Hackman and Wageman (2007) for example, comment:

For all of the research that has been conducted on the topic of leadership, the field remains curiously unformed. Leadership scholars, including those who have written for this special issue, agree that leadership is extraordinarily important both as a social phenomenon and as a subject for scholarly research and theory. Yet, as both Bennis (2007, this issue) and Vroom and Jago (2007, this issue) have pointed out, there are no generally accepted definitions of what leadership is, no dominant paradigm for studying it, and little agreement about the best strategies for developing and exercising it. (p. 43)

A central task of the literature review for the current study, then, is to outline dimensions of what is understood to be leadership and how leadership in difficult situations has been examined. In this way also, the relevance of the approach of counselling psychology in the examination of leadership through difficult situations can be illuminated. Furthermore, the relevance of the current study can be situated.

An entry on to Psychinfo, Psycarticles, Psychbooks, Psychcritiques produces close to 26,500 hits using the term 'leadership' (retrieved January 15, 2008), and this in a discipline that generally neglects leadership as an area of study (Sternberg, 2007a). The enormity of the body of literature even in psychology reflects the virtual meaninglessness of the term as a result of its being so widely applied. Leadership is a broad systemic phenomenon which can be considered individually, relationally, situationally, as a manifestation of an organization and as a social phenomenon.

Given the enormous body of literature, the current chapter is organized around reviews of the literature and representative research that addresses the experience of leadership in difficult situations. The effort is to outline the context of the research questions: What is the experience of leadership in difficult situations? What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership in difficult situations? The following discussion is wide-ranging in an attempt to represent the array of influences upon leadership in difficult situations that may contribute to the experience of the participants.

Included in this discussion is the social perspective (Bligh and Meindl, 2005), the theoretical and historical perspective (Leonard, 2003), and an organizational perspective (Alvesson, 1992), which taken together indicate the situation of leadership. That is, leadership as it can be observed within an array of influences. The review then outlines the resources of leadership in difficult situations by looking to the potentialities of relationship (Wheatley, 1999a) and high performance in leadership (Borgen, 2004). These arguably also indicate influences in the participants' personal experience of leadership in difficult situations. Finally to further situate the study, the review outlines related research (Bullock, 2004; Caritte, 2000; Frost, 2003) and the current discussion of leadership within psychology.

2.2 Bligh and Meindl (2005): Leadership and Society.

At the broadest level, leadership through difficult situations is a social consideration (Avolio 2007; Zaccaro, 2007). To represent the social perspective, the review of popular literature by Bligh and Meindl (2005) is briefly summarized. These authors, have completed a review of the top 300 popular leadership books. They introduce their analysis by pointing to the perplexing endurance of interest within the American public on the topic of leadership.

The question is posed “Should we develop a new word?” They attribute the enduring fascination with leadership to the American dream and the dizzy optimism of the American people.

They have identified seven groupings of books which are briefly summarized here. In general the major finding of the review is that leadership is socially communicated as a skill that is readily learned and practiced.

The largest cluster of books is within a grouping entitled: Learning from Leadership Outside Organizational Contexts. In general this category is characterized by a competency approach suggesting that leadership is about having the *right stuff* which people can learn about through reading the books. It seems to be almost a leadership version of self-help books.

The second category is Leading Change, which the authors suggest is a response to the fast-paced global economy of today. They indicate that the books in this category are essentially a collection of *how to* books aimed at enacting and sustaining long term change. There are many case studies in this collection of books.

The next largest group is entitled Consulting on Leadership and comprises books written by consultants based on their years of enabling companies to lead change. This group of books employs a visionary leadership approach.

The fourth group is entitled Leading Scientifically. It is comprised of books by researchers and consultants. They are more erudite in general and are written for an academic audience. The authors note “this cluster of books is differentiated by its philosophical

approach to leadership that either explicitly or implicitly treats leadership as something that can be studied, understood, and subsequently taught” (p. 28).

The fifth grouping involves insider accounts authored by executives and others within organizations. The authors suggest these are experienced leaders willing to sell their success stories. They are managerial in focus and again suggest that readers can readily learn leadership from the reading.

The next group, *Leading through Religion* is a grouping of books that examine leadership under the terms of religious structures and beliefs. “These books frequently draw on religious lessons and allegories to guide readers toward the development of their leadership skills...a key component of individual self-fulfillment” (p. 31).

Finally, the smallest grouping of books, entitled *Leading through Imagination* essentially relies on fictional representations of leadership which emphasize that leadership can be a self actualizing process for both leaders and those being led.

The authors conclude that the American romance with the notion of leadership continues. They observe that the books tend to suggest that leadership is readily learned and practiced in context. The authors observe:

The results of this study suggest that themes of change, expert and guru appeal, self-actualization and fulfillment constitute the ecology of leadership...Faced with real-life leaders who do not seem to bring about great changes, possess the right knowledge or skills in every situation, or have enough time or energy to ensure that their followers are able to realize their

potential as employees and as people, it is not difficult to see how this leadership ecology can negatively affect leader-follower relations. (p. 34)

Relevant to the effort in the current study to ground the understanding of leadership in an expression of the experience of leadership through difficult situations the authors note:

What we really need in the post-management era is a more realistic portrayal of the skills people at all levels of organizations can be taught to utilize effectively, as well as a realistic portrayal of the work it takes to get there and the limitations and constraints that each and every leader must face. (p. 35)

The authors highlight that it is a reality of the global economy that leadership needs to be operationalized in terms that have a quality of seeming *real* in contrast to the dizzy idealism of reductionistic notions of leadership. The current research examining the experience of leadership through difficult situations and giving expression to what helps and hinders in that process potentially aids in grounding the social conceptualization of the work.

2.3 Leonard (2003) Leadership Models

Leonard's (2003) review of the literature on leadership effectively summarizes the leadership literature, structuring it in a developmental manner that is informative regarding the paradigm shift in leadership. I have tried to insert representative research for most of Leonard's categories, that seem to also address leadership in difficult situations. The effect in the following summary is a kind of back and forth between Leonard's representation of the models, and then an example of the model in research. I have included samples of research that have addressed difficult situations in leadership. In this way the reader is provided with

both a broad summary of the leadership literature and some representations of research and discussion illuminating leadership in difficult situations.

Leonard (2003) effectively categorizes the evolving conceptualization of leadership in theory and research through six stages. The six categories are: (1) Mission based definitions of leadership, (2) Traits, competencies, and situation determinants of leadership potential, (3) Human relations and human potential approaches to leadership, (4) Contingency models of leadership, (5) Transformational leadership models; and finally, (6) a Path model of leadership.

2.3.1 Mission Based Definitions of Leadership

The mission-based definitions for leadership (Leonard, 2003), from earlier in the last century, held that the leader was one person who was central or focal and who integrated the group. This model is the *great man* theory often referred to in the literature. The work of leadership was to be influential, motivating, inspiring or controlling. This task was later equated with creating compliance and with the use of power. Leonard notes that this approach is unappealing to today's managers who find it too abstract or too Machiavellian.

2.3.2 Traits, Competencies, and Situation Determinants of Leadership

The history of analyzing personality factors of leadership in the traits, competencies and situational determinants of leadership potential has resulted in mixed findings in research (Leonard, 2003). Within this model of leadership studies, a great deal of research has examined the task or the people who are led. While variables have been identified as useful predictors, "it has not been possible...to identify the one ideal set of leadership competencies

or leadership style that would lead to effective outcomes in a wide variety of situations (Bass, 1990; Chemers, 1997; Howell and Dipboye, 1986)” (Leonard, 2003, p. 6).

As an example, in a recent study by Peterson, Smith, Martorana and Owens (2003), leaders are classified according to the Big 5 personality types. Their top management teams are then studied based on their manner of working and the resultant effectiveness in the company. The hypotheses regarding the expected group functioning given the Leader’s personality type are suggestive, but they also indicate that the approach is limited in its representation of the complexity of group functioning based on leader personality.

Considering the current study, the work by Peterson et al. (2003) suggests the relevance of examining leadership in difficult situations as a process of experience within a complex context rather than an expression of personality traits.

2.3.3. Human Relations and Human Potential Approaches to Leadership

The human relations and human potential approaches to leadership are characterized by an initiative to shape an organization’s structures to engage the natural motivation of people towards responsibility (Leonard, 2003). This is in contrast to earlier notions that motivation had to be externally influenced—by leaders. As this approach developed, it was observed that the understanding of the personal maturity of those being led aided in clarifying the many situational variables. Of this approach Leonard (2003) comments; “These models have been very popular with human relations trainers and organization development practitioners. Although the models are intuitively appealing and are consistent with a larger

body of social and organizational psychology research, they have not been the focus of much systematic research” (p. 7).

Bennis (2007) comments that the emergence of the humanist approach and those subsequent to it in this discussion occurred in the middle of the last century and marked the movement away from the *great man* theory of leadership. He notes that with this evolution the emphasis in trying to understand leadership shifted to followers, groups and systems.

As a current example, Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill and Stride (2004) have examined the interaction of employee well-being and leadership behaviors. Their model fits within a humanist approach to leadership in that it is premised upon the idea that motivation emerges from a sense of well-being. Interestingly what the authors have found is that well-being operates in a feedback loop between the leader and the employee.

Setting aside Leonard’s (2003) review for a moment, the following is an example of the human relations approach to leadership in difficult situations.

2.3.3.1 Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill and Stride (2004).

The work of Van Dierendonck, Haynes, Borrill and Stride (2004) highlights the interactional effect between leaders and followers. They begin the discussion of their research regarding the leader-subordinate relationship by summarizing the current literature in this area:

It is widely acknowledged that subordinates are influenced by the support received from their supervisor (e.g., Offermann & Hellmann, 1996; Sosik & Godshalk, 2000). Leadership is often mentioned in reviews of stress (e.g., Seltzer & Numerof, 1998).

The supervisor-subordinate relationship is reported as one of the most common sources of stress in organizations (e.g., Landeweerd & Bourmans, 1994; Tepper, 2000) and an essential element of the psychological climate within an organization (James & James, 1989). In most studies the relationship with the supervisor is operationalized in terms of the experienced support. (p. 165)

Leadership by its responsibility, commonly assumes that the leader influences those whom he or she leads. It is on this premise that Van Dierendonck et al. (2004) have examined the influence of leaders on their subordinates. This impact has been observed to be related to the productivity of the organization and hence is of some importance. Most often, as Van Dierendonck et al. (2004) observe, this relationship is operationalized in terms of followers' experience of support. They also point to the importance of the leader's social support in terms of reducing burnout and stress. The authors go on, however, to discuss that the longitudinal research on the directional influence of leadership behavior on well-being are inconclusive. They note in fact that a reversed causal relation has been observed between working conditions and employee well-being.

In situations of diminished well-being, people may feel ashamed and less responsive to their social environment, including their leader. Conversely, subordinates who feel good about themselves may be more socially active, which might stimulate and reinforce positive supervisory behavior. (p. 166)

Based on their research, the authors conclude that the relationship is bi-directional. They then examine the likely direction of the relationship of leadership and well-being and the time frame of the effects of that relationship. It is of interest to note their observation that

this bi-directionality is not typically discussed in the leadership literature, as it is in the well-being literature.

The authors observe that a limitation of the study was the tendency of people to see things more optimistically when they have a greater sense of well-being. On the other hand, when people are despondent their pessimistic perceptions make things seem even worse.

The authors note that the implications of the study are that managers need to be aware of how their actions both affect and are affected by employees' well-being. They suggest managers be trained to help employees break a pattern of diminished well-being. The authors also suggest that programs aimed at diminishing stress and enhancing well-being include both the most stressed employees and their managers. Finally, the authors note that employees can be pro-active in encouraging their managers to become involved with them in a more positive way. They conclude, "This longitudinal study has confirmed the hypothesized reciprocal effect of supportive leadership behavior and subordinate well-being. We have, however, to conclude that this relation is more complicated than originally conceptualized" (p. 172).

With regards to the current study what is suggested by this finding of complexity is the relevance of situating the difficult situation within the conceptual frame of the participants who are identified as effective leaders. Further, situating the question of what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations also appears to be approached effectively within the conceptual and the contextual experience of the participant rather than within the experience of followers or the outcomes of leadership efforts.

2.3.4. Contingency Models of Leadership

Returning to Leonard's (2003) discussion, the contingency models of leadership developed by Fiedler (1964) predicted that a high task or high relationship orientation by the leader would be meaningful depending on situational variables. For example, a task requiring structuring is benefited by a leader's task focus. A boring task is benefited by a leader's relational focus. Leonard (2003) comments that while the model is generally supported, it does not address how a leader's style affects followers' motivation and satisfaction.

An illuminating example of Leonard's (2003) category of the contingency models of leadership is the following summary of a recent study by Dionne, Yammarino, Atwater and James (2002). We diverge from Leonard's review again to consider a contingency model of leadership applied to the issue of leadership in difficult situations.

2.3.4.1 Dionne, Yamarino, Atwater and James (2002).

Dionne et al. (2002) examined moderated and mediated effects of leadership behavior to group effectiveness. The authors assert that Kerr and Jermier's (1978) model of Substitutes for Leadership has been integral to leadership theory in the past 20 years. Using a mediated model they have tried to link subordinate behavior to effective group outcomes using six leadership tactics and seven employee behaviors. The leadership behaviors that they have used include: contingent and noncontingent rewards, contingent and noncontingent punishments, leader member exchanges and the likeability of the leader. The employee behaviors they have used include professionalism, indifference toward rewards, formalization, inflexibility, no control of rewards, spatial distance from the leader and task

variability. The outcome measure for these mediators and moderators was group effectiveness.

There were several findings in the study: “One should use contingent punishment and other transactional styles of leadership when supervising employees in low complexity, routine jobs; conversely, one should use LMX [leader-member-exchange] when supervising employees who know their jobs as well or better than the leader” (p. 461). They observed that leadership behaviors were significant as contingent rewards, leader-member exchanges and the likeability of the leader were all related to positive outcomes in group effectiveness. Noncontingent rewards by leaders were irrelevant. The authors express puzzlement regarding the lack of relationship between employee behaviors and the outcome of group effectiveness. They observe however that such employee behaviors are better predictors of commitment, satisfaction, and role ambiguity than they are of in-role performance. In summary, the authors observe that leader behavior is key to group effectiveness and they advocate leadership training and development.

The study included 940 participants from 49 organizations who rated 156 leaders. The authors note that there were no significant mean differences found and that the significance scores for the correlations were modest. This study represents the model of investigation of leadership that is done by measuring leadership effectiveness from the perspective of those being led, a suitable mode of understanding leader effects.

The study is useful to the current discussion because it outlines some of the typical behaviors leaders may be expected to use, as well as the contextual consideration of how a leader’s actions are understood by those being led and the importance of leader behavior

regarding outcomes. The authors observe that the member behaviors are related to loyalty, commitment and so on. It is surprising that these elements are not similarly linked to group effectiveness, which may suggest a significant reliance on leadership for motivation.

2.3.5 Transformational Leadership Models

Returning to Leonard (2003), he observes that transformational and quantum models of leadership emerged with the demands for organizations to take on a more global focus. “Business was becoming increasingly global, which required organizational processes and structures that were more flexible, creative, and responsive to changes in the variety of markets with which they transacted” (p. 8)....”At the heart of these models was the leader’s ability to create a vision that inspires and motivates people to achieve more than they thought they were capable of” (p. 8). The need had emerged for leaders to lead through influence rather than authority. According to Leonard, Bass (1998) developed a model of transformational leadership which has empirical substantiation through evidence of correlations. Bass’ tripartite model includes: transformational, transactional and non-leader models. Transformational leadership involves charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Transactional leadership operates on the basis of contingent rewards and management by exception. Finally, laissez-faire behavior is the principal component of the non-leader model. Leonard notes that of the three, the transformational model has received empirical support.

The theoretical work of Wheatley (1999a) and Senge (2002) discussed later in this chapter seems to fit this classification.

2.3.6 Path Model of Leadership

Leonard (2003) describes a path model of leadership that integrates theory and research from each of the foregoing five conceptualizations of leadership—trait, situational, humanistic, contingency, and transformational. The path model has three causal stages identified as *zones*. The three zones are: the zone of self deployment; the zone of transactional relationship; and the zone of team deployment. Leonard (2003) observes that this model explains the differences in research and theory in the area of leadership. By matching the previous theoretical models to their respective places along the causal path, differences in theory and research are explained. Further, “Leadership efforts in each zone will be most successful when there is a high degree of fit between the leaders’ characteristics and behavior and the demands of the environment in each zone” (p. 9).

Each of the three zones has a dominant leadership function: Self deployment, the first zone, requires the leader’s image management. That is, the leader needs to foster the perception of being a leader as the followers understand that role. “This zone is...characterized by a trade-off between perceptions and objective reality. For instance, in many cases, the person/environment fit is best determined by followers’ perceptions of the leader rather than objective evaluations of their characteristics” (p. 9).

The second zone of the transactional relationship is largely internal, personal and subjective. Issues such as values, motivations, attitudes, commitment, and satisfaction pertain to this zone. Researchers in this zone are often dealing with the shared social reality. The focus here is on relationship development.

In the third and final zone of team deployment, the employees take up the vision as their cognitive and affective reactions are translated into action.

The leadership function of *resource utilization* is most salient in this zone.

The leader's behavior impacts the amount of effort, persistence, and contribution of followers, which subsequently results in differences in team and organizational productivity, efficiency and effectiveness (p. 10).

Leonard (2003) summarizes the model in this way:

Leaders are able to project a compelling image when their actions match commonly held templates of how effective leaders should appear. They are able to build meaningful relationships when their behaviors match followers' needs and expectations. They are able to effectively deploy available resources when their strategies match the demands of the organizational environment. (p. 10)

Leonard's summary of the current literature through the lens of the path model is meaningful to the current study in several ways. Central to this model is the mutual fostering of leadership. Leadership gives direction, but the context validates and enables the leadership. The model is also useful in identifying the multiple layers of awareness and accountability of the leader, including self presentation, interpersonal and relational skills which foster productivity. Of interest here is the idea that leadership is in part enacted in the behaviors of employees not that employees adopt the leader's behavior, but that leadership is a shared process within a social context. The idea is of course not without precedent in the leadership literature (see for example Senge, 2002; Van Dierendonck et al., 2004; Wheatley,

1999a), but it is articulated succinctly in this model. Finally, the path model indicates the changing nature of leadership activities.

At the end of his paper Leonard discusses the need to include postmodern thinking in conceptualizing leadership. The point has been well addressed by other writers such as Wheatley (1999a). In Leonard's paper however, the concept seems an unrelated afterthought which is unfortunate given the value of the paper as a worthwhile structuring of research and theory in the area of leadership.

In summary, Leonard's (2003) review of the literature on leadership provides a useful cross section that illuminates the models and the development of leadership up to the current time. By also outlining current research that employs Leonard's models of leadership, it is possible to observe some of the issues relevant to the current examination of the experience of leadership in difficult situations. What has been observed is the complexity of influences, personal, relational, situational and organizational that are operant in leadership through difficult situations. In the following discussion (Alvesson, 1991), the complexity of understanding leadership in difficult situations is broadened further by the discussion of the organization as a cultural entity.

2.4 Alvesson (1991), Leadership as Organizational Culture

Alvesson (1991) interviewed 35 managers and employees in a computer services organization concerning their experience of the founding leaders (now departed from the organization) and current management practices. Alvesson found that the practices of leadership laid down by the founding leadership was perpetuated in current practices of leadership. He suggests that the founding leaders laid down a *corporate ideology* which

hinges on the *ideology of the corporate product*. In other words, the way the organization has developed around the handling of its product becomes the corporate culture. In Alvesson's (1991) view, it is the perpetuation of this ideology that is the responsibility of the leadership.

I assume that the majority of people who have jobs in which leadership is a relatively important aspect of what they are doing are much more strongly influenced by corporate culture than they are active in producing it. (p. 187)

Alvesson (1991) outlines the interaction between the more proximal discussions of values and assumptions and the more foundational influences of the culture of the organization:

Sometimes the literature on organizational culture highlights values, assumptions, philosophies, etc., stressing qualitative virtues which are instrumental in achieving corporate goals and forget the almost hegemonic status of profits and corporate growth as the ultimate values (Alvesson 1993b). These values can hardly evoke the same feelings and commitments as, for example, social movement organizations or other organizations with 'higher' goals than profits and growth." (p. 199)

Alvesson (1991) suggests that within the organization, leadership is primarily a form of social integrative action that is informed by the priorities within the organization. He outlines three priorities of the organization that are expressed in leadership including: (a) leadership with an institutional focus-- the leadership focuses on the purposes of the organization; (b) leadership with a structural focus-- leadership is focused on organizational design and planning; and (c) leadership with a social focus,--the leadership is focused on

human relations, communication and job satisfaction. He also discusses hybrids of these three foci.

Alvesson's discussion is an interesting representation of leadership as culture bearer. The scale of the report is enormous, including a discussion of past leaders, present leaders, representations of models of leadership, practices of leadership and illustrations of leadership. Rich descriptive information regarding leadership is observed in this research. Alvesson's (1991) work is relevant to the current study by its outline of the cultural influences of the organization on the work of leadership. This perspective can serve to inform the examination of the experience of leadership through difficult situations and what helps and hinders in that experience.

2.5 Wheatley (1999a) Leadership as Relationship

Wheatley's (1999a) work is a theoretical discussion regarding the centrality of relationship and the integration of chaos theory in effective practices of leadership. Her argument frames workplace difficulties as part of a greater pattern and process of transformation. In a separate work (Senge, Wheatley and McLeod, 2001), she identifies the source of difficulties in the workplace as the emphasis organizations place upon the structures of the organization. In her view, organizations rely on their hierarchies to create momentum and thereby foster an undermining dependency upon the organization rather than fostering the agency of employees within the organization. This is a perspective of the transformation in the workplace that is in response to the technology and the global economy that has been alluded to.

According to Wheatley (1999a), an organization beset by difficulties needs to focus inward on cultivating the strengths and relationships within the organization in an unstructured and spontaneous way. In a manner that seems reflective of meditation, Wheatley highlights a model of quantum thinking which is a way of being present in the moment to the unfolding process and an indifference to outcomes. The potential within the organization Wheatley observes, rests on the capacity within the organization for relationships.

Of interest to the current study is Wheatley's articulation of inter-personal discomfort and even conflict as a part of the process. Her work puts an interesting lens on outdated linear modes of highlighting a problem and then addressing it. Wheatley instead discusses the release of anxieties concerning workplace difficulties by focusing simply on the immediate processes and by welcoming uncertainty. Her model suggests an integration of the individual perspective and experience with an engagement in the context that can be conceived as highly enabling in difficult situations.

Wheatley and some colleagues (Senge, 2002) endorse the practice of a spiritual-type dimension of leadership which expresses the manner of acceptance expressed in chaos theory. Senge (Senge, Wheatley and McLeod, 2001) articulates it as an integration of meditation, study and service to other people. Wheatley's observation regarding the fundamental character of leadership is inspiring and deeply challenging:

The leader is one who is able to work with and evoke the very powerful and positive aspects of human creativity. You don't create these energies, but you do have to support them. You do have to have a sincere belief in the commitment and creativity of the people you're working with.

We still feel very badly about each other. In my estimation, we're quicker and quicker to take affront or to be affronted, to take umbrage, to feel insulted, to assume that other people are mal-intended, rather than well-intended. This is where we are as a culture. We're very far from each other; we're very far from believing in each other.

So I've been working with the idea that a leader is one who has more faith in people than they do in each other, or in themselves. The leader is one who courageously holds out opportunities for people to come back together, to be engaged in the meaningful work of the organization, whatever it is. The leader is one who relies on peoples' creativity and their desire to do something meaningful.

So the first act of a great leader, I believe, is an act of faith. It's believing that human nature is the blessing, not the problem. That's one of the principles that I work with right now—that we are the blessing, not the problem. Then if you actually make that leap of faith, you go into these organizational processes that we've spent about ten years developing, and I feel good about a lot of them: calling the whole system together, finding ways for people to be in dialogue, noticing that people can be very committed to the work of the organization.

So I see the leader as the one who calls people together, who supports them with resources, who keeps the field clear so that they can do this work. The leader is the beacon of belief that we really are sufficient, that we really are

talented enough to make this work. The leader displays that faith in people continuously. (p. 4)

Wheatley's discussion of leadership is distinct in its articulation of the faith dimension of leadership.

2.6 Borgen (2004), Portrait of a Leader

Borgen (2004) presents a compelling portrait of leadership in his discussion of the work of Hans Hoxter. It is possible to see in this discussion many of the elements of leadership discussed so far. The discussion outlines a remarkable leader in considering Hoxter's personal vision, conviction, energy and worldwide impact. With regards to the current study, Borgen as a counselling psychologist, represents Hoxter's work using the terms of normal human functioning which is the domain of counselling psychology (Young and Nicol, 2007). Yet Hoxter is a leader, and the terms of leadership as presented so far can also be seen in the discussion.

Hoxter seems to have had an unwavering conviction about his actions. Every initiative within the article emerges from Hoxter's conviction of what was needed followed by action to make it happen. It's a remarkable portrait of initiative housed by a clear conviction of what's necessary. Borgen comments "Hans was a genuine person who was amply blessed with wisdom, vision and warmth, and with an indomitable spirit of hope and optimism" (p. 12). Perhaps related to this Borgen discusses Hoxter's use of psychoanalysis:

Hans also realized that to be an effective he needed to be at peace with who he was. As a result he entered into his own psychoanalysis, which he found extremely helpful in further developing his understanding of himself and of

other people. This action reflected a core belief of Hans – that counselling is only effective if it involves a genuine meeting of two people to discuss life issues. (p. 7)

Hoxter had a remarkable capacity to connect with people at all levels of society. Borgen begins the article with Shirley Hoxter's observation that Hoxter "was like a diamond with many different facets, and he made each person with whom he had contact feel like they were the only one" (p.2). Borgen outlines that Hoxter worked with refugees and others affected by the conflict of the Second World War and thus became interested in understanding the needs of children and adolescents. Hoxter was apparently resourceful and at ease connecting with senior people in Universities and International Governments. Showing an unassuming attitude about leadership, Hoxter expresses simply that he wanted to learn about children so he contacted Jean Piaget; he wanted to have an international meeting so he approached the university and city presidents and international leaders in counselling. He arranged to have distinguished Fulbright professors engage an international training program. Borgen (2004) notes that it was characteristic of him to approach leaders in the area of his interest to embark upon fulfilling his visions with him. The array of connections he seems to have accomplished with an open and genuine attitude of simple human connectedness or friendliness.

In response, it seems that he was consistently welcomed and successful in his enterprises. He was successful in raising money for his initiatives. Of his initiatives regarding counselling in the US Hoxter observes "people received me with open arms, without hostility, with little or no ambivalence and were really ready to welcome this new

development” (Borgen, 2004, p. 6). He speaks of his good relationships with many universities whereby when he wanted support in the creation of IRTAC he “got in touch with [his] friends” (Borgen, 2004, p. 8). Indeed, Borgen (2004) observes that genuine human interaction to address life issues is a core value of Hoxter’s and this is the premise for his small group meetings at the IRTAC/IAC conferences.

It is apparent that Hoxter managed both to gain people’s attention and to motivate them into action. His leadership is compelling and against a background of seeming chaos in the effective exercise of leadership in the workplace, it is worthwhile to examine in research people like Hoxter regarding their experience of leadership through difficult situations and what helps and hinders them in that experience.

Using the path model of leadership, it is apparent that Hoxter had a personal presentation that was convincing to people, he had substantial personal resources which fostered effective relationships with other people and the outcomes of his work was two international organizations that continue in somewhat the same manner even now. In the terms of counselling psychology, self efficacy and genuineness appear to capture core aspects of Borgen’s (2004) discussion. Further, Borgen captures a representation of high human functioning as may be represented in Maslow’s model of self actualization.

In summary, the preceding discussion has reflected the array of potential influences upon the experience of leadership in difficult situations. Bligh and Meindl (2005) have indicated the social perspectives that shape the expectations and response to leadership. Leonard (2003) and Alvesson (1992) have outlined the theoretical and situational dynamics affecting leadership in difficult situations. In these discussions the systemic dynamics-both

personal and situational- of the experience of leadership in difficult situations is expressed. Finally, Wheatley (1999a) and Borgen (2004) outline the resources in relationships and capacity that may also affect the experience of leadership in difficult situations.

2.7 The Suggestion of Theoretical Links

From a counselling perspective, the preceding discussion of the research and discussion concerning leadership seem to suggest a number of theoretical perspectives within counselling psychology. From the discussion of trait and factor theory and contingency theory there are traces of the reflexive, relational and contextual perspectives addressed in systems theories (see for example McNamee and Gergen, 1992). Systems theory is not unfamiliar in the leadership literature, note Wheatley's (1999a, 1999b) discussions for example. The path model of leadership seems to capture group process (see for example Rose, 1986), beginning with the presentation of the leader, working through cultivating relationships and fostering productivity among those in the direct influence of the leader. Alvesson's (1992) discussion of organizational culture may suggest a cross-cultural lens for the examination of leadership, again, the suggestion is tentative but can be observed. Chaos theory as articulated by Wheatley (1999a) is certainly understood within counselling and is readily conceived as useful in addressing the anxiety that may be in evidence in difficult situations. Wheatley's faith perspective seems comparable to the concept of unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1992) or Frankl's (1988) discussion of meaning. Borgen's (2004) discussion of Hans Hoxter illuminates leadership from a counseling psychology perspective and Hoxter's high functioning can be readily observed as indicating Maslow's model of self actualization. These observations of links are provided cautiously. The intention of

highlighting these parallels is simply to indicate how the literature on leadership seems to be finding the elements of theories that are employed within counselling psychology and in some cases the leadership literature employs the same theories that are used in counselling psychology.

2.8 Leadership Through Difficult Situations: Related Research

Three studies were located that address the experience of leadership through difficult situations (Bullock, 2004; Caritte, 2000; Frost, 2003). All three have been done within the academic field of organizational development. Bullock (2004) and Caritte (2000) employed phenomenological research to outline the experience of business executives through change, mergers and downsizing. Frost examined the work of leadership in addressing the emotional toxicity in the workplace. These three works are discussed here outlining the parallels and differences with the current study.

2.8.1 Caritte (2000), Phenomenology of Leadership through Change

Caritte (2000) engaged in a phenomenological study of executives leading through change in business organizations. She highlights the tremendous importance of leaders understanding how to be effective through change processes. In the study she acknowledges that she has had business relationships with the participants. Citing Pritchett, Robinson & Clarkson, 1997), Caritte (2000) notes:

A study of 41 Fortune 500 companies revealed that 90% of companies whose financial performance improved rarely reorganized and 90% of those that had lost market value had undergone frequent and difficult reorganization efforts

(Pritchett, Robinson & Clarkson, 1997). Pritchett, Robinson and Clarkson write that when no coordinated retention actions are taken, 47% of all senior managers in an acquired firm leave within the first year of acquisition; within the first 3 years, 72% leave...Even when managers are motivated to stay, they will face sagging morale, lowered trust and uncertainty...Orgland et al., (1998) point to root causes so difficult that most managers do not know what a good change plan should include, not to mention how to implement one. If they have not been prepared or trained to deal with such crises, chaos will remain. (p. 50-51)

She goes on to discuss research indicating that leaders implementing approaches to change do not make the changes themselves that they are requiring their employees to make. She notes that a burgeoning literature of case studies on effective change finds organizations failing to inform employees of the change strategy. She notes finally that changes are distinct, and there is no one solution to every situation, no single leadership style that will address organizational change. In response to this problem, Caritte (2000) highlights the human element in the process of change, discussing the sense of threat and consequent protective responses that change initiatives are met with. She highlights that the process of change is a significantly human process.

In her findings she notes that the participants were each hired specifically to implement change for the purpose of increasing the profits within the business. She notes also the array of influences that the leader is required to address:

The leader's change experience is significantly affected by many elements unique to his organization's change plan. The successful implementation of organizational changes by the leader is affected by the organizational structure, employee resistance, communication between the executive and employees, and his relationship to the parent company. In addition, his personal style, experience, education, training and perception of the organization's problems affect his perceptions and responses to the organization's issues. (p. 187)

What she found is that being a leader in an organizational transition requires focused leadership, caring as much for the employees as for oneself, supporting and enabling employees, communication, and good relationships with core people. She identifies that the study enhances the understanding of the way change is engaged by executives.

2.8.2 Bullock (2004) Phenomenology of Leadership Through Downsizing and Mergers

The second study (Bullock, 2004) is also a phenomenological study of leadership and is intended to build on Carritte's (2000) study by focusing the discussion of change to examine leadership in mergers and downsizing. Bullock interviewed six participants including executives from three public and three private organizations. Her data are based on an in depth interview examining their experience through specific mergers and acquisitions beginning at first notice of their responsibility for the merger and ending after the completion of the transaction.

She has found seven major themes in her phenomenological analysis: Others, Functional, External, Self, Emotional, Mental, and Intellectual. She also highlights in her study that one of the obstacles that the participants identify is the effort to merge two business cultures.

As in the current study Bullock highlights that leadership is a complex phenomenon that is not adequately represented in the leadership literature. “The leadership experience is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that reaches beyond the nature and scope of popular business books focusing on transaction mechanics and checklists” (Bullock, 2004, p. 2). She also notes that leadership is highly complex and compelling as a topic of research “Despite the abundance of writing on the topic, leadership has presented a major challenge to practitioners and researchers interested in understanding the nature of leadership. It is a highly valued phenomenon that is very complex” (p.11).

Bullock, like Caritte (2000), comes from an organization and development background and frames the study with reference to a business model of leadership that is role based and is organized around profits and shareholders.

The current study departs from both Bullock’s (2004) and Caritte’s (2000) studies in several ways. In the first place in both of these studies leadership is role based with change, mergers and downsizing as the focus of the discussion. This is a contrast to the present study which focused on experience rather than role, and holds the perspective that it is the leader’s conceptualization of what is difficult that is meaningful in developing the phenomenology. This is not to suggest that downsizing, mergers and change are not demonstrably difficult

situations, rather, it was thought that the understanding of the experience of an effective leader regarding what it is that is difficult, would be informative.

A related contrast is that Caritte and Bullock have developed their research within an organizational development framework. This is a meaningful difference from the current interest using the perspectives and tools of counselling psychology for the purpose of capturing the experience of leadership through difficult situations. One of the key contrasts in this regard is that an organizational development perspective assumes the perspective of the organization and a counselling psychology perspective assumes the perspective of the individual. Further, while all of these studies employ a phenomenological methodology, the current study has also employed Critical Incident Technique (CIT) to outline what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. Finally, whereas Bullock and Caritte have interviewed 6 and 5 participants, the current study has interviewed 14 participants to represent the experience of leadership through difficult situations.

2.8.3 Frost (2003), Toxic Emotions in the Work Place

Frost (2003) interviewed leaders about their experiences of working with troubled situations to effect changes within the organization, with a focus on what he calls emotional *toxicity* in the workplace. His interest in emotional toxicity stems from an awareness of the toll on individual health that is precipitated by environments that are toxic, that is, emotionally volatile. Frost identifies sources of toxicity including malice, poor management practices, organizational structures, unexpected life events and so on. He notes that the

source of toxicity is interpersonal insensitivity and he discusses how insensitivity is perpetuated in organizations.

In contrast to the substantial body of literature which discusses leadership in more behavioural or cognitive terms, Frost's work highlights the interpersonal, compassionate and resilient character of people handling others' emotional toxins. For example, Frost discusses the personal processes of sensitivity needed for toxic handling.

Preoccupation with ourselves and our inner voice of self-criticism and defensiveness takes our 'eye off the ball'. This applies to managers in organizations as well as to athletes. Instead of being able to observe what is actually going on and listening to what others are saying and feeling, we're busy processing, often defensively, only what we think *we're* doing. (p. 161)

From the perspective of leadership, there are several limitations of Frost's (2003) work. In the first place, it can be suggested that interpersonal attentiveness is a limited task of leadership that has the potential to make things worse rather than better. Note for example the work of the toxic handler as Frost describes it. "Toxin handlers respond to pain in many ways, small and large, but their work tends to reflect five major themes: Listening; Holding space for healing; Buffering pain; Extricating others from painful situations; Transforming pain" (p. 63). This is a highly localized role of leadership with meaningful implications that Frost discusses. What he neglects in this approach to leadership is the larger contextual considerations whereby one is accountable also to other employees, to the communication of a vision and to the organization.

Whereas Frost highlights the problem of toxicity, the current study takes a broader perspective looking at an effective leader's experience of difficult situations. In this way, the current study bears more of the perspective of positive psychology considering the notion of what is possible or what is helpful in difficult situations. This is particularly evident in the use of CIT whereby what is helpful and what hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations is elucidated thereby framing the difficult situation in terms that summarize the process towards an effective outcome. The approach is one of focusing on what is possible rather than on the processes of decompensation. For Frost the focus on leadership is secondary to the focus on toxic handling. Finally, Frost's intention in writing his book does not seem to be the articulation of effective leadership, rather he wanted to highlight the importance of toxic handling in the work place, and how that can be facilitated.

2.9 Special Issue of the *American Psychologist*, (January 2007).

The January 2007 issue of the *American Psychologist* was a special issue examining research on leadership. As discussed in the first chapter, the purpose was to attract interest in the study of leadership within Psychology. Bennis (2007) introduces the discussion noting:

As students of leadership, it is important for us to distinguish between what we can and cannot say with authority on the subject—that is the essential first step in developing a grand unifying theory of leadership. But we must remember that the subject is vast, amorphous, slippery, and, above all, desperately important. (p. 2)

This caution is meaningful in the current exploratory study where already I have taken the liberty of making connections between the discussions within counselling psychology and

leadership. As stated however, this is an intention of the current study in an effort to push further in considering the intersection and relevance of a counselling psychology perspective with regards to leadership in difficult situations. The effect of this caution however is that the current study will not do more than suggest avenues of consideration for counselling psychologists regarding leadership.

The theorists represented in the January issue identify themselves as being principally from the school of either trait-based approaches to leadership, or contingency-based schools of leadership. Sternberg (2007; trait based), and Avolio (2007; contingency based) however express that their models are based on integrative understandings. The fundamental view of each, that leadership is either about the traits of the individual or about situational determinants, remains squarely at the foundation of the discussions, however.

I begin with the two trait based models, Sternberg's (2007) and Zaccaro's (2007) articles. I will subsequently review Vroom and Jago (2007), and then Avolio's (2007) contingency based perspectives. The discussion concludes with Hackman and Wageman's (2007) generation of research questions to guide the ongoing development of research into leadership within the field of psychology. Responses to the feature articles are also briefly outlined. This discussion then will form the background outlining the relevance of the current research on leadership within the discipline of counselling psychology.

2.9.1 Sternberg (2007), A Systems Model of Leadership: WICS

Sternberg (2007b) outlines what he calls a "systems model" by which he is referring centrally to the process of formulating, making and acting on decisions. Whereas he links his

model to the trait based models of leadership, he comments that his model takes a broader view of traits than is typical. The model is an integration of Wisdom, Intelligence, Creativity and Synthesis, which together he calls WICS. Creativity refers to the necessary skills and dispositions for generating ideas. He notes that these ideas are generally novel, high in quality and fitting to the task. He notes that the creativity of leaders refers to both a creative disposition and a creative ability in formulating and enacting decisions.

Sternberg (2007) refers secondly to intelligence, meaning both academic, which he notes has a long history of examination in leadership, and practical intelligence, which is employed to solve day-to-day problems. Sternberg notes that emotional intelligence and tacit knowledge are facets of practical intelligence.

Wisdom is the third element of his discussion which he again indicates is a matter of disposition and skill.

Wisdom is defined here as the use of successful intelligence, creativity, and knowledge as mediated by values to (a) seek to reach a common good (b) by balancing intrapersonal (one's own), interpersonal (others'), and extrapersonal (organization, institutional, and/or spiritual) interests (c) over the short and long term to (d) adapt to, shape and select environments). (Sternberg, 2007, p. 38)

Sternberg (2007) notes that wisdom employs intelligence and creativity but intelligence and creativity do not necessarily foster wisdom. He notes that wise leaders will "leave an indelible mark on the people they lead and, potentially, on history" (p. 39).

Sternberg (2007) comments that as a systems model, WICS incorporates aspects of other models of leadership including trait based models, mission based models, humanistic models, contingency models, transformational models. He summarizes his model this way:

A systems view can provide a way of understanding leadership as a set of decision processes embodying wisdom, intelligence, and creativity as well as other higher cognitive processes. One uses creativity to generate ideas, intelligence to analyze and implement the ideas, and wisdom to ensure that they represent a good common good. (p. 40)

What is notable in Sternberg's model is the emphasis on creative and intellectual processes with a minimal attention to relational processes.

2.9.2 Zaccaro (2007), Trait Based Perspectives of Leadership.

Zaccaro (2007), like Sternberg, argues for a trait-based perspective of leadership. He notes the fall and rise of favor for a trait perspective and outlines that research into traits of leaders needs to be broad in its effort to represent leadership traits as was discussed also by Sternberg (2007). He argues further, that the intersection of given traits needs to be outlined, and that the relationship of such traits to outcomes may be curvilinear. Thirdly, he says that situations need to be accounted for highlighting the contingency models. Finally, he notes that traits may be malleable over time.

Zaccaro also provides a model of leadership. Outside of the leader's operating environment Zaccaro outlines that there are distal attributes including personality, cognitive ability, and values. Relevant to the operating environment, Zaccaro describes proximal

attributes such as social appraisal skills, expertise and tacit knowledge, and problem solving skills. The proximal attributes he describes as contributing to leadership processes which foster leader development and effectiveness.

2.9.3 Vroom and Jago (2007), The Role of the Situation in Leadership

Vroom and Jago (2007) open their discussion by commenting that leadership is almost universally conceived as a process of influence. The question addressed by Vroom and Jago is regarding the processes by which successful influence occurs. In an effort to outline effective leadership they divorce leadership from organizational mandates and focus instead on the influences within the organization to determine the effectiveness of leadership. “The traits and behavior of leaders are mediating variables between structural antecedents and organizational outcomes” (p. 19). Their point then, is that the attributes of the leader are irrelevant to organizational effectiveness.

Using a contingency model of leadership Vroom and Jago (2007) have focused their research on the way that leaders connect with the people they are leading. One of their findings is that it makes more sense to discuss autocratic versus participative situations rather than autocratic versus participative leaders, because they have found that it is the situations that account for greater variance. They summarize with a taxonomy of situational effects:

1. Organizational effectiveness is affected by situational factors that are not under the leader’s control. They note however that effectiveness is often taken to be an indication of leader effectiveness.

2. Situations shape how leaders behave.

3. Situations influence the consequences of leader behavior. In other words, the numerous maxims found in the leadership literature are not helpful if the particularities of the situation are not taken into account. A leader's action is not independent of the influences in the context.

Vroom and Yago (2007) suggest that leadership needs to be redefined as “a process of motivating others to work together collaboratively to accomplish great things” (p. 23). They note that the consequent emphasis for contingency theorists is to understand the key behaviors and contextual variables that influence that process.

While Sternberg (2007) and Vroom and Jago (2007) agree that leadership is not an inborn trait, their perspective on the individual in the process appears entirely different, with Sternberg emphasizing the individual and Vroom and Jago emphasizing the context.

2.9.4 Avolio (2007), Promoting more Integrative Strategies for Leadership Theory-Building

Avolio begins his discussion looking at the follower focus in leadership studies. Having reviewed the literature on followers he concludes that the decision to follow a leader is contingent upon the perception of the leader as representing the follower's values and identity. Given the discussion so far, this is an interesting conceptualization of the intersection of the individual and the context. Avolio situates his work within the contingency model of leadership but has expanded from Vroom and Yago's model to examine more fully the influence of the leader's and the follower's cognitive self appraisal. He draws his review of the literature together into a model of leadership development which he says takes into account cultural difference, individual difference and the situatedness of

leadership. He notes five spheres which he uses to outline his model of authentic leadership development.

1. Cognitive elements: He describes the importance of self awareness of both leaders and followers in terms of their awareness of both their actual and their possible selves.

2. Individual Leader-Follower Behavior: This has to do with the way authenticity is regulated between leaders and followers using such tools as transparency and ethical decision-making.

3. Historical context: Here he refers to the personal history of both the leader and the follower and how those may be relevant in the current context

4. Proximal context: This refers to the influence of the organizational climate on the development of authentic and ethical, transparent leaders and followers. It is interesting to note here the high contrast to what Zaccaro (2007) sees as proximate-social appraisal skills, expertise and tacit knowledge, and problem solving skills

5. Distal Context-This refers to the influence of national and international events that shape development. Of note here considering the diverse ways that leadership is conceptualized, is the contrast with Zaccaro's (2007) model of distal attributes: personality, cognitive ability, and values.

In his conclusion, Avolio (2007) challenges the current literature on leadership to be conceptualized in terms of history, culture, and social networks.

Summary comments

It is apparent that the theoretical elements considered regarding the leadership literature in general are operative within psychology. Musing on the work of counselling

psychology I suggest that one can observe traces of systems theory, group process, cross-cultural perspective, self efficacy, self actualization and perhaps others in the leadership literature. What the articles of the special issue of the *American Psychologist* also do is highlight what appears as a core conflict regarding whether leadership is a fundamentally individual process or a contextual process. Taken altogether it appears relevant to approach leadership as Borgen (2004) has done by capturing the normal human processes of a leader participating in a difficult situation. By this means the paradox of individual and context may be represented in an informative way.

Hackman and Wageman, 2007, Asking the Right Questions about Leadership

The preceding summaries of the core articles on leadership in this issue of the *American Psychologist* (2007) highlight a diversity of ways in which leadership can be effectively conceived. Hackman and Wageman (2007) drew together the discussions of the articles in the January issue of the *American Psychologist* and proposed five research questions to suggest future directions for the leadership research within psychology. Each question is posed by the authors in a binary form, highlighting the background of investigation in a given area and transforming that question to express fitting directions for leadership research:

1. “Not do leaders make a difference but *under what conditions does leadership matter?*” (Hackman and Wageman, 2007, p. 43)
2. “Not what are the traits of leaders, but *how do leaders’ personal attributes interact with situational properties to shape outcomes?*” (Hackman and Wageman, 2007, p. 44).

Hackman and Wageman (2007) note that the authors of the special issue “agree that neither trait nor situational attributes alone are sufficient to explain leader behavior and effectiveness. It is the interaction between traits and situations that counts” (p. 44).

3. “Not do there exist common dimensions on which all leaders can be arrayed, but *are good and poor leadership qualitatively different phenomena?*” (Hackman and Wageman, 2007, p. 45).

Hackman and Wageman make the comparison of leadership research to studies of performance noting that high performance is typically compared with average performance. They note that poor performance may have qualitatively different premises and they highlight Sternberg’s (2007) discussion of wisdom as a meaningful premise in the investigation of leadership.

4. “Not how do leaders and followers differ, but *how can leadership models be reframed so they treat all system members as both leaders and followers?*” (Hackman and Wageman, 2007, p. 45).

5. “Not what should be taught in leadership courses, but *how can leaders be helped to learn.*” (Hackman and Wageman, 2007, p. 46).

Regarding the learning tendencies of leaders Hackman and Wageman (2007) comment:

All leaders have mental models that guide their actions. Because these models are abstracted gradually over time from observations, experience, and trial and error, they risk overfocusing on especially salient features of the leadership

situation....Ideally, leaders would be motivated to behave in ways that foster their own continuous learning from the experiences (p. 46).

For the sake of simplicity, I will repeat the core questions proposed by Hackman and Wageman (2007):

1. Under what conditions does leadership matter?
2. How do leaders' personal attributes interact with situational properties to shape outcomes?
3. Are good and poor leadership qualitatively different phenomena?
4. How can leadership models be reframed so they treat all system members as both leaders and followers?
5. How can leaders be helped to learn?

It is relevant to consider these questions with regards to the research questions of the current study: *What is the experience of leadership in difficult situations? And What helps and hinders in that experience?* Regarding the first question, it is assumed that the current study considers leadership at a point when it matters; difficult situations. For the second question, the person and situation are brought together in the current study by focusing on phenomenological experience and critical incidents to represent dynamics of the process of leadership. Regarding good and poor leadership, the current study represents leaders who are identified as effective in their work. The question of who is a leader within a system is assumed in the current study based on an approach that situates leadership within individual experience and as it is conceived or experienced by people who refer the participants to the study. Whether leaders can be helped to learn is an interesting question that may be

addressed in the findings of the current study regarding the central importance of engagement as will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Further indication of the relevance of the current study is Hackman and Wageman's (2007) comment that:

New research is needed to fully understand how leaders learn from their experiences, especially when they are coping with crises. We go further and suggest that error and failure provide far more opportunities for learning than do success and achievement, precisely because failures generate data that can be mined for insight into how one's assumptions and models of action might be improved. Overcoming the impulse to reason defensively, however, can be a significant personal challenge. It necessarily involves asking anxiety-arousing questions. (p. 46)

The focus on leadership through crises is represented in the current research as the participants are discussing their experience in difficult situations. Hackman and Wageman's (2007) assumption however that this is best represented in the experience of failure however seems questionable and may reflect the decompensation perspective within psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As will be seen, the current study does capture the insight and personal processes as well as the situational activity of the participants that Hackman and Wageman suggest is meaningful to the study of leadership.

2.9.5 Response to the 2007 Issue of the *American Psychologist*

The articles in the January 2007 issue of the *American Psychologist* have summoned a variety of responses outlining more theories of leadership and pointing to the need for diversity in the discussion of leadership. Guastello (2007) forms one such argument, noting that nonlinear dynamical systems theory is a powerful means of representing the character of an organization as an adaptive system. He goes on to argue that leadership is emergent in response to situational demands. He notes, in fact, that whole social systems emerge in difficult situations, including primary leaders, secondary leaders and nonleaders. In similar terms, Wielkiewicz and Stelzner (2007) argue that a focus on ecological context is necessary and they highlight a contextualized view of leadership in which members within an organization need to be conceived of as organizational experts all making a contribution through difficult situations.

Bresnahan (2007) argues that Bowlby's attachment theory needs to be included in discussion of leadership and "setting the overarching, elusive concept of leadership on strong theoretical footing" (p. 607).

Chin (2007) argues that the discussion of leadership neglects attention to diversity. Sternberg has responded that the discussion is one of paradigms rather than groups for whom leadership is relevant. Chin notes however that "Defining and understanding leadership by simply examining those who hold leadership positions has led to a biased and incomplete portrayal of leadership and leadership effectiveness" (p. 609).

2.10 Leadership and Counselling Psychology

This research effort began in the recognition of an overlap in the challenges facing effective leadership in the workplace and the somewhat parallel challenges in working as a counsellor with intact groups. This observation was enhanced in the finding of meaningful overlapping areas of theoretical discussion regarding what's needed in leadership. Further it appeared that there may be some mutual enhancement possible given that from a counselling psychology perspective, leadership has the capacity to represent extraordinary human functioning and from a leadership perspective, counselling has the capacity to be informative regarding the dynamics of normal human functioning.

Reviewing the literature on leadership, core theories within counselling psychology seemed to be indicated in the efforts to generate a sound representation of leadership that may support effective leadership in difficult situations. Such counselling theories include: systems theories, group theory, cross-cultural theory, self efficacy theory and self actualization. These general observations are supported in the discussion within psychology regarding leadership.

Considering the various dynamics of leadership and counselling, it appeared to be a reasonable avenue of investigation to examine leadership using the perspective of counselling psychology in an exploratory study that may serve to inform both areas. The leadership literature has indicated that it is relevant to try to represent leadership in ordinary terms rather than the idealized or even legendary terms more often encountered (Bligh and Meindl, 2007; Wielkiewicz and Stelzner, 2007). On the other hand, the counselling literature bears the responsibility to understand this client population (Blustein, 2001). Furthermore, it

seems that the examination of high human functioning as in effective leadership through difficult situations may be informative regarding counselling theory and practice (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

If work and relationships could for a moment be metamorphosed into the areas of leadership and counselling, Blustein's discussion of a metaperspective is relevant to the current discussion of leadership and counselling. Blustein comments:

The task for scholars and practitioners, we believe, is more complex than understanding the connections between various domains of psychological functioning. Rather, we propose that psychological service providers and applied psychological researchers will need to develop a metaperspective that facilitates the ability to maintain an unbiased and affirming focus on multiple contextual domains simultaneously. A critical aspect of this metaperspective is that one domain would not necessarily overshadow the other domain. The metaperspective that we seek to construct would provide researchers and practitioners with a means of holding onto work and relationships issues simultaneously, without defining one set of experiences via the language or interpretations of the other set of experiences. For example, a tendency exists in psychotherapy to define work-related problems from a family systems perspective (Chusid & Cochran, 1989) or from an intrapsychic perspective (Axelrod, 1999; Lowman, 1993) A metaperspective that affirms work and relationships equally and without bias would allow us to revisit these

perspectives to examine whether they are viable for clients and whether they are indeed valid and consistent with human experience. (p. 186)

Of course work is not the whole of leadership, nor relationships the whole of counselling. Still, Blustein's model of a metaperspective suggests the means in the current study of considering leadership from the perspective of counselling. The intention then is not to define either using the terms of the other, but to allow a dialogue between the two to emerge by examining the work of leadership from within the discipline of counselling psychology.

2.11 Chapter Summary and Relevance of the Current Study

In this literature review I have discussed research and theory that outlines the complex character of leadership. Leadership is an embedded process that is influenced by and that influences social, organizational, situational, relational and personal dynamics. Leadership can be described as a personal process but it can also be described as a situational or organizational process. Leadership is a perplexing and complex phenomenon that is of central importance in the global community and within organizations, yet it is too often poorly enacted in difficult situations and it fails to accomplish its objectives.

Over the course of its development in the past century, leadership has come to the point where it is discussed in personal, relational and theoretical terms that indicate the relevance of the lens of counselling psychology. Using the perspective of normal human functioning that is the trademark of counselling psychology, the current study asks the question "What is the experience of leadership through difficult situations?" This question is brought to a practical consideration in the extension of the research using the question "What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership?" These questions are indicated as suitable

to the current knowledge base of leadership (Hackman and Wageman, 2007). Furthermore, because of the apparent practical and theoretical compatibility, there is some reason to engage an exploratory examination of leadership from within the discipline of counselling psychology as a means to enhance the tools, potentialities, and the theoretical perspectives of each.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter outlines the methodology by which the research questions have been addressed. The chapter begins with an overview and rationale for the study design. Two forms of analysis have been used, one corresponding with each research question. A phenomenological analysis was employed to examine the research question *What is the experience of leadership through difficult situations?* A Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was employed to address the second question in the research: *What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations.* A brief discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of these methodologies will be outlined. The procedures for developing, conducting and analyzing the data will be discussed. The chapter will also address the validation processes used in the study.

3.2 Rationale for the Study Design

In Chapter 1 the background to the research questions was provided, highlighting the central focus of the current study on leadership in difficult situations and the related assumptions. The second chapter outlined the embedded nature of leadership suggesting a complex array of considerations regarding difficult situations in leadership. These discussions have indicated the feasibility of an exploratory effort looking at leadership in difficult situations using the perspective of counselling psychology. Over the course of the development of the research; reviewing the literature and conducting pilot interviews, two research questions emerged. The first question was: *What is the experience of leadership*

through difficult situations. This question was intended to clarify the domain of discussion. The second question: *What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations*, was included to build upon the first question by contributing an applied perspective of leadership in difficult situations. Together, these questions form a contribution to the leadership and counselling literature and may serve leaders working in difficult situations and counsellors working with leaders.

As already indicated, a phenomenological analysis was employed to address the first question: What is the experience of leadership in difficult situations. Merriam (1998) outlines that phenomenological analysis “attends to ferreting out the essence or basic structure of a phenomenon” (p. 158). Osborne (1994) discusses that “The ultimate validity of phenomenological analysis depends upon the adequacy of its rendering of phenomena. There is circularity in the application of the method. Phenomenology validates itself by applying its method to itself” (p. 171). Within a counselling psychology framework, such an approach is a meaningful approach to representing human experience. Within leadership, it was thought that a phenomenological perspective of the experience of leadership in difficult situations may inform the conceptualization of leadership in theory and research. Further, Polkinghorne (1989) suggests that phenomenology is a meaningful avenue for examining relational processes which are at the core of leadership in difficult situations and are of central interest in counselling psychology. A phenomenological approach satisfies the diverse issues of leadership in difficult situations and the perspective of counselling psychology as they converge in the current research.

Moving on to the CIT analysis, the phenomenological analysis provided a backdrop representing the experience of leadership in difficult situations. From this phenomenological framework of understanding the CIT question could be asked: *What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations*. The intention of the study beyond a phenomenological analysis, was to examine what helps and hinders within the experience of leadership through difficult situations. In this way, practical means identified by the participants could be identified and may be meaningful to those leaders in difficult situations in the workplace, and to the development of the counselling literature regarding the needs of this population. CIT by its capacity to represent critical elements of practice, is ideally suited for this task.

To facilitate these two analyses, the expedient decision was made that the CIT analysis would be contained within that portion of the interview in which the participants addressed the question “What has helped you in being a leader with the challenges that you have encountered?” and “What kinds of things have hindered you in being a leader?” (See Appendix VI).

3.3 Confidentiality

The attention to confidentiality has shaped facets of the analysis and report of the results of the study. As mentioned, it was noted that because the role of leadership has a public accountability there are ways in which leaders’ discussions of their experiences raise the issue of the experiences of the difficult situations by other members within the situation. This issue varies according to the difficult situations or the leadership role or other factors.

In the current study, because the intention was to focus on leadership experience and what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations it was decided to set aside any clear representation of the roles or the situations that the participants discussed. It is for this reason that this report will not outline the stories or the profiles of the individual participants except in general terms. The decision to exclude the participant's profiles is not consistent with phenomenological research. This has been partially addressed by including the participant's identification number in outlining their contribution to the various themes in chapter 4 and by including the line numbers on the quotations as a form of accountability to the original interviews.

3.4 The Participants.

In considering who the participants would be, Woolsey (1986) specifies that the issue is to decide: "a) which persons will make the observations; b) which individuals, activities or groups will be observed and c) which of their behaviours or experiences will be observed." (p. 244). She goes on to note "The person making the observations can be anyone who is familiar with the activity and who can make first-hand observations"(p.245). Participants were recruited to the study through a process of purposive sampling (Merriam, 1998). As already mentioned, it was decided that the way to locate leaders would be to approach appropriate people who may be able to refer the project to prospective participants. The protocol for the first contact with the referral sources is given as Appendix I. A variety of people were sought to this end including people who work as consultants to leaders, and a variety of colleagues and friends. Altogether 30 people were approached as referral sources. The people who acted as referral sources were provided with a "skeleton letter" which is

attached as Appendix II. This letter was provided to help the referral sources in making contact with prospective participants. The referral sources were encouraged to use the letter as a guideline for telephone conversations or to develop as a letter to prospective participants. They were also provided with a letter from me that introduced the project. This letter is provided in Appendix III. The referral sources sent out anywhere between 1 and 15 referrals.

Regarding this process, the people who presented for interviews were individuals who in some way had access to knowing a good deal about me. This was made clear in that the participants often had close relations or had worked very closely with my referral sources who also knew me quite well. Referral sources who knew me less well tended not to have participants contact me. This was not the result of a lack of enthusiasm as several of them put quite a bit of energy into promoting the project. Many of the participants in fact came from two referral sources who have been mentors to me. In reflecting on this, it seemed possible that this was another expression of the ambiguity and uncertainty around leadership. It seems possible that potential participants may have wondered what my intentions were and what would be the manner and content of the interview.

A total of 15 prospective participants contacted me. All of the participants were given a pre-screening interview which is attached in Appendix IV. As a general overview, the participants were asked if they'd given leadership for a period of 3 or more years and whether they had given leadership through difficult situations. Several of the participants noted that leadership is virtually synonymous with difficult situations.

In an effort to address any confusion that may arise regarding the differences between leading and managing (Alvesson, 1991; Bennis, 1989; Wheatley, 1999a) a scaling question

was also developed. “Imagine a continuum of leadership through difficult situations where on one end, such leadership is a matter of managing, organizing, monitoring and controlling and on the other end leadership is a matter of concern with what people are thinking, where would you place yourself? In the middle? Further along one side or the other side?”

Essentially I was looking for those people who saw as their central task in facilitating change, the job of working with people as opposed to structuring tasks related to change. In reality the participants identified with the need to understand people, some of them to a greater extent than others. A number of participants including some of my most experienced leaders noted that being able to effectively organize things was distinctly important. The participants were also asked if they could make the required time commitment. One participant was unable to commit to the time required. The remaining 14 were interviewed.

Some of the participants readily identified themselves as leaders, but some of them were less certain. The participants represent a range of involvement as leaders: leadership without a leadership role, volunteer leadership, leadership in business, administration, entrepreneurial, government, higher education and in the military. Woolsey (1986) suggests “a wide range of respondents to give broad coverage of the content domain, [therefore] very few limits [are] set on the sampling. Because quantitative comparisons are not made, it is more important to ensure that some persons possessing each of the salient characteristics of the population be included than it is to have the sample representative in all respects.” (p. 245). In CIT, because it is the incidents and not the people that are the sample (Flannagan, 1954; Butterfield et al., 2004) there is some latitude regarding the participants. From the

perspective of phenomenology, a range of participants enhances the textural richness of the study and may expand its validity through the increased transferability.

Table 3.1 Outline of Demographic information

Occupation	Business, NGO, Law, Higher Education, Administration, Government, Volunteer
Number of years in the occupation	Range: 6 months to 50 years
Occupation/ Job Level	Business owner, Vice President, Dean, Department head, Chair, Consultant, Senior Government
Length of time in current job	Range: 6 months to 50 years with a mode of 5 years. Several of the participants are working in more than one job and represented the period of their work in those various jobs.
Number of years in the industry	Range: 5 years to 50 years with a mode of 20 years.
Age	35 to 87 years old with most participants in their 40's.
Sex	8 Female, 6 Male
Income level (household)	Range: 95,000-500,000 and 2 undisclosed
Country of Birth	All participants were born in Canada
Marital Status	11 participants are married, 1 participant is single, 1 is divorced, 1 widowed
Family Status	7 participants are parents, 4 participants are grandparents and 3 have no children.
Education Level	2 high school graduates, 2 undergraduate degrees 2 MSc. 3 LLB, 1 MA, 2 MBA, 2 Doctoral degrees.
One participant has a Doctor of Laws degree, the Order of Canada, the Order of British Columbia, and Freedom of the City of Vancouver.	

3.5 The Interview

The interview was developed based on the research into leadership and in relationship to a previously created interview (Butterfield, 2002a) examining employee wellness. The interview followed a detailed interview guide (Woolsey 1986; Cochran, 1995; and Ishiyama, 1995b, See Appendix VI) although it was exercised in a manner that was semi-structured, allowing the participants the opportunity to reflect on their experiences. The interview was developed over a period of time and it was piloted with 5 leaders. Observations from those experiences were used to refine and develop the interview. The piloted interviews were not included in the analysis as it was not clear that they conformed to the final structure of the interview. They were used more to get a sense of the utility and relevance of the interview in addressing the research questions as I had developed them.

The development of the interview occurred in tandem with my growing understanding of the complexity of the work of leadership and the relevance of a phenomenological and CIT discussion of the experience of leadership in difficult situations. The CIT questions were developed from the beginning of the research, and they initially seemed straightforward; an instrumental approach to the challenge of leadership in difficult situations. The limitation of discussing leadership in exclusively instrumental terms became clear as each pilot interview seemed to highlight the distinct approaches of the interviewee and the significant personal process involved in leadership through difficult situations. It was as this understanding grew that the form of the phenomenological and the CIT questions also grew.

With regards to the phenomenological portion of the interview, a broad range of questions was developed to address the research question: *What is the experience of leadership in difficult situations?* The interview opened with a general question regarding the participant's experience of leadership. The question addressed both what the experience of leadership has been like and what roles the participant has held. The intention of this opening question was to clarify with the participant what it was that they were talking about when they were discussing leadership. Again, the uncertainty regarding leadership indicated that establishing a shared understanding would be a necessary starting place. In the final form of the interview, this general question was developed by looking across the range of the participant's developmental experience of leadership from their first awareness of the experience through to what they wished for in leadership.

The participants were then asked about their leadership experiences through difficult situations that ultimately turn out well. Inviting them into deeper reflection on this, they were asked to consider core elements that brought the experience together as they have understood it. The participants responded variously to this question. Some rejected the trajectory of difficult situations that turn out well, to discuss that turning out well means that they have learned something. Some were uncertain whether the stories that they had chosen to tell in advance of the interview were the kind of stories I was interested in. I assured them that I was interested in the stories that they wanted to tell regarding the experience of leadership through difficult situations. Others were willing to tell the stories but expressed a sense of awkwardness as though they were "blowing their own horn" (#48) or "trying to be the hero" (#17).

Having discussed their stories of leadership through difficult situations, the participants were asked the CIT questions “What has helped you in the experience of leadership through the difficult situations that you’ve encountered?” and “What kind of things have hindered you in the experience of leadership through difficult situations?” Following the CIT portion of the interview, the participants were also asked what they wish for and what enables them to continue in leadership. These questions were intended to highlight developmental aspects of the experience, but they were also an opportunity for the participants to reflect on their resilience and motivation in leadership. Interestingly the participants found the question of what they might wish for in leadership perplexing. It was as if wishing in leadership is not relevant, as a result of the fact that leadership is about getting something accomplished. The wish may be somehow self-contained within the situation.

3.5.1 Interview Procedures

At the beginning of the interview participants were presented with a consent form explaining the purpose of the study, the type of questions to be asked, confidentiality and their option to withdraw from the study at any given time without implications. Upon reading the consent form, the researcher offered to clarify any questions the participant may have. Both the participant and I signed the consent form when all the details had been addressed and discussed to the satisfaction of the participant. To begin the interview, the participant and I established a rapport through general discussion, outlined the study in general and clarified the nature of events to be reported.

For the Phenomenological portion of the interview, an approach to the interview process suggested by Weiss (1994) was used. Weiss discusses the fact that the interviewing process fluctuates and changes through the process of each interview as well as from one interview to the next. For purposes of reliability and validity, Weiss suggests the use of a diachronic model of interviewing which elicits a story rather than the series of points. The depth of having the respondent get caught up in their story rather than relying on an analytical framework of discussion creates more trustworthy results. Further, the use of examples avoids the problem of generalized statements.

Having established a relationship of good rapport, Weiss (1994) suggests one begin the interview with where the participant's interests lie, and follow this lead, giving directions only to keep the discussion within the framework of the study. A part of keeping the interview within the participant's domain of authority is spending time with the participant and finding out together what kind of information this person can add to the study. Given an individual's preferences and areas of interest, they may be more willing to explore in some areas than in others. According to Osborne (1994)

The researcher tries to reach the prereflective level of experience.

Prereflective knowing precedes verbal articulation. Some knowing is extremely difficult to articulate while some articulated knowledge may be second hand rather than actually experienced. The aim is to elicit naïve descriptions of the actuality of experience as it is lived rather than to collect embellished and narratized accounts that are based upon what the participant believes is expected by the researcher. (p. 171)

Questions asked to facilitate the interview process were phrased in such a way that participants could freely talk about what was meaningful to their experience. Empathic listening and perception checking were used to be sure of understanding and capturing the essence of the experience. Probes were used as necessary to clarify or aid in the articulation of the experience

As the CIT portion of the interview began, I was aware of the importance of making the aim statement very clear to participants, in order to avoid the danger of collecting information that was not based on the study's aim. Woolsey, (1986) identifies 2 basic principles of CIT: 1) factual reports of behaviour are preferable to ratings and opinions based on general impressions. 2). Only those behaviours that make a significant contribution to the activity can be included. Morley (2003) notes that CIT can also be used for psychological events and for personal meanings as well. Within the CIT analysis, generalized postulations on leadership were not engaged. Equally irrelevant was material not related to the aim of the study. Instead what was important was drawing attention to the speaker's process (both in the present and at the time of the incident) and their activity related to an incident. Finally there was a need to consider and check the relevance of an incident to the objective of the interview. I aided the exploration about what helps and what hinders leadership in difficult situations using clarifying questions such as "How did you know that it was helpful?" and "what are the results of this incident?" This process continued until the co-researchers could not think of any new incidents

At the end of the interview, participants were given an invitation to recall more helpful and hindering incidents or other reflections on the interview to be conveyed in

follow-up phone calls or email, or during the second interview. Two participants emailed following the interview with some additional clarifying comments. These comments primarily supported the discussion contained within the interview. Aside from the first and second interview and these two follow-up comments, there were no other contacts with the participants. Throughout the year of completing the analysis I wrote to the participants a few times to keep them up to date on the progress of the analysis and to begin to plan for the follow-up interviews.

The first interviews lasted between one and a half and three and a half hours. I conducted all of the interviews consistent with Weiss' (1994) discussion of phenomenological interviewing and Flanagan's (1954) specifications for CIT interviewing. I was also prepared in the event that a participant should at any time become personally overwhelmed by the interviews. Resources included both personal resources and consultants with expertise in leadership concerns. No such event occurred. Six of the interviews occurred at the participant's place of work. One was a telephone interview, five interviews occurred in the participant's home, and two occurred in an interviewing space at the University of British Columbia.

3.5.2 Second Interviews

The second interviews were completed within a year of the first interviews. They were structured to unfold within one hour and had the purpose of gaining the participant's perspective of the findings of the analysis. A template of the structure of the second interview is provided in Appendix VII. This template was modified to include only those themes the

participant expressed. Further, the critical incidents provided by the participant were indicated. All of the fourteen participants were contacted for the second interviews. Eleven second interviews were conducted. Three second interviews occurred in a condensed form via email and telephone. One participant noted that she was grateful for this reduced format given her significant time constraints.

During the interviews, the presentation of the phenomenological themes was preceded by a review of the phenomenological portion of the interview with the participant. In the course of the phenomenological analysis of each of the interviews, a mind-map summary of each of the interviews was developed. Following the discussion of the mind maps, the confidentiality of the reporting of the analysis was reviewed and the themes of the phenomenological analysis were presented.

Regarding the CIT portion of the interview, the purpose of the second interview is “to give the participants a chance to confirm that the categories make sense, that their experiences are adequately represented by the categories, and to review the critical incidents they provided in the initial interview and either add, delete, or amend them as needed” (Butterfield, 2004, p.19).

During the second interview participants were asked if they had further incidents to add. Three participants added one critical incident, one deleted one critical incident. They were also asked for clarification regarding incidents that were somehow uncertain. In general it was found also that the participants wanted to reflect further on aspects of the phenomenological discussion. The participants observed that the phenomenological analysis and the CIT analysis were representative of their experience. The participants noted that the

experience was affirming and provided a venue to review their work. Several noted that the initial interview had aided in congealing some thinking and subsequent activity in their leadership.

3.6 Data Collection

The interviews were tape-recorded and later also digitally recorded. The recording was transcribed with the inclusion of nonverbal cues. Woolsey (1986) suggests working directly with audiotapes in order not to lose vocal nuances and additional nonverbals provided by co-researchers voices that can clarify the incidents. Efforts were made to link the transcription and the tape recording so that it was possible to return to the voice recording in the analysis process.

I also kept a field journal in which was recorded:

- the first contact
- impressions of the connection between the interviewer and the participant
- impressions and observations regarding the content of the interview
- reflective notes in transcribing and analyzing the data
- notes on reviewing the data with supervisors and independent coders
- decisions taken during the research process
- other related observations and impressions

3.6.1 Transcribing

The process of transcribing was reviewed in light of Lapadat and Lindsay's (1999) discussion of the subtleties to be considered. They note "The real issue that researchers face

in transcription is not how to represent everything exhaustively in the text ...but rather how to selectively reduce the data in a way that preserves the possibility of different analysis and interpretations (Bloom, 1993; Ehlich, 1993). Bloom describes this goal as ‘lean transcriptions’ that allow for ‘rich interpretations’ (pp. 152, 154).” The concern is that the transcript is prepared in such a way that the meanings within the interview are represented as plainly as possible. “There is not a one-to-one correspondence between conversational events that unfold during human interaction and what a researcher transcribes from an audio-or video-taped recording. Rather, the process of transcription is both interpretive and constructive.” (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999, p. 72).

These authors discuss the need for the transcription process to be articulated and for efforts to be made to ensure rigor. One facet of that rigor is to acknowledge that the transcript is only representational of the interview and represents in part the bias of the researcher. The authors conclude that transcription is a reasonable process despite the limitations. They state that “it is not just the transcription product—those verbatim words written down—that is important; it is also the process that is valuable. Analysis takes place and understandings are derived through the process of constructing a transcript by listening and re-listening (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999, p. 82).

A hired transcriptionist transcribed the tapes of the interviews. The transcriptions were then carefully compared to the original taped recordings and corrections and additions were made. The decision was taken to primarily use the written transcript and to review the tapes in tandem with the analysis process referring back to the recordings as appropriate.

3.7 The Analyses

As stated, two forms of analysis were employed to address the research questions. A phenomenological analysis was used to address the research question: *What is the experience of leadership in difficult situations?* A CIT analysis was used to address an applied extension of the first question: *What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations?* The work in these two forms of analysis will be outlined in the following discussion by first of all addressing overlapping elements of the process of analysis and then discussing each analysis. The phenomenological analysis will be discussed first followed by the CIT analysis.

Both analyses were inductive, unfolding with the progress of the research. The analyses occurred in tandem with the collection of data. This is consistent with the recommendation of Merriam (1998) “Without ongoing analysis, the data can be unfocused, repetitious, and overwhelming in the sheer volume of material that needs to be processed. Data that have been analysed while being collected are both parsimonious and illuminating” (p. 162).

The interviews were reviewed in detail in order to extract the participant’s meanings and the critical incidents. The analysis was repeated in cycles of 2-3 interviews, after which I reflected back upon the objectives of the study and developed some preliminary notions of how the interviews were addressing the focal questions: *What is the experience of leadership in difficult situations?* and *What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations?*

In both forms of analysis the process was recursive, with the analysis informing the interviews and the interviews informing the analysis. Further, in the process of doing the analysis the unique approach of each participant's contribution to the topic was apparent. In the unfolding interviews then, I made an effort to enter into the participant's mode of understanding, to aid in elucidating their understanding and experience of the topic and to highlight facets of the critical incidents as they discussed them and as they pertained to the aim of the study.

3.8 Phenomenological Analysis

An existential phenomenological analysis was chosen because of its capacity to represent lived experience. "The phenomenological approach is primarily an attempt to understand empirical matters from the perspective of those being studied" (Riemen, 1998). According to Krefting (1991) "The phenomenological approach asks what it is like to have a certain experience. The goal is to describe accurately the experience of the phenomenon under study, not to generalize to theories or models" (p. 215). The intention in this study was to represent the participants' experience of leadership through difficult situations as it was expressed in the interviews. According to Van Manen (1984) "A phenomenological description is always *one* [sic] interpretation, and no single interpretation of human experience will ever exhaust the possibility of yet another complementary, or even potentially richer, description" (p. 42). Phenomenology has the advantage of examining the 'ontic' that is, the real, as well as the lived experience, the ontological (Van Manen, 1984). Further, it is a suitable approach in exploratory research such as the present case (Giorgi,

1997). In the current study a descriptive approach to the phenomenology in the manner of Van Manen (1984) was used.

3.8.1 Bracketing

The starting place for a phenomenological study is to consider the perspective and meaning making of the researcher. It is assumed within phenomenological research that the presuppositions of the researcher will inform the development of the research design including the interview questions, the data collection, transcription, analysis and presentation of the data. By outlining my understanding, the experience of leadership through difficult situations, it was anticipated that the researcher would be made more transparent and thereby the report of the results would be set within a meaningful context of understanding and interpretation.

My parents were both leaders in a community church and as a result I grew up in a context where responsibility towards other people was a core manner and purpose of living. My father was a charismatic person who connected easily with other people and was an able public speaker. It was my mother who highlighted within this context the responsibility also to grow personally and this was a core focus of her leadership work. This background is likely a premise contributing to my interest in the present study.

As stated in chapter 1, my own sense of insufficiency in working with intact groups as a counsellor was what sparked this investigation into leadership through difficult situations. Counselling may become leadership as a result of the fact that participation as a counsellor entails the capacity to connect closely with the processes of the group and the

capacity to win the confidence that you can lead the group through a process. More often my experience is that you get an opportunity to make a contribution to an intact group such as a family.

From my academic background and interest in relationships and systems, the immersion in the leadership literature expressed a language and form of engagement with people and life more generally that I found meaningful. Being inspired previously by Jennings and Skovolt's (1999) discussion of master therapists as masters in relating with people fostered an immediate connection to the leadership literature as it is all about relating with people. Greenleaf's (1977) discussion of the quiet and hidden challenge of changing institutions from the inside and Wheatley's (1999a) discussion of the remarkable capacity of an accepting and positive attitude in chaos theory, her discussion of fractals and her challenge to hold faith in people I found compelling and something that I conceived would be an important learning regarding my work as a counsellor. Further, leadership held the potential of grounding me in a broader perspective of my work.

The sum of this reading on leadership fostered a naïve sense of curiosity about these remarkable people. I wanted to know more about how these people could go into these difficult situations apparently regardless of self-interests. They could galvanize people's interest and motivate a community investment in creating a worthwhile outcome. These people could put out their ideas and initiatives and bear the assaults of other people's challenging, commonly unsupportive, and sometimes antagonistic responses. Further, they could go back and do it again in another situation.

To summarize, the more I investigated the topic, the more elements I found that were relevant for my understanding both as a counsellor and for the work of counselling with people. What I observed was the discussion and practice of meaningful engagement in such things as: acceptance, challenge, change, resilience, integrity, excellence, relationship, purpose, meaning, people, endurance, understanding, there were so many things that I was curious about that I wanted to know more.

My engagement in the interviews was a sincere and compelling curiosity about the experience of leadership in difficult situations. I was struck by the ease and familiar manner of the conversations with these people whom I held in such esteem. My participants were insightful, articulate and capable of a remarkable depth of perception and sensitivity to the issues they discussed. The subtleties of the conversations were striking in my experience. It was clear to me also that the participants made a significant personal investment in the interviews. Further, I sensed that I was a valued participant in the conversations rather than the naïve researcher I felt myself to be.

I was struck by the remarkable array of stories that the participants told and the tremendously varied perspectives that were brought to the issue. There were many times when I felt entirely uncertain about my ability to bring the stories together into a narrative account. Still, I held an enormous sense of responsibility towards my participants to render the stories as accurately and as representatively as I could for I sensed their sincere curiosity in the outcomes of the research, and I wanted to return to them something of what I felt they had given to me. In the course of doing these interviews I felt that I witnessed ways of being and relating that I had not conceived of previously.

As I worked with the interviews, my interest and respect for my participants grew and the study similarly grew in interest for me. There are many ways in which this study has carried me as much as I have constructed it. The humor in the situation for me was that by the time it came to the second interviews I realized what a significant respect and appreciation I had developed for the participants, how much time I had spent with each of them and how well I felt that I understood their views, whereas they had known me in a real sense for two hours. I was deeply indebted to them for some significant learning. What I encountered in the second interviews was that whereas I had captured their experience well, there was more to tell in outlining the richness of their experiences. In my experience this has been a truly wonderful study to do.

3.8.2 Analysis

The process of the phenomenological analysis was focused on an intention to return “unto the things themselves” (Osborne, 1990). Typically, while a phenomenological analysis works with guidelines, it is also emergent through the process of the analysis. Osborne (1990) identifies that there is no orthodoxy in phenomenological data analysis. He recommends Colaizzi’s (1978) and Giorgi’s (1975) analytic procedures. The process of the analysis was circular in nature and involved repeated consultation with my supervisor.

To begin with the transcripts were reviewed with the tape-recorded interviews to make necessary corrections and to get a feel for the interview. A mind–map of the interview was generated to create a felt sense of the experience as the participant expressed it. The mind maps are not included in the presentation of the results, but they were considered an

important aspect of understanding the individual phenomenology of the experience of leadership in difficult situations. Further, they are consistent with the outline of phenomenological analysis provided by Weiss (1994). These mind maps were provided to the independent validator who assigned the phenomenological meaning units to their themes. She observed that they were an important facet of understanding the themes and the participant's meanings. Further, as stated, the mind maps were taken back to the participants in the second interviews as a means of recovering the interview and moving from there to the discussion of the phenomenological themes. In general, the participants noted that the mind maps captured their recollection of the interviews.

Using Atlas ti, the interviews were broken into meaning units. Initially the meaning units were at very detailed level. Gradually, as more interviews were analysed and the understanding of the topic grew, the meaning units expanded. The early interviews then were analysed several times over as the capacity to move among the interviews recognizing the meaning structures grew. Later interviews were reviewed progressively fewer times until the last interviews were analysed primarily to validate the structure of the themes.

While the approach to the phenomenology analysis followed the designated process (Colaizzi, 1978; Giorgi, 1975) for existential phenomenological research, the confidentiality of the research caused variations in the reporting of the results. Primarily this meant that the summaries for the participants were not included in the final report, nor were the stories of the experiences through leadership in difficult situations reported. This resulted in a loss of contextual information in the reporting of the results and it is a major variation in phenomenological analysis.

3.8.2.1 The four voices.

A focal point in the emerging analysis was the awareness of the different *voice* the participants expressed. I am using the word voice, to express the manner of expression of the participants.

The first voice was the most cognitive in nature, expressing conceptualizations of leadership. This voice was observed most commonly in response to the opening question regarding their experience of leadership. It was also observed as a particular expression of some participants who were more didactic in their delivery in general.

The second voice expressed the lived dimensions of the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The themes categorized within this voice seemed to reflect most fully the spontaneous expressions and movements within oneself. For example, in this voice the participants make affective expressions of the experience, or discuss the lived experience of the challenge of leadership through difficult situations.

The third and fourth voices addressed what the leaders do in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The third voice is characterized by a personal frame of reference or perspective. The *doing* in this voice is directed intra-personally. This voice struck me as the heart of engagement as a leader in a difficult situation. The themes expressed in this voice represent creativity, connection, meaning, purpose and so on.

The fourth voice is action oriented and emerged primarily from the middle portions of the stories of leadership through difficult situations. Once they had set the scene for their stories the participants described making something happen in language that almost seemed like recitation. This voice is expressed in the way #8 notes that leadership is “really very

simple isn't it?" In my view, this voice was perhaps the most succinct and colorless of the four voices being highly intentional, structured and goal oriented.

The themes emerged in tandem with the four voices through a process of continual assignment and re-assignment of the meaning units as new interviews were included in the analysis. I worked with paper copies of each meaning unit and assigned them to various emerging themes. As new themes emerged the meaning units would be re-assigned. At the point that the four voices became clear the themes unfolded easily within each voice. This occurred soon after the tenth interview.

At the point that ten of the fourteen interviews had been assigned into thematic units, I began to track for exhaustiveness of the themes. When 12 of the interviews were completed there were no new themes introduced.

3.8.3 Criteria for Trustworthiness of the Phenomenological Analysis

With the fourteen interviews completed, four were randomly drawn from a hat. These four were given to an independent validator experienced in both the topic of leadership and in phenomenological analysis for her assignment of the meaning units to the themes that I had developed. In addition she asked for the mind maps of each of the four. As stated, she observed these to be necessary to framing an understanding of the participant's meaning units. Through carefully reviewing the structure of the analysis an agreement of 85% of the assignment of the meaning units was achieved.

Krefting (1991) discusses four elements of trustworthiness in qualitative research which involve (a) Truth value, (b) Applicability, (c) Consistency, and (d) Neutrality. We will consider each of these in turn.

a). *Truth value*. The truth value of the study is the extent to which one establishes confidence in the findings for the participants and the context. The truth value of the present study can be ascertained in several ways. First of all, I used a field journal in which I recorded the schedule and logistics of the study, the decisions regarding methods and a diary of thoughts, feelings, ideas and hypotheses as well as questions, problems and frustrations. In the field journal I wrote my observations and thoughts following the interviews. I stored the mind maps here. I kept my notes from conversations with my supervisor and the people doing the validations for the study and I recorded decisions made through the process of the analysis.

A second facet of the truth value of the study was the careful preparation and process of the interviewing:

The reframing of questions, repetition of questions, or expansion of questions on different occasions are ways in which to increase credibility (May 1979).

Credibility is supported when interviews or observations are internally consistent, that is when there is a logical rationale about the same topic in the same interview or observation. (Krefting, 1991, p. 220)

A third measure of trustworthiness is that there are no unexplained inconsistencies between the data and the interpretations. Accounting for rival explanations and deviant cases is important. Certainly there is a range of meanings regarding the experiences of leadership

through difficult situations that were expressed. The thematic structure however is sufficiently coherent and yet flexible to account for the variations.

The triangulation of data is a further measure of trustworthiness. The range of representation of leadership among the participants, combined with the diversity of experiences of each participant provides an important triangulation of information within the themes. Further, it may be considered that the overlapping findings in the CIT analysis serve in some way to triangulate the findings in the phenomenological analysis.

Time and reflexivity can also indicate the trustworthiness of the study. The first interviews were deeply engaged by the participants as previously indicated. More than one participant expressed a feeling of being spent at the end of the interview. It was apparent that they had given themselves fully in participating in the interview and that at the end of the interview there was not much more that could be given. Two of the interviews were stopped on account of running out of time and had to be completed in a second sitting of the interview. In each of these cases the interviews in total ran over three hours. There was no shortage of time spent in gathering the information of the interviews. In terms of reflexivity the authenticity and engagement of the participants and the interview process was transparent. Further, I noted in the second interview their quick recovery of what had been discussed as much as a year previously suggesting the reflexivity of the first interview.

Finally, the second interviews form an important aspect of the validation of the phenomenological analysis. The participants noted that the thematic profile fit with their articulation of their experience in the interview.

b). *Applicability or transferability*. Transferability and applicability refer to the application of the study to other contexts and settings. Krefting (1991) argues that this can be determined based on the researcher's sense of whether what has been observed seems typical or atypical in the lives of the informants. I conceive that what I observed was typical in the lives of the participants.

c). *Consistency or dependability*. Dependability refers to whether the findings would be consistent with the same participants or in a similar context. The use of an external validator to replicate the assignment of the meanings supports the dependability of the study.

d). *Neutrality or confirmability*. These are established through the use of an auditing system whereby the natural history or progression of the project is tracked to understand how and why decisions are made. Working through the process of analysis with a supervisor and with a field journal aids this process as does the review of the document by the examining committee.

3.9 Critical Incident Technique-CIT

According to Flannagan (1954) the categories emerging from CIT can be used for practical programs, test building, or for the development of theory. These possibilities suggest a relevant contribution of the current study's employment of the critical incident categories for the difficulties of leadership in the workplace.

CIT is an investigative research tool that has been widely used. Butterfield et al., (2004) have provided a review of the broad use and the application of the technique. Considering the intersection in the present study of counselling psychology and leadership the broad use of CIT can suggest its application both to counselling psychology and to the

study of leadership in other disciplines such as organizational development. These authors summarize the array of disciplines that have employed CIT:

Evidence of its ubiquitous presence lies in the fact that it has been more frequently cited by industrial and organizational psychologists than any other article over the past 40 years (Anderson and Wilson, 1997). However its influence ranges far beyond its industrial and organizational psychology roots. It has been utilized across a diverse number of disciplines, including communications (Query and Wright, 2003; Stano, 1983), nursing (Dachelet et al., 1981; Kemppainen et al., 1998), job analysis (Kanyangale and MacLachlan, 1995; Stitt-Gohdes et al., 2000), counselling (Dix and Savickas, 1995; McCormick, 1997), education and teaching (LeMare and Sohbat, 2002; Oaklief, 1976); Parker, 1995; Tirri and Koro-Ljungberg, 2002), medicine (Humphrey and Nazarath, 2001; McNabb et al., 1986), marketing (Derbaix and Vanhamme, 2003; Keaveney, 1995), organizational learning (Ellinger and Bostrom, 2002; Skiba, 2000), performance appraisal (Evans, 1994; Schwab et al., 1975), psychology (Cerna, 2000; Pope and Vetter, 1992), and social work (Dworkin; Mills and Vine, 1990), to name but some of the fields in which it has been applied. (p. 475-476)

CIT (Flanagan, 1954) is designed to generate descriptive and qualitative data regarding an experience that is still mostly uncharted in the literature.

The technique consists of a set of simple interview procedures for collecting information from people about their direct observations of their own or others'

behaviour. The emphasis is on things that have been directly observed or experienced which significantly affect outcome”. (Woolsey, 1986, p. 243)

While the body of literature on leadership is enormous, no studies were observed to address what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. This is a unique contribution of the current study to the literature on leadership.

Flanagan (1954) describes five steps in the process of a CIT study: (1) determining the aim of the activity to be studied, (2) setting plans and criteria for the information to be observed, (3) collecting data, (4) analyzing the themes or categories induced from the data, and (5), reporting the findings. The first three steps have been addressed in the foregoing discussion. The discussion of attention to employment of CIT during the interviewing also was discussed earlier. The process of analysis will be outlined in the following section. The report of the findings is found in chapter four.

3.9.1 Critical Incident Analysis-CIT

The beginning point of the analysis is the clarification of the incidents. This begins in the interview process by clarifying the aim of the study and aiding the clear articulation of the incidents. Flannagan discusses the need for attention to the parameters of an incident. “By an incident is meant any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act”(p. 327). Woolsey (1986) suggests that the incidents should be primarily behavioral as opposed to interpretive. Butterfield et al. (2004), however, highlight that CIT has evolved beyond purely behavioral observations and may include ideas, reflections, values and so on. In a review of

research using CIT they note the integration of issues of context, meaning, elements of personal importance or significance in relation to the incidents. Further there is integration of the participant's thoughts and feelings related to their behaviors. "This builds on the practice of focusing on what a person did, why he/she did it, the outcome, and the most satisfying aspect" (p. 24). At the same time however, the incidents also need to be specifically linked to the purpose of the study. Flanagan (1954) observes that depending on the complexity of the data, anywhere from 100 to 2000 incidents are required. The current study generated 134 incidents.

The following discussion is broken into three parts corresponding with the process of the analysis. The first section will discuss the extraction of the incidents, the categorization of the incidents follows, and finally, the validation of the categories.

3.9.2 Extraction of the Incidents

The interviews were tape-recorded, transcribed, and number-coded. Before the incidents were extracted, each transcript was carefully studied in order to understand the full meaning of the statements. Incidents to be included were evaluated with respect to their suitability to the aim of the research as well as more qualitative features such as their factual nature and whether they have been personally experienced or more generally inferred. As stated, a clear delineation was made between the phenomenological analysis and the CIT analysis defined by the discussion concerning the CIT questions: "What has helped you in being a leader with the challenges you've encountered" and "What's hindered you in being a leader?"

Regarding the quality of the incidents, retrospective data is permissible, but more recent and direct observations are preferred (Woolsey, 1986). “The criterion for accuracy of reporting is the quality of the incidents themselves. If the details are full and precise, the information can be taken as accurate, whereas if the reports are vague some of the data may be incorrect” (Flanagan, 1954 as discussed in Woolsey, 1986). The process of extraction of the incidents was done using Atlas ti and followed the guidelines outlined by Butterfield (2002b). A focal articulation of the incident was highlighted and then supporting evidence in terms of the importance of the incident and the effects or results of the incident were highlighted separately. The expressions of importance and the results were linked to the focal expression forming a comprehensive articulation of each incident. In cases where the incident seemed unclear, or where supporting information was lacking, a memo was created which was followed-up with the participant during the second interview.

The process of extraction of the incidents occurred in tandem with the identification of the meaning units in the phenomenological analysis. This was a circular process of going back and forth between the two methodologies using three interviews at a time.

The phenomenological portion of the interview was an informative background in the participant’s generation of the incidents. For example, against a background of talking about what leadership is and her experiences of difficult situations (phenomenological portions of the interview), Participant #17 highlighted that what helps in the experience of leadership through difficult situations is being conceived to be a truly seasoned individual. This is an incident that holds a great deal of complexity of meaning and it draws together in a short phrase a good deal of the content of the entire interview. This incident satisfied the criteria

for accuracy as an incident within the CIT portion of the interview, the meanings inherent in it however can be traced widely throughout the interview.

3.9.3 Categorizing the Incidents

Categorizing the incidents consists of inductively studying the thematic nature of the incidents with the aim of providing a valid list of categories regarding what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership in difficult situations. The categories were tentatively formed by sorting the incidents into clusters that appeared to be similar, and labeling them with descriptive titles. Consistent with the suggestions of Easton (1986) and Proulx (1991) a process of redefinition of categories, and reclassification of incidents occurred until all of the incidents were allocated. Woolsey (1986) notes that “Anyone planning to do a CIT study should be prepared for the fact that analyzing the data is the most difficult and frustrating part of the method. This phase consists of an analysis of thematic content, arrived at by inductive reasoning. It is necessarily subjective, although some steps can be taken to ascertain whether similar conclusions would be reached by other judges” (p. 248). Similarly, Flanagan (1954) states that this process is more “subjective than objective”, and that it requires “insight, experience and judgement” on the researcher’s part (p. 344). Creating the categories in tandem with generating the phenomenological themes was slow and challenging as expected, but as my understanding of the research domain grew, the common ground was informative in delineating the phenomenological themes on the one hand and the CIT categories on the other.

An important element in developing the categories is the level of generality (Woolsey, 1986). According to Woolsey (1986) setting the frame of reference is done based on the intended use of the results. To this end I tried to form categories using the research question as a focus: what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The objective is that the categories should provide a comprehensive list that is, a conceptual map of what hinders or facilitates the experience of leadership in difficult situations. Flanagan (1954) argues that such a map of categories can be used for practical programs, test building, or for the development of theory.

Woolsey's (1986) discussion of the process of developing the categories was instructive. In her study of same sex friendships, she discusses how she found the relationship to which the incident referred was an aid to categorization, in another study she found that she could not categorize specific incidents, instead she categorized descriptions of relationships. She notes that other researchers have used theory as the premise of categorization and yet others who have used emotional shifts as the premise for categorization. To enrich the distinctiveness and frame of reference for the categories, Woolsey (1986) advocates a return to the current literature which has been instructive in the current study.

Some incidents fit more readily into the categories than others. One way of addressing categorization of less clear incidents (Alfonso, 1997) is to categorize the clear ones first and use them as prototypes for less clear categories. This was the approach taken in the current analysis. These less clear incidents were marked using memos and checked with the respective participants during the second interview. Some incidents were appropriate to

several categories. To this Novotny's (1993) suggestion was used, categorizing borderline incidents "on the basis to which extent they resembled the prototype of a particular category more than the other" (p. 54).

3.9.4 Validation Procedures

Butterfield et al. (2004) have articulated 9 steps in the validation of a CIT study many of which have already been discussed.

1. Extracting the critical incidents using independent coders;

Butterfield et al (2004) indicate that it is customary for 25% of the incidents to be extracted by a person familiar with CIT yet independent of the study. The purpose they point out, is to calculate the level of agreement between the researcher and the independent coder. "The higher the concordance rate, the more credible the claim that the incidents cited are critical to the aim of the activity" (p.19).

An independent coder was used for extraction of the incidents. 4 interviews representing greater than 25% of the 14 interviews were randomly drawn and given to an independent coder. She extracted the incidents from the designated portion of the interview. The initial rate of agreement was 85%. After checking with each other regarding the variations agreement was 100%.

2. Cross-checking by participants;

The incidents were validated by the participants in the second interviews. All fourteen of the participants were reached for the second interviews. Three of the second interviews were conducted using email and telephone conversations. The remainder were conducted in

the homes and workplaces of the participants. The participants observed that the critical incidents expressed their experiences well. In the second interviews three new incidents were added and one was deleted.

3. Having independent judges place incidents into categories;

25% of the 134 incidents were selected using a random table (Glenberg, 1988) and given to an independent coder. The independent coder placed the incidents into categories. There was 85% agreement across the 9 categories.

4. Tracking the point at which exhaustiveness is reached;

At the point that 10 interviews were completed, I began reviewing the categories to track for the point at which no new categories emerged. Once 12 interviews were completed, no new categories emerged indicating that the point of exhaustiveness of the categories had been reached.

5. Eliciting expert opinions;

The results of the CIT analysis and the charts of the phenomenological analysis were provided to two experts in the field of leadership for their feedback. In both cases, the experts function as leaders, mentors and consultants to leaders. While both experts noted that the study was “good” their responses to the findings were notably different from each other. The first focused on the expressions of the participants and noted their merit in representation. He was interested in the critical incident category: Experienced, Principled, Self aware, take one’s time. He noted that these seemed to express the “virtues” of “humility, forbearance and patience”. He also suggested that the discipline expressed in these seems to capture a manner of “rationality” which goes against the cultural manner of “letting it all hang out”.

The second expert said that in his experience the participants represent a rarefied group as expressed in the book *Good to Great* (Collins, 2001) which describes comparable leaders from the small percentage of Fortune 500 companies in the US that have made a sustained transition from being a good company to being a great company. He said that most of the leaders of today have an A-type personality and that while our culture has had enough of them, this is the way it is.

He also noted a hesitance in the quotations of the participants which he attributes to the fact that leaders do not often have occasion to reflect on what their work is about.

He observed that the comment that leadership is about facilitating success is a brilliant conception. Similarly, he found the polarity in the *Full Engagement* CIT category of holding on the one hand *learning* and the other *having a capacity to get away from the work* an excellent rendering of what leadership is about. In his experience, leadership is about having enough distance from the work that you can critique it.

In his experience leaders are tough, focused individuals and the initiative towards sharing, understanding and using people effectively is extremely uncommon however laudable. He said my participants seem contemplative, considerate and holistic as opposed to the "Damn the torpedoes" approach to leadership that he is familiar with.

6. Calculating participation rates (Butterfield et al., 2004).

Butterfield et al., (2004) specify that to be considered valid, the critical incident categories require a minimum of 25% of the participants. The participation rates for the categories are tabled in Chapter 4. All of the categories exceed the 25% participation rate ranging from 36% to 86% participation.

7. Checking theoretical agreement by stating the study's underlying assumptions and by comparing the emerging categories to the relevant scholarly literature;

This assumptions underlying the current study have been addressed in this and the previous two chapters. Chapter one outlines the assumptions developed through the background to the study, the rationale for the study emerging from the literature review and the relevance of the methodologies discussed in the present chapter. Chapter five links the categories to the existing literature. By this means this validation criterion has been addressed.

8. Audio- or video-taping interviews to ensure participants' stories are accurately captured;

As discussed, all of the interviews were audiotaped and transcribed.

9. Checking interview fidelity by getting an expert in the CIT method to listen to a sample of interview tapes.

Four of the interviews were provided to an expert in CIT for feedback regarding fidelity to the protocol for CIT interviewing. The expert was given one of every 3-4 interviews so that the fidelity to the interviewing process was monitored across the period of time during which the interviewing was occurring. She noted that I effectively employed a CIT interviewing protocol. She noted that I did not lead the participants and that I checked back appropriately regarding points of clarification. She commented that my interviewing skills were excellent.

According to Butterfield et al. (2004), these data analysis checks support the credibility claims for the results of the CIT portion of the research.

3.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have reviewed the rationale for the study design and the suitability of the two forms of analysis: Phenomenology and CIT. The effects of confidentiality in the reporting of the results of the phenomenology were discussed. The steps of the methodology were presented beginning with the recruitment of the participants, the development of the interview and the interviewing procedures, the process of data collection and transcription, finally the analyses were outlined including steps taken to ensure the validity of the study.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

4.1 Chapter Overview

The following discussion summarizes the findings from the analysis of the 14 interviews on the topic of the experience of leadership in difficult situations: what helps and hinders. The two research questions have been addressed using two research designs. The first was a phenomenological examination addressing what is the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The second was a CIT analysis that addressed the research question: what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations.

The report of the phenomenological analysis is given as a comprehensive narrative of the 14 interviews. The four voices of the phenomenological analysis, mentioned in Chapter 3, guided the development of the phenomenological themes. The voices emerged through the phenomenological analysis as four manners of expression of the participants in elucidating the experience of leadership in difficult situations. The voices are divided into two parts. The first two; descriptions of leadership and the lived experience, capture separate dimensions of the underpinnings of the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The remaining two voices outline the phenomenological rendering of what makes leadership effective in difficult situations. These two voices are called: Frames of Reference: Perspective and What you do. The chapter concludes with a report of the CIT analysis which is presented according to the suggestions of Woolsey (1986). Each of the three sections begins with a table summarizing the content of the section. Following is a table summarizing the themes of the

experience of leadership, which includes the voices of the descriptions of leadership and the lived experience of leadership through difficult situations.

Table 4.1 Underpinnings of the Experience of Leadership through Difficult Situations

Voices	Themes	Details
Descriptions of Leadership	Leadership as facilitation	Facilitate people's becoming involved
		Motivating by being naturally attractive
		Responsible to people
		Know what makes people tick
		Balance presence and objectivity
		Draw People in to working
		Working collaboratively towards worthwhile outcomes
	Leadership as the willingness to get things done	Willingness, not role
		When Will is lacking
		When Will is dominant
		Using a plan
	Leadership as Organic	Enacting the 'right' thing
	Not Leadership	Situational Emergence
		Tyrannical Leadership
		Command and Control Leadership
		Non Leadership
		Command and Control Leadership as non-leadership
Ego		
Elevating yourself as Leader		
Manipulating information		
Heritage of Leadership within an organization		
Lived Experience of Leadership through Difficult situations	Relating	Leading
		Connecting with People has to do with connecting to oneself
		Influences from those surrounding the leadership
		Within, not apart from the system
	Learning	
	Affect	
	Hard work	
	It's Personal	
	Pushing it through	
	Limitations	

4.2 Descriptions of Leadership.

Thirteen of the fourteen participants readily pursued a discussion outlining what leadership is. Participant # 12 addressed the question of what her experience of leadership is summing it up briefly as hard work. Leadership is something that she is both able to do and something that she is reluctant to initiate. For the remaining participants, in some cases it was as if they were teaching me about leadership, in other cases it was more a process of storytelling from an array of their lived experiences and knowledge. The meanings that were elicited here were somehow characterized by the phrase “Leadership is...”. While two of the participants referred to the literature, most did not in their definitions of leadership. One of these two provided a guiding definition from the literature, and then proceeded to tell me what he thought was a better definition of leadership from his own conceptualization of it. In general the meaning units were taken from the beginning portion of the interview when the participant was addressing the question of “what is your experience of leadership” by which was meant both what have you done? and what do you make of it? As discussed in Chapter 3, the intention of this portion of the interview was to ascertain how the participants understand leadership in general, as a means of finding a shared premise for looking at the question of What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations.

We begin with a quotation that in many ways elucidates features of the participants definitions of leadership. What the participant describes here are the elements of facilitation, action and in some ways, emergence and ‘being’ that are captured in this voice.

I understand effectiveness to be one where you are alive to the changing reality around you, the changing, in my work-political context, institutional context, you know often legislative context, ... So, being alive to the changing broader context, broader factors. Being alive also ...with, at the end of the day it's the people in the room that you're working with, and they are either going to want to change or not. And so you have to be alive very much to the interpersonal dynamics among the group. Those are two really key factors of effectiveness.

Preparation is a huge aspect as well and scoping the problems, scoping the issues ...having the opportunity to understand the different interests around the table, their perspective.

At the end of the day..., I think it's...having a strong sense of yourself too, on what it is you are trying to achieve...so what is the vision that you are trying to get people to buy into. ... I do think that if you don't have your own compass the work is very hard because you can go all over the map in an instant (participant #7, line 395-417).

4.2.1 Leadership as Facilitation.

Participants: #1, #7, #8, #11, #17 #18, #19, #25, #31, #48, #53, #57, #58, Total: 13/14

The leader in a difficult situation has a kind of 'feel' for people combined with the understanding that people want to contribute and to be appreciated.

Facilitate people's becoming involved. Leadership is about facilitating people to become involved in what needs to be done. Participant #17 describes how when you have a leadership direction in a difficult situation

Everything you think is not, automatically imprinted within other people.

They have their own ideas, and they have their own sensitivities and their own fears and lots of times they have their own secrets (line 1509-1513).

Adjectives used to describe the task are: mentor, facilitator, educator, enabler, role model, example, support.

Motivating by being naturally attractive. The work of facilitation begins with the person of the leader. Some of the participants see themselves as natural leaders with regards to winning other people's attention and support, other participants state that they do not have this natural ability but are able to learn the work. Participant #48 conceives of herself as one of the latter and she describes the former

Some people just are a kind of people that others want to be around, in a positive way. I mean...there are people who I think they're content in their own skins, I think they...know pretty well who they are, they know their strengths and their weaknesses and they're not...frightened people. I think they're genuine, generally happy, and they make other people happy, and therefore other people like to be around them and they like to do things with them and so...they're motivators" (line 250-258).

Responsible to people. Regarding leadership as facilitation, Participant #25 describes leadership first and foremost as having a responsibility to people.

You have a responsibility to other people and other people's lives and futures and that people are relying on you for your judgment, your wisdom, your effort that their future and their well-being is placed in your hands in some ways (line 45-48).

Know what makes people tick. From a different perspective, #19 identifies that a leader should be able to identify "what makes people tick" (line 159). A question the leader in a difficult situation may ask is "what's going to make a person feel good about this?" The leader's work is to act as a positive support and a resource, not adding fuel to a difficult situation. The leader is able to bring people along and enable diversity to be heard. The leader in a difficult situation is able to provide people with a sense of meaning, they feel a part of the process and they feel joined to each other in some way. People feel motivated because they feel they're making a difference, their input is valued and they have some influence on the process. This is not about consensus, but it is about the inclusion of all members and availability to the questions and concerns of group members.

Balance presence and objectivity. In engaging people in a facilitative way the leader balances presence and objectivity. Participant #1 describes it in this way: The leader needs to have

an awareness of all sides and an ability to listen, and ability to be sort of fairly objective and dispassionate on the one hand, as you ... hear different perspectives from various sides of things, but at the same time you also need

to be...sympathetic and sensitive to people's frustrations or problems or issues. So...it's a strange sort of a balancing there of sort of very present and yet at the same time somehow objective (line 77-83).

Draw people in to working. The facilitation process is not simply about making people feel good. It's about being able to draw them into a process of working. Participant #31 provides an illustration of how it evolves:

It all rested on their co-operation and my ability to demonstrate to them... or ... to engage them enough at the beginning ... it wasn't me leading by the time it got going, I was...touching each piece of it, but each person was responsible for running a portion of it...So the delegation or the handing off, it was very important and what again facilitated it was a more real encounter, a real discussion, interchange (line 854-866).

Participant #58 takes this further identifying that the objective in leadership is to enable other people to be leaders.

Enable people to stretch their limits. Leadership in a difficult situation is about being able to help people stretch beyond their customary limits. Participant #31 highlights this in his discussion of a mentor who was able to challenge him into trying new things at an important period in his life. Or another mentor: "he just had this very calm way of enforcing the rules that used the people's own logic against them" (#31, line 318-320). These influences have helped to clarify the work of leadership as #31 sees it. "That also told me an important aspect of being a leader which is, to me it's helping people find strength in themselves that they don't necessarily recognize yet ... that was an important defining piece

for me” (#31, line 980-984). In this process #1 describes that a trust for the leader is built because people feel that they are heard. When they feel that they have been heard they can also be enabled to listen to each other.

Working collaboratively towards worthwhile outcomes. The desirable outcome of the facilitation process is collaborative work according to #7 in which as #31 points out, people see themselves working effectively in the process because they have contributed to creating the process. Change, improvement and resolution of the difficult situation becomes possible. The outcome of the facilitation, that is, the leadership process, is that something greater is achieved than simply the sum of the parts, the initiative is able to move forward in an effective way. Participant #7 and #58 identify the aim as an integration of social well-being, economic prosperity and environmental health, in #58’s words “prosperity, people and planet” (#58, line 93). Participant #58 goes further, suggesting that the outcome of an effective leadership process should be that the leader is able to walk away from the situation and there is no perceivable impact from that departure “that’s a true sign of leadership that you created that community, that they can survive when you’re gone. In fact, they shouldn’t even know you’re gone” (line 842).

4.2.2 Leadership is a Willingness to Get Something Done

Participant #1, #7, #8, #11, #17, #18, #19, #31, #48, #53, #57, Total: 11/14

The second theme in the descriptions of leadership indicates that leadership is about the intention to make something happen, that is, to do something. For Participant # 57, the definition of an effective leader is to want to do something. “I want to like get right into it,

run it, make something happen and have that satisfaction...of doing it. And so the difference is that, that effective leaders can ...mobilize a group of individuals to actually go out and do something” (line 1212-1218).

I begin this section with another quote from Participant #17 who describes what the work of leadership is. While facilitation is apparent, the task focus is clear.

There isn't a void between a new idea or a new way of looking at things and [the idea or perspective] coming into its own. There's a tremendous amount of leadership in between: getting a buy in, getting the understanding and getting [the right information out there] (line 885-892).

There are several facets to consider regarding the intention to get something done. In the first place, you have to be willing to step up and take on the responsibility to do something. Secondly, you have to be willing to act upon your sense of the right thing to do.

Willingness, not role. Leadership is the willingness to take something on or to move something forward, to take risks. It's a willingness to be responsible for mobilizing people, responsible for the outcome of the leadership task and responsible for the work of those people working for you. It's about making sure that the right processes are put in place to make something worthwhile happen. It is relevant in leadership to be excited about the potential outcome of your work. At the same time, leadership is not dependent on having the role and having a role does not necessarily indicate leadership. The participants also indicate that the lack of a designation of role makes it more difficult to discern that a given approach is leadership.

When will is lacking. Participant #8 among other participants sees that not enough people are willing to be leaders. In her view, this is due to a tendency to underestimate their ability, combined with an unwarranted concern that you will not be supported in your efforts.

If you don't mind stepping up and saying "Yes, I'll do it,...yes I'll Chair the committee, or yes I'll take that project on" I always feel that other people will work with you. You don't really have to do things alone. And that really, taking the lead sometimes isn't as difficult as people think it's going to be (#8, line, 17-21).

She sees this as an issue especially amongst women. She sees that leadership doesn't necessarily need a whole lot of people. What it requires in her view which is supported by other participants, is three people who are willing and dedicated to take on the leadership of something. Of leadership she says "I think in leadership that there's a lot of elements to it, but it's just like everything else, you know, it's not that complicated is it really" (#8, line 270-272). She sees that the job is largely about organization.

When will is dominant. Participant #57 points out that leaders need to have a passion. She describes one leader she knows of as being perceived as crazy and very hard driving with his employees. These effects she calls "the worst manifestations of his genius". The drive to do something can be dominant and beyond the cognitive understanding of the people around the leadership. As a result some leaders aren't easy people from whom to take leadership.

Participant #11 contrasts different leadership styles:

I suppose there are some leaders, like the founders of companies, who have their own particular passion and they might ... not necessarily be the nicest

people to be around in some cases, because they will disregard other people's suggestions of what they should do, and they're just driven.

And then there are others who may have an idea, or their style of leadership is actually just to grasp the ideas and the energy of people around them. Because you see leaders of that type as well. They're not necessarily the ones with all the ideas, but they're very good consensus builders, and they can take the ideas and they can maybe sell them, or, or talk about them (#11, line 88-106).

On the other hand, working collaboratively may be the task focus of the leadership, as for Participant #7:

The non-profit organization has a vision for ...a more collaborative and...shared vision for the future of how [the industry] could be...The work that I was doing and leading...and responsible for had to do with ...bringing people together to try to form a vision to form that more collaborative process (#7, line 123-136).

Using a plan. So how do you get people to buy into your leadership direction? Many of the participants say that you "go through the process" which they take as a point of common understanding. Participant #31 describes it as being able to work at the level of the big picture. Keeping people at all levels informed. Participant #17 says that you do it with a clear plan. To begin with;

Figure out...what do I want to do, and what needs to be done. What void is there or what opportunity is there on both sides of the spectrum, and how am I going to get the hearts and minds of others involved? ... There will probably

be an expenditure, inevitably an expenditure of resources. So something has to be left behind quite often, or dropped, or not done in order to take on something that is new....There's not an infinite amount of resources anywhere. And so once you get to there then...you have to bring along a significant proportion of people that will be affected by the decision (line 148-165).

Once you've generated a plan you follow it:

The plan will have sections and you...have to know how to get from the beginning to the end...you don't wing it...so you stay on that plan and you learn along the way, and you can make adjustments...You can't be rigid...that's also leadership...to be able to not exactly change courses, but change ...something when it's not working. (line 252-283).

Enacting the right thing. A motivating premise of leadership is acting upon a sense of the right thing to do. The nature of this sense is discussed more fully in the phenomenological voice of the Frame of Reference: Perspective, here I focus on the participant's representation of it as a description of what leadership is. In leadership, doing the right thing creates risk and potential alienation at least in the short term. This is a feature of introducing change. The task of opposing the status quo demands significant persistence in the face of a powerful pressure to conform. The participants respond to these elements with the question "But why am I here if I'm not going to do what I think is right?" (#57, line 109). What does this look like? Two illustrations serve to elucidate the process. The first is a political example that is perhaps more experiential in nature:

I can remember asking [political leader] once, ...“How can you lead all these people...just being the [community leader] when there’s all these special interest groups who are always out, you know marching and telling you you’re just doing stupid things”. And he said, “Well you know when you’re doing the right things, then that’s the context in which you deal with it” And I thought “that’s very interesting, because as I look back, whether it’s a social situation, you know maybe somebody’s had an accident, or a family needs help, or what-have-you, you just have a sense of what you think needs to be done and then you just start doing it, and you obviously gather other people to do it. Sometimes you just will do things by yourself, but I suppose that leadership by its definition...comprises situations where you bring other people along to do things (#11 line 22-35).

The second illustration is a more cognitive elucidation of the process of doing the right thing:

Leadership... it’s being able to have a kind of critical relationship with what’s going on, as opposed to...sort of like what is just going to make this happen, ok. And it has to do with a lot, with engagement with a lot of different people...because I think without the engagement you don’t know, you’ve no idea (#57, line 382-407).

4.2.3 Leadership as Organic

Participants #1, #17, #18, #19, #25, #48, #57 Total: 7/14

Another theme that emerged from the descriptions of leadership is that leadership is organic. It is a process and/or a role that emerges in response to a situation. Participant #18 says that leadership emerges in response to given situations. She describes how when a situation emerges and a clear path does not become apparent, a leader emerges from within the group. When the situation has passed, the leadership likewise passes. She says; “Some people aspire to leadership, but I don’t know that there’s a thing you can get to, it kind of comes to you” (#18, line 69-71). As an example she notes Giuliani’s rise to effective leadership in New York following the 9/11 crisis followed after the fact by a submergence as a prominent leader. Of note is the observation that the role is pre-existing, but the leadership emerges and later dissipates.

In another expression of situational emergence, #57 speaks of the outdated tendency in the public realm to frame a political issue as “Conservative” or “Liberal”. The former presumption that a leadership direction was a given is subsumed by a contemporary practice of developing understanding or leadership in response to what’s needed. Speaking more broadly, several of the participants note today’s emphasis on team leadership and shared knowledge in terms that may be considered organic or situationally emergent.

4.2.4 Not Leadership

Participants: #1, #7, #8, #48, #53, #57, #58 Total: 7/14

This theme within the descriptions of leadership includes those conceptualizations of leadership that represent that which is not leadership according to the definitional descriptions of the participants.

Tyrannical leadership. Several of the participants point to tyrannical leaders such as Hitler, Idi Amin or Sadam Hussein. Participant #48 observes that they highlight the potential negativity of the term *leader* making it in her experience, a difficult term with which to identify.

Command and Control Leadership. Short of tyrannical leadership is the traditional Command and Control form of leadership which a number of the participants encounter and find limited (#48, #57, #11). Participant #48 says that if you feel that if you have an understanding of how something should be done, “it’s not necessarily the way to bring other people into that way of thinking, is to be dogmatic or too determined or whatever” (line 54-56). Similarly, Participant #7 points to the tendency for leaders to be “control freaks”. Command and Control leadership is prone to say “I’m very open to new ideas provided they’re my ideas” (#58, line 76). Participant #57 highlights that a significant limitation of a Command and Control approach is not listening, not communicating and inflexibility. She describes the leadership as overly circumscribed “we’re going to work within this box” (line 221).

The Steering Committee wasn’t capable because the Co-Chairs showed no leadership. They weren’t capable of taking that support and taking their idea

and saying, “Okay, how do we figure out what you want to do. We know what we want to do, what’s the way to mesh them in a way that’s going to work for you and work for us and work for everybody?” It was “This is what we’re going to do. Write the cheque.” And...what was fascinating about it is you knew it was a lack of leadership...because leadership says “How do you make this work? How do we get where we’re going? Where we all know where we want to go, how do we do it? And it’s being flexible, right. It means “how do you find the best way to do it” (#57 line 160-185).

Participant #57 and #58 discuss that the command and control form of leadership as outdated because of the increased competition today. Participant #57 highlights that businesses can no longer function as monopolies and that people have access to a wide array of information by which means they can make competitive choices:

It’s not that you were never good, but you didn’t really have to be competitive, you didn’t have the same competitors as exist today. So, it’s the technology that, I think changes things... You could be the CEO sitting in the corner office, really didn’t work very hard and, because things didn’t change very quickly, things could go on and on and on and that’s just the way it was. Everything’s cycled so fast now that that world has gone. I think people are more empowered because of technology and because of information and because of education and probably because women have come into the workforce and all of those things, and immigration. And so I think that old model of hierarchy, of an old boy’s or even an old girl’s club just doesn’t

work. I think ...people have to be really highly motivated everywhere to make things happen. And I think it's more partnerships now..., you can't do things yourself, or less and less can you do things yourself (Line 675-710).

Non-leadership. A meaningful negative model of leadership is non-leadership whereby no leadership direction is provided. Participant #53 describes non-leadership giving an example of a leader who conscientiously avoids encountering his staff of several thousand people. He fires executives whom he's never met, over the phone. Participant #8 talks about the destructive effects of non-leadership:

So they sort of inherited these women and that made it almost worse because here they were, and they had ranks and so forth. So they get in, they get amalgamated with this group who just decided they were going to get rid of them. They harassed them, they did all these terrible things, and somebody let them get away with it. But obviously there wasn't the leadership there that there should have been (line 1220-1228).

Command and Control leadership as Non-leadership. Participant #57 poses the possibility that a command and control approach to leadership is non-leadership. She talks of a national election of a minority government which she sees emerged from established support rather than people who are motivated to support true leadership.

Even the people who were involved were people who weren't there of their own free will, they were mostly people who were either true believers, or consultants or people who had a vested interest in the [political party]

winning. And when you see that happen you know it's over, you can't win because... there's no leadership (line 940-951).

Ego. Ego is a dimension of some forms of leadership that several of the participants refer to (#12, # 57, #11) as hampering a leadership process. Participant #8 makes some reflective comments on the limitations of an ego-based approach to leadership:

People think that ... they've got their spot and then they get their ego all wrapped up in this little position they've got when it's really ... it's not necessary you know... Then you always have to win, and we don't always win, I mean we don't. We give and take.

But if you get your ego all wrapped up in it then I think thatyou don't function as well, because you're thinking of you, and I don't think you can do that when you're working on committees and working with other people. You ... don't want to be downgraded or anything but ...I think the people that are sometimes difficult to work with, are people that have too big an ego and the pecking order means too much to them. Because in the scheme of things....they're too focused on themselves and what their position is, and what they sound like and are they getting the credit for it and so forth which is not really the way you work with people I don't think. I think...sharing with people is what's going to be successful (line 2493-2541).

Elevating yourself as leader. Participant #53 illustrates the problem of elevating yourself as a leader. He tells what happens in a meeting where staff have not been informed.

You don't stand up ...and say "We are going to do x or y or z" and staff is just bent out of shape and then "Do you agree with that Mr. [Department head]?" "Well I-" he's had 15 seconds to think about it and he hasn't talked to his colleagues, he hasn't talked to his staff, and he's supposed to stand up [and talk about it]. And then he walks out of there livid. "You sons of guns, you blind-sided me and I was humiliated and embarrassed in the media and you look good and, well I look bad and my staff are all upset and my staff [are saying] 'well guy you run the show'" You've got yourself in a pickle of a mess and the whole relationship thing at all levels, it's totally broken down (#53, line 1006-1014).

Manipulating information. A significantly negative description of leadership is avoiding dealing with issues by manipulating information. There are several methods that are representative of negative forms of leadership. Participant #53 describes these.

1. Manipulating meanings in a self serving way: When the Republican Government in the US avoids addressing its massive budget problems which have arisen on account of the war on terrorism by saying "don't vote for the Democrats because you won't be safe from terrorism"
2. Establishing superficial policy that disguises a patronage agreement and protection of interests.

3. Focusing on too few of the relevant issues and refusing to move into discussion on any of the other issues.
4. Focusing on the development of strategy and neglecting policy. This is a manifestation of short-sighted thinking that is better characterized as a knee-jerk reaction than effective leadership.
5. Working within the effective boundaries of the leadership. For example, at a City Hall the elected officials (leaders) provide good policy ideas and direction whereas the staff do the administration of the task. When leaders step into the administration of the task, problems erupt. This may be comparable to micro-management.

Heritage of leadership within an organization. Participant #58 describes the heritage of leadership within a company or organization. In his view if good leadership is not laid down at the beginning it can be very difficult for subsequent leaders to take that organization in a better direction. He describes how in his present work as a leader he is recognizing this challenge and he identifies it as “more of a challenge than any other one I’ve been through” (#58, line 150). He notes that as a consultant he would not take on a role to address such an issue:

The way that leadership has been learned, has been passed on from generation to generation within an organization,--you better hope that the first generation got it right...In my consulting business, if I was going into an organization that those experiences and that learning of leadership and management was not based on a foundation of what I would call those good qualities of

leadership, I would walk away from that organization and say “This is too much work as a consultant” I’m not going to try because the barriers to make change are going to be so great that the only way that organization is going to be changed is if there’s a complete overhaul of the organization. If the organization didn’t want that, as a consultant I would not proceed. I would say, “My ability to provide that leadership with your organization and to help you with that...I’m not going to be successful” (#58, line 94-120).

4.3 The Lived Experience

The second voice in the comprehensive narrative of the phenomenological experience of leadership through difficult situations is the lived experience. All of the participants are represented in this voice. The meaning units included in this section were characterized by more spontaneous personal expressions of the experience in contrast to the more descriptive or explanatory meanings of the previous section. These meanings were noted throughout the interview rather than located particularly within one or another section of the interview.

The themes included in this section include the experience of relating with other people as a leader in a difficult situation. The participants also outlined the experience of learning, the affective responses, the hard work of leadership, the way that the experience of leadership in difficult situations connects with their personal lives, how they push through difficult situations and finally the negative dimensions of leadership in difficult situations.

4.3.1 Relating

Participants: #1, #7, #8, #11, #12, #18, #19, #25, #31, #48, #53, #57 Total: 12/14

This theme conveys the participants' experiences of relationship with the many people around them during leadership through difficult situations. There are four dimensions of relating within this theme: Leading, Connecting with people has to do with connecting within oneself, Influences from those surrounding the leadership and finally, being within not apart from the system one gives leadership to.

4.3.1.1 Leading

This sub-theme examines the lived experience of relating to others while one is leading through difficult situations. To begin with, there are facets of leadership through difficult situations wherein one is leading alone, without the support of people in the environment. Participant #31 talks about the experience of being alone in his leadership when his supporters have turned to self interest as a result of a significantly difficult situation. "It was an area of what made it much more difficult to be an effective leader because I realized that I didn't have the support I needed from the people I needed it from" (line 2123-2125).

As previously discussed, there can be an experience of being alone in difficult situations when you are resisting the status quo or when you are initiating a leadership direction and people have not yet understood where you are going. Participant #57 says:

I get into trouble fairly often, pushing all this stuff. There are a lot of people that don't want to hear it. They don't want to go there. They don't want to

know. They don't see it as part of a constructive process, which to me it is (line 138-142).

One of the experiences of leadership through difficult situations is having to relate in a way that is not preferred or is distasteful. Participant #18 talks about it this way:

A: You do have to kind of cajole like a child and ah reinforce and it's constant, it's not just once,

Q: Constantly telling people "you're doing a good job..."

A: "Oh it's wonderful, yes I'm so glad you came to the meeting, and on time, wonderful" and not sound like that (laughter) not sound condescending and cynical (line 272-278).

Shared leadership can be a positive experience as described by participant #18:

We'd shift positions depending on if it was a building issue then I sort of sat back, I don't know much about rebar, things like that and when it became more of a leadership on the legal side or the rights side then I would shift forward and whenever I would lose inspiration one of the other guys would say "no, [#18] that's not the way it's going to be, it'll be this way" and so he had the strength and I'd go "yeah". When he would lose strength I would be the strong one, so it seemed to balance off each other quite nicely (line 138-1145).

The personal intention in leadership can be a purposeful or meaningful venture as when Participant #31 discusses that leadership is an opportunity to give back.

4.3.1.2 Connecting to People has to do with Connection to one's self

This element of the lived experience of relationships in leading through difficult situations reviews those comments of the participants that express how the capacity to connect to people has to do with the capacity to connect personally.

Leadership can be a very powerful platform from which to relate people. Participant #19 and #53 discuss the effects on people of the proverbial giving up their assigned parking in the interests of fairness and community. Participant #19 comments “that sort of thing, as small as it was, meant ... a lot to people, unbelievably, I mean ... the smallest things mean so much to people” (line 452-453).

Participant #48 comments, however, that as a leader, people will do what you say just because you have that role of authority. This is a point of contention on the issue of leadership through difficult situations because a number of the participants including #18, #19, #48 and #58 question whether this is actually leadership. The issue here goes back to those means of drawing people into the leadership direction by fostering their personal sense of engagement. #19 illuminates the complexity in leadership stating “it’s a very interesting balance whereby you’re the leader, you’re the manager but you’re also part of a group... you straddle both sides and you’re challenged to do that” (line 746-749).

The way that the leaders operate within that complexity is by going back to that sense of themselves within the context. #19 discusses how they have to go back to the process of self awareness and it is out of this self knowledge that leadership emerges. Speaking of the leader #19 says:

Through that really strong sense of self that person's going to understand that they are human and they have human qualities and traits and frailties and with that self-awareness--when they can connect to themselves in that sense, in that authentic way-- then they can connect to other people. When they connect to other people then they can draw the best out of that person. So I always say that...the best people I ever had work for me were the people I learned the most from (line 111-117).

The connection of self and other through a process of leadership is reiterated by Participant #7 who takes on the question of charismatic leadership:

I don't think that you need to be a charismatic [leader]..., you can have this quiet sort of confidence and... be a leader that enables people... I think ...you need to command trust and respect, but you don't need to be charismatic necessarily (line 73-76).

It's from within that you are able to lead. Participant #53 pushes this concept further suggesting that the environment of the leadership provides an accountability for that inner process:

People get you for phony stuff, you know you've got to think long term for policy and you've got to think long term and be true to yourself and don't do a lot of fluff and a lot of b-s and play games, people pick that up (line 196-199).

#18 discusses that in the active process of providing such leadership, there is the ongoing challenge of being self aware because without that awareness there is the problem of operating out of your personal weakness. #12 provides an example of leadership out of a

place of weakness. There is a lack of self awareness in the form of insecurity, that precipitates a lack of engagement as a leader and a poor outcome:

When you're implementing change to somebody's way of doing work quite often out of insecurity people go in and say "this is the way it needs to be done and this is why" without ever getting into the realities of why they do it the way they do it. ...like if you're going into a payroll clerk and saying "Okay you need to do it this way" The way they're doing it is based on a bunch of assumptions and unless you've gone in and identified all those assumptions first and understood why they do things in the way they do things, you will implement a new way of doing it and then all these other mistakes will come out because you never took in the whole scope of why they did things the way they did it.

Q: Okay so sort of like the idea that change is inherently good regardless of...

A: Right and you're doing it wrong right now. Whereas, they never sort of got under the covers to understand why they were doing it the way they were doing it. So out of insecurity the team would go in and say "You're doing it wrong, you need to do it this way" and the immediate response is "You don't know what you're talking about, and I don't particularly want to see you again" So it's pretty hard to implement change (line 178-202).

Even given self awareness however, the relations with the people one is leading remains a challenge. Participant #18 expresses her aggravation in working with people who are passive aggressive:

A: See I find this juvenile...I find it, you know, "I have to work because my colleague is working." I enjoy doing what I'm doing because I have self respect or maybe it's a puritanical work ethic ... like whatever it is you're born with. But I don't do things just because everybody else is doing them and I do things because [they have] value, so I have a hard time with the philosophy of "I'm not working unless you work" (laughter). I don't get it, or "you're working too hard, stop, you're making me look bad."...I have a hard time with that to. (#18, line 368-394)

4.3.1.3 Influences from those surrounding the leadership

The people around the leadership through difficult situations, are meaningful in the process and experience of leadership. Participant #31 for example notes that he has had compliments for his leadership by those he has led, including one compliment from a person who notably offered to reach outside of her cultural norms in order to support his leadership.

Participant #8 refers to the many people she knows in her community through a long time of having lived there. She says these connections have been significant regarding her opportunity to be involved in the leadership of many different situations and thereby gain an array of experiences.

There are of course failures in leadership through difficult situations. Participant #25 mentions a client who leaves in his view, on account of his over-extension of his energies. He notes also that some personnel decisions just don't work out. These he takes as learning experiences.

Participant #18 describes the importance of support from the people around one's leadership. Such support is characterized by other people's sense of a positive outcome in contrast to the challenge of uncertainty and a significant sense of responsibility by the leader.

The people I talked to knew it was going to be successful, I didn't know it all the way through, it was successful in the end. But there were moments of you know, I guess opposition I hadn't anticipated and doubt. But it was that "Yeah I won—uh-oh now all the responsibility's on my shoulders" and people would say to me, it took about 6 years from start to finish, they'd say "I'm a betting person and I'll bet on you". So it no longer became an issue of [dealing with the difficult situation], it's more like "(#18) will be successful and I'm betting on (#18)" (line 169-175)

In leadership though difficult situations there is satisfaction or affirmation in beginning to see things change. At one point in the interview, participant #18 takes this feedback as a statement regarding her personality which seems to suggest how closely the task of leadership is held. Participant #18 notes:

One of the guys, the last to contribute to my little [professional] group ... actually started doing the work that I finally decided I had to do myself against my better judgment and I said you know "I really thank you for doing this", even though I didn't want to say that, and he said "Well, you know there's been a lot of peace and quiet since you've come here, there's a peacefulness, it's tangible". So maybe there's some element to my personality

that people, initially find offensive, you can tell they get their backs up and then after a while they just seem to say “Oh, she’s fine” (line 787-794).

In a separate quotation, Participant #18 also notes that the changes she is witnessing have nothing to do with her leadership. She attributes the changes rather to peer pressure.

Another facet of the influence of others on one’s leadership is that you’re dealing with the diversity of human experience, #7 notes “it’s very complex right. You’re dealing with the whims and the issues that individuals have.” (line 341-345).

Finally, Participant #57 describes how in leadership through difficult situations, one can be seen to not be listening in the process of making tough decisions. This perception is costly to an effective leadership role.

4.2.1.4 Within, not apart from the system

A final element in this theme of the lived experiences of relating, are those quotations whereby the leaders have expressed their sense that their leadership is a natural expression of themselves within the system in which they work.

Participant #7 for example uses systemic terms to describe how we are a part of the systems that we are trying to change. She goes on to discuss how providing leadership is a part of her own personal growth and development. Participant #12 talks about how project management is a natural for her. #53 describes decision-making that emerges from his sense of himself and his own goals in his life; he also notes that extending himself to people is just something he’s always had a distinct capacity for. #11 discusses her clarity regarding her personal strength to overcome an obstacle through a difficult situation. In a manner that

expresses this theme, Participant #12 talks about her motivations to leadership. Like several of the participants (#31, #11, #8, #48, #18) she articulates that her leadership is not about her aspiring to a role of leadership, rather it is a skill that she simply has and that she trusts enough to know that the people around her will see it and will respond to it:

I've never been specifically ambitious, whereas I think some leaders are specifically ambitious.

Q: ...Can you give me a portrait of what the differences are, specifically ambitious versus not specifically ambitious?

A: Sure, when I was starting out my career I never ever thought "oh I want to be a vice-president some day" whereas I've had people come and ask me "How do I get to be a vice-president some day?" and I've never ever, I've never asked that question,

Q:....it's not been your motivation

A: No, whereas that's been some people's motivation

Q: How did you become vice president?

A: I got asked (laughter)

Q: And how did that....

A: Getting asked? I was honored. Yeah in some ways a catch 22 because you can't say no ... if you say no you'd have to leave.

Q: Right. Do you think it would have been different if you'd never been asked?

A: How do you mean different?

Q: I just wonder if you'd be motivated or not motivated?

A: I assumed it would happen

Q: You assumed, so you had a sense that it was going to...

A: Yeah I had a sense that it was

Q: It wasn't [a sense that this was what you were after?]....

A: ...No (line 1042-1092).

Finally, participant #1 describes how in seeking his current leadership role, he determined what it was that he had to offer and this was met with acceptance within his place of work. He also described in the second interview a leadership initiative that has been undermined by a breach of ethics. He said that as he is seen to be a person of integrity within his field and as he values this initiative, he will likely be given the responsibility to lead the initiative.

4.3.2 Affect

Participants: #1, #7, #8, #11, #12, #17, #25, #31, #48, #53, #57, #58 Total 12/14

There is a broad range of feeling described in the experience of leadership through difficult situations.

Participant #12 says that it is fun being in the complexity of leadership juggling "people issues", technical issues, financial issues, mental and physical issues. She finds the process very interesting. It is out of interest also that Participant #8 enjoys watching public meetings because the dynamics at work are so fascinating. Along these lines Participant #11 expressed that she wasn't sure she could talk about the experience through difficult situations

“Because...I don’t really feel like I’ve done that”. This seems surprising given the challenges associated with the work of leadership that she has done. On the other hand, several of the participants indicate that challenges are a normal part of leadership and that they very much enjoy being challenged.

Participant #31 says there can be a sense of risk through a difficult situation.

Participant #48 notes the potential to become extremely angry in certain circumstances. This is a potentiality that she says needs to be managed in the interests of being effective through a difficult situation. Participant #7 concurs with regard to the challenge of dealing with racial prejudice but also notes with interest when there is increased inter-racial sensitivity.

Participant #25 talks about becoming too involved and too stressed out at times. He says that the impact of a process through a difficult situation can be painful and difficult. Participant #11 talks about facets of leadership that challenge her preferred approaches to situations.

Participant #7 describes her hesitation in putting forth new initiatives within confidential settings that may later be used by some members for personal political benefit and grandstanding. She also notes the occasional frustration that emerges in a situation that is in a slow process of change.

It can be slow, and... you can spend a lot of time working on things and then they can be undone by the action of others in an instant. So while I’m motivated and compelled by the work I do from an idealistic point of view, I’m also at times... frustrated by the slow process of change and the sense of, not impotence, but the sense that there are things that are beyond my influence to change (line 327-337).

She goes on however to discuss that she sees this process as a weaving together of many different threads and as one that is therefore going to be slow by its nature.

Participant #53 talks about the experience of leadership where other people are after the role. He describes it as having people “nipping at your heels”. Participant #31 describes the sense of “Gotcha” when people come to a realization of what his leadership has accomplished. Participant #19 describes a similar sense when he wins the leadership through a process of a business merger.

Participant #11 discusses the sense expressed among various of the participants that leaders need to see leadership being carried out in a group. She expresses her frustrations in seeing a group that is not productive under incompetent leadership, or the enjoyment of working with a team of people that is productive. Similarly, #8 talks about the need to see something accomplished. “I feel we spend an awful lot of time discussing things ... and I just love people that do them” (line 28-30). #58 sees tremendous opportunity in creating a community of leaders which is what motivates him on a day to day basis.

In extremely difficult situations the leaders indicate that there is a significant personal cost in leadership. Participant #53 says that he has lost many former friends and colleagues as a result of having a supported leadership initiative rejected. Reflecting on this experience by pointing to political figures, he recounts the number of public leaders who have suffered as a result of their leadership in the past 20 years.

There's some hurt in the political realm, the damage you take politically and there's no way around it I don't think. I mean ... look at British Columbia, Bill Bennett ...took a big hit as premier after 9 years, a big problem...

VanderZalm was a big laugh, went in disgrace. Harcourt quit early in disgrace. Glen Clark left early disgraced. I mean there's... four premiers that all went out as damaged goods. I mean with a broken heart and a painful body... you look at Jean Chretien, and you look at Paul Martin,... Mulroney was disgraced with the Airbus thing, it's forgotten now but he left with a huge deficit. There's all these people that were quite brutalized and they'll never get over it (line 872-881).

Along these lines, Participant #19 speaks of the intense pain of losing a leadership role. He says it is like having a limb amputated.

Several participants speak of the challenge of being publically vulnerable as a result of the efforts to exert oneself for people in leadership. In some difficult situations when as a result of being a leader where you have extended yourself to people, people have responded to the participant making significant verbal and public affronts to their leadership. In response, the participants describe the responsibility to quietly absorb these assaults because of the responsibility of confidential knowledge. Participant #31 describes similarly how this level of awareness of the big picture by the leader must be acknowledged also when one is under the leadership of someone else.

Participant #25 talks about the significant personal cost of starting up a business. He goes on to talk about how when leaders leave (or perhaps lose) a significant role of authority there needs to be period of grieving:

I think that there's a reason why leaders do leave positions of authority, and under difficult circumstances take a while before [they] move on to the next

big ... position of authority... If you didn't, you wouldn't be doing yourself...or that new business any good.

Q: That reflection piece is really critical.

A: Absolutely, absolutely, there's no leader out there that doesn't care deeply about how a particular business or undertaking or people around him can become or can grow or evolve and be successful...If you remove that leader from that scenario there has to be a grieving process that goes on...They have to figure out a way to not care as much anymore and [to] care about something else...

Q: It's very personal

A: Oh absolutely, you know and I think that if it isn't personal then there's something seriously wrong with those leaders (line 574-595).

Similarly participant #19 describes the significant pain of losing a leadership role describing it as being as significant as having a limb amputated.

Participant #31 talks about the wonderful gift a mentor has been in his life. An extension of that influence has been the distinct enjoyment of connections with other leaders and an opportunity to perpetuate that gift of opportunities and relationships for other people. Similarly #8 comments "I've stepped up you might say and taken some opportunities in leadership but I've also gained a tremendous amount" (line 325-326). For her also the opportunities of leadership have been wonderful, interesting, varied even if at times it gets rocky.

A number of the participants note that leadership appeals to their desire for a challenge (#57, #18, #8). For example, Participant #31 notes that he needs the stimulation of the challenges of leadership. The continuous change and challenge of the role drives him and he gets bored if things are repetitious. This experience is repeated by several of the participants. Participant #11 describes how she looks for positions where she either has an opportunity to lead or where she can see a leadership opportunity that connects with her sense of what she can do. “It’s got to be the right thing. I wouldn’t want to be in there ... if I was like a second-level leader ...and I didn’t buy into it all. I know I’d find that frustrating” (line 2133-2135).

4.3.3 Learning

Participants: #1, #7, #12, #17, #18, #25, #31, #48, #58 Total 9/14

The next theme of the Lived Experiences of leadership through difficult situations is the experience of learning. This theme highlights the process of going through a learning curve that is generally characterized by a sense of vulnerability or uncertainty at the beginning. The direction of the participants’ comments indicates a process of coming to a kind of mastery in the situation. The learning covers a broad range of dimensions of leadership through difficult situations including learning about leadership through to growing personally through the experience of leadership. #18 identifies that in a difficult situation she experiments to find what works. She re-uses what works and discards things that are not working. This task can be very challenging at times as she steps outside of her familiar domain of behaviors to try out “Touchy-feely-fuzzy” approaches that she senses surprises the

people she is leading because they are so uncharacteristic, “I thought, well if I’m going to do this I can’t just be my usual self because it’s not going to work” (line 265-266). While she finds herself fundamentally at odds with the behaviors, she is finding that they can have an effect. She discusses the sense of vulnerability through a challenging leadership process. She notes also that the learning can be very challenging:

When I’d experienced it the first time I didn’t know what I was experiencing, I was kind of going through the dark, and it was an awful sensation at times. You have the sensation that you don’t know what you’re doing, you’re just following your gut, you’re hoping it’s right and people are following you...and they’re expecting you to perform and you’re not sure what’s going to actually happen.

Q: Lots of sort of self doubt that I’m guessing they probably don’t know too much about.

A: No, they won’t yet... you just sort of wake up at 3 in the morning and think “Oh no, now what have I done” you know, “I hope I’m right”... At the time when I was going through a lot of struggle with this one leadership experience I remember watching the news [concerning] Bush taking people to war... I kept thinking, “Well that’s a big decision and people are following you and you’d better be going in the right direction” (line 106-125).

Participant #25 suggests that learning from his mistakes is his means of growing as a leader. Given the research question regarding his experience through difficult situations that turned out well, he said that it is his failures that have been instructive and he focused on

these stories to illuminate an impact on his leadership. He comments “hindsight is 20/20 in that regard and if you don’t look back and [learn from the experience] then you’re really a fool, you can’t learn if you can’t learn right” (line 471-472). His trajectory in leadership then is to continue to grow and develop as a leader.

Participant #12 comments on her experience through a difficult situation saying
It was probably a little over my head which is pretty common for me and I
would say fairly common in leadership...It created stress but it also created
lots of motivation to go to the *nth* degree to make sure things were done
properly and ... my experience through it was, it was a very positive
experience (line 299-309).

She says that through this challenge she probably didn’t say “no” as much as she should have.

Participant #7 takes the learning process to a deeper level. She describes the learning curve in leadership almost as though it is a facet of leadership itself and that the scope of learning reaches into who one is as a person:

This specific experience is one where as a leader I am learning big time... I
think that’s a facet probably of leadership too is that ... you’re not at an end-
point ...so you’re really learning... All of us at, at the individual level, we
have those deep-seated assumptions that we make about different cultural
groups as well, right, so we ourselves are part of that fabric then (line 1284-
1304).

Participant #57 identifies that she continues learning, learning to have confidence, and learning to trust the process through situations.

In the second interview Participant #48 revisited the topic of learning as a core feature of leadership as well as something that leaders offer to the people they come into contact with by opening up opportunities for other people to stretch themselves in new and somehow fitting directions.

4.3.4 Leadership is hard work

Participants: #1, #7, #8, #12, #18, #25, #48, #57, #58 Total: 9/14

In this theme, participants discuss that leadership through difficult situations is hard work. Participant #12 notes simply that leadership is hard work and she is reluctant to take on leadership for this reason. She notes however, that leadership keeps coming back to her. Within a difficult situation Participant #48 notes that “Every day I went to work was an uphill battle” (line 132). Participant #57 talks about the significant difficulty of writing a dissent on a Board decision “One of the hardest things I ever did” (line 1416). Participant #18 discusses the significant challenge of motivating people who are in a habit of passive-aggressive behavior.

Participant #25 talks about the challenge of trying to provide meaningful leadership in a context that will not support the leadership direction.

I was there trying to push a square peg in a round hole where I didn't fit long term in that firm. The bigger picture of that firm was the national firm trying to deal with multi-national and national clients and governments, acting on big

projects, many who were acting against First Nations interests, and here I was acting for First Nations within that firm (line 473-477).

Participant #8 talks about the hard work of being in a conflictual public meeting over many months and the significant sense of limitations to resolve the conflicted situation:

It was one of the more difficult things I've faced I think in that you went to a meeting every Monday night and you just dreaded going because you thought "Oh, what's going to happen tonight" you know. And when you're there in the public forum... you just can only do a certain amount. It's not like in between meetings you can talk to people and work on it and get advice. The staff used to just sit there in despair because the meeting got so dreadful with people shouting at each other and so forth, it was not great (line 1890-1906).

Participant #7 talks about how the sheer volume of the work makes it very difficult to realize some of the preferred practices of the organization:

A: The organization itself ... at the staff level, ...could be more collaborative and integrated...Everyone's very busy and so you're working your butt off trying to get stuff done...

Q: What I'm getting...is that...the objective of the organization is to work collaboratively, the reality of the workload and the day-to-day is you don't work so collaboratively

A: That's correct (line 203-226).

As a final sample in this section, Participant #58 describes the tremendously difficult task of working against the heritage of leadership within an organization. He notes that

people under a given form of leadership through twenty odd years, have well established notions of what leadership is. This established learning within an organization makes the transition in leadership towards current and more adaptive modes of leadership enormously difficult.

4.3.5 It's Personal

Participants: #19, #25, #31, #48, #53, #58 Total 6/14

In this theme of the personal facets of the lived experience of leadership through difficult situations, the participants outline that the experience of providing leadership through difficult situations connects with their personal lives. One aspect of the connection to one's personal life is the sense that it is an expression of personality. Participant #19 outlines this perspective succinctly. He describes leadership as a natural orientation in living that he no longer apologizes for. It's his personal interest and he is significantly motivated by it. He provides an illustration:

I was in a golf tournament last month and we were playing in teams of 4 and it literally came down to the last hole to see whether I was going to be second or not...the last hole and the last shot on the last hole, honest to god, as to who was going to take the shot. I don't know if I was the best golfer but geez I wanted to take the shot and I did and ... you know it was terrific (laughter) so I loved it (line 286-292).

Several of the participants identify that they can see behavioral expressions of leadership throughout their lives. Often they note that they seem to have always had a knack

of getting people involved in their efforts, this even before they recognized their capacity for leadership. Many of the participants who discuss this life-long capacity for leadership also outline that others recognized their leadership before they did.

Aside from the sense of leadership as inborn, Participant #19 also articulates the connection between leadership and one's personal life. Participant #19 provides a metaphor saying the personal experience of being a leader is comparable to being a mobile:

So you have all these different things that affect that leader. He's got all these pressures, all these things that happen to him or her on an ongoing basis... There's a systems effect so when a leader is leading people, --this is what people don't get right-- and let's say you have a business and... you've got family, you've got health, you've got shareholders, ... you've got all of these different sort of things that affect this leader.... Knock one on one side and this one's (indicating a separate part of a mobile) going to get rattled..

So let's say the leader's getting a divorce okay, that's going to have a systems effect on the rest of their ability to lead and perform to that capacity. There are some leaders who I believe are particularly adept at managing that systems effect on the rest of their ability to lead and perform to that capacity. If their company is about to be bought by somebody else and they're fighting which was in my particular case, they're fighting for their life... their career or their job or whatever, it's a really effective leader who doesn't cascade that throughout his personal life to a certain degree, or throughout the rest of the organization (line 234-249).

Participant #53 talks about leadership as a life-long venture that takes some luck, some opportunities, and a sense of personal direction. Participant #19 again, talks of how the impact of leadership can be very positive or very negative. Participant #25 talks about the challenge of staying on top of a business that is growing at a significant pace. He notes that while the business thrives, his family takes a significant toll that they are still working to address four years later. He notes that this impact on business and on family is not unusual.

4.3.6 Pushing it through

Participants: #8, #11, #31, #48, #57, #58, Total: 6/14

Given the notable challenges of leadership, the participants addressed the means by which they would push through to the end of a project.

There are a variety of means that the participants identified whereby they could get together the capacity to follow through in a difficult situation. Participant # 11 notes that she would take a moment to “regroup” privately in her room before she would carry on.

Participant #31 would exercise with a colleague. Participant #57 talks about the significant difficulty of decision making, yet the importance of pushing through to make the decisions.

I think tough decisions are, for effective leaders those kinds of decisions are very painful, extremely painful. Dag Hammarskjold once said you know, “Wrestle with your problem until its emotional discomfort is clearly conceived in intellectual form and then act accordingly” and to me that’s..., when you have a tough decision of any kind, you have to wrestle with it, and then, kind of make sure

you've got the information you need and then make a decision.

Intellectually figure it out. I think a lot of people get stuck. The emotional discomfort is too horrible, so they don't make a decision, and sometimes no decision is the right decision. But, that's why they don't want to get into these things a lot of them, because it's way better and easier not to. And I think you don't get one without the other. I don't think you get the excitement and the passion and the buzz without making tough decisions along the line (line 1381-1401).

Participant #31 describes simply accepting difficult situations as given. This is not a passive reception of what comes along, but a kind of openness to engage with energy and purpose within a difficult situation without resisting the movements within the situation. Difficult situations are accepted and engaged in earnest. Indeed, sometimes difficult situations are intentionally generated by the participant to address circumstances meaningfully. The participant describes a process then of being within the situation without resisting, rather with acceptance of what emerges.

Participant #58 talks about needing to be able to discern the point at which the effort is poorly spent. "If you're going up against a brick wall at every single stage, that building process can take years and years and years and depending on where you are in your career, you may or may not choose to do that." (#58, line 64-66).

4.3.7 Limitations

Participants: #8, #18, #19, #31, #53 Total 5/14

Finally, the participants discussed facets of leadership that are experienced as limitations. The limitations indicate what the participants conceive of as somehow representing limitations that affected their experience of leadership, or limiting the potential of a given leader or leadership initiative. These limitations could be personal, they could be limitations that the participants have observed in other leaders, they could also be relational or situational limitations.

Participant #31 indicates that those in leadership can be observed to use their leadership to become judgmental rather than supportive of the people to whom they are giving leadership. He also talks about blind spots in leadership, referring to a mentor who, while she could be confronted privately, could be merciless when confronted in a meeting. Finally, he refers to his early experience of learning the art of public maneuvering in order to achieve an end. He expresses that this “finagling” or orchestrating social systems is something he would rather not have learned although in the situation, the ends achieved were consistent with his objectives as a leader.

The participants discuss the personal toll that leadership can take. Participant #18 talks about refusing to perpetuate the model of leadership used by her predecessor who drove herself into the ground as a result of doing everything herself. Participant #19 talks of personal burn-out in the role of leadership because in leading all of the people around him through a difficult situation, he neglected elements of self care.

The participants identify that leadership is undone by manipulation, deception and the complacency of people within the difficult situation. Participant #53 talks of losing respect for people because they refuse to address the issue on its terms. Instead he finds that they sidestep the issue by making it a personal issue about him. Participant #31 and #1 similarly describe the experience as a leader of losing respect for people who have used inappropriate tactics to address a difficult situation and who refuse to address the deceptions long after the situation is resolved. The loss of respect is a decision that is arrived at slowly, reluctantly, but when the decision is finally taken it is not reversed. Finally, Participant #8 talks about the ground that is being lost in women's issues despite the significant leadership work done in the last century. The loss is a result of complacency in her view.

Participant #18 indicates that leadership is readily undermined by self-serving actions. She observed that two leaders with whom she had led, turned to self interest and entirely lost their credibility with the people they had led. The disdain in which these two were held was applied to both their present self interested action and to all the good that they had done previously within the group. In sum their effectiveness as leaders was lost.

Finally, Participant #19 talks about how most leaders he knows do not have his respect at all:

I mean that to me, I just find that absolutely disgusting, but they're leaders and they have thousands of people...at their beck and call. But they reap what they sow and the organizations that they have reap what they sow (line 369-372).

4.4 What Makes Leadership Effective

The discussion now turns to the remaining two voices of the phenomenological themes: Frame of reference: Perspective and What you do. These two voices express in different tones, the participants' descriptions of purposeful engagement in the difficult situation. The two voices in this section outline the participants' discussion of their frame of reference or perspective in the difficult situations and then the activity of the participants. Together these two voices will outline the participants' expression of what makes leadership effective in difficult situations.

As an overview, a table of the phenomenological themes describing what makes leadership effective in difficult situations follows:

Table 4.2 What Makes Leadership Effective in Difficult Situations

Voice	Theme	Details
Frame of Reference: Perspective	Conscious of situational Influences	Sensitized to the team
		Risk of being impacted by what's unseen
		Consciousness to effect a direction
		Canniness, Empathy, Social Intelligence
		Influences will shape the initiative
	Personal Understanding and response	The Capacity to stay with the situation
		An independent sense of what's needed
	Generate Remarkable outcomes	Guiding Principles that Generate Possibilities
		Shoemaking
		Remarkable outcomes
	Mastery of the facts	
	Trusted resources for feedback	Check your ideas and perceptions
		Present personal resources
		Remembered Personal resources
		Other Personal resources
	Conscious of your effects	Set aside personal issues
The Power of your information		
Feedback regarding your capacity to build trust		

Table 4.2 What Makes Leadership Effective in Difficult Situations, continued

Voice	Theme	Details
Leading in Difficult Situations; What you do	Exert yourself to be involved	Intentional engagement
		Care for people
		Be a positive force
		Keep people informed
		Invite feedback
		Give people choices
		Lobbying Persuading, Demonstrating
		Wade into the difficulty
	Exercise of Personhood	Confidence
		Honesty and transparency
		Personal Strength
		Integrity: Ethics with action
		Authenticity
		Self Monitoring
		Self Aware
	Push Back/Be consistent	Consistent
		Insist
		Persist
		Set Limits
		Endure
		Determination
	Working with the team	Assess and Shape the Team
		Keep the Team informed
		Protect the Team from Extraneous negativity
		The Team has a personality
		The Team is core to implementing effective change
	Employ Leadership	
Orchestrate a successful outcome	Validating and successful	

4.4.1 Frame of Reference: Perspective

The first phenomenological theme that outlines the participants' discussion of what makes leadership effective in difficult situations, is the Participants' discussion of how they situate themselves in relation to the difficult situation, that is their frame of reference or perspective within the difficult situation. The metaphor guiding this theme which is given by a number of the participants is that quiet space of being alone reflecting, reviewing, anticipating, envisioning and finding a kind of personal resonance with the difficult situation whereby things can take shape and move forward. This is a discussion of what the participants bring to the difficult situation that orients them in relation to it, and keeps them feeling supported and accountable through the process of addressing the difficult situation. Participant #31 for example describes challenging himself to see the situation in a unique way or leave:

I remember sitting in my office and thinking you know, two things, I either have to see the strength of this environment or I have to get out of it because I'm becoming part of the problem...I'm joining all the rest of the system seeing what this environment lacks rather than what it has (#31, line 595-603).

This voice is expressed in six themes. The first is the personal understanding and response to the situation. Secondly, the use of trusted people and resources to inform one's perspective. The third and fourth themes capture the two levels of awareness that the participants discuss; the consciousness of the influences within the situation, and the consciousness of one's effects upon the context. Fifthly, the participants emphasize their own efforts in knowing the facts of the situation, and finally they discuss the process of designing an outcome that -

within the participant's frame of reference- fits the situation thereby generating meaningful and oftentimes notable outcomes.

4.4.1.1 Conscious of Situational Influences

Participants: #1, #7, #8, #11, #17, #18, #19, #25, #31, #48, #53, #57, #58

Total: 13/14 participants

The participants identified the need to be conscious of the operant influences in a difficult situation. There is consciousness of the dynamics within the group, both those that are immediately apparent and those that are dormant in an immediate sense. These forces hold the potential to undermine the leadership direction. They are also significant in terms of the participants' capacity to use them to shape a successful outcome. The participants identify the use of empathy to create understanding of divergent influences in a situation. They also describe simply a kind of attunement to what actions may be taken by the various players in a situation. Following is an comprehensive narrative of the consciousness of the forces in operation as expressed by the participants.

Sensitized to the Team. To begin with, the participants identify a need to be sensitized to the movements within the 'team', the group one is leading. There are many examples of this process of reflecting on the dynamics within the team. Participant #53 describes sitting with a staff member reflecting on the content of an upcoming meeting and sorting out what's necessary to discuss and what will raise a "donnybrook" in the meeting by being presented prematurely. Participant #7 illustrates it this way:

You're not only informed but you take that in... whatever the emerging context or changing context may be in the room or outside the room. You... have to be informed and, and you [have to be]... connected to those different... things that may be at play. [You] also have to incorporate [them] and, and respond to them appropriately.

Similarly #1 discusses his awareness that the distortions of issues within a given difficult situation are a result of longstanding aggravation.

I thought that things had gotten way out of proportion partly though because people were so kind of tired, wounded, frustrated, misunderstood each other, some personalities were very...prickly. As a result of all of that, [the]...chemistry of things [had] got way out of proportion. I thought "You know, they'll sort of settle." (Line 1494-1499)

In a very similar context #58 finds that while the team is pretty "beat up", it doesn't have the skills to be able to build or develop a vision for the future. The people on the team do not have the right skill level.

Risk of being impacted by what is unseen. An aspect of the importance of this consciousness is expressed in #53's awareness of the significant risk of being impacted by what is unseen. He notes that leadership is "full of land mines." In his view the leader needs to proceed only with the committed involvement of all interested parties. "Until you get some [diverse] support, don't go there." Participant #7 observes that while you can set a respectful tone and things can unfold in a reasonable direction, the dimension of racial prejudice cannot be ignored or presumed

to be surpassed by the achievement of a group that is in an immediate sense, functioning effectively.

Consciousness to effect a leadership direction. Participant #8 describes the necessity of using this consciousness to effect a leadership direction. In one situation having to do with introducing women into a traditionally male profession, she says that the discussions were initially conflictual. She describes how she worked with the conflict in the necessary leadership direction.

In some issues they were very determined, they were not going to have women..., and so everything that was brought up they... showed you why they couldn't possibly happen. "She couldn't be there because, well, there was no washroom for a woman". Okay, "she couldn't carry the [equipment]". It was a case of physical strength, and they had people there that showed you how you did this and this and this.... But I think ...you keep in mind that you are not going to get into a confrontational situation, because somebody's going to lose and that isn't going to move you forward.

... We knew perfectly well that if the Union lost on the issue, if we just forced it through, then they would go back to the [worksite] and think up all kinds of [ways that] they could, ... outsmart you, because you knew they were at it every day.

And then the other thing was, if they felt they won and we had lost the whole thing and taken it off the agenda, that wasn't what [the overseeing body] had asked us to do. The [overseeing body] had said "We are going to start moving

towards an equal opportunity workforce”. And so unless we can do that,
...unless we can work to start changing attitudes,...it’s not going to happen.

(Line 1063-1097)

Note that she is operating in the consciousness of the immediate conflict as well as the accountability she holds to a given leadership initiative. It is in weighing these various interests that she situates herself to address the difficult situation.

Participant #57 identifies that the process of getting something moving is highly leader directed until it builds its own momentum. She describes a situation that due to a lack of leadership that is, a command and control approach to leadership, has become deadlocked by the lack of an ability to cultivate a vibrant and relevant direction. As discussed this form of leadership lacks the necessary capacity to explore the issues and engage in meaningful dialogue. With a void in the leadership she sees an opportunity to initiate a leadership direction which will require working around the person in the leadership role to find a way to move forward on this important initiative.

For instance, an example, well I know I’m going to be able to do it with this [project], I mean it’s interesting. It’s just hit the wall now, and it’s really deadlocked and [the question is], “Okay, how are we going to get around this?” You know, “How are we going to do this?” Because these [leaders] are a problem, but they’re there, you can’t change that. How can we work around them without alienating them and get this going? And so you know I just made some calls yesterday and it was like “What’s happening?” [second person] “Well nothing... this time around” [#57:] “Well why don’t we do this

and maybe we do that and then we're meeting next week and we're going to develop some options...in a way that they can come back to them"...It's really exciting because you also have a sense for when things [are getting deadlocked]. This is not going anywhere...it's basically a natural death...There isn't enough merit in it". (line 885-910).

The other side of movement in a leadership direction is knowing your place within the difficult situation as #48 and #17 point out. Note that #57 is not seeking to take the leadership role here, but to provide leadership in a direction that will be effective in generating viable avenues for a worthy initiative.

Canniness, Empathy, Social Intelligence There are many illustrations of the kind of consciousness or social intelligence that is required. Participant #18 talks about the capacity to read people's intentions in advance of their taking actions and then responding accordingly. #57 describes recognizing the apathy of workers who feel acted upon rather than invited or included in a transition process. She sees empathically that information sharing is needed to foster their understanding and buy-in to the new scenario. In a separate situation she describes the process of working to change a long standing allegiance that had become outdated. In getting resistance to a new initiative she asks "Is it fundamentally that they don't agree with it, or we haven't given them enough of an argument to move them?"

#11 notes that it is important to understand who you need to convince in order to get things accomplished. #19 discusses choosing the right person to implement a merger strategy within a business in a way that complements his own strengths and weaknesses as a leader. What is noteworthy considering the participant's understanding of the influences in

operation, is how this participant has identified both what is needed and his awareness of his own limitations in getting the job done:

I'm really more of a macro, big picture kind of person, I'm not a detail... operational sort of person in many respects...For this case where these two companies had to come together, I picked (laughter) to lead this whole thing, the absolute best person in the world to do it. ...He was smart as a whip. Certainly from a cognitive standpoint [he was] smarter than me. He was strong. He was abrasive when he needed to be. He was very process oriented. He was very result oriented, and he had integrity I was going to say almost to a fault. ...He wanted to do what was always in the best interests of the business and he had all these qualities. I put him in charge of it, to do this and he was a better person to do that than me because I would be sometimes too conciliatory or too nice. But I was smart enough to make sure that I had the best person on the right job. (Line 695-707)

Situational Influences. Finally, #58 notes that you need to be aware that situational influences have a capacity to shape or to inhibit any meaningful leadership direction.

If I think about my individual goals of leadership and...my bigger picture goals of leadership, you might as well work with the people that are going to go in that direction, rather than trying to change all those that will never believe in it. (Line 1297-1300).

For participant #58, the consciousness of the situational influences is related to the leader's capacity for vision. As he describes it, vision is the capacity to see what is happening in the present as well as the capacity to see into the future.

4.4.1.2 Personal Understanding and Response.

Participants: #1, #11, #17, #18, #19, #25, #31, #48, #53, #57, #58

11/14 participants

The participants identify that their personal response to the difficult situation is meaningful in connecting them to the situation. This theme ranges from what seems to be pure intuition, to an intuition that is somehow informed through a sense of values, morality, life experience or education. Some of the expressions in this theme include: doing what makes intuitive sense; confidence that sleeping on the issue will set things right; awareness of a moral compass or a sense of what is the right thing to do; personal resonance with a group or a necessary direction; a conviction that the premise of good leadership is a combination of gut, experience education and personality coalescing around the given issue or situation. This is not to suggest that the personal response is about power. Some of the participants (#19, #31, #48) directly reject that the premise of their response is an orientation to power. Rather it seems that the participants' interest is in making something worthwhile or something that is "right" happen. The participants connect to their initiatives from a moral, intuitive or value-based response to the situation.

The Capacity to stay with the situation. This sense of connection to the issue seems to provide two things to the participants. In the first place, it gives the participants the capacity to stay with the difficult situation through its resolution. Participant #17 states that “The stay-ability on the course (through a difficult situation) has to come...from very deep roots.”

Alternately, if the participant’s sense of what’s right is violated, the situation becomes intolerable. Participant #19 notes that at the point that he could no longer believe in the objectives of his company he left “As soon as I started to disbelieve that’s when I really had to leave myself...two years after the merger I had to leave because I couldn’t take it anymore, it was just too much rubbish.”

An Independent sense of what needs to happen. The personal perspective provides the participants with an independent sense of what needs to happen in the difficult situation. For example, Participant #57 describes her perception of how pressure to conform was shaping inappropriate activity within the difficult situation. Her own leadership came out of her recognition that important information was not recognized by the people involved. Empathizing with those in a difficult situation forms a cornerstone for participant #31 at a turning point in addressing the situation:

It was sort of like the Pygmalion thing; going through all this education and then...sitting and thinking “These people know how to live their lives and probably they need a lot of letting alone and just help where they can use it”...and once I had that perception then I could work there (Line 613-621).

Indeed his work transformed from endlessly pouring out unproductive effort to becoming effective in fostering a transformation within the working environment. One meaningful facet of this independent perspective as discussed by Participant #1 is the capacity to stay focused when the people around you are becoming upset or distracted by the demands of the situation.

Following is a quotation from Participant #31 illustrating this theme. Note that Participant #31 initiates his leadership within the group out of a felt resonance with the group. The result of the resonance according to his words is that he is clear about how to appraise the outcome of the leadership effort.

But value-wise ... I never liked people who were duplicitous or phony and at a young age that was very strong. If people weren't being genuine I didn't want anything to do with them. That's my thing as they said, and I thought the students were authentic in trying what they were doing, and they actually did a good job.

Q: So that was what you responded to...

A: Yeah, very much so, and I felt like my neck was out on a big chopping block with all these people waiting for it to...fail, ...and in some of their eyes it had. It hadn't been what they had expected and I didn't care, because it wasn't about what they expected. It was about what the students wanted to do (line 229-247).

Participant #58 describes that the essence of one's leadership doesn't change:

That's exactly the point I think, your values should never change...at the highest level you're never really changing your leadership style. What you're doing is saying that your style is that you have to be able to understand the organization you're with and what's going to get them from where they are to where they need to go (line, 276-284).

4.4.1.3 Generating, Aiming for significant outcomes.

Participants: #1, #7, #8, #11, #17, #18, #31, #48, # 53, #57, #58 Total: 11/14

Interestingly this theme is linked back into the previous theme of the personal understanding and response as a result of the fact that the primary response to the difficult situation draws the participant into a leadership direction that fosters significant outcomes. In the following discussion, two aspects of the orientation to create significant outcomes are highlighted. First of all there are the operating principles the participants have identified as orienting for them in generating outcomes, and secondly there are a few portraits of the participants at the task of working to generate an outcome that will fit the situation. Because of issues of confidentiality, these outcomes will only be generally alluded to at the end of the discussion of this theme.

Speaking generally, the outcomes are characterized by the participants as being somehow unique often without the participant's intention to create a unique outcome. Rather their intention is to do the right or fitting thing. In many cases the participants note that the outcomes have been met with astonishment. In some cases the outcomes are not even noticed though they are transformative over time and finally there are significant outcomes described

by the participants that are rejected and over a long period of time they remain contentious possibly indicating the depth of their significance.

Guiding Principles that Generate Possibilities. Following are personal principles of operation that the participants use in difficult situations. One principle is to get involved with people. Participant #11 for example, identifies an operating principle that says “If you want to get a lot out of life, get involved” (line 2251).

A second principle is holding a perspective that generates possibilities. #31 takes the words of Bobby Kennedy “Some look at situations as they are and say ‘why?’ and I look at them for how they could be and say ‘why not?’” (line 2241-2245).

#53 prioritizes the capacity to think long term and big picture as well as taking the time needed to address a situation or to create effective policies. #53 talks about how he is constantly looking for new things to ‘grow’. His perspective includes life beyond his immediate experience and after his life is over.

#58 describes a fundamental orientation to making even a good situation better. I’ve assumed positions where the person before me had been outstanding, and has been...an exceptional leader, and has gone on to do great things...I’ve gone into a place like that, my approach has been “This person was so good at what they’re doing, what can I do to make this better?” And for the life of me I can’t actually pinpoint why I do that, I just know that I do do it. (line 732-737)

Perhaps related to this, several of the participants including #53, #31 and #25 identify that fostering a legacy is a meaningful orientation within their leadership.

Participant #8 and #31 are remarkable in their freedom to introduce unlikely avenues to address situations. These are unlikely in the sense that they seem to function independently of the typical parameters of power and privilege. #8 for example looks for occasions to provide those in opposition to her with opportunities despite the hesitations of those on her own team. #31 seems remarkably able to achieve ends that defy the given order of things. Hierarchies are overturned, budgets are modified, practicalities are set aside fostering important outcomes.

Shoemaking. The second facet of generating significant outcomes is what I characterize as shoemaking. This title is intended to suggest the metaphor of the shoemaker sitting on his bench working and shaping the leather into a new form that is designed to fit perfectly. The quotations in this theme illustrate the participant's experience of individually working a situation to shape a desirable outcome. This task is framed very much by the participant's personal frame of reference regarding this situation. It is their identification of what the problem is and their personal sense of what's needed. It is almost a sense of building something good or worthy.

Participant #31 illustrates this approach in the simple comment "What made sense to me that would make this system more human and more real". This highly individualized approach is a characteristic across all of the quotations represented in this section. Participant #8 discusses taking on the task of reflecting on the situation to work on outcomes "I had to work before the meetings and after the meetings trying to figure out how we could make it into a situation that at least was tolerable for everybody, and yet we would not back off from the general principle that we were after, that wasn't easy" (line 503-506). Participant #11

talks about building a case in order to effect a change with a “big blow-hard, big, you know, man about town” (line 804-805). She did this by addressing all possible avenues of response. She begins by doing her homework concerning the person she was speaking to, building a case against the issue at hand and recognizing that in this context she will also have to provide a sound alternative in terms that this person would recognize and endorse.

Remarkable outcomes. The significant outcomes described by the participants have been influential at personal, community, provincial and international levels. They address problems related to women’s issues, patronage, justice, business mergers. They represent unprecedented initiatives in higher education and in government, innovations in technology. In many cases they were initiatives that were the first of their kind or ahead of their time and were followed up shortly after the participant’s efforts were realized. They have addressed potential violence and introduced instead the potential for community building. The participants have managed to bring value to situations where there was no value. In many situations what is wrong has been efficiently stopped or has been defused through being aired. The leadership initiatives have emerged despite opposition, impracticality, lack of support amongst superiors or simply doubt. In one case the outcome was contrary to extant technological knowledge yet was provincial in scale. Moral reasoning has won out over hierarchical structures. The outcomes have been unprecedented have flown in the face of common practice or the operational budget. They have been remarkable, unique and enduring.

#58 provides an illustration of the response to the outcome that is sometimes expressed by the participants. He is describing the organization's response to a team he worked with who when he began, were in complete disarray:

It was something that they had never done before in terms of size and scale and complexity. And, we put together a training event sort of nine months after I got the team together, and invited everyone from across the country to come and see...we got the immediate feedback, you know that, that we had done an outstanding job and that the, not just my headquarters, but the people that were actually in the training event, were training at a level never seen before by an organization like ours. And that was recognized you know all the way from (Capital of the country) to you know all the way across (the country). (#58, line 815-823).

#8 illustrates the unlikelihood of the accomplishments of these leaders by referring to another leader "I've forgotten her name now, she sat in the House of Commons by herself for twelve years, and there wasn't even a women's washroom...When you think what some of these women did. Pretty courageous really" (line 2543-2549).

4.4.1.4 Mastery of the Facts.

Participants: #8, #11, #12, #18, #31, #48, #53 Total: 7/14 participants

This theme outlines the participants efforts towards mastery of the issues at hand. It is indicated by phrases such as "do your homework", "get the facts", "know the documents" "researched all over the world", a conscious fidelity to "the process" in decision-making and

action-taking, or discussions that indicate energies directed towards doing research or being on top of relevant materials that support and inform one's investment in their leadership direction. Alternately, discussions that indicate poor coverage of the necessary material or a poor process of proceeding with a decision are included. Participant #31 comments for example

I was in at least 2 nights a week and one half day on the weekend every week just to keep up with all the ins and outs because the devil was in the details, you had to look at things from as many angles as possible because others were as well (line 1348-1352).

Participant #53 makes an interesting point about this task of knowing the facts. In describing a difficult situation he makes the unusual comment that he is right and "they" are wrong. He rests his argument on the knowledge foundation that he has built:

Well because I think I'm right, they're wrong, I've got the facts and I've got the experience and I've got the evidence, I'm going on a detailed researched 85 page document that the staff did and we did over a six month period. It came out in draft form and ...we went and had over 60 meetings. I was at over 30 of them...So it was going through the process, it was listening to people. Then we did a public survey and ... we finished that process of six months before the document came to final form. [Then] the professional pollsters said that if we talk to 500 [participants]...that's enough sampling and I said ... double it, do 1000, just for credibility. If you can get the truth of that with 500,

do 1000, it's going to cost another \$10,000 or \$15,000. Fine." So they did it, it was from 85-95%... support (line 380-406).

4.4.1.5 Trusted resources for support and feedback.

The participants: #1, #8, #11, #17, #57, #58, Total: 6/14 participants

The participants discussed the importance of having a trusted network of resources in their experience of leadership through difficult situations. Such a context of support includes engagement with trusted colleagues or professionals, relevant reading, recalling the influence of mentors, family, good parents and grandparents. These people form a core background of support for the participants and they foster the participants' sense of values which are key to the capacity to be discerning and able to make effective decisions in difficult situations.

Participant #8 outlines that the support of leadership as one of the keys of leadership.

What it takes is the fact that if you take something on then you know that if you need help you can get it. If you need advice, that you can get it and that there's somebody there that's supportive of you. It's a good feeling when you are taking the lead on something, to feel that back there, there are able people who are interested in you, who've encouraged you to do this and they're not just going to encourage you and then run away and do something else.

They're going to be there if you need them (line 143-158).

Check your ideas and perceptions to 'grow' them. A major reason for using these resources is to get feedback and to “grow” their ideas regarding addressing the difficult situation. A quotation from Participant #57 in which she is illustrating this give and take process:

I don't know it just because I know it, I know it also because I test it with others. In other words I say, “Look I don't think this is going to work, do you agree with me?” I mean I have places and people I can go and talk to... and say “look I think [this is] where this is going is wrong. I don't think it's going to work, but if it's what you guys want, I'm not going to lie down on the track. If you want something that looks like this, that's fine”. And they go “No” so “Okay, as long as I know”...And not being afraid then, or taking it personally, when you're off. ...Because you wonder sometimes when all these people are saying you know, “Well we're doing this”, and I think “well that's nuts” but so, then you have to go and test it with key people and you know key people, decision makers, people who are going to be doing it (line 323-369).

Present Personal Resources. Participant #8 sees leadership as foundationally dependent upon this sense of ready and enduring support among trusted people. She began the interview describing the necessity of having a person with whom a leader can in a trusted and confidential context directly explore their actions and ideas. In working as a mentor to other leaders she notes that often the role of the listener for the leader is simply allowing the other person to speak. By this means she has observed that leaders tend to resolve their concerns independently. She notes however that the sure knowledge of present and abiding

support from at least one person is critical to effective leadership. Participant #58 concurs stating that finding those people that you trust is a central resource for motivation in leadership.

Remembered Personal resources. While the capacity to discuss ideas with trusted people is important, mentors, role models and other important influences who are not immediately available to the participants also play an important role informing the Participant's work with the difficult situation. Participant #31 describes the input of a mentor which has significantly shaped his experience of his leadership.

[The mentor] said "It's not often useful to live your life looking over your shoulder" and I don't think you can do that as a leader. I think you have to take input, you have to be highly respectful especially if you're going against the grain but you can't stop. If you worry about being liked you stop in your tracks. I think in the end if I've made bad decisions, it's where I let my values be compromised by other agendas and if I've made good decisions I think it's because I've taken input from people and I've used it in an ethically consistent fashion (line 2277-2289).

Other Personal Resources. Beyond the immediate difficult situation, Participant #11 spoke of the support network that has been developed among women in leadership roles in Canada noting that women in corporate leadership because of their gendered orientation to go home and take care of the household, tend not to have the collegial support that their male counterparts have. She noted that these support groups are a valued resource for getting support to implement new ideas.

4.4.1.6 Conscious of the Effects of your Behavior.

Participants: #1, #8, #12, #17, #18, #31 Total: 6/14 participants

The participants identified the need to be conscious of your effects on the people who are looking to you as a leader. There seems to be three main facets of this need to be conscious of the effects of your behavior. The first comes from the need to set aside personal issues to be present to people and responsible to the leadership task. The second has to do with the responsibility of holding power in relation to other people's lives. Finally, there is the need to be sensitized to the people you are leading as a means of getting feedback about your capacity to build people's trust through being available to them.

Set Aside Personal Issues to be Responsible to the Leadership. Of the first facet, quieting personal concerns and focusing on the leadership task, #8 describes how the effect of her aggravation on the group informs her in her role as a leader. She was dealing with a situation in which the objectives of her group were specifically targeted through an individual creating mayhem. She found herself getting caught up in this situation:

The point of the story is that I had to try to keep it in perspective, because I found that this was bugging me so much, that it was influencing the others and so they were laughing about it at first and then one of them said to me, “[#8], you're taking this much too seriously”. And I realized that...because... people work so hard, you have to keep people enthusiastic and ... they want to do the job that they're doing. We were looking after this [difficult situation] anyway as best we could and so, it sort of taught me that when you're in a tight situation you can't get diverted (line 2156-2164).

This dimension of leadership informs Participant #31 about how to behave in leadership:

You have to be careful in some senses in your leadership position, the professional persona enters the door, but if I'm having a bad day who cares (laughter) you know, I have to be there for them not, I can't be with my ego.

Be conscious of the Power of Your Information. Of the second facet of awareness of your effect, the responsibility to be conscious of your influence in the situation #18 and #19 discuss the need to be conscious of the information that you impart to people. #19 notes that you need to be aware of whether you are talking for your own benefit or whether this is something others need to hear. #18 talks of the vulnerability of the group when they are powerless to affect a situation.

I mean some things you don't tell people, I used to have to tell my colleagues "Do not tell them that the (situation is extreme) because they're going to panic, these people are (vulnerable), they can't do anything about it so tell them that we're fixing it or doing whatever." It wasn't ever a lie, but it was, (pause) sometimes too much information is too much information for people and you have to be able to gauge how much they need to know that's going to give them the alert that you want them to be careful about something, but not scare them to death because they have no control. I have all the control. So you can't scare someone and say "oh and by the way you have no control" that's just self defeating (line 212-220).

In a separate situation Participant #12 describes her intervention 6 weeks from taking on a difficult situation. Over 6 weeks she lays the groundwork for a radical change which she effects in one day. She describes it as pulling off the “band aid” quickly:

A...There was lots of fear, there was lots of fear... at- not necessarily the level underneath me, but the level underneath...my leadership team, that's where the fear was

Q: Real uncertainty of what was going to happen

A: Yeah, uncertainty about what was going to happen, lots of speculation. But I did it very quickly so there wasn't that speculation for a long time...I went through it quickly, so I eliminated the 16 positions within a day.

Finally, in a contrasting example, there are those moments in leadership where the leadership initiatives are sufficiently shocking that the response is total silence as described by participant #17. In her situation the initiative was met with silence but what ensued was a transformation in the way that the difficult situation was addressed. She comments simply that she was glad she did that.

Be conscious of feedback regarding your capacity to build trust. Of the third aspect of consciousness of your effects, consciousness of feedback regarding your capacity to build trust through availability to people, Participant #31 discusses the consciousness of effects with sensitivity for the people he leads. He describes his awareness of the power of his look or his voice in shaping the response that he gets. He relates the story of becoming angry with one group and then noticing the hesitance of an ensuing group based on lingering non-verbal behaviors.

He also notes that people seem to have a sixth sense about whether or not he's very busy. He gauges this awareness on whether the people he leads ask to speak with him for five minutes, whether they ask for a minute or whether they ask for a second. He says he knows that he looks very harried when they ask for only a second. His response to these indicators varies.

Participant #1 similarly talks about being in a difficult situation and being able to address it by being direct

I got reviled by a few people, I mean...I can go straight to them and talk to them and deal with it and not take it to heart. When I need to be bold with these kinds of conflicts...I can. I can just go straight in and ...restore some trust...when I need to (line 622-626).

4.4.2 Leading in Difficult situations: What you are doing

The second voice in this section includes themes that outline the activity of leadership in difficult situations. The meaning units within this voice came largely from the participants' stories of their experiences through difficult situations. It was interesting that while the introduction to the stories and the discussion of the outcomes of the stories were rich and textural, the discussion of the middle section of the stories from which the meaning units in this section were taken, was functional, expressed in more behavioral terms than the other voices.

4.4.2.1 Exert yourself to be involved with people

Participants: #7, #8, #11, #12, #18, #25, #31, #48, #53, #57, #58, Total: 11/14

As the title suggests, this theme describes the responsibility of the leader in a difficult situation to exert yourself to engage and be involved with people. It is very much a core activity of the work of leadership.

Intentional engagement The participants place a significant emphasis on putting themselves out to engage with people through actions such as: connecting with people where they are at, remembering people's names, using language that people can connect with, having the time and taking the time with people, doing good works. Participant #53 says "Make yourself available and communicate, and leadership is inspiring people and you inspire them so that they will be calm in their work and feel that that's (engagement in work is) a good idea" (Participant #53, line 165-167).

Care for people. At a broader level you extend yourself to people by taking care of them. You take care of staff, pay them well and look after them. In general you want to make people feel valued. "You have to make every [person] feel valued and important, you have to generate a huge feeling that you're all working for the same end" (participant #48, line 292-294). The participants describe that you need to provide freedom to the people around you to be who they are.

Be a positive force. You need to be a positive force in relationship to people. To do this you need to let them know how much you appreciate what they're doing. Give them a reason to believe. On the other hand, you need to allow them their negative responses and

look for them to respond to your positive direction as a leader. To this end you also want to line up the leadership objectives with the interests of people.

Keep people informed. A significant area of engaging people is making sure that everyone is well informed. As appropriate, hire consultants to aid this process. You need to be able to identify and communicate the goal clearly so that people know your objectives. To this end it is important to ensure that the executive are educated regarding the problems and the possibilities. Along the same lines of keeping people informed it is relevant to provide lots of warning of changes so that people can respond to and get used to the idea.

Actively invite feedback. Actively invite feedback from people. This is for the purpose of growing your own ideas and understanding, but it is also in order to get their buy-in to the initiative. Participant #57 provides an illustration saying: “Look are you with me, if you can you tell me where the holes are in my argument, push back, because what I want to do is figure out the best way to go, and if I don’t know where the pitfalls are, I don’t know that” (line 117-120). Similarly, when people are hesitant invite them to get involved in a dialogue with you about it “I don’t want you to take it on if you’re not going to do it...It’s okay. Do you want to do something else?” (Participant #57, line 530-535).

Provide choices. With jobs that people loathe invite them and give them choices: “we need this it’s really important, and it’s the toughest thing to get people to do, if you love (doing this) we need you there...But you know if it’s something that you’re going to dread and not do, let’s not. If I get desperate can I count on, can I call you?” (Participant #57, line 548-554).

Lobbying, persuading, demonstrating. In some situations it is relevant to use lobbying, persuasion and demonstration and laying out the pros and cons with people. “I will do everything if I have to but it would be nice if you would cooperate with me” (Participant #31, line 1628-1629). At times engaging people requires cajoling, you cajole people by laughing them into cooperation.

Wade into the difficulty. When there are difficulties you need to wade right into the difficulty rather than laying back. In a conflicted situation, you try to understand and connect with people. Participant #8 describes this in the following quotation:

I tried quite hard, between meetings, to get to know these people better because I didn't know the other side very well. I tried to get to know them and tried to appreciate their point of view-that they had been in charge and they did know a lot more than we did, and asked their advice and try to chat with them and that sort of thing and then in the committees try to, you know not, not take all the limelight and stuff. They probably didn't realize that we were trying hard to cultivate them a little bit you know (Participant #8, line 1914-1931).

An alternative method of dealing with people in opposition to your leadership is in the words of Participant #11 is by ‘killing them with kindness’.

4.4.2.2 The Exercise of Personhood.

Participants: #7, #8, #17, #18, #19, #31, #48, #53, #58, Total: 9/14

The task of ‘who you need to be’ that the participants identify includes: confidence, honesty, personal strength which includes tenacity, hardiness, resilience and the ability to compartmentalize, integrity by which is meant ethics with action, authenticity, self monitoring and self awareness.

As an overview, this section begins with a quotation from Participant #53 regarding effective leadership through difficult situations: “Well, it’s a case of mainly trying to function in an environment where you have a peaceful mind and a calm heart and you try and find as much time as you can dealing with difficult situations” (#53, line 31-36).

Confidence. Confidence in one’s leadership through difficult situations is a necessary tool. As an example, according to Participant #53 “the leader has the confidence to say ‘You’re keen about it, you take this, you pass the motions and you’ll be the point person for that’” (line 721-723). A facet of confidence is what Participant #7 and #25 discuss as the need to see that you cannot control it all. According to Participant #7:

Working with people and in complex situations [with] complex relationships among individuals and institutions... you can’t necessarily control it all...And that’s sort of an aspect of leadership which is interesting, you don’t know and you can’t talk about it necessarily...Being a leader doesn’t mean controlling things (#7, line 315-325).

Honesty and transparency. Participant #18 talks about honesty and transparency as the capacity to stay “straight, stable and forward” (#18, line 755). In part she indicates that this is a practical approach “Well, it’s easy to be truthful because then you don’t have to remember what you said” (#18, line 767).

Honesty has to function with conscientiousness regarding the vulnerability of the people you are leading including the propensity to say things that would serve a more personal interest. In part, the value of honesty says Participant #19 is that it is a positive energy, it is undeniable. People can see honesty and consistency in the behavior of leaders. When they know what they’re getting they can trust that leadership and get behind it. Honesty is a core variable for participant #53 who sees phoniness as a significant impediment to leadership even though it is regularly seen. According to Participant #53;

Be yourself, be honest, be yourself and don’t try and play games, you’ll get tripped up because you will, suddenly they will see you as one personality, and here’s another personality and “He’s acting different, where’s the real (participant #53), can we look in the heart of this guy, I mean what makes this guy tick?” (#53, line 217-220).

Personal Strength. Participant #18 describes the need for tenacity to see something through. Participant #19 talks about the need for Leaders to be resilient and hardy. For him, leaders need to have the capacity to weather storms for people.

When trouble hits um it’s that leader who you know metaphorically is really able to stand up and um help people and help the organization or help people who are the organization find their way collectively through metaphorically

through this fog or this earthquake...in Japanese the same word for confidence is the same word for earthquake ... when you're confident you say ...I have confidence, I have earthquake. (Line 78-88)

One facet of this personal strength is the capacity to compartmentalize things. Participant #19 gives the example of Bill Clinton's continuation in the presidency through the public scandal with Monica Lewinsky. In #19's view, Clinton's ability to disentangle his leadership and his private crisis is a significant accomplishment especially given that his private crisis was publicly played out on account of his leadership role.

Integrity: Ethics with action. Participant #58 says that integrity, by which he means ethics combined with action is essential in effective leadership. He notes that the task of implementing ethics and action takes patience, courage and humility through leadership in a difficult situation. In his leadership feedback is sought after, in contrast to a command and control style of leadership. The following quotation illustrates the situation:

It's the learning on the individual's part, but there's a learning on the part of the group of people that you're trying to communicate with. If they've gone through four generations (of command and control leadership) and...someone with fifteen to twenty years of learning will have some pretty clear ideas on, on what they believe in.

Q: Right. And then the challenge is, I'm guessing, leading with this humility and courage.

A: Yeah Absolutely....You're on your own with it, you have to have the patience, and ... the fortitude to see that through. And whether you're willing

to see that through, when the easiest way is usually to just clean the slate and start from the beginning. But if you can't clean the slate, then how do you actually see that through (#58, line 240-268).

Authenticity. Participant #48 comments "Leadership to me is not...just showing you know that you're able to do a job. It's, it's the day-to-day stuff of doing it in a warm compassionate, caring way, you know?" (#48, line 2059-2061).

Participant #31 indicates the personal challenge of being authentic:

I thought "Okay, here's the defining point because I don't know anything about this work, I don't know if it's good, bad or ugly" you know. And so I said to her "Well I can tell you're upset, but I quite frankly don't know whether this is good work, average work or terrible work" and I thought "Okay, now she's going to kick me out or she's going to teach me" and she said "you come with me"...so the staff taught me quite a bit about the specifics. (#31, line 621-643)

The challenge to be authentic can be very complex as a result of the subtleties of leadership. Participant #53 describes a situation in which as a public leader he attended a memorial service which was attended by many socially vulnerable people, as well as the media, and political figures. Participant #53 had been asked to bring greetings from a mayor.

I didn't do it because that would be grandstanding, taking opportunity of everything and people say oh [Mayor] said give them my regards, well if I spoke I would have, but I didn't want to speak and the TV still covered me and I was on the news and whatever there was cameras there and naturally

they sort of picked me up, but... it just would not be good for [Mayor] or good for me. This is a sobering kind of event. There's a lot of damaged people, people in wheelchairs, people with canes, totally addicted or had been addicted for 20 years and [the deceased] got them out of it and I stand up and say "I'm [#53] and I'm here and greetings from [Mayor]. They're saying "[Mayor] phoned [#53] and said go down and get me some brownie points". I said, "If you felt serious about it [Mayor] you should have been there, if you can't be there I'm not going to do that" so I didn't mention his name, I didn't speak. I think that's sincerity, that's honesty, that gets tremendous respect from those people. "This guy came here because he knew [the deceased]". I worked closely with [the deceased]... and so we had private talks and I had a feeling for the guy. I'm there for him, I'm not here for [mayor] or a bunch of political stuff. (Line 253-268)

Self Monitoring. Participant #48 describes the challenge of becoming extremely angry.

The worst thing is, is to lose your cool and to lose your temper and really tell that person that they're doing things wrong which puts everybody's back up and probably makes people more entrenched in the way they do things than otherwise. (Line 101-104)

The objective she says is to keep your eye on what your purpose is without being swayed by other people's negative behavior.

Self Aware. Participant #53 for example comments that you need “a personality where you’re sensitive to shifting and changing within your personality, to keep the morale up and production up” (#53, line 773-777). Participant #19 says that most of the time, leaders don’t get this responsibility to be self aware and to have humility. He discusses that one demonstration of being self aware is surrounding yourself with people who complement your strengths. You exercise self awareness so that you can minimize your mistakes.

The biggest thing about the process of leadership is you know you make mistakes and most of the mistakes that are made I would submit are mistakes that are made from a lack of self awareness, and a lack of listening, and a lack of drawing on those intangibles...Most important in making decisions...[is] listening to yourself, understanding where you are at a particular time and from a leadership standpoint that’s absolutely critical (#19, line 749-754).

This self awareness is closely linked to the consciousnesses that are discussed in the next two sections.

4.4.2.3 Push back

Participants: #7, #8, #11, #18, #31, #48, #53, #57, #58, Total: 9/14 participants

One of the tasks that the participants described was the process of pushing back, or being consistent regarding their goals. Participant #48 provides a glimpse of the task: “How you handle a difficult situation is primarily you try, and in the gentlest way, but firmly, educate people as to how they would like to be treated if they were in the same place”. This section is divided into a number of descriptors with examples taken from the participants’

stories. These descriptors include: Consistency, Insistence, Persistence, Set limits, Endurance, Determination. Finally, pushing back against authority can be defining regarding outcomes.

Consistent. Pushing back is about being in the difficult situation and being consistent regarding process, standards, expectations whatever the leadership direction is that has been taken. Participant # 11 comments “I just couldn’t within myself say ‘Oh yeah let’s just appoint this person because that’ll shut them up.’ Because then I think you’re just opening the flood gates.” There are a number of examples that the participants provided: Standing up to people in authority over you when they are feeling pressured to relent. This may escalate to a yelling match. Another part of this situation is approaching the people who are putting on the pressure and providing them with the information relevant to proceeding in a manner consistent with the leadership direction. This is an invitation to these people to become informed and participate.

As another example, Participant #58 talks about following through on creating a community of leaders by providing literature and engaging conversation which models the learning environment he is interested in.

Insist. Participant #57 describes a situation in which, despite a lack of existing technology, she, as a Board Chair, insisted that this technological innovation be absolutely ruled out before taking a less desirable (though the technology existed) option. She noted that on this occasion having the power of the role of being the Chair was useful in creating a notable outcome, though she describes that power as “perilous”.

If you're the Chair it's huge. It was really interesting to me, you can almost do whatever you wanted because you were the Chair. It didn't matter if people didn't agree with you, and maybe that's why I think that is so perilous because it's slightly oppressive... the organizational structure gave me enough leverage to push something that the other people were maybe not quite so inclined to do. (Line 1892-1910)

In another situation, insisting means demanding that appropriate behavior is used. Participant #11 relates confronting partners in an organization about the unacceptable behavior of another senior member of the organization who was not being addressed for unacceptable behavior within the organization. Participant #18 describes demanding that a team member follow through on what she has agreed to do.

To precipitate change, Participant #18 allows people to experience the consequences of their apathy. She compares her approach to that of a predecessor.

She liked to micro-manage things I think, I like to let people drown. So I drop them off the edge into the deep end and say "You know what, that project is hinging on you, if you want to let it go, let it go and then we'll let the [supervisor] know and chips will fall where they may." No-one is going to get fired, that's the problem, there's no repercussions so it's just self-respect is the repercussion, it's interesting. (Line 397-401)

Persist. Participant #58 talks about needing to have courage in telling authorities that, while what they are looking for is not happening immediately, the process is building and there is not as yet the strength to complete the change they are anticipating.

Similarly, be persistent regarding the relevance of your action to the problem at hand. This can be a joyless role as when #18 talks about “doing the checklist” in a passive aggressive environment. When people are feeling ruffled, continue to methodically make your case with them.

Participant #31 provides an illustration of persistence:

According to the case, which is ethically all I can go on ... otherwise I'm on a very slippery slope ethically, the other cases... were very much equal to that. My personnel committee...supported it, I supported it, the procedure is then you take it to the [supervisory] committee, they rejected it. I said “Well that just means I haven't made the case to you properly yet then, tell me what else you need.” I kept coming back to them and it was like a dog with a bone I wouldn't let it go (line 1990-2004).

Set Limits. Another facet of pushing back is defining the limits of one's work to facilitate effective attention to the assigned leadership task. #58 puts this as simply not taking too broad of an approach to addressing a difficult situation.

Endure. It is important to stay focused on your role and work through the difficult situation.

For Participant #48, endurance also refers to Leadership by example for 6.5 to 7 years based on a moral conviction of the right thing to do. Her moral conviction was eventually supported by law and became the standard for performance within that working context.

That's what I did for seven years, even though I got a lot of criticism for it..., there was a lot of anger and there was a lot of, well,... what I was doing was

[deemed] unnecessary, [people indicated that] it made [the projects] longer than they should be...Interestingly enough, not only because of me, but because of the Courts that's the way things are done now. But it added a huge amount of angst. (Line 1074-1087)

Determination. Do an excellent job on the given leadership project. Also, follow the project through to the end. #17 talks about how abandoning a project part of the way through can be a very negative influence to the people in every facet of a difficult situation.

While determination is important, the outcomes are not necessarily successful. Participant #8 talks about rallying courage with a group of peers to push back against a domineering boss for the re-institution of a supervisor. She describes this as a very difficult situation that did not meet with success. Similarly, Participant #53 talks about confronting an influential Board with a well supported initiative and laying out his case to them. What he encountered was a protective refusal to entertain his case. His experience was that there was less and less communication possible in this situation to the point that over several months efforts at communication were abandoned.

4.4.2.4 Working with the Team

Participants: #1, #7, #11, #12, #18, #31, #48, #58 Total 8/14

This theme is about facets of what makes the team work and it includes both the characteristics of the team members themselves and the leaders work and observations in shaping the team for effectiveness. The term 'team' in this theme is very diverse and may include: Members of groups meeting to resolve a conflict, a leadership team intended to

revive an ailing organization, a group of people that is required to demonstrate its relevance within the organization, a team that undergoes a refining process by the leader, the orchestration of people around policies for change. Essentially it refers to the group of people who are required to work together to achieve an objective, this would include the people that the participant is giving leadership to, as well as the people the participant is required to give account to.

Assess and shape the Team. First of all you need to be able to assess the team as it is and make the necessary changes through hiring and firing. Your objective is to design, and construct an effective team. To do this you need to be sure that the team players are the right people to address the issue, that is, they have both the professional skills and the right resources.

There are hiring and firing decisions to be made, not uncommonly, in re-constructing an organization.

Participant #12 provides a glimpse of working to shape the team:

I went through and I identified ... who I thought my key leaders were going to be underneath me and I ... talked to them. Then we went through and designed the new department together.

Q: How do you pick these people out?

A: Ah partly it was through ah interviewing.

Q: Interviewing on the premise of “ah I just need to talk to you find out how you fit in the department or...”

A; Yeah, “What do you want to do, what do you really like about your job, what do you not like about your job”... just sort of basic things and “what have you done.” Just sort of basic but very casual interviews. There was some I knew right off the bat that would not um survive um and I made the conscious decision that I would have a vacant spot before I would fill it with a poor leader. So even if ...I had nobody to actually fill the spot I would go with a vacant spot and eliminate the individual that was currently holding it.

Q: What’s that thinking about?

A: It’s too hard to, it would be too painful to manage a poor manager. It’s easier to have a vacant spot, let the department slide a little bit and find a replacement.

Q: So you kind of had already a sense of direction, a sense of what you wanted to make happen in terms of...

A: Oh I worked with people... I had to identify some key people that knew enough so that we could figure out what, what was required, looking at it very objectively, not the people but just this is what’s required. (Line 435-464)

With an organization that’s in trouble, it is difficult to build the team you want to because you have to be able to finance it to get really good people. In some extreme cases, you may need to build a team that will build the team to revitalize the organization. With an effective team however, the situation can resolve or change quickly.

Keep the team informed. With the team established you need to keep people informed of what is happening, what is necessary, and what they need to do in order to be successful. Keeping people informed about the leadership direction is a significant portion of the work repeated by many participants.

Protect the team from extraneous negativity. You need to protect the team from negative rumors or the intimidation of outside authority figures. On the other hand, while you are supportive of the team you also need to maintain the capacity to engage corrective action as necessary.

The team has a personality. You need to function in the awareness that a team of people has a personality to it. One of the rhythms within a team is that new leadership ideas are commonly met with irritation and resistance. Participant #31 notes that this is a normal phase of a change process. Within the team those people who are most alive, that is, most conscious of the forces at play within the group are observed to be the ones who can contribute the most meaningfully. Still, it is the task of the leader within the group to facilitate awareness of the processes within the group.

Summing up many of these ideas, Participant #11 provides an illustration of the dynamics of the team that seem to broadly represent what several participants have expressed:

I set this system of how people would be appointed, which it's not rocket science. It's basically, you look at the organization, you look at what their strategies are, you look at what kinds of tough issues they are going to be dealing with, and you choose people... that will be able to help them think

through what those tough issues are. Provide mentorship to their leader, to the leaderships, the CEO and the Senior Executive, and that will provide oversight. ... And so you have to get a mixture; a team of people that can provide all those skills and they need to be able to work well together. So we can't have three bull-moose leaders, we have to have different styles ... on a team.

Q: What was that word you said? "Three..."

A: Bull-moose's...Egos. The guys who just want to "Look at me, I'm the guy that has the idea, I know what needs to be done, I don't need to talk to anybody and I don't need to discuss it with you, and I'm not interested in your ideas". We, we can't have in fact you really wouldn't want any of those people in a group. There's a real team dynamic that you have to build as well, thinking about the personalities. So the skills and the background that they have are important and also the personalities and how they'll work together as a team. Because in that setting, it is only a team sport, you. You don't act individually, you only act as part of a team. (Line 895-932)

The team is core to implementing effective change. Participant #58 has experienced the team as core to implementing effective change and he observes that an institutional structure that limits or stops the leader's freedom to shape an effective team through hiring and firing is one of the big challenges in leadership. The objective is to show the team how to be leaders and how to run the organization. On the other hand, participant #58 also discusses

that a strong leadership team is characterized by the capacity to handle anything that comes up:

To be able to maintain an organization, I think you really have to have an ability to create enough leaders that can take that organization through and move it through, no matter what you're doing (line 325-327).

4.4.2.5 Employ Leadership

Participants: #1, #8, #11, #12, #19, #57, #58, Total: 7/14

Don the Role of the Leader. Donning the role of a leader is of particular importance as a strategy at certain points. In order to get numbers of people moving, you have to show leadership in the sense of becoming that public stereotype of leadership. In new situations, you have to demonstrate to people that you have that capacity to lead and you need to do this within a short period of time. In a conflicted situation you assume leadership because you have to give people direction, someone to look up to and a reason to believe in an outcome. In re-constructing an organization you need to take that authoritative role to make decisions about who can be leaders with you through the change process.

Keep people focused in the right direction. The role of the leader can be used at times to keep people focused in the right direction. Participant #8 describes a situation she observed in which a leader diverted a meeting from focusing on a problem that would consume the meeting by stating that the situation is being effectively handled. He then refocused the meeting on the issues that could be addressed within the group. #8 comments on how effective this approach is because the ability of the group to proceed and be

productive is enabled by the leader's use of their influence in the group rather than allowing the group to be consumed by a situation that they cannot affect through this meeting.

Lead the action. The leader is also the person who risks putting out their perspective of where the group is going and then inviting feedback on that process. The leader is responsible then to initiate shared visions and common values.

One of the contemporary ways of building visions for organizations, is that you should develop shared visions and common values. So to do that, the leadership begins that process and says "Okay, here's my concept of where I think we should go" and they throw that out on the table, [for] the community that they're trying to lead. Depending on what the community comes back with, or often, what the community comes back with will not be what that initial leader was believing in, and where they wanted to go, and this is where the courage and the humility has to take place for the leader. They have to be able to say, one way or another what are the values (#58, Line 81-91).

Along similar lines, the leadership task of delegating work to other people is identified as needing the courage because you can't do it all yourself.

Participant #58 provides a summary of the work of leadership through a difficult situation: "be prepared, be professional, have a vision, look at other options, be able to communicate effectively, understand what's going to motivate the different groups around you."

4.4.2.6 Orchestrate a validating and successful Process

Participants: #8, #12, #19, #48, #53, Total: 5/14

Cultivate a process through the difficult situation that will be validating and successful. To this end you need to take the time to go through a process towards effecting worthwhile outcomes. Elements of this process include framing policy in a way that is maximally clear, unfettered by clauses that compromise simplicity or clarity of intention. Secondly, it is relevant to focus beyond an efficient strategy in order to cultivate something worthwhile and enduring.

Organize the work into manageable pieces so that you are not overwhelming people. Visualizing the job can help to break it down into manageable pieces. Maximize peoples' chances of success, for example, make sure that their job fits their declaration of what they can do.

Finally, aim for a good experience "If they have a good experience they'll be back" (Participant #8, line 712).

4.5 Critical Incident Categories

The following discussion outlines the results of the CIT analysis which addressed the research questions: *What helps (and what hinders) in the experience of leadership through difficult situations?* The portion of the interviews that addressed these questions yielded 88 helping incidents and 45 hindering incidents for a total of 134 incidents. Of the 134 incidents, 17 had to be followed up with 4 of the participants and another 10 needed supporting evidence in terms of either their importance, or the results of the incidences. These were

addressed during the second interviews. Further, there was one deletion and 3 additions of incidents in the second interviews.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the incidents were placed into categories that emerged through the analysis process. Using the guidelines for CIT analysis given by Butterfield et al. (2004) a minimum rate of 25% of the participants was required for each category. With 14 participants a minimum of 3.5 that is, 4 participants were required for each category. The following table summarizes the Helping and then the Hindering incidents for the 5 categories. There were no hindering incidents in the category entitled “other characteristics”.

Table 4.3 Chart of CIT: What Helps and Hinders in the Experience of Leadership through Difficult Situations

Categories	Total N=28	%	Helping Incidents			Hindering Incidents		
			Partici- pants N=14	%	Number of incidents N=89	Partici- pants N=14	%	Number of Incidents N=45
Experienced, Principled, Self Aware, take one's time	n=22	79%	n=12	86%	n=27	n=10	71%	n=14
Interest and skills in relating with people	n=21	75%	n=11	79%	n=21	n=10	71%	n=15
Supporting People and Influences	n=17	61%	n=12	86%	n=22	n=5	36%	n=6
Vision or Perspective	n=13	46%	n=6	43%	n=8	n=7	50%	n=10
Full engagement	n=8	36%	n=8	57%	n=11	n=0	0%	

4.5.1 Experienced, Principled, Self Aware

There are 12/14 Participants and 27 incidents in the helping column of this category entitled Experienced, Principled, Self Aware, Take one's time. There are 10/14 Participants and 14 incidents in the Hindering column of this category. The incidents in this category express the participants' identification of the need for experience and self awareness and a manner of deliberate process in the role of leadership through difficult situations. As may be expected the incidents in this category include comments about being experienced such as: maturity; being respected for being a truly seasoned individual; having leverage. The incidents also refer to having a level of self awareness or self monitoring such as: integrity; self awareness; maintaining connections to why I'm involved; not feeling that you are devalued by acknowledging that you don't know; having strong core values; having the

capacity to learn from your mistakes. From a premise of self awareness the incidents identify the need to be principled or disciplined. Incidents include; holding yourself in accordance with leadership in a sincere and genuine way; Work ethic; have a positive attitude; I've never seen the point in becoming angry when other people are; I can present as organized, competent and together though I feel differently.

Finally the deliberate approach suggested in this category is expressed in incidents that reflect the need to take your time: take time, think it through, be ahead of the issues; be prepared; be able to constantly evaluate your environment and do it. The outcomes of these incidents have to do with the participants having a sense of confidence, leverage and motivation within the difficult situation. It is also associated with the capacity to garner people's trust.

Participant #17 provides a quotation that exemplifies this category:

So, I think exposure is vital. And exposure to what a lot of people aren't used to as experiences. Getting to know how the other side lives, or whatever, but it's their real life. Knowing how other people actually manage, and ... that comes with an intimacy that's going to be borne out of, one of your good words is trust, but [my word would be] relationships. ... Actually, being open to someone who may make you really uncomfortable, may make you angry, may really upset you because they're blowing all your, or blowing some of your conventional wisdoms. And I really think what defines a leader when it's getting right down to it is the, ability to take conventional wisdom,--and some of it's very deeply felt, because it's part of your hard-wiring-- and being

prepared to look at it and say, "Is it valid? Has it worked for more people than you meet in my crowd?" (line 1472-1497).

What hinders within this category is what the participants identify generally as lack of experience, lack of self awareness and situations that hinder principled practice. Incidents in this category include; lacking self confidence; Self doubt; lack of experience; lack of judgement; lack of time; getting distracted, losing focus momentum and energy; you make the mistake of thinking you're an equal; not being fully aware of your shortcomings. The outcome of these incidents is that the participants are thrown off their focus in leadership or they may make big mistakes. Self awareness is significantly linked by the participants to the potential to make mistakes. Participant #19 talks about how it's ok to make mistakes, but he also comments that big mistakes can be very costly.

Self awareness right, I mean a lack of self awareness-- ...It's very funny somebody can say something to me and I'll go "Oh no no no" and I'll say it with all the conviction and self knowledge in the world. But I'm actually wrong ... If a person's wearing blinders and doesn't realize they're wearing blinders that's the dangerous thing. And so what I was saying with Mr. Bush is that he completely misunderstands what strength is about I think. Strength to a certain degree, is the ability to admit you've made a mistake. From a political standpoint perhaps you get beaten up too much by admitting you made a mistake. Nobody ever can admit they make a mistake because, the sound bite is ...[played] over and over and over and over again. So it's easier not to [admit a mistake]. Plus that whole stoic sort of mentality. People want to see

that [stoicism] even though they're wrong [about that desire]. But in real life you'd better admit that you're wrong and change it after you are wrong. Pride is an Achilles heel. Ego is an Achilles heel... If your centre is off and it's pride as opposed to something which is more real [that is guiding your decisions], then the decisions that you make are going to be the wrong ones. You can't help it (line 1066-1091).

4.5.2 Interest and Skills in Relating with People

There are 11 participants and 22 incidents in the helping column of this category which is entitled *interest and skills in relating with people*. There are 10 participants and 15 incidents in the hindering side of the interest and skills in relating with people category.

On the helping side, this category includes incidents that indicate both the ability and the inclination to connect meaningfully or purposefully with people. Samples from the helping incidents include the ability to communicate with people such as: honesty that doesn't destroy the working relationship; being an effective communicator; transparency as an aid to communication. The incidents indicate that ability to connect with people who are influential including: establish credibility with key executives through shared values; aligning with successful people; a good networking scheme, This category predominantly addresses the skill and attitude of willingness to be available to people. Such incidents include: take people's wanting to spend your time in stride; emotional intelligence with humility; letting go of control of the team's process; meet people at their level and understand the issue; a tendency not to give up on situations or people; individual

relationships with the people around the table; I've offered quite a bit to take things on; I never mind asking people.

I have provided two samples of quotations from this category. In the first quotation, Participant #8 is discussing an early experience that has enabled her to approach people:

I never mind asking people ...Somebody said to me years and years ago-- I was in a big pickle over a dress actually, a dressmaker let me down, and then she wanted me to go and ask somebody and I said "Oh I can't ask her. " She said, "[#8], if you ask somebody to do something you've made a friend" I say that to myself a lot. (line 2649-2658)

Regarding communication, Participant #12 discusses transparency as a way to connect with people.

It's getting to the point where it's okay to receive feedback and that goes back to that sort of transparency concept right-- It's okay to screw up, right.

[Transparency] helps to get through doing stuff, but it also helps in terms of communication between you and the other person because the other person can then come back and say "You know what, this really isn't working for me" and so then I've got to go back and rethink "Okay, it isn't", so it really enables two way communication (line 463-487)

On the hindering side of this category are those experiences that the leaders identify as limiting their ability to be available and to connect with people. Often these hindrances are the challenges the participants experience from other people. Such incidents would include: Taking it on the chin for other people's screw-ups; I can identify another leader's agenda, but

not manage it strategically; Resentment; small people who are jealous, insecure or small 'p' political people; Working with someone totally different than you; unwillingness of the people involved. The hindrances associated with the interest and skills in relating with people are also characterized by the participants' awareness of their own limitations. Such incidents include: Sometimes I'll take a side; I can be too quick to jump in; you have to earn my trust; I'm not as good a written communicator; not listening or communicating. In general the participants experience the outcomes of these barriers to their engagement with people as limiting in their capacity to provide leadership. There is also dissatisfaction associated with these experiences as in general the participants note that they like to get along with people. As an example of a quotation in this category Participant #17 illustrates the challenge of working with people who are "small people":

I mean small in the sense of jealous, insecure, small "p", political, looking at the next round, looking at ... a [private] necessity that we got to take somebody down. It looks like they have their eye on something else. I don't mean direct, I mean [they're] just watching people maneuver. [They're] taking their position and looking at their own particular barriers to something they want to get done (line 1832-1841).

4.5.3 Support of People and Influences

There are 12 participants and 22 helping incidents in this category. On the hindering side, there are 5 participants and 6 incidents in this category.

The helping side of this category includes incidents that refer to the people and situations the participants experience as a support or a resource in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. Samples of the incidents in this category include people from one's personal life, mentors present or past, professional resource people or colleagues and whatever else it is that one may find a support. Incidents include: A home life to come home to; family; people who are resources for you; having people you respect, can get advice from and talk to; people having confidence that I could do things; following other people; whatever gives you support. The positive outcomes from these incidents are that the participants have a reliable source of support in both their personal lives and in their work. In some cases they have a precedent or a model that in some way refreshes them or gives them a sense of perspective on what they are about in leading through difficult situations. In other cases, they have interested family members or professionals who support them by believing in them when the situation is difficult.

The following quotation from participant #11 elucidates some facets of this category:

So if I say what helped me be a leader, it would be people having confidence that I could do things...So that might have started with my mother, even though she wasn't a business person, ... Whatever I did, I was marvelous in her eyes so it was the positive...She never told me I couldn't do anything, or I wasn't pretty, or ... And then I think in my later life you know [my husband

is] very supportive and there's been other people along the way who have reinforced me... He always told me that I was very capable and helped me put things in perspective, because I would always tend to see the negative things in what I hadn't done, and how I hadn't handled it right, as opposed to how I had handled it right. So I think he really helped me. ...And in my work...this young guy...was always telling me that, "You don't realize, but what you've done is really remarkable." And he, would tell me that all the time. And he'd say, "You know what, whatever you do I'm always going to support you doing what you're doing, because you've done an amazing job, ...you're so good at what you do". And he said, "I've never worked with anyone like you, and I've never had a professional experience like this" ... And you know, [My husband] is more the sort of the "rock", he doesn't tell me what to do, but he basically, he'll help me think it through. If I'm deciding about something, and then whatever I do, he'll just support whatever I do. So I think that people's support has been big.

And then you build a bit, you build that internally, with a bit of a team around you... I mean you're building a whole team. They're not there to build me up. But as part of building that team, it does build you up, because you have people who are like-minded. They're on the same program of what you're trying to accomplish, and so you feel like you've got a bit of an ally there (line 1502-1569).

The hindering side of this category includes those people, those social issues or those realities that hinder the participant's experience of leadership through difficult situations. Examples of the incidents in this category include: gender, often being the only woman; racial prejudice; circumstances, fate the "what if"; not finding other people who have good leadership abilities; processes external to the team's process. These hindrances can be significant in terms of their capacity to undermine or frustrate the leadership objectives. They operate independently of the participant's domain of influence and they have to be worked around.

A quotation illustrating this category is taken from Participant #7:

The external hindered me changing...things. Decisions being made beyond your control that are not necessarily in the best interest of the process, you know, usually at a political level....

Q: So how did it hinder

A: It hindered it by bringing a new set of issues to the table... Changing the mandates of the people around the table that would, you know the, the scope of how they could you know interact universally.

Q: Okay and the outcomes or the results?

A: Having to... start all over again. ...The immediate result is usually anger and frustration, because people are frustrated that all the hard work that they've been doing ... is for naught. It could be anger at the individual or at the event. And then the interim result is that ...you potentially undermine the

willingness ... of people to participate and the process might fall down (line 1686-1789).

4.5.4 Vision, Perspective

There are 6 participants and 8 incidents represented in this Helping category. On the hindering side this category has 7 Participants and 10 incidents.

Helping incidents in this category include those in which the participant is describing their perspective or their vision related to the experience in the difficult situation. Samples of incidents included in this category include: having a strong vision of what I want to accomplish; a real sense of wanting to make a positive difference; belief in the goodness of people; having a perspective that others may not have, keep having that vision; like what you're doing; a personal commitment to the issue at hand. This vision or perspective provides the participants with a sense of direction and the ability to make decisions and stay involved in the process through the difficult situation.

The following is a quotation from Participant #58 who is describing his process of coming to clarity regarding his sense of vision:

You also have to make sure you have the time to sit down... yourself [and] think about where you're going and what you want to do. And I've realized... very recently... that, probably in the interview process leading up...to accepting this job, I went through a lot of that thought process, as to where I wanted to go and what I wanted to do. And I've spent the last six months doing that. But I'm now getting that sense, "Okay now, I'm getting close, what

do I want to do" and I'm finding that I need to get myself focused again, so that I can focus everybody else. It all comes down to that, you know. I really believe that what leadership is, is creating that environment for success. You need to be able to constantly evaluate your environment, and make sure that you are doing that. You can't get your head down so far that you're not paying attention to what's going on...

Maybe it's all the training that I've had, or wherever it's come from, but I think I have that natural [sense], or I have that alarm. It's almost like it's gone off and it's time for me now to get myself sorted out (line 1194-1233).

The hindering incidents in this category represent those limitations the participants identified that affect the capacity for vision or perspective. Samples of incidents in this category include: a philosophy of don't wait for other people just do it yourself; not being good at planning the details of certain goals or objectives; getting swayed by other people's agendas rather than looking at the big picture; lack of courage in taking risks; leaders who show no leadership; too broad an approach impedes forward movement; I tend to get bored with a job.

Participant #31 illustrates this theme in discussing the challenge of being swayed by other people's agendas:

Getting swayed by people who have other agendas and sometimes not being quick enough to pick that up, I think I'm better at it now but you know that kind of thing would be hard.

Q: Okay, how do you see that being a problem, that ... linked into lack of confidence then is that right?

A: Well, I don't know if it's linked into lack of confidence as much as perhaps getting into other people's perspectives rather than looking at the broader one (line 738-747).

4.5.5 Full engagement

There are 8 participants and 11 incidents in this helping category. There are no hindering incidents in this category. The participants describe personal characteristics not expressed in the previous categories that they find helpful in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. It was observed that together these characteristics seem to express a manner of full engagement and preserving full engagement. Examples of the personal characteristics that they find helpful through the experience of leadership in difficult situations include: being very competitive; having a personal need for stimulation; oriented to doing new things and learning new things; having a robust sense of humor; hardiness as the ability to compartmentalize; intelligence; having a fair bit of energy; the ability to get distance from the work. It may be observed that this full engagement seems to express a polarity of engagement: on the one hand competitive and oriented to learn, on the other hand able to extract themselves from the situation, and finally, able to be present in the situation without being impacted personally by it. The participants express this full engagement as facets of who they are that enables them to do the work of leadership. Participant #11 for example says that she is very competitive:

I'm very competitive too, that's probably another success factor,... another attribute that either keeps me going, is the competitive side of it.

Q: Are you saying that's ... one of those things that help

A: Yeah, I don't like to lose... But I think I'm ... quietly competitive. I'm not overtly... I won't tell somebody, "I'm in your face; I'm going to beat you"... And my strategy was always to be nice and etcetera, but I'd definitely be working my hardest and I would elicit a lot of information...you know I went in to win, there's no doubt about that (line 1991-1941).

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the findings from the phenomenological analysis and the CIT analysis of the 14 interviews undertaken in the current study. The phenomenological analysis addressed the research question: What is the experience of leadership through difficult situations. It was presented in four voices that were divided into two parts. The first two voices of the phenomenological analysis outlined the underpinnings of the experience of leadership through difficult situations; the Descriptions of leadership and the Lived Experience of leadership through difficult situations. The third and fourth voices of the phenomenological analysis outlined what makes leadership effective in difficult situations. These voices capture the Frame of Reference or Perspective of the participants in difficult situations and what the participants are doing in leading through difficult situations. Finally, the results of the CIT analysis were reported in five categories that addressed the research question: What helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations?

The five categories were (a) Experienced Principled, Self aware, take your time (b) Support of People and influences, (c) Interest and skills in relating with people, (d) Full Engagement, (e) Vision, Perspective.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Chapter Overview

This was an exploratory study within counselling psychology which has examined the experience of leadership through difficult situations and what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The purpose of this final chapter is to situate the findings of the current study within the literature and to draw possible inferences from the results that can inform practice or research. The study has produced a number of phenomenological themes presented in four voices of the experience of leadership through difficult situations and five CIT categories addressing what helps and hinders in that experience.

In the following discussion, the phenomenological analysis and the critical incident categories will be addressed with reference to the professional and scholarly literature in leadership and counselling psychology. This discussion will be followed by summary comments regarding the research and the intersection of counselling psychology and leadership. The implications and limitations of the study will be outlined and finally future research emerging from this study will be indicated.

To begin, the phenomenological analysis will be discussed in three parts: the descriptions of leadership, the lived experience of leadership in difficult situations, and what makes leadership effective in difficult situations.

5.2 Descriptions of Leadership

The descriptions of leadership represent the participants' outline of what leadership is rather than, what is leadership in difficult situations. Since leadership is conceptualized in widely diverse, sometimes seemingly contradictory terms (eg. Sternberg, 2007; Vroom and Jago, 2007), this premise for discussion was considered necessary to situate the discussion of what the experience of leadership in difficult situations is, and what helps and hinders in that experience.

This voice contained four themes. The following discussion will summarize three of the themes with reference to the current literature. The three themes are: leadership as facilitation, leadership as willingness and leadership as organic. A model of the three themes will then be outlined and the relevance of the model to the remaining two themes within this voice will be discussed. The relevance of the model to the dominant models of leadership in the literature will also be discussed.

5.2.1 Leadership as Facilitation

This theme describes leadership as an active effort to support people to become involved towards worthy ends. The terms enabler, facilitator, mentor, leadership by example, educator, role model, example and support are descriptors of the work. The work is underlined by an ability in understanding, attending to and engaging with people to work towards given ends and to foster their recognition of personal strengths. Words that describe the task include being responsible, socially discerning, caring, supportive and motivating. The outcome of facilitation is collaborative work to achieve a remarkable outcome.

The work of facilitation as discussed by the participants is generally well represented in the leadership literature (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes and Posner, 2002; Leonard, 2003; Wheatley, 1999a; Messick 2005). As an example, Messick (2005) elucidates the facilitative process which produces effective outcomes and self respect among followers. Messick notes that the leader is aware that people wish to contribute in a meaningful way. He comments that human beings are oriented to belong and that this “Sociality” (p. 85) is frequently overlooked by leaders. He indicates that leaders make followers feel pride and self respect. He also notes that this transformation in the sense of oneself is a byproduct of achievement and belonging in the group, but he argues this has to do with the leader’s capacity to make people feel valued at a personal level. “I think there is an independent contribution that comes from being treated like a valuable person, from being respected and entrusted to undertake challenging jobs” (p. 86). Messick outlines the importance of real connections with people as opposed to relationships that are instrumental or opportunistic. Messick notes further that followers develop the ability to be self-directed as a result of the leader’s capacity to effectively communicate their vision and the culture of the context. This observation illuminates the participants’ expression of good leadership as a process whereby once the leader gets the process started, it carries itself and eventually leadership holds the capacity to walk away without perceived effect. Further, good leadership generates other leaders.

In the terms of counselling psychology, the discussion of leadership as facilitation is, in the main, readily captured in the work of group counselling. The details of this theme include; the focus on enabling people to become involved, the work of holding a sensitive

awareness and understanding of people, balancing a practice of relational presence with a kind of objectivity, and the notable personal and productive potential in the group's emerging capacity to work together in a collaborative way captures core factors of group work (Borgen et al., 1989; Yalom, 1985). The difference here is the context of the work and the intentionality of the outcome as discussed in the following voice.

5.2.2 Leadership as Willingness to Get Something Done

Leadership in this theme is a willingness to make something worthwhile happen. This theme comes close to expressing leadership as holding a task focus. The participants indicate that they are willing to take risks, to take responsibility for the people they are leading, and that they want to make something happen. This perspective of leadership is based on a sense of the right thing to do and a plan to follow the initiative through. The participants do not reject a leadership role as a means to accomplish their goals, but they also note that it is not the role that makes the leader, it is rather the willingness to do an effective work through leadership. To repeat, their willingness is based on their sense of the right thing to do and an awareness that this is a worthwhile leadership direction. The plan then guides how they will participate in leadership through the unfolding process towards the desired end. Participant #8 also suggests that leaders need an awareness that they have the ability to do it.

The leadership literature does not highlight the motivational premises of leadership as commonly as might be expected, although it is mentioned there (Greenleaf, 1977; Collins, 2001; Wheatley, 1999a). An advantage of the phenomenological analysis of the experience of leadership in difficult situations as presented here is the opportunity to highlight this

dimension rather than setting it within the framework of a whole leadership process where it can be minimized by the more common focus on action, tasks and products. Further, the motivational premises of leadership are not conveyed in the leadership literature as *willingness* as they are in the current study. This is an interesting construction of the premise of leadership expressed by the participants which may bear investigation in future research.

One point that the participants highlight is the challenge of one's willingness to lead within the organizational system in order to enact the outcome in an effective way. The *will* dimension of willingness points to a sensitive point around which the work of leadership is organized. Collins (2001), for example, summarizes the exceptional leader as "an individual who blends extreme personal humility with intense professional will" (p. 21). Leaders need a will to do the work and yet the theme of leadership as willingness captures how they hold this will within the social context that will achieve the outcome. As an example, in the second interview, Participant #57 described further the challenge of pushing at the margins by asking what are taken to be uncomfortable questions about the status quo of a situation. The challenge of asking what the real limits are and trying to affect people's understanding and engagement at those limits is what facilitates change happening. Hackman (2005) captures this challenge of will in his discussion of the capacity of leaders to "make magic" (p. 138) that is, to produce remarkable outcomes. Using the metaphor of the orchestra conductor, he expresses the dimensions of the practice of willingness in the situation.

There are two certain ways team leaders can ensure magic does *not* [sic] happen. One way to go wrong...is to act like a maestro on the podium, body and limbs in constant motion in an effort to pull greatness from an

orchestra...The other way leaders can get it wrong is to do nothing much at all, on the assumption that the magic of teamwork comes automatically and therefore the best thing to do is to stay out of the way. (p. 138)

Fostering notable outcomes within a context Hackman (2005) argues, is not a balance between the two extremes of willing and not willing in the theme, it is the effort to generate the right conditions. He comments:

So what *should* [sic] a leader do to increase the likelihood that a team will have a magical moment every now and then? ...A leader cannot make a team be great, but a leader can create conditions that increase the chances that moments of greatness will occur—and, moreover, can provide a little boost or nudge now and then to help members take the fullest possible advantage of those favorable conditions (p. 139).

What Hackman is indicating here is the importance of using a plan as described by the participants.

From the perspective of counselling psychology, this theme highlights the theories of motivation (Maslow, 1971; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) and systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Shulman Shy, 2006) . What is less commonly within the purview of counselling is the willingness to assume responsibility to enact a worthy outcome in a situation, and the discussion of employing a plan to realize that outcome. Counsellors are certainly willing to facilitate the goals of their clients, families or groups, but to assume responsibility for those goals or to identify within themselves a right or worthy outcome is contraindicated. To put a point on the difference between

the two, where leaders will identify and enact organizational change, or budgetary goals for example, counsellors will focus on the personal process of change for the individuals with whom they are working and this necessitates the ongoing integration of the client's articulation of their objectives rather than the counsellor's intentions for the client. In the best situations, it may be argued that what is shared in the two areas of practice, is the capacity to use personal resources to serve a greater good. In both cases this service necessitates engagement with people to effect a change. It is chiefly this challenge of taking the responsibility for forging a direction that distinguishes leadership and counselling as the participants discuss it and the premises of this difference are foundational in both disciplines.

5.2.3 Leadership as Organic

The participants described leadership as being organic, it emerges within a situation. They also indicated that this quality pertains to both the emergence of a leader within a situation and the emergence of a leadership direction within a situation.

The description of leadership as organic, or emergent within a situation is a recent development in the discussion of leadership in the literature and marks the movement away from the view of leadership as the solitary construction of a powerful figure. Greenleaf (1977) used the term *organic* to indicate the way that people are naturally drawn to leadership as opposed to being coerced under a leadership directive. His meaning captures a sense of the contextual legitimacy of the leadership that the participants express. As outlined in Chapter 2, it is expressed in a range of contemporary models of leadership including:

contingency theory (Avolio, 2007; Leonard, 2003; Vroom and Jago, 2007), ecological systems (Wielkewicz and Stelzner, 2007), complex systems (Guastello, 2007), and chaos theory (Wheatley, 1999a).

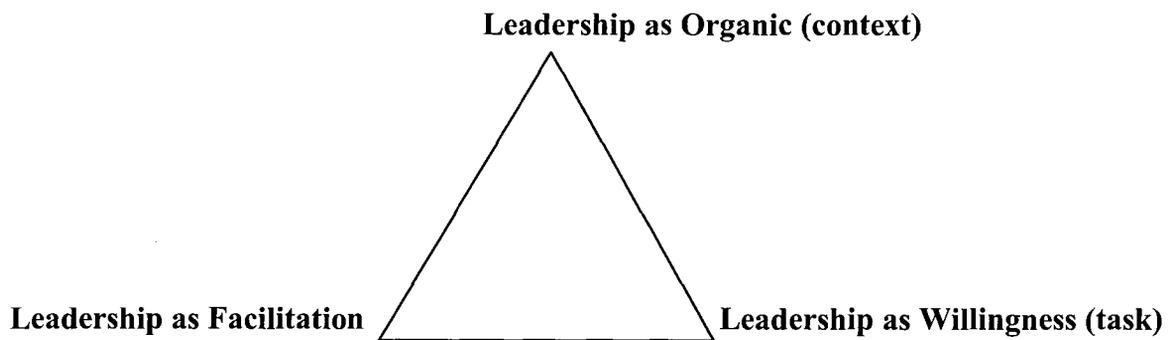
Within this theme leadership is conveyed as an organizational entity that is cultivated in some way by every person or virtually every person within a leadership initiative.

Wielkewicz and Stelzner (2007) for example observe that “Leadership always matters but leaders do not” (p. 605). Similarly, Messick and Kramer (2005) observe that a person need not actually be more influential than others to be seen as a leader. Leadership is conceived to be based more upon followers’ perceptions of influence and charisma than the true skills of the individual. Guastello (2007) sees leadership as an inevitable emergence in situations characterized by “high entropy—strong imperatives to produce a new result, uncertainty about the best ways to interact, and a good deal of unpatterned bilateral interactions among group participants” (p. 607).

5.2.4 Summary and An Illustrative Diagram of Leadership from the Descriptions of Leadership

An illustrative diagram of leadership can be taken from the intersection of these themes. The diagram is a triangle representing the three major themes: leadership as facilitation, leadership as willingness and leadership as organic.

Figure 5.1: Diagram of Leadership



To summarize the previous discussion, Leadership as facilitation describes leadership as a process of engaging and enabling other people to participate towards worthy outcomes. Leadership as willingness expresses the participants' personal inclination to make something worthwhile happen, it captures the way the participants engage a task focus. Leadership as organic removes the work from the individual participant, expressing it as a process within a context.

Considering this diagram, the themes in the bottom two corners, leadership as facilitation and leadership as willingness, highlight the work of the individual leader to effect a process towards an outcome. The facilitation-willingness continuum closely resembles the task and maintenance roles discussed by Northouse (2004) within the leadership literature, and Borgen et al. (1989) from within the counselling literature. Sternberg's (2007) model of leadership that focuses on the individual in effecting an outcome seems to be captured in this continuum.

The third point, leadership as organic, introduces two further continuums. The willingness-organic continuum integrates a task focus as an expression of the contextual

influences. The task emerges from the context, or, the context shapes the task. The organic-facilitation continuum highlights the reciprocal processes of the facilitator-leader and the situational influences that were discussed in the leadership literature in chapter 2 (Van Dierendonck et al., 2004; Dionne et al., 2002). Considering leadership by centering the argument upon the organic description of leadership and extending along these two continuums seems to capture the contingency models of leadership (Vroom and Jago, 2007) with their focus on the primacy of the context in leadership. What the participants have collectively indicated as a profile of leadership has to do with functioning within the triangle as a whole rather than on one or two points of it.

One of the strengths of the diagram is the capacity to represent the divergence observed in Chapter 2 regarding whether leadership is primarily an individual process (Sternberg, 2007) or primarily a contextual process (Vroom and Jago, 2007). Senge (Senge, Wheatley and McLeod, 2001) has already indicated that this division is a paradoxical reality of leadership: “I often say that leadership is deeply personal and inherently collective. That's a paradox that effective leaders have to embrace. It does depend on them. It does depend on their convictions, their clarity, their personal commitment to their own cultivation. And on the other hand, it doesn't depend on them. It's an inherently collective phenomenon” (p. 1). The model provided through the given research provides a means to represent this paradox.

In a manner that further informs the consideration of the diagram, the theme of not leadership is excluded by the phenomenological themes captured in the diagram. Tyrannical leadership, command and control leadership, ego, elevating oneself, a laissez faire approach

and manipulating information do not figure on this diagram. This is in part the delimitation described by the participants. What it suggests however is that the model is underscored by a practice of personal (willingness), relational (facilitation), and contextual (organic) engagement which the negative models of leadership are not based on.

This diagram represents the unique capacity within counselling psychology to capture the normal processes of being and relating that are at the core of this work (Amundson, 1998; 2003; Young and Nicol, 2007).

5.3 The Lived Experience

The themes within this voice taken altogether form a rich and uncommon representation of the lived experience of leadership through difficult situations. Consistent with Bligh and Meindl's (2005) challenge to address the public representations of leadership as a "dizzy" expression of American idealism, this voice expresses leadership in the common language, yet colorful expression of lived experience. The expressions within this voice form a strong demonstration of the vibrant authenticity of the participants both in the genuine expression evidenced in their quotations, and in their articulation of a remarkable range of felt experiences which arguably indicates their high functioning (Gilbert, 1992). Taken altogether, this voice expresses the lived processes of leadership in difficult situations.

The themes of this voice begin with the relational processes of being alone, being able to connect by relying on one's personal resources, being in meaningful connection with the people around one and recognizing one's self as participant within a system. This continuum of relational experience captures to a significant extent the model of the personal, relational and contextual influences of the model of leadership generated in the first voice.

Using a perspective from counselling psychology, this voice expresses a manner of engagement and authenticity in relating.

The remaining themes of this voice: affect, learning, leadership is hard work, it's personal, pushing it through and the limitations in leadership, capture in expressive terms that leadership in difficult situations demands commitment, resilience, hardiness. It appears that leadership in difficult situations is all-encompassing regarding a person's individual resources.

That leadership can be lonely is perhaps best captured in the great stories of leaders, for example the history of Shackleton's journey across the Antarctic (Messick, 2005) or Churchill's leadership of England through the Second World War (Storr, 1996). The loneliness expressed in those stories however is in a manner of legend and does not capture the more commonplace 'normal' lived expressions of the participants. The participants' expression of relationships in leadership held the warmth of engagement in *real* conversation. One may wonder where the meaningful translation occurs from shared experience to the remoteness of legend. Perhaps Storr's (1996) discussion of the tendency to remove teachers to an unattainable position upon a pedestal is meaningful in this regard, though this seems a confusing removal given the tendency of engagement among these participants.

Messick (2005) captures a significant proportion of the participants' discussion within this voice. He highlights the responsibility of leadership to convince people that a difficult goal is in fact achievable. He notes that this capacity begins with the leader's ability to connect to this objective within himself or herself and he discusses the importance of the

leader's capacity to instill optimism in himself or herself in order to foster that spirit of optimism amongst followers.

Messick (2005) observes that the leader receives gratitude and loyalty out of his or her capacity to connect with and facilitate people's participation. Further, Messick describes the manner of relating as a reciprocal process that extends beyond the relationship between the leader and a given follower to foster a willingness to be a support and resource to people outside of the difficult situation.

Self awareness as a means to connect relationally is a foundational understanding within counselling (Amundson, 1998). Similarly, the reciprocal process of the leader-follower (in this instance read counsellor-client) relationship and the generalization of experience into a broader context is understood within counselling in general and group counselling in particular (Yalom, 1985). A central example of these in counselling is Roger's requirement of unconditional positive regard as a premise for the client's capacity to engage with the counselor for the purpose of change (Rogers 1992).

The affective experience described by the participants is captured variously in the literature. Cattila (2000) for example has identified that leaders who have facilitated organizational change find a great deal of excitement and satisfaction leading successfully through difficult situations. The representation of affect in the second interviews seemed an uncomfortable exposure as though there was a risk of compromising the integrity of the participants. On the one hand, the representation of affect forms a rare glimpse into the personal process of leadership. The risk of such a representation however is to misrepresent affect as a core element of leadership in difficult situations rather than an expression of the

lived experience. Participant #57 highlights the manner in which to understand the role of affective processes through difficult situations when she describes how tremendously emotionally challenging and painful some decisions are, and the responsibility of leaders to work through these decisions until they can be understood in cognitive terms. The responsibility to exercise self control in leadership is well discussed in the literature (Goleman et al., 2002). What this theme provides is a representation of what is potentially being managed through leadership in difficult situations. The representation of affective experience in leadership through difficult situations is an indication of how fundamentally grounded the participants are in human experience as well as their access to a broad range of human experiencing. In some ways, it may be considered that this theme suggests the importance of trusted supports and resources as well as the capacity of these participants to be fully engaged in the experiences of life.

In extremely difficult situations, Messick (2005) suggests that one of the roles of leadership is to provide security and protection for followers.

In extreme cases leaders can place themselves in harm's way to protect followers. Less extreme versions of this type of behavior can be seen when executives put their own careers in jeopardy to argue against laying off subordinates...In hostile environments...leaders place their personal well-being at risk to shield their followers." (p. 83)

This was the context expressed by those participants who indicated having suffered the most extreme situations with in some cases a resultant significant personal loss.

Within the literature, some have written that leadership is very much about learning (Avolio, 2007; Bennis, 1989; Hackman and Wageman, 2007). Interestingly, Hackman and Wageman (2007) highlight that ongoing learning in leadership is desirable to keep leaders vibrant. Speaking of a research direction that addresses the issue of how leaders can be helped to learn, they comment:

Ideally leaders would be motivated to behave in ways that foster their own continuous learning from their experiences. ...Continuous learning almost always requires that leaders overcome inherently self-limiting aspects of their existing mental models. Because such models become so well learned that they are virtually automatic, leaders may not even be aware of the degree to which their models are shaping their leadership behaviors (p. 46).

This observation of Hackman and Wageman seems to suggest that learning is not generally continued throughout leadership which seems to be in contrast to the expressions of the participants. Participant #58 however discusses the problem of becoming bored in leadership which makes it difficult for him to stay in the role. It seems possible that this problem is an expression of his appetite for the ongoing challenge of learning. This research may respond to Hackman and Wageman's (2007) question by noting that an appetite for learning can be an indicator of effective leadership.

The theme describing leadership as hard work was a general acclamation of the participants and was all-encompassing in nature. This theme was not directly observed in the literature although it is often assumed. As an example, there is some discussion of the need for leaders to be hardy and resilient for the work (Kets De Vries, 2001).

The personal dimension of leadership is variously integrated into the discussions of leadership. For example, the literature outlines models of personality traits (see for example Sternberg, 2007) that are suitable to leadership. Bresnahan's (2007) discussion of the suitability of attachment theory to the task of drawing together the various perspectives of leadership suggests the link to personal experience. Again, leadership stories commonly illuminate the intersection of personal life and leadership. Cowden's (1999) discussion of Adlai Stevenson for example, represents the effects of a self effacing manner on the trajectory of leadership.

The theme of pushing it through seems to express self efficacy and perhaps also chaos theory. Murphy (2002) discusses that the leader's self efficacy and ego resiliency are meaningful with regards to a leader's capacity to endure through a difficult situation. Kouzes and Posner (2002) comment "Leadership experiences are, indeed, voyages of discovery and adventures of a lifetime. They're challenging explorations under rigorous conditions, and they require pioneering spirits" (p. 174). This perspective on the limitations of leadership captures the resilient manner in which the participants made these observations of the experience of leadership through difficult situations.

Wheatley (1999a) puts a different face on the manner of enduring through difficult situations by looking for a new perspective. Using the perspective of chaos theory, Wheatley illustrates the accepting manner of engaging difficult situations expressed by the participants in the current study. She describes her reflections on an interview with a geologist following a hurricane.

“What do you expect to find when you go out there?”...I assumed he would present a litany of disasters—demolished homes, felled trees, eroded shoreline. But he surprised me. “I expect” he said calmly, “to find a new beach.” Since that night, I have pondered what it would take for me and my colleagues to bring his clarity to our own work, to understand that this world changes, to be curious about newness (p. 137).

The theme of limitations in the experience of leadership is supported in the literature. Price (2003) for example, observes that faulty leadership occurs as a result of a lack of self awareness and sometimes moral judgement. Further, reprehensible leaders are not uncommon (Wielkiewicz and Stelzner, 2007). The limitations of leadership that are rendered by social dynamics of manipulation or complacency point back to the organic, emergent dimension of leadership. Participant #7’s suggestion that in leadership you are dealing with the whims that people have indicates the ongoing relevance of leadership as a result of the continually changing landscape of relations and influences. In essence, “Leadership always matters” (Wielkiewicz and Stelzner, 2007, p. 605). Reflections on the limitations in leadership are employed by the participants in the ongoing process of growing in one’s personal and leadership skills, and in generating further leadership.

Taken altogether this voice captures the personal effort, authenticity, resilience, acceptance, and integrity of the participants in leading through difficult situations (Kouzes and Posner, 2002; Price, 2003). It illustrates the powerful momentum generated by that sense of the right thing to do within the participants’ understanding of the situation. The participants have expressed in this voice how very challenging, at times personally costly, it

can be to negotiate a difficult situation as a leader. They have also indicated that it can be deeply compelling for them by its rewards in learning, relating and success.

The range of lived experiences is neither dwelt on nor minimized by the participants. The participants' experience seems reflective rather of an adaptive orientation in a difficult situation. This is expressed in psychological terms as an optimistic engagement in the difficult situation (Seligman, 1991). Kouzes and Posner (2002) have observed that leaders lived experiences through difficult situations are anything but boring. "Leadership bests are filled with stress. Although people describe their projects as exciting, about 20 percent also call them frustrating, and approximately 15 percent say their experiences aroused fear or anxiety. But instead of being debilitated by the stress of a difficult experience, they are challenged and energized by it" (p. 177).

De Charms (1968) discussion of the striving of Origins seems relevant in this discussion: "Striving within a personally meaningful context has come to be the central core of being an Origin...[for Origins] striving has supplanted a vague notion of freedom." (p. 206). De Charms focuses on the experience of freedom as anticipated by the Pawn and the Origin and highlights the effects of an attitude of striving:

The difference between an Origin and a Pawn does not lie in a personal feeling of freedom vs. constraint. True, the Pawn feels constrained and complains about it. When asked, the Origin may report equal feelings of constraint, but he is not obsessed with them. What is most important in his life is responsible commitment. He strives to visualize his path through the external constraint to the goals that result from his commitment. (p. 206)

De Charms discussion of the Origin in some ways captures Bandura's (1986) later development of self efficacy theory. Certainly there is self efficacy captured in the participants' expression as will be discussed in the following section.

5.4 What Makes Leadership Effective

The remaining two voices of the phenomenological analysis: frame of reference: perspective, and what you are doing, together capture the largely intra-personal and then the contextual-relational processes of leadership through difficult situations. These two voices capture the work of leadership through difficult situations to effect a worthwhile outcome.

It is of note that these two voices express the intra-personal (willingness) and then the relational and contextual processes of leadership in difficult situations. In the presentation of the model of leadership discussed earlier, Senge's (2001) observation of the paradox of personal and collective processes in leadership was quoted. Here, the discussion in two voices of what makes leadership effective outlines the processes whereby this paradox is purposefully engaged.

5.4.1 Frame of Reference Perspective

The first voice of what makes leadership effective in difficult situations is the personal frame of reference or perspective expressed by the participants. The systems dynamics of leadership are downplayed in this theme, which centers around the intra-personal processes of observation, self awareness, appraisal, reflection, the generation of relevant objectives based on a cultivated understanding and the use of personal supports for feedback, guidance and support. experience and action. To review, the themes of this voice

are: being conscious of situational influences; personal understanding and response; generating, aiming for significant outcomes; mastery of the facts; trusted resources for support and feedback; and conscious of the effects of your behavior.

From the models of leadership presented in the second chapter, the themes within this voice align most closely with Sternberg's (2007) systems model which he notes comes from the traits and competencies model of leadership. He discusses that the integration of wisdom, intelligence, creativity and synthesis in his model come together in a process of decision making. In the current study, the qualities that Sternberg outlines are represented within the intra-personal process described by the participants as being an important part of leadership through difficult situations. Intelligence, creativity, wisdom and synthesis within the context, seem to express well the participant's description of a reflective and informed process of understanding and deciding, leading to remarkable outcomes that are tailored to the particular difficult situation.

The two themes of consciousness: conscious of situational influences and conscious of your effects, are captured in Goleman et al.'s (2002) discussion of emotional intelligence in leadership. The use of trusted resources for feedback is captured as one of the CIT categories so is addressed more fully in that discussion.

Stajovic's (2006) discussion of core confidence as a higher order construct captures the autonomous activity of the participants within the array of influences surrounding their leadership. Stajovic has integrated hope, optimism, resilience and self efficacy to form a model of core confidence. He states that "the greater the core confidence, the more likely employees are to accept the goal, be committed to it, and persist on the course of action,

especially in the face of difficulty”. Stajovic also expresses the participants’ observation that their fundamental sense of resonance with the situation provides a sense of direction and tenacity with the difficult situation.

An informative dimension of Stajovic’s (2006) model of core confidence is the active as opposed to passive construction of hope. He discusses that day to day constructs of hope are characterized by a manner of passively hoping something will happen. As a research term however, hope is active. Stajovic writes: “Hope is defined as a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally derived sense of successful: (a) agency (goal-directed determination) and (b) pathways (planning of ways to meet goals)” (p. 1210). This active quality of hope is manifest in the themes of this voice and it is powerful in the unfolding outcomes of the difficult situation.

Beyond Stajovic’s model however is this seemingly curious perspective of the participants in the current study that they operate on the basis of the knowledge that they are “right”. As discussed, this is a core motivation for the participants. De Charm’s (1968) model of Origin may be informative in this regard. De Charms describes the purposes of the Origin as an integration of taking responsibility, commitment and an expectation of striving within constraints. De Charms comments “An Origin sets his goals and determines the actions that he must take to realize the goals” (p. 206). Within this activity De Charms surmises that the sense of being right emerges.

We can speculate that there is a level at which personal responsibility is completely beyond accountability, a level at which the person is free to do as he must because the responsible striving act is meaningful within his goal-

seeking context and no irresponsible act makes sense. At this level a person who has taken responsible action knows he was right no matter what he is told by others, just as someone who has solved a mathematical problem knows he is right. He is not accountable to others, he is personally responsible. (p. 207-208)

This capacity to know what is the right thing to do occurs according to De Charms, within the perspective of personal striving. If this is the premise of the participant's understanding of what is right, then it is based on the participant's significant priority of being actively connected within the situation and with the people who are involved in the situation as will be discussed in the following section. The participants indicate that the sense of what's right, or the resonance with the situation is so foundational to their capacity to engage that it is a determining factor in their capacity to provide leadership in the difficult situation. This point may bear investigation in future research considering the priority of the right thing over and above the expedient thing, the profitable thing or other premises of leadership.

The combination of Sternberg's (2007) wisdom, intelligence and creativity, Stajovic's (2006) core confidence and De Charms' (1968) outline of the responsible action of the Origin together provide theoretical frameworks explaining the capacity of the participants in generating remarkable outcomes. There is a marriage here of skill, discernment, confidence, action, and a commitment to striving and responsibility within a context. The work of generating remarkable outcomes as described by the participants is noted in the literature (Collins 2001).

Collin's (2001) discussion of the hedgehog principle captures the effort of identifying what an organization is good at and cultivating it to produce remarkable outcomes. Sternberg (2007) identifies the merit of wisdom beyond intelligence and creativity in an effective decision making process. What is not provided in the leadership literature however is a representation of the work of leadership in generating a meaningful response in a difficult situation. In the current study, the metaphor of shoemaking captures a meaningful moment in the work of leadership through difficult situations.

From the perspective of counselling psychology this voice represents a rich phenomenological illustration of high human functioning. Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi's (2000) description of the responsibility in psychology to see what's best in human behavior is illustrated here. The premise of the discussion seems to be the capacity for ethical, effective work that is effective because it is a core expression of the participant's thorough engagement in the context. It is as if the participants have surpassed an instrumental approach to the task in order to make the outcomes an expression of themselves. One might compare it to the efforts of an athlete or an artist in the realization of a masterful performance.

The performance however is not achieved unless there is movement within the situation. The second part of what makes leadership effective in difficult situations then, is action based.

5.4.2 What You're Doing

The themes of this voice outline the direct action of the participant in the difficult situation. As stated previously, the themes expressed here are relational and contextual. They are employed to serve a purpose to foster an outcome. It is as if they are the tools of leadership through difficult situations. The themes identified here are: exert yourself to be involved with people; exercise personhood; push back; work with the team; employ leadership; and orchestrate a validating and successful outcome. From the point of view of the literature (Collins, 2001; Goleman et al. 2002; Kouzes and Posner, 2002), these represent some of the various approaches to leadership in difficult situations. Perhaps because these themes are more observable than the other themes captured in the phenomenological analysis, they are well represented in the literature and practice of leadership. There is some suggestion in the literature that they capture diverse strengths and/or various roles assumed by leaders to address difficult situations (Goleman, 2002; Kets De Vries, 2007).

The first two themes in this voice; exert yourself to be involved with people, and exercise personhood, seem to capture foundational necessities in the work of leadership through difficult situations. In the first place, the responsibility to connect with people is such a basic effort of leadership that it is commonly assumed in the literature. Kouzes and Posner (2002) and Wheatley (1999a) for example observe that leadership is a relationship. The participants agree, placing this task as the first theme regarding what you do in leadership through difficult situations.

The participants provide an ethical and transparent self presentation to form a trustworthy public self. This self presentation is an effort of authenticity which Kets De Vries

(2001) describes as an effort of balance between one's intra-personal experience and the social world. Authenticity as he describes it is rendered in a public way. It is the public practice of authenticity then that is a meaningful thread joining this voice called what you do, with the more hidden efforts of the previous voice, the frame of reference: perspective. Messick (2005) notes in fact that people are acutely attuned to authenticity, suggesting the importance and delicacy of this work and the significance of the capacity to connect.

The remaining themes, push back, work with the team, employ leadership and orchestrate a validating and successful process, are also captured in the literature regarding leadership efforts through a difficult situation. Kouzes and Posner (2002) comment "Leadership experiences are, indeed, voyages of discovery and adventures of a lifetime. They're challenging explorations under rigorous conditions, and they require pioneering spirits" (p. 174). The authors go on to summarize five practices of working through a difficult situation: Model the way; inspire a shared vision; challenge the process; enable others to act and encourage the heart. An alignment between these two summaries is readily apparent. Both capture the responsibilities of leadership in leading, relating, setting limits, and providing a meaningful path towards a worthwhile outcome.

Collins (2001) similarly captures many of the tasks indicated within this voice in his discussion of companies that have moved from being good companies to being great companies. He discusses the need to have the right people on the team and to specifically shape the team towards this end. He also addresses the need for transparency on the team.

Collins (2001) addresses the challenge of pushing back in a discussion of the importance of confronting the "brutal facts" (p. 43) and holding on to a conviction of

eventual success. This is not a precise replication of the theme of Push Back except that it captures the tenacity indeed the self efficacy (Bandura, 1986) expressed by the participants with regards to their objectives and their conviction of their actions. Collin's work in fact seems to provide meaning and context to this expression of the participants.

5.4.3 Summary of What Makes Leadership Effective

What makes leadership through difficult situations effective is an active engagement in personal, relational and contextual processes. Such processes are premised upon the participants' sense of resonance and consciousness of influences with the situation. The participants prioritize a personal effort to cultivate this resonance through perception and understanding. From a personal premise of understanding and clarity regarding how to proceed, the participants actively connect with people and work to shape the dynamics of the situation with the explicit intention to orchestrate a validating and successful outcome.

5.5 Critical Incident Categories

The CIT analysis generated five categories which summarize critical practices in the experience of leadership through difficult situation. As will be observed, this is a meaningful complement and an applied rendering of the themes generated in the phenomenological analysis.

5.5.1 Experienced, Principled, Self Aware

The helping and hindering incidents of this category are largely represented as two sides of a coin. For example, what helps is experience and what hinders is the lack of experience. This category supports Bligh and Meindl's (2005) observation that the public

notion that leadership is readily learned and practiced is misleading and undermining of leadership. The category indicates that leadership does not lend itself readily to a quick personal integration of the ability to lead. It is captured in part by Goleman et al.'s (2002) work on emotional intelligence. Further, Collins' (2001) finding of the central importance of personal discipline in the work of a company also reflects the core practices reflected in this category. Collins highlights that the difference between the practice of discipline that has the capacity to generate enduring remarkable outcomes, and the practice of discipline that passes when the leadership passes, is the way that this discipline is exercised. In the companies that realize enduring success, discipline is employed in a manner that enables people to become involved. Such leadership is transformative. In companies that realize significant outcomes that pass with the leader, discipline is practiced upon rather than for people. He seems to express the difference between self-discipline versus social discipline and the related outcomes.

5.5.2 Ability and Orientation to People

Leadership as it is rendered in this category and in the discussion of the phenomenological results is centrally concerned with the inclination and the capacity to engage intentionally with people. This is consistent with Goleman et al.'s (2002) findings regarding emotional intelligence. Interestingly, the participants do not express the ability to be involved with people as a manifestation of an extroverted personality. A number of the participants in fact, noted that they are introverted and make a point of withdrawing in order to recover a sense of bearing. Further, as noted by Collins (2001) extroversion in the form of

a strongly charismatic personality may be contra-indicated in leadership through difficult situations as a strong personality in the leader can limit the confidence of the people on the team to express their perspectives.

The presence of this third category, rather than one that prioritizes technical skill, forms a meaningful challenge to the common practice in the work place of selecting leaders on the basis of their technical skills. This finding also, is consistent with the observations of Goleman (1998) that emotional intelligence is a more meaningful indicator of leadership than is technical skill.

The hindering side of this category captures Participant #7's comment that you have to work with the whims that people have. Again the participants do not function with absolute control. Greenleaf (1977) talks about how there will always be people who are evil, stupid and thoughtless. Leadership does not proceed unimpeded or without constraints (De Charms, 1968).

In this category both the helping and the hindering incidents capture the interplay of the leader and those following as rendered in the contingency theories (Avolio, 2007; Dionne et al., 2002; Vroom and Jago, 2007) the path model of leadership (Leonard 2003) the humanistic model of leadership (VanDierendonck et al., 2004) the ecological systems models of leadership (Wielkiewicz and Stelzner, 2007) and Wheatley's model of relationships (1999a).

One of my experts was concerned that some of the expressions of what hinders in this category sounds like blaming the people who are not responsive to the leadership and suggested I change the quotation in this regard. I decided not to do this however because I

think it captures the hindering experience within the category. Whether it is a limitation of the leader or of the follower or some other factor, it is a real dimension of leadership and one expressed as what hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations.

5.5.3 Supports and Influences

This is a notable third category as it is minimally represented in the leadership literature in a direct way. This category is very close to the phenomenological theme of engaging trusted resources for support and feedback. As it appears in both analyses there is the implication that the dynamic of meaningful support and influence is of distinct importance in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. The helping incidents in this category include personal and professional relations and mentors as well as other activities one finds helpful. The hindering elements of this category point to influences external to the participant's range of direct influence including various social issues such as gender or racism, as well as chance or fate, and those factors that occur outside of the domain of leadership. The hindering side of this theme points to the chance encounters with those inevitable hidden influences in life and in North American culture.

This category is represented only as a passing reference (Collins, 2001) in the leadership literature that is intended to broadly represent the work of leadership. This helping category captures more of the lived experience of support, true and abiding support from people who have known the participant well in some way or who have affected the participant in a meaningful way.

Current discussions in leadership literature of the connection of attachment theory to leadership suggest the relevance of foundational relationships to leadership (Bresnahan, 2007; Popper, Maysel, and Castelnovo, 2000). A psychodynamic approach to coaching leaders also suggests the relevance of attention to leadership supports and influences (Kilburg, 2004).

Storr's (1996) observation that tyrants do not connect with those who are close to them such as family, but rely on the whims of the crowd may be telling with regards to leadership. It seems possible that the capacity for connections -- both personal and professional -- is a meaningful indicator of familiarity with the uncertainty, vulnerability, humbleness, and awareness that the participants in the current study discuss as being necessary for the effective exercise of leadership through difficult situations. Storr for example, refers to the familiar cliché that no one is a hero to their valet. The hindering incidents of this category similarly highlight the participant's experience of the limits of their domain of influence.

This category is captured within counselling psychology in Jennings et al.'s (2005) discussion of the ethical practice of master therapists who as will be discussed, bear many of the same ways of being as the participants of this research.

This ethical value appeared as the most important to master therapists.

Master therapists valued their relationships with themselves, clients, colleagues, family and friends, and members of the community. (p. 37)

Finally, given the research focus on the experience of leadership in difficult situations, the importance of supports as discussed within the literature on coping (Folkman and Moscovitz, 2004) is also a finding worth consideration.

5.5.4 Vision or Perspective

The participants outline that cultivating vision or perspective is an intentional activity of leadership in difficult situations. The incidents suggest that it is an expression of a self transcendent connection to meaning or to the common good and it is characterized by a unique personal perspective. The helping incidents in this category include motivating premises such as the intention to make a positive difference, the belief in the goodness of people, holding a unique perspective, being fundamentally committed to the issue at hand, having a strong vision of what is wanted. What they identify as hindering appears to be a form of unawareness, or a disconnect, for example, trying to do the work yourself, neglecting the details, getting swayed by people's agendas, restlessness or a *laissez faire* attitude. The hindering incidents support the helping incidents by their identification of what an absence of vision or perspective is like. Vision or perspective enables the participants to have a sense of direction, the ability to make decisions and to stay involved in the difficult situation.

Considering the review of the leadership literature given in Chapter 2, the vision or perspective of leadership is captured in models that represent the leader as an individual rather than as a part of a system. Sternberg (2007), for example, using a trait-based model, talks about the orientation of the leader to the common good. What is notable regarding leadership as captured in the second chapter, however, is how infrequently vision or

perspective is indicated. In particular, the models that frame leadership systemically or relationally do not represent the vision or perspective of the individual leader (Alvesson, 1992; Leonard, 2003; Vroom and Jago, 2007; Wheatley, 1999a).

Vision is discussed in the leadership literature from the point of view of the organization. Landau, Drori, and Porras (2006) for example, define vision as “a statement of purpose determined by management based on the organization’s core values and beliefs that defines the organization’s identity and combines an ideal manifestation of its direction together with a tangible prescription for realizing its goals” (p. 147). This is a summary definition of vision stemming from the leadership literature. Vision is a distinct tool that holds the potential to galvanize interests and momentum within an organization what’s not discussed is the meaningful processes by which it is generated.

In a separate approach, Kotter (1997) suggests that vision is a core means of effecting change within organizations, noting that the use of authoritarian measures or micro-management does not work “Only an approach based on vision—a central component of all great leadership--works over time” (p. 15). What is not discussed in the leadership literature, is that clarifying vision and perspective is a critical and deliberate activity that helps in leadership through difficult situations by aiding the leader’s sense of direction and engagement in the difficult situation.

Within a counselling psychology framework, vision and perspective as described by the participants appears to be a higher order attainment captured by the concept of meaning or the self transcendence which Frankl (1988) describes as the unintentional effect of intentionality. What the participants describe in the category of vision or perspective seems

to be motivated by an understanding that underlies premises of ethical practice, and self transcendence towards a common good.

In counselling, the requirement of engaging vision may emerge as counsellors are charged with the responsibility to clarify the terms of their work (Marsella, 1998; Young and Nicol, 2007) at a national and global level.

5.5.5 Full Engagement

This is an interesting category that brings together the polar qualities of, on the one hand energy, investment in learning, competitiveness, hardiness and on the other hand, the capacity to get personal distance from the work. There are no hindering incidents in this category. The participants frame these qualities as personal characteristics that help them in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. One of the experts who reviewed the study was particularly drawn to this category as an excellent rendering of leadership and he meaningfully extended the capacity to withdraw as an opportunity to critically evaluate one's work saying that when the leader is not doing the work, they are situated in such a way that they are able to critique it.

Another point that this expert made is that most leaders he is familiar with are Type A personality, bearing the manner of "Damn the torpedoes" as discussed in Chapter 3. Considering this comment, it is interesting to note that the participants see that this category is helpful in addressing difficult situations and one wonders if often the energy and competitiveness expressed in this category comprises a substantial portion of what is taken to be leadership within organizations. This category does not express the experience, the ethical

practice or self awareness that is expressed in the first category except in the balanced practice of being able to withdraw.

Collins (2001) outlines that significant leaders are deeply ambitious in combination with being very humble. Kouzes and Posner (2002) capture the energetic dimension of leadership of this category:

The responses suggest a highly spirited outlook, one that views the white water of change as a personal challenge. All the descriptions are vibrant and full of life. Leaders seize the initiative with enthusiasm, determination, and a desire to make something happen. They embrace the challenge presented by the shifts in their industries or the new demands of the marketplace. They commit themselves to creating new possibilities that make a meaningful difference (p. 178).

They go on to discuss that leaders have an appetite for taking on challenges and that while the work is hard, the experience of success is deeply motivating.

Learning is an interesting element to have included in this category as it is uncommonly referred to in the leadership literature. As observed in Chapter 2, Hackman and Wageman (2007) have indicated that leaders need to be encouraged to continue learning. Kouzes and Posner (2002) certainly also encourage an orientation to leadership whereby one is open to new challenges, but learning as a tool of leadership is generally not mentioned. McCall (1994) discussed with top executives their perceptions of what was important regarding learning and found that executives outline the following characteristics regarding people they consider to hold potential to become leaders:

- Show curiosity about how things work
- Have a sense of adventure
- Demonstrate readiness/hardiness about learning
- Are biased towards action
- Accept responsibility for learning and change
- Respect differences among people
- Seek and use feedback, and have shown consistent growth over time (p. 56)

These attitudes towards learning are expressed to a greater and lesser extent by the participants in the interviews.

The capacity to withdraw or to reflect critically on one's work is captured by Bennis (1977).

That ability to withdraw and reorient oneself, if only for a moment, presumes that one has learned the art of systematic neglect, to sort out the more important from the less important—and the important from the urgent—and attend to the more important, even though there may be penalties and censure for the neglect of something else. One may govern one's life by the law of the optimum (optimum being that pace and set of choices that give one the best performance over a lifespan)—bearing in mind that there are always emergencies and the optimum includes carrying an unused reserve of energy in all periods of normal demand so that one has the resilience to cope with the emergency.

Pacing oneself by appropriate withdrawal is one of the best approaches to making optimal use of one's resources (p. 19).

5.5.6 Summary of the Critical Incidents

Five categories of critical incidents were generated in total: experienced, principled self aware; supports and influences; ability and orientation to people; full engagement: vision or perspective. These five together form a meaningful summary of what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. They capture the diversity of what the participants have expressed in the phenomenological analysis and at the same time they summarize nicely a practical rendering of what helps and what hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. Further, they are supported in the leadership literature.

Taking the liberty of musing about leadership, it is interesting to note the stereotypical representations of leadership in four of the five categories. Experienced, principled and self aware seems to capture a traditional model of leadership. One thinks for example of the figure of Dumbledore in J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. The category of the ability and orientation to people seems to capture a stereotypical notion of leadership as an exercise in extroversion. Full engagement seems to capture the aggressive and competitive dimension of leadership that has come to be seen as typical in business organizations. Fourthly, the Vision or perspective captures the notion of the visionary leader stereotypically assigned to transformative leaders such as Gandhi. This perspective on these categories perhaps suggests some of the modes of leadership employed by a given leader as discussed in the leadership literature (Kets De Vries, 2007). Within a counselling perspective, it may

suggest the range of possible selves available to the participants demonstrating their remarkable capacity to function across an enormous breadth of human experience (Amundson, 2003; Cross and Markus, 1991).

By contrast with the stereotypical representations that can be taken from the four categories, the category of supports and influences seems an uncommon lens through which to understand leadership, yet it held a similarly prominent place in the phenomenological voice of the frame of reference; perspective. A remaining consideration of this research then is the importance of a supportive context peopled by family, professional resources, mentors and other available means of gaining a personal sense of support. As discussed earlier, this may be an expression of coping, though even within the coping literature social support is uncertain in nature (Folkman and Moscovitz, 2004). Alternately, it may be an important aspect of effective leadership. This issue bears examination in future research.

5.6 Comments on the Results

This research has been conducted using the lens of counselling psychology to examine leadership in difficult situations as an individual experience. This is an unusual perspective in the leadership literature and marks a preliminary effort of counselling psychology in the interdisciplinary discussion of leadership that has been indicated as a necessary next step in the understanding of effective practices of leadership (Bennis, 2007). The lens of counselling psychology is indicated by the use of a qualitative analysis which is common within counselling psychology (Young and Nicol, 2006), and by the focus on leadership as an individual's lived experience, rather than as a role, a representation of an organization's objectives, a story of leadership, or another construction of leadership.

Taken altogether, the research outlines the experience of leadership in difficult situations as a manner of being fully engaged personally, relationally and contextually. The result of the leadership is a distinct outcome that is meaningful to those involved in the leadership, and that holds the potential to support those people in realizing their own strengths. The descriptions of leadership capture an uncommon portrayal of leadership in its paradoxical dynamic as an individual expression as well as a collective expression. The lived experience of leadership provides an unusual glimpse into the array of demands upon the leader, expressing leadership thereby as a process that is an expression of one's personhood. The participants have indicated; a willingness to reach deeply into themselves to connect authentically with other people a manner of resilience; an appetite for learning; a personal commitment, and determination related to the desired outcomes. What makes leadership effective in difficult situations is of course, a personal, relational and contextual engagement. Effectiveness is an intersection of, on the one hand, personal consciousness, knowledge, personal resources and a capacity for generating fitting outcomes that are distinct, and on the other hand, relational skills, social discernment, intentionality and determination all oriented to generate a unique, distinct outcome. Taken altogether leadership in difficult situations should hold the potential to generate leadership; thus leadership holds the capacity to be self-perpetuating. The critical incident categories highlight the means by which a leader in a difficult situation is able to effectively engage the situation. The manners of engagement are characterized being experienced, principled and self-aware, being connected to personal and professional resources that are supportive, having the skills and inclination to connect purposefully with people, having energy and an appetite for full engagement through

learning and feedback as well as the capacity to withdraw, and finally cultivating one's vision and perspective within the situation.

There are three major findings of the current study. The first is the diagram of leadership that captures the paradox of the personal and contextual dynamics that are observed in the leadership literature (Leonard, 2003; Vroom and Jago, 2007). This diagram is borne out in the phenomenological analysis, which outlines the ways in which the paradox is experienced in leadership through difficult situations. It is also modeled in the CIT categories which highlight personal and relational ways of engaging the difficult situations. The diagram of leadership that has emerged in this research is characterized as meaningful engagement with people and within a situation to effect an outcome.

The second contribution of the current study is the finding in both the phenomenological analysis and the CIT analysis of the importance of supports and influences. These supports and influences include family members, mentors, professional resources and other practices that the participants experience as supportive. As discussed, this finding may be an expression of coping, on the other hand, it may be an expression of the fundamental manner of connection whereby the participants are able to provide effective leadership in difficult situations.

Finally, the categories of the CIT analysis form a robust yet flexible summary of what helps and hinders in the experience of leadership through difficult situations. These categories are supported in the leadership literature and together they form a unique contribution of the current study to the leadership literature and to the counselling psychology literature. It is in the contemplation of these categories that the difficulties of

leadership in the work place may be meaningfully addressed. It is of note that these categories do not underline professional skills or management practices. This finding supports the literature that observes that leadership does not rely primarily on technical skill or a management focus (Bennis, 1989, Goleman, 1998, Wheatley, 1999a), rather, what is important is the exercise of leadership.

5.7 Counselling Psychology and Leadership

There are several ways in which the intersection of leadership and counselling psychology are summarized in this section. In the first place, the study of leadership may be informative in the continuing development of counselling psychology in its national and international roles. Secondly, this research is informative for counselling psychology regarding the concerns of this client population and the representation of high human functioning. Jennings and Skovolt's (1999) observation of the personal characteristics of master therapists overlaps to a significant extent with the findings of the current study indicating a possible avenue for future research. Finally, I will return to the discussion from the special issue of the *American Psychologist* to comment briefly on the contribution of the current research to that representation of leadership within psychology.

Young and Nicol (2007) note that "The challenge for counselling psychologists in Canada in the next ten years is to become more fully integrated in the professional and academic psychological community without losing their distinctiveness" (p.28). What seems apparent in this article regarding counselling is that it is readily subsumed within other professions. This observation suggests a leadership challenge for counselling psychology to represent what the distinctiveness of counselling psychology is. Leadership as a facilitative

process is a well used practice in counselling psychology. What seems less well employed within the discipline is an approach characterized by a willingness to take leadership initiatives with the attendant responsibility to direct an outcome. A directive mode of self representation may become more important as counselling psychology evolves to participate and be recognized in national and global concerns (Marsela, 1998, Young and Nicol, 2007). As an example, the Practice Directorate of the APA has outlined the importance of communicating the work of psychology within the American legislative, legal, business and educational institutions (Sullivan, Newman, and Abrahamson, 2007). Counselling psychology has a tremendous opportunity which the current research may support by its representation of leadership as observed using the lens of counselling psychology.

The second dimension of the current research with regards to counselling psychology is the representation of the counselling related concerns of this population. The current research has provided a meaningful representation for counselling psychologists of how leadership in difficult situations can be effectively understood and practiced which may be useful in personal and career counselling. In particular, the lived experience of leadership in difficult situations resonates with the dimensions of normal human concerns and challenges which are the domain of counselling psychology (Young and Nicol, 2007). The summary from the CIT analysis of five categories of what helps and hinders in difficult situations may serve leaders as clients and provide a useful framework of understanding whereby counselors may be enabled to work with leaders. This could be an avenue for future research.

The representation in this research of high human functioning is meaningful with regards to inspiring counsellors to employ the understanding of the potentials of human

functioning within a profession that has too often dwelt upon the weaknesses and shortcomings in human experience. To repeat the quote given by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) in Chapter 1: “Psychology is not just the study of pathology, weakness, and damage; it is also the study of strength and virtue. Treatment is not just fixing what is broken; it is nurturing what is best” (p. 7). Leadership in difficult situations forms a representation of the enactment of a positive psychology engagement. Such Leadership forms a challenge to counsellors to join clinically with a client in the process of being immersed in a difficult situation and holding within that difficult situation an outlook; that accepts what is; that anticipates the best; that trusts the process; that bears inner personal resources that are engaged, reflective and enabling; that encourages action with intact groups; that is informed and responsive; and that fosters a positive outcome. A meaningful question for a counsellor working with a leader in a difficult situation has to do with striving to cultivate their personal frame of reference or perspective, or, from the CIT analysis, cultivating their sense of vision. This work won’t be done in a manner that is not forward looking and aware of social dynamics. This is a challenging perspective on the growing edge of the integration of positive psychology within a counselling paradigm.

The participants of the current study have been observed to demonstrate high levels of human functioning and performance. In their discussion of Master Therapists, Jennings and Skovolt (1999) commented that the high functioning of their participants may be replicated in diverse professions amongst people who are similarly functioning. The description of their participants bears a striking resemblance to the participants of the current research:

It appears that many of the master therapist characteristics highlighted in this study are related to concepts such as Rogers's (1961) "fully functioning person," Maslow's (1970) "self actualized" person, Skovholt and Ronnestad's (1995) senior therapist in the integrity stage of therapist development, and Erikson's (1963) ego integrity stage of human development. In the future, researchers may want to explore commonalities between master therapists and highly functioning individuals found in a variety of professional fields, that is, those who have acquired a high level of maturity and wisdom through their experiences. Our study may have tapped personal characteristics resulting from optimal human development, regardless of career field. (p. 9)

The overlap of these comments with the notable strengths of the participants in the current research seems to suggest the merit of their conjecture. Jennings and Skovolt (1999) go on to discuss the activities of their participants which again seems to be reflected in the manner of the participants of the current study:

The master therapists in this sample seem to continuously capitalize on and proactively develop a number of characteristics in an effort to improve professionally. These master therapists appear to be voracious learners who are open to experience and nondefensive when receiving feedback from clients, colleagues, and others. The master therapists seem to use both experience and intelligence to increase their confidence and comfort when dealing with complexity and ambiguity. In addition, they appear to be quite

reflective and self-aware and use these attributes to continue to learn and grow personally and professionally. These master therapists seem to possess emotional maturity and strength of character that come from years of active learning and living. Finally, the master therapists appear to be able to relate superbly with others, which one can assume often leads to a strong working alliance. (p. 9)

The commonality of their participants (Jennings and Skovolt, 1999) and the participants of the current study in their high functioning, their appetite for learning and their capacity for relationships seems remarkable. Indeed future research may indicate that high functioning is related to such personal characteristics.

In continuing to consider the intersection of counselling psychology and leadership, I return to the discussion of leadership within psychology as presented in the articles of the special issue of the *American Psychologist*.

The current research supports the trait model of Sternberg (2007) by its validation of the individual processes in leadership including wisdom, intelligence, creativity and synthesis within a context. It goes further however to illuminate the engagement of the individual leader in the social processes of the context.

My findings are also supportive of Vroom and Jago's (2007) representation of leadership as a set of effective tools of influence. This can be observed in the action portion of what makes leadership effective and the organic dimension of the descriptions of leadership. Their expression of the context as the dominant force in leadership is captured in the participants' effort to actively engage within the system. The participant's engagement

however indicates the significant force of the individual in shaping that context. The current research suggests that the experience of leadership is clearly bidirectional. Further it highlights the intra-personal processes indicated by Sternberg, which are all but overlooked in Vroom and Jago's approach. From a counselling perspective, the contingency model of which Vroom and Jago's work is an example, captures a systems perspective on the situation. It seems possible to surmise then that the participants in the current study have elucidated the experience of differentiated engagement (Gilbert, 1992) or purposeful interdependence. Avolio's (2007) inclusion of history and culture in his model of leadership is not directly represented in the participant's discussion and may suggest a limitation of the study.

5.8 Implications of the Study

The findings of the current study have implications for research, for leaders, for organizations, for society and for career counselling. All of these are centered around the responsibility to re-imagine the work of leadership in difficult situations as a unique engagement by an individual within a web of relationships that holds the capacity to build people up and to produce remarkable outcomes.

This study has generated a model of leadership that addresses the paradox observed in the leadership literature. This finding implies that future research can reflect in more comprehensive terms upon both the individual and contextual dimensions of leadership rather than from predominantly one perspective or another. There are indications of this shift in the special issue of the *American Psychologist* (2007), as for example when Zaccaro (2007) outlines the need for trait approaches to leadership to be more complex in their representation of individual and situational dynamics. The current study however has found

that this paradox can form a central assumption. Further, this study has supported Vroom and Jago's (2007) observation that lists of leadership behaviors are limited in their capacity to represent or address the complex dynamics of leadership through difficult situations.

Research then, needs to be organized to engage the unique and complex dynamics of the leadership situation. To this end, counselling psychology by its capacity to represent normal human experience and behaviors has a meaningful role to play in continued research into leadership.

The social conceptualization of leadership is impoverished in its tendency to conceive of leadership in a manner that is facile (Bligh and Meindl, 2005). It is as if at a social level we somehow do not look for distinct or remarkable capacities in leadership. When we do see such capacities, they are somehow segregated from an understanding that they are an expression of engagement, not the independent construction of an uninvolved task master. The Participants express that leadership is an expression from within a system comprised of people, tasks and influences. The participants are indeed variously gifted, but they also note that their work is simply what they do, it is their contribution and it emerges from their capacity to be involved in the difficult situation.

Further, the phenomenological theme of "not leadership" combined with the participants' and one of the experts' observations of the many reprehensible leaders in North American society suggests that what is commonly conveyed as leadership in our society, lacks that core capacity of leaders to engage people. There are too many examples of leaders who do not exercise leadership as the participants of this research have constructed it. A

social implication of this research then, is that there is a need to review what is conceived of as leadership and how we live in relation to it.

There are a number of implications of the current study for organizations and for leaders. The current research has indicated that the capacity for effective leadership through difficult situations may be indicated by a manner of public bearing, a facility in reaching out to people, an appetite for learning and engagement and a capacity to be discerning within a situation to the end of generating remarkable outcomes. This study suggests that a positive effect for the common good can be anticipated by the work of leadership in difficult situations. Further, from the CIT categories, leaders should be observed to have diverse means of engagement in various situations. In simplistic terms, these diverse modes of engagement range from experienced and self aware, through to energetic, competitive, relational and visionary. Each of these points should be apparent to both leaders and to organizations. A further implication for organizations and leaders is to observe the presence of personal supports to the leader in the form of mentors, trusted colleagues, family or other elements that provide a leader with a sense of personal support. Finally, organizations and leaders need to support leadership in the deliberate, but hidden work of generating a vision and a remarkable outcome. For organizations these implications point to the responsibility to actively look for effective leadership and to be open in a process of engagement around leadership initiatives, in essence to observe the influence of the organization on the potentials in leadership. A further implication of the study for leaders is that they need to be able to identify a sense of resonance within a situation.

Regarding career counselling, the results of the current study indicate that leadership is a process of personal engagement that seems meaningfully represented by Super's (1990) archway of career determinants. Super captures the social and relational influences along with the personal elements of needs, values and interests. Interestingly, the participant's note that leadership is not a career that is readily pursued, it is more commonly a byproduct of circumstances consistent as discussed in Mitchell et al.'s (1999) concept of happenstance. Career as rendered in leadership through difficult situations is an expression of one's sense of self. As career counselling already has a theoretical means to articulate these core processes of leadership, it may hold a meaningful influence in the individual, organizational and social conceptualization of effectiveness in leadership.

5.9 Limitations of the Study

Considering the limitations of the current study, first of all, given the qualitative design of the study, the findings are not generalizable. Further, the sample for this study was taken from within Canada and none of the participants represent cultural diversity. Consequently the research is restricted to Canadian viewpoint. The leaders of the current study represent an array of leadership roles including business, government, education, non-governmental organizations and volunteer organizations. While the use of an array of leaders to examine the issues of leadership is precedented in the literature (Kouzes and Posner, 2002), this may form a limitation to the study. I did not analyse the phenomenological or CIT data for differences that may have existed across leadership contexts. This is clearly an area for future study. Finally, the research assumption of leadership as a personal experience forms a meaningful delimitation to the representation of leadership. In particular, the lack of

representation of the experience of followers in leadership through difficult situations may be limiting of the representation of leadership. This is partially addressed in the current research through the use of referral to the participants based on the perception of leadership effectiveness, and through the use of expert appraisal of the results of the study.

5.10 Future Research

There are three major areas from the current study that warrant future research. In the first place, the critical incident categories should be examined with regards to their broader application in leadership through difficult situations. Secondly, the role of supports and influences in the exercise of leadership through difficult situations warrants examination. Thirdly, the model of leadership generated by the descriptions of leadership warrants further investigation regarding its usefulness in representing the dynamics of leadership.

Two conceptualizations of the premises of leadership have been determined in the present study and they merit examination in future research. The first is the concept of leadership as a process of willingness. The second is the leader's sense of what is right as a premise of engagement in leadership through difficult situations.

The current study has examined leadership in difficult situations as a personal experience. This approach may be changed or expanded in future research to consider leadership in difficult situations using other perspectives. Further, future research also needs to examine the experience of leadership in difficult situations using culturally diverse participants.

There is apparent support in the current study for Jennings and Skovolt's (1999) suggestion that optimally functioning people in diverse careers overlap in their personal characteristics. This may also form a meaningful avenue for future research.

Future research may be informative by addressing the experience of leadership in difficult situations using leaders from only one working context such as business, education or government.

Finally, future research may employ a variation in the operationalization of effective leadership by addressing the dyadic relationship of leader and follower in the experience of leadership through difficult situations.

5.11 Concluding Comments

This study has been a privilege from its inception through the interviews with the participants through the analysis of the results. The study of leadership through difficult situations has been an exploration of people actively engaged in the experience of personal and professional development through purposeful and meaningful connection with other people and influences, working towards a worthwhile outcome. These participants have portrayed a remarkable capacity for optimistic and energetic engagement looking forward to what's possible and focusing on what is best in the people around them. What is generated is a rich representation of the experience of relationship, of striving and of the acceptance of human uncertainty. The current study has been an opportunity to explore with these exceptional people the experience of being immersed in what is at times immensely difficult and yet is a process which they accept and remain engaged with out of their own sense that

the process is meaningful and can generate worthwhile outcomes oriented to the common good.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I-Protocol for discussion with Referral Sources

Protocol for first discussion with Referral Sources about the project

- 1). Thankyou for agreeing to be a referral source for participants for my research.
- 2). My research is examining effective leadership through difficult situations. This research project is one phase of training for my PhD in Counselling Psychology. The research is a part of a larger project on workplace wellness that it is funded by a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
- 3). What I am asking you to do is to consider leaders in the workplace who have been effective in your view. Your deliberation about who you see as an effective leader is an important facet of the recruitment process because effective leadership is recognized by other people, it is not necessarily a self-identifying process. I will be talking with leaders across the spectrum of leadership activity. I am interested in leaders of high caliber and I am interested in leaders in formal and informal leadership roles who have taken the responsibility to act as a leader to some fitting end.
- 4). I will be asking the participants to engage in 2 interviews. The first will be approximately 2 hours in length, the second will be about an hour.
- 5). My hope is that the interviews will provide the leaders with the opportunity to reflect on their work and in so doing build up their sense of their personal strengths in leadership. At a broader level, I hope the research will contribute to what is known about effective leadership in the workplace.
- 6). In return for their participation I would like to provide them with an executive summary of the findings of my research, or a copy of my dissertation, or a presentation of my findings to themselves and a group of colleagues according to what they would see as appropriate.
- 7). Please do not inform me of the names of the people to whom you will be giving the letter. This is done for purposes of confidentiality.
- 8). Similarly, I will not inform you of whether or not the person you've sent the letter to has contacted me. This is again for purposes of confidentiality.
- 9). Thankyou again for offering to forward or send my recruitment letter to people whom you deem to be effective leaders.

Appendix II-Letter for Referral Sources to Use

Dear

Enclosed please find a copy of a recruitment letter for a University of British Columbia (UBC) research study examining effective leadership during difficult situations in the workplace. I have been approached as a referral source for this research project and have been asked to forward this letter to persons whom I recognize as effective leaders. This study is part of a larger research project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada that is looking at well-being in the workplace.

Pamela Patterson is the PhD candidate doing this research through the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education at UBC. The research project is a requirement of her PhD program of Studies. You will find more information about the project in the attached letter. As I understand it, she wants to talk with you about your leadership experience during challenging workplace situations that have ultimately been successful.

I recognize that you are very busy and I hesitate to approach you with this request. On the other hand, I also believe that your leadership style is effective and worth careful examination, and in my estimation this study is worthwhile and important. I have spoken with Pam about the study and am satisfied that it has the potential to contribute necessary information regarding effective leadership in the workplace that is currently missing in the literature. Pam is willing to discuss the research with you before you commit yourself to the interviews and answer any questions you may have. In return for your participation, Pam is offering to provide you with an Executive Summary of her findings, or a copy of her dissertation, or to make a presentation to you and any colleagues you think would benefit from attending. The presentation would highlight her results.

While I have been asked to forward this information to you, I will not be providing Pam with your name, nor will I be informed of whether you contact Pam. This is to respect your right to confidentiality and your freedom to choose to participate or not. You should know that Pam is hoping to have all of the 15-20 interviews she will be conducting completed before December. I am pleased to send this referral to you and I hope you will be in a position to support this research with some of your time. The contact information for Pam is on the attached letter.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Appendix III- Letter Introducing the Project to Prospective Participants

Dear Prospective Participant,

My name is Pam Patterson and I am investigating ways in which Leaders have effectively addressed workplace challenges. This research is part of my Ph.D. work in Counselling Psychology at the University of British Columbia (UBC). It will result in a doctoral dissertation that will be housed in the UBC library and will be available to the public upon request.

My particular interest is in the experience of effective leadership in challenging situations. I see leadership as a dynamic act drawing upon personal, social, and intellectual resources. I want to examine the experience of effective leadership when it is under pressure as in the context of workplace challenges. Today there are significant global, technological, economic and other demands upon the workplace. While I don't see the solution to these challenges as resting entirely upon the shoulders of effective leadership, I do see that there is a need to understand effective leadership in such contexts. It is my hope that a better understanding of effective leadership in the face of workplace challenges can make a contribution to wellness in the workplace and by extension, in the lives of individuals.

I am seeking adult volunteers who have given effective leadership through difficult situations in the workplace. Leadership may be a formal or an informal role and it is characterized by taking the responsibility and initiative to effect change within the workplace. Participants will be asked a series of questions in a face-to-face interview, for instance: What have been your experiences of leadership in general? Could you give me some examples of your experiences as a leader through difficult situations that were ultimately successful? What helped you through these challenging situations? What hindered you through these challenging situations? What enables you to continue in leadership? There will also be some demographic questions to help with interpreting the data.

There will be two interviews, the first of which will last about two hours and the second, will last approximately one hour. Both interviews will be audiotaped. The tapes will later be transcribed and given a code number in order to ensure your anonymity and confidentiality. The tapes will be erased upon completion of the study. The information obtained will be kept confidential. Participants will not be identified by the use of names or initials.

The purpose of these interviews is to collect information about your experiences of addressing workplace difficulties, specifically, what has helped you and what has hindered you as a leader. The second interview is to have you review the way in which your interview has been understood to ensure that your experience is captured well.

Your involvement in this study is voluntary and you may decide to participate or not participate, or you may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice of any kind.

A professional colleague who has not shared with me the names and addresses of people receiving this letter is forwarding this letter to you in confidence. Only those individuals who contact me for more information or to indicate interest in participating in this study will become known to me. Your professional colleague will not be provided with the names of individuals who participate in this study.

If you decide to participate in this study, or would like more information, please contact me. If I am not available you are welcome to leave me a voice message stating your name, phone number, and that you are calling in response to this research recruitment letter. I will return your call as soon as possible. I can also be contacted by email .The Principal Investigator for this project is my dissertation Supervisor, Dr. Bill Borgen.
Thank you in advance for your time and interest, and I look forward to working together with you.

Yours truly,

Pamela Patterson, M. A.
Ph.D. Candidate
Counselling Psychology,
UBC Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education

Appendix IV- Screening Questions for Prospective Participants

Prospective Participant's Name: _____

Date of Pre-screening Discussion: _____

Gender: Female Male

Industry: _____

Industry Category: Low volatility Medium volatility High volatility

Have you given leadership for a period of 3 or more years? Yes No

Have you given effective leadership through difficult situations? Yes No

Imagine a continuum of leadership through difficult situations. On one side, leadership through a difficult situation is a matter of managing, organizing, monitoring and controlling and on the other side, leadership through a difficult situation is a matter of concern with what people are thinking, where would you place yourself? in the middle, further along one side or the other side?

Managing,controlling etc. Concern with people
/ _____ /

Determining criteria is the middle or further to the right side

Willing to spend approximately 2.0 hours for 1st interview? Yes No

Available for a 2nd interview in the Winter/Spring, 2007 of 1 hour? Yes No

Willing to talk about their experiences? Yes No

Currently a full-time student? Yes No

Able to converse in English? Yes No

Proceeded to arrange a first interview? Yes _____)No (State Reason

If Proceeding: Participant # _____ Address:
Phone #: () _____ E-Mail Address:

Appendix V- Informed Consent

CONSENT FORM

“Towards a Preventive/Developmental Approach to Counselling:
Helping People Meet the Challenges of Change” (Phase 2)

Principal Investigator: Dr. William Borgen, Professor & Faculty Advisor
University of British Columbia
Department of Educational & Counselling Psychology,
and Special Education

Co-Investigator: Pamela Patterson, Ph.D. Candidate
University of British Columbia
Department of Educational & Counselling Psychology,
and Special Education

This research is being conducted as one of the requirements for Pamela Patterson for the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree in Counselling Psychology at the University of British Columbia. The results of this research will be included in a dissertation that will become a public document in the University library once it is completed. The results of this research may also be published in appropriate professional and academic journals. This study is funded through a grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to explore the experience of Leaders working effectively to address challenges or difficulties that emerge in the workplace. It will provide leaders with an opportunity to discuss what has helped or hindered them through the process of addressing these challenges. Finally, it will consider what enables leaders to continue in the work of leadership.

Procedures

This study will require two interviews. The first one will be approximately two hours long. It will consist of introducing the participant to the purpose of the study and obtaining signed consent. Participants will be asked to describe their leadership experiences using an open-ended question format. They will then be asked to recall specific factors or strategies that helped and hindered their leadership through difficult situations. Participants will also have a chance to discuss their experience of what enables them to continue in the work of

leadership. The final part of this first interview will collect demographic information about the individual.

The second interview will last 30 – 60 minutes and will consist of a review of the categories discovered by the researcher. Both interviews will be tape recorded, transcribed and given a code number to ensure confidentiality. Upon completion of the study these tapes will be erased. Your total time will be approximately three hours within a three to six month period.

Confidentiality

Any information identifying individuals participating in this study will be kept confidential. Only trained Research Assistants on the research team will have access to the data. Upon signing the informed consent you will be given a code number to ensure the maintenance of confidentiality. Participants will not be identified by the use of names or initials in any reports of the completed study. All research documents will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in a locked office at the University of British Columbia. Computer data files will be password protected.

Compensation

There will be no monetary compensation to participants.

Contact for Information About the Study

If you have any questions or would like more information about this study, you may contact Dr. William Borgen (Principal Investigator)

Contact for Concerns About the Rights of Research Subjects

If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services

Consent

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice of any kind.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

Participant Signature

Date

Printed Name of the Participant signing above

Thankyou for your willingness to participate in this study.

Appendix VI- Interview Guide

“Experience of Effective Leadership” Strategies Being Used

Participant #: _____

Date: _____

Interview Start Time: _____

Phenomenological Component

Preamble: As you know, I am investigating the experiences of women and men who have given effective leadership (either formally or informally) through difficulties or challenges in the workplace. This is the first of two interviews, and the purpose is to collect information about those experiences.

To begin with would you talk about your experiences of leadership. (What do you understand leadership to be? What’s leadership been like for you?) To do this it may be useful to draw a lifeline.

b. When did you first realize that you had a capacity for, or an interest in leadership?

c. Could you give me some examples of your experiences as a leader through difficult or challenging situations that were ultimately successful? (*Track that the incident has a beginning a middle and an end*)

What were some core elements in operation in this (each) situation that made it all work out as you experienced it.—I’m asking this because you might have a sense that it was something about you or something about the situation or perhaps some intangible that helped it to all come together.

Critical Incident Component

What has helped you in being a leader with the challenges that you have encountered?

Helpful Factor & What it Means to Participant	Importance (How did it help?)	Result/Effects of Helpful Factor

--	--	--

What kind of things have hindered you in being a leader?

Hindering Factor & What it means to participant	Importance (How did it hinder?)	Result/Effects of Hindering Factor

c. What has allowed you to continue (what keeps you going) in Leadership?

Continuation Item & What it Means to Participant (What do you mean by ..?)	Importance (Tell me what it is about .. that fosters your continuation)	Example (Is there an example of how this allows you to continue?)

d. Is there anything that you could hope for or wish for in continuing as a leader?

Wish List Item & What it Means to Participant (What do you mean by ..?)	Importance (How would it help? Tell me what it is about .. that you would find)	Example (In what circumstances might this be helpful?)

	so helpful.)	

3 Before we end this interview and review some demographic information, is there anything else about your experience as a leader that you think it would be helpful for me to know. Perhaps something I haven't asked about.

Demographics Component

Occupation

Number of years in this occupation

Occupation/job level

Length of time in current job

Industry in which the person works

Number of years in this industry

Length of service in this company

Age

Sex

Income level (household)

Country of birth

If not Canada, (a) length of time in Canada; and (b) 1st language

Marital status

Family status/parental status

Education level

Interview End Time: _____

Length of interview: _____

Appendix VII- Template of Second Interviews

- 1). Review the Layout of the Interview (5 mins):
 - i). Talking about the experience of leadership, what it's been like
 - ii). When you first realized you had a capacity for and an interest in leadership
 - iii) Asked for examples of your experiences through difficult situations that turned out well
 - iv) core elements contributing to those experiences
 - v) What's helped you in being a leader with the challenges you've encountered
 - vi) What's hindered you in being a leader with the challenges you've encountered?
 - vii) What enables you to continue in leadership?
 - viii) What do you wish for in leadership?
- 2). Review the Content of the Interview in Descriptive terms (10 mins)
- 3). Confidentiality and changing the scope of the analysis
- 4). Review the phenomenological analysis of the interview (20 mins)

Descriptions of Leadership

- Leadership as facilitation
- Leadership is about the willingness to get something done
- Leadership is Organic
- Negative descriptions of leadership
- Participant Strengths

The Lived Experience

- Relating
 - Leading
 - Connecting to people has to do with connecting to oneself
 - Influences from those Surrounding the leadership
 - Within not apart from the system

- Learning
- Affect
- Leadership is hard work

It's Personal

- Pushing it through

Negatives in Leadership

Leadership Through Difficult Situations: What you're doing

- Exert yourself to be involved with people
- The Exercise of Personhood: Who you need to be
- Push Back/Be Consistent

Work with the 'Team'
Employ Leadership
Orchestrate a validating and successful process

Frame of Reference: Perspective
 Being Conscious of the influences in the situation
Personal Understanding and Response to the situation
Generating, Aiming for Significant Outcomes
Mastery of the Facts of the situation
 Trusted resources for support and feedback
 Being Conscious of the effects of your behavior

Feedback?
4: List of Critical Incidents:
Check for Comprehensiveness of Incidents (10 mins)
Check for Memos (10 mins)



Appendix VIII

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR Borgen, W.A.		DEPARTMENT Educ & Couns Psych & Spec Educ	NUMBER B02-0632
INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT UBC Campus ,			
CO-INVESTIGATORS: Amundson, Norman, Educ & Couns Psych & Spec Educ; Britten, Lianne, Counselling Psychology; Connerly, Mike, Psychology; Gagnier, Danielle, Counselling Psychology; Patterson, Pamela, Counselling Psychology			
SPONSORING AGENCIES Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council			
TITLE: Towards a Preventive/Developmental Approach to Counselling: Helping People Meet the Challenges of Ongoing Change			
APPROVAL RENEWED DATE SEP 11 2006	TERM (YEARS) 1	AMENDMENT: Sept. 7, 2006, Subjects / Adver./ Covering letter / Consent form / Poster / Recruit. letter	AMENDMENT APPROVED: SEP 11 2006
CERTIFICATION: <p>The request for continuing review and amendment of the above-named project has been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Approved on behalf of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board by one of the following:</i> Dr. Peter Suedfeld, Chair, Dr. Jim Rupert, Associate Chair Dr. Arminee Kazanjian, Associate Chair Dr. M. Judith Lynam, Associate Chair</p> <p>This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the experimental procedures</p>			