DCPsych thesis

The lived experience of Qallunaat teachers in Nunavut: a heuristic enquiry study

Garrett, G.B.

___

The Lived Experience of Qallunaat Teachers in Nunavut: A Heuristic Enquiry Study.

By George Garrett

Abstract

This research arises from the researcher's own experience in the Canadian Arctic and the life changing effects of living there. While several qualitative studies have been done on the people living in the Arctic, none have documented the lived experience both in and out of the classroom of the Qallunaat (meaning white people from the south) who live there. The purpose of the current study was to study the lived experience of teachers in the Arctic. To explore lived experience using the researcher's reflexivity, the researcher selected the Heuristic Enquiry phenomenological research approach. In addition, van Deurzen's model which includes the physical, social, personal and spiritual dimensions is used as a framework for generating questions to get a broad overview of the participants' being-in-the-world in the Arctic. The emotions of the participants were given special attention as they were impacted by their cultural experiences in the Arctic. An overarching theme is that the participants were looking to establish connection after having moved to Nunavut amongst different social, cultural and geographical surroundings.

Table of Contents

Preamble

There was a long period of isolation I had after the first year of living in Nunavut, where I hardly had a single conversation with a friend other than a couple of short informal chats with people through work. Although I had a roommate, she often resorting to talking about work and getting worked up about some of the things that had happened throughout the day or week. Phone calls to the south went through a satellite and I felt like I was constantly interrupting and being interrupted through the three or so second lag over the call. Internet cost $150 for 5 gigabytes of downloading, so video calls were less of an option to stay connected with family down south.

I can still remember the feeling I had when the Inuit school counsellor asked “how are you doing?” A short gesture of care like that penetrated me so deeply that I felt it grip my heart. No one else seemed to take notice or show any gesture of care. I even was sure tat I was not showing that on my face but he did notice. Although I found it difficult to connect on a personal level to my Inuit peers and sometimes these were turbulent relationships, I felt cared for by them more than the southern Canadians at the time. There were moments where I felt deeply cared for by the community and other times when I thought they would like to see me go away and never come back. There was an Inuit teacher who assumed that I would be no better than the social workers who would take children away and was overtly critical of me. There were some pockets of time where she made me feel welcome in the school. Years after having left the community I would feel such grief to hear of her passing even though she probably spent more time disliking me than liking me. Her and others like her were what I had for a long time and was at times very reassured by them that I welcomed in their territory.

Overall, I felt a sense that we were all in this together for better or worse, a sense of togetherness that transcended the good and bad times. There was no escaping each other in this small community where you could walk from one end to the other in twelve minutes and outside of that community was a seemingly endless tundra and no roads going out of the community. We were all so very different and we had no option but to connect with other, rely on each other.

In my position as a Child and Youth Outreach Worker, I represented to the children and youth as someone that was going to help them and was concerned for them. I often asked them what we could be doing for after school sports and got feedback from them about what I should be doing with my position. They always felt like I was someone they could run up to and talk with when I was walking in the community. From the children and some of the adults in the community, white people were seen as not understanding them or their way of life. White people were seen as less caring about their family or about the people that they are working with because of our personal or professional boundaries. They mostly know us through professional roles where we are trying to do something to them or get them to do something. I feel like it leaves the impression that we see the way that they do things as somehow wrong or less important.

One client I met with for three years hardly spoke a word in the sessions. Sometimes the whole session was spent in silence and sometimes he would offer of few words that never revealed much about him. He would answer that he felt good when I asked but normally just smiled when I asked him other questions. I kept him as a client because as long as he was showing up to the sessions and wanting to be there, she suggested something must be

happening. At times, I felt like this was true and at other times, I lost hope thinking that we were both just wasting each other's time and that it was nice just to have the time to reflect on my day. I brought in everything and anything to do something else other than sit there from worksheets to art to other activities with little to no success. If I were to write out a transcript of what he said to me in the three years in the session, it may have been two to three pages single spaced. The interesting part of this was that he was the first youth to meaningfully talk with me in the community and would always run up to me and want to say something. He would either tease me or tell me about a video game or a movie he had seen or make small talk. When I was leaving the community, I gave him two months notice that we would be finishing up. He burst into tears as if someone were performing unanesthetized surgery. They were so sudden and powerful that tears flowed from me as well. That the time I spent there with him truly meant something.

It seemed that I transcended some of those boundaries between the two cultures with this particular client. It could be that he was able to say things often in the community amongst other people but did not have much to say when meeting individually. To this day, I do not know what happened with between us in that counselling relationship just as I do not fully know what my affect was on the community in which I lived. Whether it was the Inuit counsellor who noticed me in my struggle, the teacher who made me feel welcome every once in a while or the clients who let me know every once in a while the importance of my work, I know that something was happening and that the work I was doing there was meaningful.

1. Research Question and Aim

One of the first questions people working in the Arctic often hear from individuals in the south is “How could you do it?” followed by the comment “I couldn’t do it,” suggesting that people want to know but just the thought of living there makes them feel compelled to say they could not do it. To the people who cannot even entertain the possibility, the very few individuals that choose to live and work in the Arctic are heroes or crazy people. The people who move there have the flexibility, courage and/or curiosity that not many people have. They are willing to confront the difficulties and opportunities of living in a remote Arctic community where personal change and growth are inevitable.

The current research aims to explore the lives of those who choose to live in Nunavut. My research question to explore the lives of those who choose to live in Nunavut is **“What is the lived experience of Qallunaat in Nunavut?”**

This study focus on the lived experience of teachers in particular because:

1) Teachers have regular contact with Inuit people. They develop ongoing relationships and work closely with them. Although nurses may see Inuit in their practice and hear much about their lives in a confidential setting, teachers develop long term and constantly evolving relationships with the students and parents. In contrast, many other professionals such as those working in finance, may have limited contact with Inuit individuals.

2) Teachers play a crucial role in educating Inuit children and youth, and I hope my research may contribute to teacher recruitment and retention.

3) The vast majority of Qallunaat professionals that go to Nunavut are teachers.

During my time in Nunavut, I worked as a Child and Youth Mental Health Outreach Worker and initially considered recruiting participants from the field of Mental Health. However, in most of the communities, there is only a Mental Health Counsellor, often a local Inuk (singular for Inuit), and a Psychiatric Nurse, who often stay in the community for 5 weeks to 4 months at a time and thus are not truly living in Nunavut.

The aim of the present study is to prepare counsellors and psychotherapists to work with individuals who have experienced similar struggles and opportunities and to prepare them to work and live in Nunavut. From my experience in these communities, there is a high incidence of mental health problems among both the residents and the workers who come to these areas. This research will fill the research gap by explicating the holistic lived experience of Kadloona teachers living in the Arctic.

In Nunavut communities, there is a higher rate of suicide, homicide and child abuse. From the years 2011 to 2016, amongst Inuit individuals, there were 72.3 suicide deaths per 100,000 people, as compared to 8.1 suicide deaths per 100,000 people in the non-indigenous population (Statistics Canada, 2019). In 2021, Nunavut had a homicide rate of 5.08 per 100,000 people, while non-indigenous Canadians had a homicide rate of 1.55 per 100,000 (Statistics Canada, 2022). Nunavut's youth experience abuse at a rate of 10 times higher than the national average (CTV news, 2021). Compounding these issues, access to mental health services in rural and remote areas in Northern Canada are limited (Friesen, 2019). The communities are strongly affected by these statistics, as well as many unrecorded aspects and so are the people who are more directly affected by these affected populations. Furthermore, these experiences can have long-lasting impacts on the lives of those who have experienced it even after returning to

southern Canada. For instance, after experiencing a several weeks in a northern Ontario community, Shimo (2016) described taking months to return to her normal level of coping. Therefore, studying the lived experience of those who have lived in the Arctic can be an important area of study for counselling psychologists. This study can aid in gaining insights into the ways in which the currently living in such circumstances through telehealth or after they return to more southern, urban centres.

Regardless of the hurdles within the communities, these teachers are choosing to live in remote and rural northern Inuit communities where feelings of both physical and social isolation are likely to emerge. The remote and rural nature of these communities keep the teachers from a number of resources that help them physically, socially, personally and spiritually. Moreover, there are also a number of comforts that are on hold while they live up there, affecting their lifestyles in a number of ways.

There are also amazing experiences in Nunavut that cannot be compared to those in southern Canada. These experiences are often not recorded in statistics because they are individual and uniquely meaningful to the people who live them. Often when people look at the statistics or hear about the more negative aspects about the north, they would not want to live there. However, for those who do decide to live in Nunavut, they have found something truly incredible in order to bear some of the more challenging aspects of life in the region.

The main gap lies in the absence of a comprehensive understanding of the holistic Arctic experience. This research intends to explore both inside and outside the classroom, both the daily routines to the unique events, both the joyous and difficult experiences and especially both what keeps them up there and what draws them away from Nunavut.

This focus will also significantly benefit the research field in the Arctic by informing induction programs. It will give teachers and other professionals an idea of what to expect in Arctic. In addition, this research can contribute to the qualitative pedological and counselling literature on culture shock (Wihak, 2004; Brown & Holloway, 2008; Roskell, 2013) and personal development in the context of a different culture/place (Hayes, 2007; Brown & Brown, 2009; Brown & Graham, 2009).

The holistic nature of the aims of this research can help contribute to other fields of research. Since the participants will be moving to a completely different culture and geographical location, this study may also contribute to research on emotions in the anthropological field (Davies et al., 2010) and emotional geographies (Bondi & Davidson, 2009). Finally, although existential anthropology is a discipline that focuses on lived experience, there has been no existing phenomenological research employing van Deurzen's existential dimensions to explore the lived experience of individuals living in another culture.

2. Background

> *"I have always seen human existence as a struggle between contending forces and imperatives… At times it consists in working to transform the world into which one is thrown into a world which one has a hand in making – to strike a balance between being an actor and being acted upon… At times it is a struggle for being against nothingness – for whatever will make life worth living rather than hopeless, profitless and pointless" (p. x).*
>
> - Michael Jackson (2008) founder of existential anthropology

2.1 Personal Background of the Present Study

In 2010, I left the comfort of my home and job to live in the remote Arctic community of Pond Inlet, Nunavut. My stay in Nunavut between 2010 and 2015 was to be one of my most life-changing and life-defining experiences; I would continue to look back on it with curiosity. At the time, I had long since been studying existential philosophy and writings in existential therapy. The existential theme of freedom lay at the center of my decision to move there, forgoing living life as other people had in the comfort of their familiar surroundings to test my thinking, philosophy and psychotherapy on a new frontier. Although I could never have anticipated what learning would take place, I knew that I would be bestowed some truths that I would not have otherwise received. As Nietzsche (2008/1872) put it: "For how could we have compelled nature to give up her secrets… if not for the fact that we commit unnatural actions? (p. 34). He said this with reference to the story of Oedipus killing his father and marrying his mother which led him the insight to solve the riddle of the Sphinx. For me, the unnatural was moving to one of the coldest and most remote areas of the world to learn about a culture and place that was completely new to me. For the first few months, I worked as a casual cell guard for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and as a substitute teacher. For the rest of my time in Nunavut, I served as a Child and Youth Outreach Worker, providing counselling to children and youth and implementing mental health programs in the classrooms and the community. Existential anthropologist Jackson (1995) described the uncertainty of arriving in a new culture:

> "You feel estranged from your European roots yet cannot identify with wholeheartedly with Indigenous culture of the land. You live betwixt and between, uneasy about your

origins, unsure of where you stand, in two minds about your identity and allegiance" (p. 6).

I felt foreign and was given the label "Qallunaat" by the local Inuit, which means white person or person from the south. My background in existential thought and training in existential therapy eased the anxiety associated with the uncertainty that was felt during this time but did not save me from it and I felt like I needed to remind myself more often what I stood for and what I believed in. Like others before me (Wihak, 2004; Harder, 2004; Chen, 2015), I did not feel like my training had prepared me. At times, I felt the sense of fundamental isolation from the other to be a matter of fact when considering the wide gap between western ways of thinking and Inuit ways of thinking. There were times that I felt drawn to their ways of nonconformity to western ways of thinking and doing things. I found that when meeting with parents or other professionals, I could never expect just to extract information from them but to slow down and take the time to engage with them in a discussion before getting to my agenda. There was a comfort with this way of relating to others where I felt much less like I needed to be a professional or witty or clever or a great conversationalist. I felt like I could just be in their presence and that was enough. I saw people of my own culture caught up in a hustle and bustle of everyday life needing to impress themselves or other people in subtle ways. Thoughts shared in moments without that rush or pressure can be so much more meaningful with much less said.

Even towards the end of my stay in Nunavut, I was still being surprised and intrigued. I made friends along the way with a number of teachers and a biologist, and together, we would try to make sense of what happened for us throughout the week. Our conversations usually

began by venting and debriefing, followed by our efforts to understand the culture and experiences we encountered. The impact of that week left us with much to process. The work to understand it could have lasted much longer and, in a sense, it has lasted to this day for myself and this group of friends. This was a period of intense personal and professional growth for all of us, since we were learning extensively about and from Inuit community members, ourselves and our relationships: “the first major field trip for an anthropologist is similar to the experience of depth psychoanalysis” (Matthiasson, 1992 p. 20). When I returned down south for vacation, I tried to explain what it was like to friends and family, but I soon realized that only those who had been to the Arctic would actually understand. Thus, I formed strong connections with the professionals who had shared similar experience in the Arctic.

These experiences have continued to inform my work in counselling to this day as a Child and Youth Mental Health Clinician. After working with clients from a culture far different from my own, I hold less assumptions about how people might think, how they might have reached a conclusion about something or what they might mean when they use certain words. It left me with a lasting curiosity about my clients for this reason. More generally, I hold a position of being uncertain about the values that we have come to know in our own culture. There are times that they serve us and times that they do not and it is important to reflect upon these and adjust ourselves to get the most out of life.

The majority of people who move to Nunavut plan to stay between one and five years before moving back down to southern Canada, with teaching being the most common profession. In schools, students become accustomed to a professional setting that prepares them for a demanding post-industrial world. For many Inuit children and youth, teachers are

their first relationship with any white person, shaping their early perceptions of white people and white culture. The high turnover rate of teachers in Nunavut means that many of them will not be attuned to the way things are done in the school and community. Moreover, since teacher turnover rate is high, some youth may believe that their teachers never truly cared, reinforcing the impression that white people are uncaring.

The experience of living in the Arctic is quite unique, including both the challenges and opportunities of living in a remote Inuit community. It involves experiencing the months where the sun does not rise and months where the sun does not set; living in extreme cold for most of the school year; living amidst a foreign culture; experiencing majestic treeless landscapes; and so on. By interviewing teachers, my goal is to capture their thoughts, emotions and experiences and frame within their own existential development.

2.2 Introduction to the Nunavut Communities

Nunavut is divided into three main regions: the Qikiqtani region, the Kvalliq region and the Kitikmeot region. Daily life in these communities are different from living in southern Canada. First, the communities are not accessible by any highway. The almost exclusive way to travel from other communities or cities into the communities is by Dash 8 airplane. The most direct flight down south is to Ottawa, which connects in Iqaluit and costs over $1200 for a return ticket. While it is possible to arrive by sea vessel, most years only one or two non-passenger barges go up to the communities. While the isolation can be challenging, particularly during winter holidays, justifying a $1200 trip back home can be even more challenging.

Second, many of the comforts of southern life are unavailable as there are only a few commercial businesses. Only two stores carry most of what might be needed in terms of food,

subsistence, toiletries, basic clothing, toys, guns and ammunition, electronics, kitchenware, some tools and other basic amenities. Inside the general store, a restaurant serves deep fried food and burgers, while in the hotel, a meal can cost close to $30, influencing residents' dining and social habits.

Third, the price of amenities in Nunavut is greatly increased due to shipping costs from the south. Most dry goods arrive on a barge that comes once a year and the Dash 8 airplanes bring in fresh food and dry storage food as it runs low. Depending on the government subsidy on the food, some food can be largely unaffordable (see Table 1). Most of the time, the fresh food that comes in had already froze on the trip up so apples, cucumbers, lettuce, tomatoes and other fresh fruit and vegetables develop quite a different texture, which may affect food spending practices and choices, with most people opting for either the most affordable food or the best quality food.

Table 1

Food Prices Comparison

Food Item	Southern Canada	Nunavut
6 Gala Apples	$6.12	$19.79
6 Bananas	$1.98	$3.99
1 Tomato	$2.51	$6.99
4 Litre Ice Cream	$8.39	$19.79
1 Bag of Lays Chips (255g)	$4.29	$11.79
335ml of Coca-Cola	$6.49 for 12 cans	$2 for 1 can

Fourth, some of the communities are “restricted communities” with respect to alcohol by-laws so no alcohol is sold in the stores. Each Hamlet council across Nunavut decides whether they will prohibit, restrict or allow alcohol depending on their perceptions of the alcohol abuse in the community. However, that does not mean that people cannot get alcohol; it just takes a

several stage process. First, you have to go to the Co-op Store and pay $10 to the customer service office that funds the Alcohol Education Committee. Second, you take the receipt they give you and to the Hamlet office where you need to fill out an alcohol request form. No one is told how much alcohol they can buy since the Hamlet office will just say that the Alcohol Education Committee decides on the amount. Third, the Alcohol Education Committee meets and decides whether to approve the order and if they refuse it, the process must begin again. I asked for a four-litre box of wine and a bottle of wine and I was denied. Fourth, upon being approved, you must call or email the Rankin Inlet alcohol storehouse and pay the bill for your alcohol. Fifth, you also must pay the shipping bill at the airport. Finally, you must wait between 5-10 days of when it might arrive. You have to be at the airport when it arrives or someone might steal it. If anyone from the south drinks alcohol, this six step procedure may affect their alcohol consumption and choices around alcohol (weight determines the cost of the shipping bill making beer even less desirable).

Fifth, the sun patterns are quite different from those of the majority of the planet. In the two communities, the sun officially does not rise from mid to late November until mid to late January when it rises again and for a few days on either end the sun rises but you can not see it for the mountains. During the summer, for about two and a half months, the sun does not set. How people are affected by the 24-hour sunlight or darkness varies – some are hardly affected at all whereas others need sun lamps and/or large amounts of supplements to either wake up or fall asleep and others find different ways to adapt.

Sixth, the cold is a significant factor that is often the first question someone from the Arctic is asked about. Surprisingly, after the sun returns in February the communities have its

coldest month averaging a low of -35 and a high of -25 degrees Celsius. The cold sometimes leaves people staying indoors for all of the winter or some brave individuals take advantage of the cold for ski-dooing, cross-country skiing or going for brisk walks.

Seventh, utilities are sometimes inconsistent. Power outages are often but usually only last a couple of hours. Because of the permafrost, there is no underground plumbing or heating. Instead, trucks transport natural gas, sewage and water on regular weekly intervals. There is a certain amount of water that is given to each housing unit, which can be quickly used up if you do not ration well by taking quick showers. Extra water comes at an additional cost of $75 on your water bill. If a sewage or water truck breaks down, you may have to ration extra because you may not know when you will get water again. It happened to me once where I ran out of natural gas and the house began to freeze in the middle of the night. I had to wait until morning for the natural gas truck to come and fill my tank. Boiling pots of water and leaving the oven open at 500 degrees Fahrenheit got me through the night.

2.3 A Brief Inuit History of White Contact

The Inuit have a long history of living as hunter-gatherers and it is only recently that they have been introduced to post-industrial civilization. The first recorded European "discovery" of Baffin Island by Martin Frobisher was during his 1576 search for the Northwest Passage (Billson & Mancini, 2007), which marked the beginning of several later expeditions of explorers over the next couple of centuries to discover the Northwest Passage (Fossett, 2001). One such expedition led by Sir John Franklin in 1845 ended when the ship was locked in the ice and the whole crew and captain of 129 gone missing. Beginning in 1848, many expeditions

searched for the ship, but it was not found until 2014 within a couple of kilometers of where Elders informed by their oral tradition had pointed out where it would be (Parks Canada, 2019).

Nomadic patterns of Inuit reaching distant lands began to localize around trading posts during the 1800s while they were in regular contact with whalers (Matthiasson, 1992). One elder explained camps would be comprised of a maximum 40 or 50 Inuit (Billson & Mancini, 2007). The Inuit hunted whales and walrus and prepared the skins and carcasses for the Scottish and English traders (Matthiasson, 1992). The Inuit also were invited aboard the ships to attend religious services and events like Christmas; this was their first introduction to Christianity and the Scottish jig. Even today, Inuit dance in their adapted versions of the Scottish jig during special community events and holidays. Catholic missionaries arrived in the early 1900s and discouraged the use of traditional names, songs and language itself (Davis, 2009; Billson & Mancini, 2007).

From the 1920s to the early 1960s is a period characterized by the slow coming of houses to the area and ended by all Inuit being housed in Canadian government-built homes. With a few pieces of modern technology and food including rifles, motorboats, tarps, tents, Colman stoves, canned soup and bannock, Inuit lived mostly a traditional hunter-gatherer life. Inuit hospitality would welcome anyone who wished to learn their ways of survival and take it seriously to teach them (Matthiasson, 1992; Briggs, 1970). Outside of the tent were often seal skins strung out on a wooden frame to dry after the blubber had been carved off of it. Still today in the communities one will often see at least somewhere in the community the sealskins stretched out on frames and are mostly used for mittens and the occasional seal skin park and

pants. Where the camps used to be, today you can find seal bones dense on the ground like landscaping gravel alongside the remnants of winter homes made of whalebones and sod.

During the early 1960s, the Canadian Government encouraged the Inuit to stay out on the land. However, welfare subsidies were dispersed only to those who had children going to school and in the schools these children were punished for speaking Inuktitut (Davis, 2009; Billson & Mancini, 2007). During this time, the RCMP who were responsible for dispersing welfare to the people living in the settlements observed that many of them became reliant on welfare and alcohol (Matthiasson, 1992). With a few pieces of modern technology and food including rifles, motorboats, tarps, tents, Colman stoves, canned soup and bannock, Inuit were able to live a mostly traditional hunter-gatherer life.

In the late 1960s, a significant change began in the eastern Arctic when the Canadian government built homes for all the Inuit and offered school education to their children (Smith, 1972; Condon, 1988; Matthiasson, 1992; Damas, 2002). In his 1973 visit to Pond Inlet, Mathiasson (1992) noted an increase in cars, modern clothing, sunglasses, mattresses, clocks, radios, sporting goods, automobile catalogues, religious plaques, and household furniture. Inuit had become immersed largely in Southern Canadian culture. In the 1970s, they began being employed as clerks in grocery stores, heavy equipment operators, teacher's assistants, clerks in government offices, Public Works odd jobs, oil-riggers being flown out of the community and sewage and garbage truck drivers. Today they are employed in nearly all wage positions in Nunavut including teachers, nurses, supervisor of health programs (CBC, 2016), appointed and elected government officials, and so on with the exception of some more highly educated professions like doctors and lawyers.

With the introduction of the school, wage labour, and other institutions, the awareness of the differences of our two separate ways of thinking increasingly emerged. Matthiasson (1992) noted that a heavy equipment operator did not understand that his foreman required him to not work the hours after midnight when he wanted to. Our idea of the workday comes from the steady rise and fall of the sun, as well as the well-accepted tradition of the "9 to 5" workday. Brody (2001) described another incident when teachers noticed that their students were falling asleep in class and set up a community meeting with the parents. The teachers suggested that the children needed to go to bed earlier so that when they came to school, they would be more awake to learn. The parents responded by explaining that it was a good idea and that they were open to having the teachers go to each of the houses to put the children to bed. These are examples of two separate epistemologies coming from an Indigenous and white Canadian culture (Kovach, 2010). Teachers are constantly exposed to these different ways of thinking and are affected by them.

Since the settlement in communities began in the 1960s, there have been a number of dramatic changes that are linked to some of the social problems within the communities. Inuit youth were being raised in residential schools while their families were living out on the land (Williamson, 1992; Billson & Mancini, 2007). Some argue that Inuit want to live white people's lifestyle but are unable to because they are not the same (Williamson, 1992). After receiving education from the residential school or schools in the community, many Inuit reported a sense of being between two worlds, the white world and Inuit world (Williamson, 1992; Billson & Mancini, 2007). Even after enrolling in some of the schools, many of the Inuit adults did not see the importance of schooling for their children (Condon, 1988).

3. Literature Review

The aim of this literature review is to discuss the relevant qualitative literature on the Arctic from the perspective of southern workers and to show its relevance to existential philosophy and psychotherapy. This literature review also summarizes the existential dimensions of human experience and the affective turn in anthropology that shape my research methodology and objectives. First, I will discuss the qualitative studies completed in the Arctic that focus on southerner's experience there and show that the research is missing a more holistic depiction of the lived experience of the teachers both in and out of the classroom. Second, I will review some of the quantitative research on what motivates teachers coming to and returning to the Arctic to work. Third, I will discuss existential philosophy and existential therapy, which will provide the framework for the study. Fourth, I have organized the following material in a generalized narrative literature review (Onwuegbuzie & Frels, 2016) to capture the key points that will help to provide both the context of the literature and the experience of the Arctic.

3.1 Qualitative Arctic Literature

When I conducted searches using PsychINFO, Academic Search Premier Google and Google Scholar using the search phrases "qualitative arctic," "qualitative remote," "qualitative rural," "qualitative rural/remote teachers," "qualitative rural/remote experience," and "remote/rural qualitative sojourn." I discovered a few dissertations and articles. Next, I searched thesis and dissertation repositories from all major Canadian universities and the Government of Canada website and used the search term "arctic" to ensure that I would not be missing any relevant dissertations. I found more success in finding theses and dissertations that

were relevant to the current study. I excluded the qualitative research that discussed medical, political, geographical or environmental topics or research on teachers with a complete focus on matters of the school without considering the thoughts, feelings and experience of the teachers. Below I summarized master's theses that focused on physical, social, interpersonal or intrapersonal topics.

There were a number of qualitative studies on the experiences of teachers living in the Canadian Arctic. First, I share some of the research conducted on multiple teacher participants in the Arctic including Tolley (2003), Mueller (2006), Oskineegish (2015) and Harper (2000). Then I explore findings from a number of personal reflexive experiences in the Arctic including Barr (2001), Harder (2004), and Chen (2015).

3.1.1 Multiple Participant Qualitative Research on Teachers

At the time of her thesis, Muriel Tolley (2003) had lived and worked as a teacher for 30 years in the Northwest Territories (NWT), which is the territory neighbouring Nunavut. In 1999, she was tasked with developing a program to support new teachers. The Aboriginal population there includes Dene[1], Metis[2] and Inuit. In her master's thesis, she explored the first year of teaching experiences of five female NWT teachers through three phases of interviews conducted in November, February and June.

In the first phase of interviews, one participant commented that in her community there was a limited preservation of culture (Tolley, 2003). Another participant criticized the practice of paying elders to speak in the schools to share their cultural knowledge in the schools, even

[1] First Nations people occupying areas of the Northwest Territories
[2] French word meaning half First Nations. In Canada, Aboriginal people can legally identify as First Nations, Metis or Inuit.

though they were the ones who wanted to preserve that culture. One participant found that she gained acceptance from the community by learning the language, eating traditional foods, buying things from community members and showing an interest in their arts and crafts.

In the February interviews, many of the participants described the ways they made positive changes in their teaching and classroom management, community relationship and work-life balance (Tolley, 2003). One participant was dismayed about how negative she sounded and made changes to her work-life balance. She went from thinking that she would not last the year to planning to stay for another year. A community member who became a teacher felt like everyone was watching and judging her, and so she removed herself from the community to only spend time with immediate family members and elders. After being sick for two days, one teacher was surprised to find all 20 of her students giving her a hug the next day of teaching. Many teachers formed strong personal connections with their students, leading to significant changes in their teaching strategy and classroom management. In addition, they asked the students what they wished to learn and created shared achievable goals with each student. Some teachers showed string desire for more preparation regarding multi-grade/multi-level classrooms and various learning styles.

A set of freedoms and responsibilities given by the parents and community conflicted with the values and goals of many of the teachers (Tolley, 2003). This included parents giving their children freedom to decide when to go to bed, sometimes going to school without breakfast, and looking after their younger siblings instead of going to school.

Tolley (2003) adopted the term “border world” from Haig-Brown (1992 as cited in Tolley, 2003, p. 26) to describe the place where Aboriginal people work to “recover from the

results from past and present 'cultural invasions,' resulting in community disruptions and discontinuities" (p. 108). This border world is "where both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers work in the midst of a constant tension and struggle" (p. 26). The non-Aboriginal teachers struggled to integrate into the community by going to community events and attending other community-based programming. Some felt they had more success than others. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers appreciated cultural differences and the Aboriginal teacher aimed to emphasize these differences to her students.

In her thesis, Tolley (2003) emphasized the experience of the teachers in the classroom while also referring to the teacher's lives outside of the classroom in the community. In such a small community, teachers interact with students both within and outside the classroom, and these interactions are influenced by the teachers experience in the community. Tolley (2003) discussed some of the challenges that the teachers had experienced and how they were able to transcend some of these challenges. However, she did not inquire more deeply about how they were affected by their experiences.

Caroline Mueller (2006) is another who recounted her time in Nunavik, an area of northern Quebec also inhabited by Inuit, where she researched the experiences of teachers living there. She shared that she spoke with attempted to find connection to the place and find their identity. The teachers reflected on how viewed themselves their positions of privilege and as role models for their Inuit students while working within the colonizing structures of northern education. Wanting to reduce the anxiety brought on by culture shock, the teachers wanted to integrate into the local Inuit community. Along with other experiences in the north (Wihak, 2004; Tolley, 2003; Chen, 2015), there was a profound sense of isolation felt by going

to a geographically remote community where one mentioned that they all go through a certain low point or phase of discouragement.

Before arriving in the communities, Mueller (2006) shared that all teachers had a sense of excitement or curiosity about learning from Inuit culture and wanted to break through the perceived differences between the two cultures. One teacher found Inuit values to be of freedom and adventure, being drawn to northern landscapes and wildlife. Another wanted to learn more about Inuit art, culture and spirituality and to understand what it meant to be a member of the other culture. They wanted to find connections, become more like insiders and were anxious about how they would make differences in the students' lives.

Mueller (2006) explained that feeling unprepared in living in the communities, the teachers struggled to maintain control of the classrooms, gaining students trust and gaining acceptance in the community. In adapting to Inuit values, teachers found themselves to be more nonjudgmental, while at times they had to force. While wanting to adjust to let go of southern values one teacher felt conflicted as seeing Inuit values as an alternative. One teacher noticed the lack of structure offered by parents and linked that to the lack of encouragement for the students to go to school. The expectations of the southern schooling system did not seem to connect well with Inuit students. Another teacher noted the openness as to which her host family was able to talk about their daughter's suicide as challenging her assumptions of family life that affected her insight in her role as a teacher. Although most teachers appreciated living with their host families, they felt badly if they were to complain about community members.

Most teachers were quickly “disappointed when they encountered a different reality than they had expected” (Mueller, 2006 p. 233) and were unsure about how to respond. The teachers found that the Inuit were trying to embrace the southern lifestyle that the teachers were trying to escape and were unable to experience the traditional Inuit lifestyle they hoped to encounter. It took teachers lots of time to plan for classes and they found the students were quickly discouraged when the lessons were not adjusted to their needs. Most teachers found that they did not fully belong in the community and found that the students, who were once so friendly upon their arrival, were difficult to build relationships with. Frustration with their uncertainty about their roles as teachers and feeling unsuccessful in connecting with their students compounded their sense of inefficacy. Some teachers found teachers and administrators encouraged social distancing from the Inuit community to the new teachers, leaving them feeling confused by these prejudice views and uncertain about how they position themselves in the community. Mueller (2006) described racism as a dangerous attitude that was held by both Inuit and Qallunaat communities that harmed the children most of all. For those who continued to live in the north, they felt abandoned by their colleagues, having to restart working relationships with teachers every new year.

Like Tolley’s (2003) research, Mueller (2006) also has a focus on what was happening in the classroom and shares a few stories of the participants lives outside of their professional roles.

In her thesis, Tolley (2003) focuses more on the experience of the teachers in the classroom but certainly refers to the teacher’s lives outside of the classroom in the community. In such a small community, teachers interact with students in the community and the

experiences of the teachers in the community affect the experience in the classroom. Tolley (2003) discusses some of the difficulties that the teachers had experienced and how they were able to transcend some of these difficulties but she does not inquire more deeply about how they were affected by some of the events they had experienced.

Oskineegish (2015) performed a qualitative study with Native and non-Native teacher participants from Northern Ontario and Northern Manitoba concerning culturally relevant teaching and classroom management in the Northern Native communities. Teachers described the difficulty in developing lesson plans that worked well and behavioral issues that led to problems with student attendance. Attendance issues in Nunavut are related to a "herding" effect (where when their friends drop-out that they are more likely to drop out), alcohol and drugs, and parental factors including parental encouragement and education level (O'Gorman & Pandey, 2014). To become more equipped to deal with some of these challenges, the teacher participants made several recommendations (Oskineegish, 2015). One Native teacher suggested that non-Native teachers should communicate with the Elders and parents in the community to become more knowledgeable about the people for whom they are providing their service. One non-Native principal suggested that new teachers sit in on other teacher's lessons during their free periods. A couple of teachers communicated the importance of partaking in community events like feasts, festivals, cultural activities, sports, dances, and flea markets. They suggested that the experience of isolation can be overcome when teachers engage in these community activities and build positive relationships between themselves and the community. Some teachers suggested that new teachers need to be open minded and flexible to avoid pushing their own agenda and to avoid disrespecting the local rules of respect.

Their attitude needed to be one of patience, compassion and understanding and to have a good sense of humour.

Oskineegish (2015) shared recommendations for coping with some of in the classroom, including participating in community activities. However, she did not discuss the lived experience of teachers' involvement outside of the classroom.

Harper (2000) also described the experiences of teachers in northern Ontario. The teachers felt uncomfortable in their role as outsiders and the community and the teachers all knew that at some point the teachers would leave the community, making the effort to build connections less meaningful. Teachers without families to go home to felt more isolated than those who did and were homesick for some of the luxuries in the south including clean water and movie theatres.

3.1.2 Single Participant Reflexive Research in Nunavut

Odette Barr (2001) conducted an autobiographical inquiry study on her four-year experience with her friend YoAnne in a few communities across Nunavut, based on her journal entries. She mainly explained her experience in Grise Fjord. Without much summer programming for the children throughout the summer, they often look forward to school starting and were happy to see the teachers arriving. She found that the students enjoyed the routines of school and found the school to be the hub of the Inuit community.

Because of the housing shortage, Barr (2001) initially stayed in an apartment above the health centre normally reserved for visiting professionals. She shared that She kept her dog close, hearing that Inuit were often frightened of white people's dogs. I also have to add that Inuit are often afraid of cats or house flies.

Barr (2001) commented on a few aspects of her emotions in and out of the classroom. There was a big celebration on the first day of school, where the community gathered at the school to show their pride in their children going to school and their appreciation for the teachers. Barr (2001) described such fond emotions watching these students grow into adults and shared with them the joys and sorrows of their families. Finally, she speaks of such a sense of pride knowing that she was a part of some of the student's growing up.

Drawing from her experience, Barr (2001) offered significant insights that might help teachers to be ready about what to expect in teaching in Nunavut. On the first day, she introduced herself to her class and they showed no reaction. She knew that they were listening and observing very carefully from her previous experience. She focused the value of observation and advised new teachers to arrive with an open mind and a willingness to learn. Also, she emphasized to learn the language because Inuit have respect for that and they have a good laugh when you get the pronunciation wrong. In her years of teaching, she learned to have fun with the students before moving into the curriculum. She adds that a sincere interest in learning about Inuit culture and their language could help the teachers gain credibility in the classroom.

Barr (2001) talked about what it was like to integrate into the community. She described a community picnic arranged by the airstrip, where games were played by all of the community members and she joined in at times. On Halloween, she had seen so many people young and old dressing up and even Elders going trick-or-treating. She felt amazed that the more non-academic students seemed to shine out on the land. The community radio passes every bit of information from community events and news to personal announcements like "Hannah, wherever you are, please call your mother at home when you can" and even broadcasting games like bingo over the radio.

There was such a sense of connection to the natural environment, specifically with Inuit, as described by Barr (2001). She explained her fascination with some of the Inuit being able to travel

hundreds of kilometers by skidoo without a map. There was also a time where an Inuk effortlessly pointed out a tiny speck in the far distance and was able to make it out as a boat, while it took Barr (2001) some time to even see the boat in the white snow landscape. Part of YoAnne and her routine was to walk around the community and enjoy the natural environment. Barr (2001) described not seeing a blue sky like the one she saw in Nunavut anywhere else. She recalls feeling uplifted, light in spirit, free and exhilarated at the sight of the sun after three and a half months of darkness. She also described the sun returning as more difficult, as it returns at a faster pace than the body is able to adjust.

Dorothy Harder (2004) used autoethnography and phenomenology to describe her year teaching in the Arctic. For her, it was a sojourn between two worlds: “caught between the mainstream and the culture of contemporary Inuit people” (p. 8), where she mustered the strength many mornings to assume her role as a teacher described her experience as “feeling inexperienced, confused, frightened and at a loss to inspire.” She seemed to realize “the problem is not to make something happen, but to understand what is already happening, what is right there and then with this person” (Craig, 2008 p. 240). She suggests that teachers need to question their values and beliefs, acknowledge their white skin privilege and come to see their own cultural framework as colonial. This awareness and struggle is similar to a form of existential crisis where “beliefs can be identified, valued, prioritized and authenticated” (Webster, 2004, p. 82). Recognizing herself as a member of a privileged group, Harder (2004) cites Bourdieu (1977) in his description of the various forms of capital, that create an authority power divide between southern teachers like herself and Inuit (Harder, 2004). Within the framework of Bourdieu’s theory, she had economic capital because she was well-off financially. She also had cultural capital as she had been to university. In addition, she had social capital as she held a respected position as a teacher.

In the staffroom, Harder (2004) noticed that it was easy to focus on the student's misbehaviour rather than risk questioning their own teaching abilities, which had been successful in southern Canadian cities. She created a list of things that were considered "unlawful" in her teaching post in Alberta, Canada, but did not matter in the junior high class in Arctic:

> "gum chewing, cap wearing, chair tipping, paper planes flying during class, pencils used as missiles, students unprepared for class, students lying on the floor/sleeping at their desks, ignoring teacher's requests, wandering around while the teacher is talking, rude comments/insults about the teacher's appearance in her presence, interrupting the teacher mid-lesson, leaving the class without permission, calling a teacher by first name and listening to a diskman while the teacher is talking" (pp. 35-36).

Upon reflection, she recognized that her desire to control her class to impart knowledge could be compared to a "saviour" saving underprivileged youth. Thus, she found that her once professional goals as being "less than flattering, even blatantly authoritarian" (p. 47) and colonial since she did not attribute value to the particular strengths of the culture. Other teachers coming to Nunavut have also gained appreciation for the power divide and the colonial impact of education on Inuit culture (Tomkins, 1998; Yue, 2011; Chen, 2015).

In Harder's (2004) experience of being between two worlds in the Arctic, she does not discuss many of her experiences outside of the classroom where she is still in the cultural, geographical world of the Arctic. She focused on the border between her culture and Inuit culture but the experiences of border within the classroom will undoubtedly be influenced by the experiences in the off-work time and outside of the classroom. Many changes in one's life

happen in the first year, and normally more experience is needed to have a better adaptation to the remote Arctic community. Harder (2004) was able to look deeply into her experience and identify her own colonial way of thinking, yet we do not hear about what she did outside of the classroom and how her inner experience was affected by some of these events.

In her autoethnography, Chen (2015) documented her two-year adventure as a new and inexperienced teacher in Nunavut. She described the feeling of no longer enjoying going to work because the classroom situation was hostile, and she felt the majority of the high school students had turned against her. She attributed these feelings to a cultural clash between herself and her students. Chen struggled with the intricate relations among herself and those she teaches throughout her story. The struggle to gain control of her classroom and understand cultural differences generated a chaotic emotional landscape.

Some of the challenges Chen (2015) confronted with her students included them not attending class that made it difficult for her to teach in a continuous manner, cursing her in Inuktitut, helping out other teachers when they should not have, calling out in class, and being distracted and distracting other students after only working for a short time. She also experienced unsupportive co-workers, difficulty in building relationships with students, being away from the support of friends and family and being blamed by student's parents when their child punched holes in the wall. In this challenging situation, Chen (2015) became aware of her own insecurities and worked to appreciate the backgrounds of her students, acknowledged her own limitations, developed better stress management, transformed her outlook on life and her teaching career and developed a greater understanding of what values she held as an educator.

Chen (2015) described one event that led to the deterioration of her "physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health" in which students took her iPad and discovered a conversation where she vented about a student. Then the students copied the conversation and pasted it across Facebook. At this point, she reported she quit trying to smile, and engage in conversation with students and co-workers and just went "through the motions" to finish the year (p. 48).

During her time in Nunavut, Chen (2015) was "unsure of [her] abilities when performing at work, unsure of how to conduct [herself] in social events and [she] certainly had to question her own character" (p. 58) and asked whether she was in the right profession. She described that she had to undergo a deep change that enabled her to understand that "as the world around us changes, we lose our sense of alignment… [however], we need to alter our fundamental assumptions, rules, or paradigm and to develop new theories about ourselves and our surrounding environment" (Chen, 2015 p. 58). These new theories will develop a cultural flexibility that is needed for Nunavut and other cultural contexts while the old theories maintain the cultural rigidity that serves to make matters worse for the individual's inner world and outer surroundings. Chen eventually took her own unsettling experiences as a gift from the people which helped her to develop new ways of thinking.

Chen (2015) discussed extensively how some of the classroom experiences left her unsure of herself and deteriorated her mental health. She provided a detailed account of her personal and inner experience of living in the Arctic. These experiences in the classroom can certainly be difficult but the larger situational context of life outside of work could also either exacerbate or mitigate or help process these difficult experiences in the classroom. Her

Nunavut experience of two years is more than Harder's (2004) one year; however, both are single experiences that do not have a wide range of communities across Nunavut from different people. By reflecting on their own experience, they are exploring the questions that they had considered without exploring the experiences of those around them. For all of the above research, we do not know what their daily routines and living is like. We have not heard anything of their social lives.

3.1.3 Limitations of Qualitative Teachers Living in the Arctic Literature

While all of the above research has obvious strengths, none of it focused on the wider experience of teachers from the south living the Canadian Arctic. Barr (2001), Tolley (2003), Harder (2004), Mueller (2006), Chen (2015) and Oskineegish (2015) described the lived experience and the challenges and opportunities in the role of a teacher but said little about the life outside of that role. Barr (2001) described her lived experience in a detailed way discussing her reflections and emotions related to her experience. However, she was a single participant in her study and did not explore much in terms of difficulties or adjustments that she needed to make while living there. Tolley (2003) described the experience of several new teachers in NWT that mainly focused on their lives and reflections related to the classroom and their professional work. Although, she did mention that the teachers gain more connections with the students through attending community events there is not much discussed about the personal lives of the teachers. Harder (2004) also talked about finding connections with the students outside of the classroom setting but did not go into detail about her life outside of the classroom. Mueller (2006) discussed lots of the emotional processes of the teachers through fascinating and challenging experiences. In this study, we do not hear much of what the

teachers do outside of the classroom in terms of their activities or social life. Chen (2015) discussed some important learning that she underwent in Nunavut and her personal reflections related to it but said virtually nothing about her experience outside of her professional role. Oskineegish (2015) gave a good list of recommendations for teacher of how to adjust to the Arctic but did not share anything of the lived experience of the teachers.

In the current study, I will focus on the lived experience of the teachers across their physical, social, personal and spiritual/existential domains who are continuing to adjust to Nunavut culture and living. The main limitations of the above studies is that they do not reveal to the reader much of what happens outside of the teachers professional lives but the outside life is essential in our understanding of how they experience the classroom. Outside of the classroom they must find new ways of taking care of their health, social life and recreation which are different from the places where they used to live. Life outside of the classroom and personal experiences are a part of the holistic experience of all of the changes that come with moving to a completely different culture and geographical location. I will explore some areas of living in Nunavut that have not been directly explored including exercise, eating and health, the experience of the cold and sun patterns and the quality of friendships in Nunavut.

3.2 Other Relevant Qualitative Research Literature

There were also several studies that I found that were related to the present study but were not focused on teachers in the Arctic. First, I summarize the findings from Smith (1972) who was a trail blazer in qualitatively researching what it was like from Qallunaat to live in Nunavut. Second, Wihak's (2004) research gives a very comparable study to explore the experience of people who had experience of being a counsellor in Nunavut. Third, I included

some of the findings from Bergen (2020) who described the lived experience of non-Aboriginal workers in remote Australia. The experiences recorded in this study were of relevance because there were a number of similarities between the rural and remote lifestyle in Australia and Nunavut lifestyle. Fourth, I summarized two studies from Wihak & Merali (2007a; 2007b) who studied some of the experiences of counsellors in Nunavut.

While anthropologists in the Arctic normally focus their study on how Inuit live, Smith (1972) was the first recorded to focus his research on how southerners lived in the Arctic. He observed that the work group and social group often comprised the same individuals, making it difficult to avoid disagreements and differences (Smith, 1972). Conflict between agencies often arise during the work day, and after work is finished friendships between the people in these agencies continue. While there are some differences in the experiences of living in the Arctic, and I did not see conflicts to the extent and severity as Smith (1972) describes, the experience in Nunavut is still similar and similar conflicts still persist. I have excluded the aspects that are no longer relevant in Nunavut.

Many of their usual forms of entertainment and sport are not offered in the small communities (Smith, 1972). Inter-agency conflict arises when different activities in different buildings are scheduled for the same times because community members will miss the other event. I had some experience in being criticized in running youth programming while other community events were taking place, which can make sense for those wanting more attendance at their programs or seeing it more as a community event intended for all to attend. Some southerners, particularly the nurses, become dismayed when the Hudson Bay Company brings in large quantities of soft drinks and candy bars or when luxury items are introduced to

the community, such as “gourmet foods,” tape recorders, and Honda motorcycles. These are, however, considered unnecessary luxuries given the low income of Inuit population. While other agencies are meant to educate Inuit, improve their health and meet their spiritual needs, the Hudson’s Bay Company operated with a motive to make profit that sometimes undermines the goals of the different agencies (Smith, 1972). The wives of southerner living in the Arctic were often unemployed. They expressed concerns about the education and medical care of their children and wished to move the family back down south. Conflict also arises where reciprocity is not completed in cases like when one is not invited for dinner after having friends for dinner at their house (Smith, 1972).

Intra-agency conflict can arise for various reasons, comprising: (1) disagreement on how a certain role or task should be performed, (2) poorly defined roles with no clear boundaries, (3) southerners in one role not acknowledge the legitimate authority of southerners in another role, (4) conflicting characteristics of the role holders (e.g., two authoritarian individuals), or (5) the need for supervisors to discipline employees due to poor work performance (e. g., absenteeism or lengthy coffee breaks)” (Smith, 1972, p. 83). Southerners who are aware of the possibilities of conflict in the workplace may choose to fraternize with those from other agencies.

Smith (1972) identified that often conflict arose over competition for scarce resources like Christmas trees, housing and partners for mating and marriage. For instance, disputes would occur over the placement of the community Christmas tree, with some individuals preferring to be set in the Hudson’s Bay Company building, while others wished for the tree to

be placed in the school for the students to enjoy. This situation is an example of conflict between tradition and progression.

Conflict over housing revolve around the allocation of government-owned subsidized housing and the problems with the different houses. In some cases, single southerner men would compete, often leading to conflicts, for the much fewer single southerner women. Language, culture and education differences often restrict the already limited number of single Inuit women, although mixed marriages do occur.

Christine Wihak (2004) studied the experiences of southern Canadian experiences in Nunavut, who had some experience in counselling Inuit. The counsellors experienced several living conditions in Nunavut that was hard. They spoke with “great feeling about the intensity of abuse and trauma in Inuit lives” (p. 115). After hearing daily of so much child sexual abuse, spousal assault, suicide and other social problems the counsellors found it to be a depressing place to not be able to do anything about it. One of the counsellors described herself as feeling vulnerable and almost paranoid. To cope with the difficult realities of the experience, the counsellors worked to distance themselves as much as they could including one counsellor who repeatedly used the word “one” instead of “I” when being interviewed to distance herself to make the experience more bearable. They had worked with mothers who had lost their children to death and found that the clients were not as traumatized by this. One counsellor saw children under a building sniffing glue or propane and talked to an older Inuit woman about what could be done (Wihak, 2004). She was told that it was none of her business and that the family would deal with it. Several counsellors felt personal or professional isolation, having both positive and negative effects on them. Being in another culture made it harder for

them to find connections. Professional isolation where they were given autonomy to make decisions was felt as positive for some and mixed feelings for others (Wihak, 2004). One counsellor was put into a room without windows with the disruptive students in the school and teachers saw their job negatively. I had experiences of teachers not wanting their student to leave for a counselling appointment because they had missed so much school that they wanted them to stay to catch up on the learning. Being caught between cultures created difficulties for them in their professional roles. One counsellor found that the institution she was working for had turned on her because the Inuit she was working with began to be critical of the government system.

Several living conditions in Nunavut that were helpful for their experiences. Though working with abused and traumatized clients, the counsellors felt that they had taken away some valuable lessons from their experience (Wihak, 2004). The counsellors found that they had to build a new framework based on the experiences had in Nunavut that reflected a better desire to be open and learn from the culture. They had experienced a number of mentors both local and nonlocal that were willing to help the counsellors navigate the new culture. In small communities, a comment shared that one could not afford to have feuds with people in the community and worked to accept those around them. Some participants shared that they felt at “home in Nunavut and had learned acceptance and humour in Inuit communities” (Wihak, 2004 p. 135). They even talked about the difficulty in leaving the community knowing that they would miss the Inuktitut voices and closeness of the people. There was a felt sense of guilt coming from being white as experienced from some of the counsellors. While feeling accepted by the local Inuit community, the teachers still felt that they were seen as different and a

cultural exchange would happen in the counselling room where each side would share information about their culture. There was a commonality of linking their spirituality to the natural beauty of Nunavut in all of its vastness.

In the counselling room, there were several differences that counsellors experienced compared to working with clients in southern Canada (Wihak, 2004). Clients were so much more honest and open and jumped right into the trauma that they were experiencing. The crying was a deep wailing that made the counsellors feel like they were going to fall apart but this was natural for them in their way of letting go of the suffering. These experiences gave the counsellors confidence to be working with difficult or scary situations and to work with other at-risk clients and those from other cultures.

Upon coming back to southern Canada, some counsellors felt a sense of relief while others reported an uncomfortable feeling (Wihak, 2004). One discussed the feeling of discomfort with buying anything and suddenly did not see the purpose of shopping for anything other than the essentials.

Wihak (2004) describes a number of the struggles and good qualities of living in Nunavut. She went into depth in describing the shock felt by the counsellors when hearing about the social problems within the community and the stories that their clients had to share. Like some of the qualitative studies on teachers, she keeps her focus on the professional lives of the counsellors and shares less about their lives outside of work.

Penelope Bergen (2020) conducted a qualitative study exploring the development of culture amongst the non-Aboriginal workers in remote Australia. She noted that geographical

isolation was a significant factor motivating workers to relocate to these areas, and it was not reported as a source of stress..

For the above literature of Nunavut, geographical isolation was a source of stress (Chen, 2015; Harder, 2001) and something to be overcome (Tolley, 2003; Oskineegish, 2015). Despite these challenges, all the literature reviewed here emphasized that going to a remote area amongst an Aboriginal culture was viewed as an adventurous experience (Bergen, 2020; Chen, 2015; Harder, 2001; Tolley; 2003). Apart from the Arctic literature, Bergen (2020) noted the existence of segregated groups among non-Aboriginal workers and between non-Aboriginal workers and the Aboriginals. In my Arctic experience, some communities witnessed a lot of intermingling between nurses, teachers and other government workers, while in other communities; they were often divided into groups based on their profession. Bergen (2020) also described how the participants felt a strong level of autonomy with their work when they did not have their supervisors watching them closely. Supervisors instead relied on their workers' judgement, at times to the extent of ignoring government policies. A number of these workers questioned their assumptions about their role in the workplace and why they were doing what was asked of them because it no longer made sense to them. In the Arctic literature, a significant number of teachers experienced a period of questioning their assumptions and their role as a teacher (Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2001; Chen, 2015; Oskineegish, 2015).

Bergen (2020), through a qualitative study, showed the lived experience of rural and remote life in Australia. However, it lacked an organizing rubric to provide a holistic experience of its participants' experiences. Once immersing oneself well into the cultural context, some of

the “givens” of the place may taken for granted and receive less thought. By intentionally inquiring about each domain of their lived experience, we can assume that we have left fewer areas of their life unexplored.

Wihak and Merali (2007a) used a narrative analysis to interview counselors who had worked in Nunavut and asked about the experience and changes in practice they had while living and working there. Three themes emerged that are directly related to ethical practice including relaxing professional or personal boundaries, establishing confidentiality and redefining child maltreatment. Personal and professional boundaries were relaxed and adapted to the demands of the community members by interacting with clients outside of the session, and giving gifts of food and clothing to clients in extreme poverty. Confidentiality can be difficult in working amongst a small population, requiring counselors to plan about how they will cope when clients appear in their lives outside of work. Child maltreatment in Nunavut needs to be redefined, where it is normal for children to be playing outside during all hours of the night and having less parental supervision. They researchers suggest that future research should investigate strategies counselors should use to prevent burnout and compassion fatigue.

They conducted another study, a chronological narrative of the same eight counselors who worked in Nunavut. This study focused on the perceived changes in their sense of self or racial or cultural identity because working in a cross-cultural context (Wihak & Merali, 2007b). Four emerging themes were identified including an increased “White” consciousness, feeling unity with nature, cultural shifts in worldview and recognizing universal human connections. The increased “White” consciousness came from an awareness of their status as coming from the dominant oppressor group. Feelings of unity with nature came from the Inuit clients’

spiritual connection to nature. The cultural shift in worldviews was explained by one participant, who noted that White “linear thinking” is characterized by “cause and effect and clear and distinct ideas, where responsibility for problems is emphasized.” This is distinct from Inuit “circular thinking” which identifies everyone as contributing to the problem creation and emphasizes collective efforts in finding solutions. Counselors were also able to recognize the deep human connections and similarities among people from diverse cultures.

These two studies by Wihak & Merali (2007a; 2007b) offer a critical analysis of working amongst Inuit clients from an ethical and culturally sensitive lens, which is helpful to situate the current study. They are qualitative studies but do not get deeply into the experience of the participants.

3.2.1 Other Relevant Qualitative Research Limitations

The other relevant research offered some additional insights into the current study topic and there were also some limitations. Smith (1972) discussed much of what happened between members of the community, especially in terms of conflict. However, he did not discuss much of what happened internally with the people living there or their lived experience of the happenings in the Arctic. Wihak (2004) discussed the experiences of professionals having some experience in counselling in Nunavut but kept her focus on the professional experience of them. Bergen (2020) explored the lived experience of people living in rural and remote Australia but did not have a structural rubric to explore it. Some features of the lived experience that were missed including routines and what people did for recreation. Wihak & Merali (2007a; 2007b) shared some more of what it was like to live in Nunavut but were not an in depth look at the experiences. The current study will explore the lived experiences of the

teachers living in Nunavut in a structured way illuminating some aspects of living there that have not been explored.

3.3 Quantitative Research of What Draws Teachers to the Arctic

Kitchenham and Chasteauneuf (2010) investigated the "northern" needs of recruitment and retention of general and specialist teachers. A total of 56 school districts participated including Whitehorse Department of Education (Canada's Yukon Territory) and the Yellowknife School District (Canada's Northwest Territories) and other northern school districts below the Arctic region. The data was gathered through questionnaires sent to the teachers and involved two semi-structured interviews with five to ten teachers, three to five principals and one Human resource representative. The top ten reasons for staying in their roles included a) "I love where I work," (e.g., Barr, 2001) b) "good salary," c) "integrated into the community," d) "bought a house here," e) "retiring here," f) "cost of living is reasonable," g) "opportunities for career advancement," h) "employment is difficult in the south," (also found in Harper, 2000) i) "access to teaching resources," and j) "access to professional development."

3.4 Existential Philosophy and Existential Therapy

When researching the lived experience in the Arctic, there is no better philosophical framework to use than existential philosophy. Existential philosophy can be understood as a style of philosophizing about life that includes recurring themes of freedom and responsibility, finitude, guilt, despair, anxiety, boredom, alienation and the emotional life of man to name a few (Macquarrie, 1976). Existential philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre (1943) argued that we are in Bad Faith when we are not immediately aware of these themes. The themes of existence are often veiled by the experience of everyday life only to come into awareness when this routine is

interrupted or something goes wrong (Macquarrie, 1976). The cultural and geographical differences in the Arctic are enough for any urban dweller to experience an interruption in their habitual ways of living making them acutely aware of some of these themes of existential philosophy. For instance, Hayes (2007) shared that the sense of alienation and estrangement that is inherent in the experience of those going to a new cultural environment is an accentuation of existential anxiety. Within the new cultural environment, individuals may experience a destabilizing sense of freedom resulting from the deconstruction of their self-beliefs developed in one's home culture. This can lead to a realization of the plurality of possible selves (Brown & Brown, 2009). Existential philosophy not just of facts but absorbing each of these within their life and living life differently as a result (Warnock, 1970). The immediacy felt by some of these themes changes anyone living in the Arctic to be greatly impacted by the experience. Some of the existential philosophers that I will mention throughout the study to offer insights into the experiences of the teachers include Søren Kierkegaard (1841), Jean-Paul Sartre (1943), Karl Jaspers (1965) and Martin Heidegger (1927).

Existential therapy draws heavily from existential philosophy for insights into helping clients navigate their struggles (van Deurzen & Arnold-Baker, 2018). Existential therapists endeavour to take a holistic view of the client, considering their cultural and social backgrounds. As an existential therapist, I hoped to look at the teacher's lived experience in the Arctic as a matter of the way that I see the world around me where I attempt to look at all aspects of a person's living circumstances. Some of the existential therapists that I will mention throughout the study include Ludwig Binswanger (1963), Rollo May (1958), Bo Jacobson (2007), Ernesto Spinelli (2007), and Emmy van Deurzen (2016). Below, I will discuss a few concepts

from existential philosophy and psychotherapy that I will use including the subject-subject relationship, attunement and limit situations.

3.5 Subject-Subject Relationship

This division between subject and object in the context of research has affected much of western thought including the disciplines of psychology, anthropology and geography. Indeed, in existential therapy from Binswanger (1963) onwards, it has been a primary concern of the existential approach to maintain a subject-subject relationship between the client and the therapist. This subject-subject relationship is essential in that it can act as a model for the client to rediscover one's being-in-the-world which is thought to strike directly at the most acute problems of modern Western man, namely that they have lost their experience of community and world (May, 1958). May (1958) argued that the subject-object dichotomy, that had influenced much of psychotherapy up to that time, has to be avoided to understand the world through the clients' eyes and the world in general. The division between subject and object in everyday life, and at times the therapy room, has left an estrangement or alienation between self and the other and self and the natural environment.

Within the existential approach, there is an acknowledgement of our somatic, embodied existence, which is useful given certain contexts. The empirical account of the emotions remains incomplete from the existential point of view because it only focuses on the outward observable phenomenon and ignores the inward experience of this outward phenomenon. The existential approach argues that it is through our body that we subjectively participate in and are affected by the happenings of the world; we are embodied by our physical selves and by the

world around us, including the cultural and natural world we are being-in-the-world. Furthermore, “the perceptions that we have by way of sense-experience, we have as spectators in the world; but through is our feelings, we are immediately participating in the world” (Macquarrie, 1976, p. 157). To perceive is to objectify the world but to feel and participate is to be united with the world subjectively. By experiencing the world through feeling, allows one to actively participate with emotions or feelings acting as a conduit to register for one’s being-in-the-world.

One might assume that only the exercise of rational objective thought help one understand the emotions of attuning oneself to the social world leading to philosophical truths. However, it is the fleeting moods and feelings that we experience ‘in our minds,’ or within our subjective experience that can be the basis for philosophical understanding and can inform our being-with-others. Macquarrie (1976) illustrates an example of someone looking at a burnt forest and saying “What a sorry sight!” The forest itself is not sorry but one projects their own emotions onto a situation. In this case, our subjective, physiologically felt emotions can inform the way we can make meaning out of the (natural) world.

3.6 Attunement in the Arctic

The German word “Stimmung” can refer to attunement but also to the opening up of the world and moods such as “joy, contentment, bliss, sadness, melancholy [and] anger” (Heidegger, 1995 p. 64). Many of the teachers attune themselves to the Arctic by being flexible and open-minded in their work and personal lives and the need to make efforts to connect with Inuit on a personal and cultural level (Tompkins, 1998; Barr, 2001; Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Yue, 2011; Chen, 2015) which holds true for other professions in the Arctic (e.g., Vukic & Keddy,

2002; Wihak & Merahli, 2003; Wihak & Merali, 2007; MacKenzie, 2015; Fraser & Nadeau, 2015; Shimo, 2016; Macleod, Garraway, Jonatansdottir, & Moffitt, 2018). One cannot forcibly bring attunement; it is already there and we must awaken it (Heidegger, 1995). Similarly, teachers could not force an immediate attunement, understanding or mastery of their circumstances, since it had to come over time and through personal and professional reflection. Heidegger (1995) continues that attunement is not inside us nor does it come from other beings and "is not some being that appears in the soul as an experience, but the way of our being there with one another" (p. 66).

3.7 Limit Situations in the Arctic

Psychiatrist and existential philosopher Karl Jaspers (1994 as cited in Jacobsen, 2007) distinguished between normal and limit situations. Normal situations are to a certain extent what one can deal with, influence and co-create while *limit situations* refer to the fact that they do not change, for example, crashing into a brick wall. When suffering is understood as inevitable:

> "only then Jaspers says, have I accepted suffering as my lot: I grieve, admit the presence of suffering to myself, live between the tension of acknowledging and not acknowledging, sometimes fighting it, seeking to diminish and postpone it, *but finally I acknowledge that this suffering is mine, it belongs to me. Nobody can take it away again. It becomes my life*" (Jacobsen, 2007 p. 34 Italics in original).

This limit situation as a "change in feeling and mood that they become aware of their own self" (Stanghellini & Rosfort, 2014, p. 152) is relevant for all teachers that come to the Arctic with preconceived beliefs of what their experience of the Arctic will be like and try to use accepted

ways of teaching from southern Canada (Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Chen, 2015). While the "ultimate frustration of our projects is inevitable" (Solomon, 2002, p. 77), the cultural and geographical differences encountered in the Arctic increases the frequency and depth of this frustration.

3.8 "Affective Turn" in Anthropology

In doing a holistic study about the lived experience of the teachers, the current study may help contribute to the growing research on emotions in the anthropological field (e.g., Davies, 2010a). The teachers do not experience the clients from a different culture just within the classroom just as counsellors there would not just experience clients in the counselling room. They also experience the students and clients outside of the sessions in the community and get to experience first-hand the community and culture in which the student or client has developed. In typical counselling relationships we may never get to know the student or client outside of that context or may never get to meet anyone who knows them outside of our professional relationships. As Wihak (2014) explained, there is a relaxing of professional boundaries in Nunavut. In Nunavut, a student or client could very well be one's next door neighbour or a member of the community in with which we must interact. We might work alongside their brother or sister and we might eating alongside all of their friends or close family members at a community feast. We know the Elders in which they drew lots of influence, and we might know their parents on a personal level. Understanding the culture in which a student or client is raised can give us an extraordinary amount of information about who this student or client is. We can understand the culture of which a student or client is a part of more

than we ever could by simply meeting with clients in professional contexts or reading about the culture from a book. Gathering information like this blurs the boundary of a teacher or counsellor into that of a participant-observer anthropologist that seeks to understand the culture. This "in-between" of the professional work of a teacher or counsellor and that of fieldwork offers opportunities to develop more insights into those we wish to understand (Siddique, 2011). While it would be important for teachers or counsellors to maintain boundaries and not interact with people closely associated with the client outside of work, in Nunavut communities it is inevitable and can be used as a strength.

Similar to existential therapy's intersubjectivity with the client, the emotional subjectivity of anthropologists and their subjective experience have garnered interest and become a topic of research for anthropologists (Davies, 2010a; Moutsou, 2011). Although these teachers are not anthropologists, they are natural participant-observers of another culture who often stay longer than anthropologists. This culture is no longer a hunter-gatherer culture but retains many of the same values and traditions, making it relatively new to post-industrial civilization and thus are a richly different culture to be encountered.

The subjective data of emotions, reactions and experiences can assist rather than impede the objectivity and understanding of the lived experience in the field (Davies, 2010a). When traditional empiricists in anthropology attempted to detach themselves emotionally from their research, they unknowingly fostered a different set of emotions (Davies, 2010a). *Radical empiricism*, a term coined by psychologist William James, is a methodological position for understanding the spaces between subject and object, which is not thought to be antagonistic to traditional empiricism but to be understood as complementary. This postmodern movement

in anthropology seeks to dissolve the *subject – object* or the *anthropologist – exotic other* dichotomy by including subjectivities and emotions. Becoming a participant-observer within the context of fieldwork is essential for the anthropologist to gain cultural knowledge (Moutsou, 2011).

In anthropology, the "*affective turn*" movement suggests that subjectivities and related effects, feelings and emotions are aids to understanding research participants and researchers alike (Stodulka, Selim & Mattes, 2018). This approach is similar to the psychoanalytic concept of *counter-transference* where the therapist experiences emotions from interactions with a client. Indeed recognizing the anthropologist is always a "part of the situations, interviews, conversations and other social encounters that they wish to analyze, it is methodologically careless not to pay more attention to our own affective engagements." (p. 521). According to Macquarrie (1976), our "feelings are rooted in our being-in-the-world or more adequately in our being-with-others-in-the-world… [and they] attune us to the real state of affairs" (p. 158). Emotionally conscious anthropologists continuously affect and are affected by what they witness.

The "affective turn" in anthropology research can also help understand some of the teachers' experiences as they are both in cross-cultural placements. There are several similarities in the experiences of the anthropologists as compared to the teachers through each step of the immersion process. Anthropologists and teachers both experience excitement and anxiety when first arriving (Stodulka, Selim & Mattes, 2018; Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Chen, 2015). Many anthropologists unveil concerns about not producing data or doing their work the wrong way (Stodulka, Selim & Mattes, 2018), while teachers worry about doing their work

properly in this new context (Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Chen, 2015). As we have already seen with Tolley (2003) and Harder (2004), there is some guilt related to our colonial heritage that is also experienced by anthropologists (Stodulka, Selim & Mattes, 2018). Tolley (2003), Harder (2004) and Chen (2015) described the experiences of teaching in the Arctic as constant struggle, where they questioned their abilities to the core, and even wondered if the teaching profession is right fit for them, similar to the insecurities felt by the anthropologists (Stodulka, Selim & Mattes, 2018). Stodulka, Selim & Mattes, 2018 also discussed the anthropologists' feeling of pride when they are finally able to "get it right." Tolley (2003) described the experiences of gaining particular insights into the students and teaching where they felt satisfaction. Harder (2003), likewise, found a clearer understanding of herself and her culture.

3.9 Emotional Geographies

In counselling research, the surrounding place or geography within which the client lives is often overlooked and considered unimportant. It might be only understood as the space to be traversed or the space between important objects or places. Emotional connections and reactions to place have been overlooked as not scientific or of research importance (Hastrup, 2010). In the field of geography, researchers are increasingly focusing on the emotional relationship that individuals have with a particular place (Bondi, Davidson & Smith, 2007). In the context of Nunavut, teachers move to a completely different geography. It is important to consider their feelings and emotions related to the geography of the place to get a holistic understanding of their lived experience. Hastrup (2010) related the experience of living in the Arctic landscape to a feeling of perpetual emergence from language. He further stated, "subjectivity has to be constantly reclaimed in a landscape of such momentousness, within

which the manifest insignificance of people readily displaces any comprehensive language of signification" (p. 195). The place has such implications and connections to the people and researcher interacting with it and being acted upon by the natural environment (Hastrup, 2010).

Malpas (2012) suggested that for Heidegger, the question of being and the world might be the same. Heidegger's idea of homecoming or return can be understood simultaneously as returning to place or the natural environment. In Heidegger's *The Origin of the Work of Art*, Malpas (2012) finds that Heidegger provides an account of the worlding of the world as it occurs as a strife between world and earth where world and earth are brought to appearance where they are differentiated. Certainly, modernity is the result of the man-made world and a natural world or earth. Heidegger sees technological modernity as the metaphysical inevitability of forgetting being that is inseparable from forgetting place.

Even when researching the physical environment in geography, emotions are often overlooked. Smith et al. (2009) trace the separation of emotion and place to Cartesian philosophy for having several implications. First, in viewing the world materialistically there exists only human subjects that have at their disposal a world of mere objects where even animals have no mind to feel pain. Second, individuals come to understand the world through abstract reasoning, where objects are defined in terms of their physical extensions in a seemingly empty space. This leads to the development of mathematical coordinates that provide the basis for mental representations of how material things stand in relation to each other. Third, Cartesian dualism gives rise to an understanding of knowledge as a mapping or reflection of the physical world within an entirely separate world of mental constructs and

emotions. Through this method of inquiry, the human subject masters the world by use of these mental representations of the outside environment. Moreover, what cannot be measured, manipulated, predicted or accurately defined does not exist in any meaningful sense. Emotions, on the other hand, are difficult to exist in the Cartesian mode of understanding and, with that, our emotional relationships to topography were not represented in research. In other words, emotions are left in a "no man's land" that rests between subject and object, or the researcher and topography, resisting attempts to be appropriated to either side of this dualism (Smith et al. 2009).

3.10 Culture Shock

When arriving in a new culture, people often talk about a feeling of "culture shock." This is very relevant in the present study because this is a part of the lived experience of people going to a new cultural setting such as Nunavut. Culture shock was first described by Oberg (1954) as "the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" (p. 1). Oberg (1954) continues that these can be "words, gestures, facial expressions, customs or norms" (p. 1). The experience of culture shock is likened to the sense of "being a fish out of water" which can be followed by a feeling of frustration or anxiety (Oberg, 1954). More broadly, Furnham (2019) defines culture shock as "the unexpected and often negative reaction of people to new environments" (p. 1832). Brown and Holloway (2008) assert that for many individuals moving to a new environment can be one of the most traumatic events in a person's life and culture shock will be experienced to varying degrees.

The bulk of the literature on culture shock often explores tourists, international students (Brown & Holloway, 2008), international business-people, immigrants, and refugees (Ward,

Bochner & Furnham, 2020). Culture shock for teachers is a relatively new and growing field of study. Roskell (2013) described teachers working in a southeast Asian country had prepared themselves for culture shock in adapting to the new culture but had not anticipated that it would be such a different work culture resulting in some of them deciding to end their contracts early. It has been found in other studies that false anticipations can lead to more feelings of culture shock (Chen & Zhu, 2022). Chen & Zhu (2022) explained a situation where a teacher who had spent decades researching China, had plenty of experience working in China and had a Chinese wife still experienced culture shock when working at a Chinese university. Similarly, nothing can prepare oneself for the experience in Nunavut and people are often hold false anticipations about what work might be like up there. In other studies of teachers in cross-cultural settings, interpersonal and collegial support, especially coming from local teachers were strong predictors that the teachers would continue to stay at the school (Yang et al., 2018).

Stasel (2021) described some of the experiences of culture shock from teachers in a cross-cultural environment. She found that culture shock did not happen in a linear fashion where the phases went from honeymoon, to shock, to adjustment and then to recovery (Oberg 1960 as cited in Stasel, 2021). She reported that shocks continued to occur, and they often were followed by honeymoon phases, which were less still less frequent than the shocks. There was also no clear beginning and end to the shocks. Culture shock was felt more pronounced in the early sojourning experiences. The participants spoke about culture shock as being associated with a sense of "lack of power and agency, leading participants to experience sentiments of helplessness" (Stasel, 2021 p. 195).

Brody (2001) suggested that there is an essential difference between the cultures of traditional farmers and traditional hunters, which might explain some of the pronounced differences in our thinking. In the bulk of the literature on teachers in a cross-cultural environment, the teachers are often moving from one city to another city. Teachers often find themselves in cultural placements, where the culture has either been farmers for generations or it is a post-industrial civilization who had been hunters for centuries before. I argue that the experience of living and working in a community recently coming from a hunter-gatherer economy is a much harder adjustment than even working in other countries. Even teachers who had extensive First Nations experience both personally and professionally found living in a northern Ontario community a difficult adjustment (Harper, 2000). From my own experience, I have lived in both Sweden and Turkey and still find that going to Nunavut, another side of my own country, was a more significant cross-cultural experience.

3.11 Personal Development in the Context of a Different Culture

We have discussed some of the literature of culture shock but there is also a growing body of research looking at some of the personal developments that happen when people are living abroad. Drawing from the philosophy of Sartre (1943), Hayes (2007) suggests that being at home provides a definitive and limiting answer to the question of who we are. For instance, Brown and Brown (2013) interviewed several international students living in the United Kingdom. They found that the students re-identified with their culture of origin. There were some things that the students felt that they were taking for granted from their own country and would appreciate more when they return. A sojourner amongst another culture has the opportunity to reflect on who they are and what lifestyle choices they are making (Brown &

Brown, 2009). Going to a different culture allows the sojourner the "opportunity to assess and revise their self-understanding" (Brown & Brown, 2009). It can call for a re-socializing by unlearning old ways of thinking and behaving.

There are a couple of relevant studies to show how personal development can happen in a cross-cultural context. Brown and Brown (2009) found that sojourners developed an increasing sense of independence and confidence that was positively linked with stress and strength. From this experience, they were given new perspectives on the quality of their personal relationships. The female students were able to enjoy some of the freedoms that may not have been tolerated in their country of origin. Brown and Graham (2009) showed that a transformation took place with international students where they were confronted with different perspectives and had to either integrate or reject them. Either way, it led to a growth in open-mindedness and tolerance. Their priorities shifted as they explored some of their old attitudes and re-evaluated them with a tendency to remind themselves to value happiness over economic reward, some of the freedoms endorsed by the culture they found themselves in. Brown and Graham (2009) also found that these experiences led people with partners back home to reflect on the way they asserted themselves in the relationship, finding their own values and a stronger desire to voice them. The students also reflected on how they might be able to reintegrate coming back to their homes and how easily that transition might be with some of their new values.

Several studies on culture shock and personal development in a cross-cultural context do not involve workers going to a hunter-gatherer culture that has recently adapted to post-industrial civilization. In their discussion of culture shock, Ward, Bochner and Furnham (2020)

shared that the majority of literature is on tourists, international students, international businesspeople, immigrants and refugees. While tourists are often drawn to beautiful locations, those who visit the Arctic, have limited interaction with the local people, aside from tourist hunters paying local guides. Additionally, international students and business people, immigrants and refugees, primarily move from less developed to more developed countries or areas. I also noticed within the culture shock and personal development literature that they assumed that leaving one's country is the only way to have contact with a different culture.

4. Research Method

In the current section, I will explain the research method, describe my chosen research method and then explore each of the research methods that I considered.

4.1 Theoretical Background

The theoretical background is essential to the rigour of a qualitative research study even if a researcher does not recognize the influence (Collins & Stockton, 2018). It requires a deep, thoughtful understanding of the problem, purpose, significance and research question (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). To illustrate my theoretical background, I turn to Binswanger (1990) who distinguished between two types of empirical scientific knowledge that could answer research questions. The first is discursive inductive knowledge involving describing, explaining and controlling 'natural events' (p. 192). The second is the phenomenological empirical knowledge that is a methodical, critical exploitation or interpretation of phenomenal events. Favouring the latter form of knowledge, Binswanger (1990) suggested that the "fatal defect of all psychology" (p. 193) is the subject-object dichotomy that is overcome by the concept of *being-in-the-world* as transcendence in the phenomenological method. The concept of "*being-in-the-world*" is a

fundamental part of existential philosophy, put forward by Heidegger (1927). It represents the fact that human beings are not isolated individuals, but are always placed in an environment with which they understand and interact. This concept emphasis the individuals' connectivity with their surroundings and the importance of their lived experiences. The notion of “being-in-the-world” is apparent in the current study since I will use phenomenology to explicate meaning from the research participants and the researcher to have their reflexivity included in the research. Personally, I have an extensive lived experience of the Arctic, so it seems to include myself in the research and to be explicit about my potential subjective bias. In reference to being-in-the-world, May (1990) has suggested that “knowing means knowing in the context of the same world” (p. 56). After having experienced five years in Nunavut, I know much of the context in which the teachers live.

In conducting the present study from an existential framework, I wanted to ensure that it is done within a subject-subject way of relating to my participants. For social scientists attempting to diminish the subject-object relationship to research inquiry, they need to find themselves within the research topic which includes subjectivity, recognizing the intersubjectivity between themselves and the people under study, and establishing interconnectivity with the broader physical environment or world.

The notions of isolation and connection are critical to comprehending the lives of teachers who reside in distant or culturally unique areas, such as the Arctic. Isolation in these situations can take many forms, including physical isolation owing to geographical distance, cultural isolation due to disparities in languages and traditions, and emotional separation as a result of the interaction of these variables.

Phenomenology offers the social scientist a way to dissolve the dualism of subject and object. It combines subjective and objective perspectives and finds the interrelations between them. Essentially, when researching the relationship between topography, culture and the emotions, phenomenology can combine each of these in the form of the sense experience. As participant observers strive to understand being-in-the-world, phenomenologists form a clearer connection regarding how they relate to the world, achieve a deeper understanding of the world, and understand the self which is created in the process of these interactions (van Deurzen & Adams, 2011).

4.3 Heuristic Enquiry

The qualitative research method that I have chosen for the current study is a mixed methods approach using Heuristic Enquiry as my primary research method and Structural Existential Analysis (SEA) as my secondary research method. Heuristic Enquiry supports my intention to utilize a phenomenological research method and my reflexivity. Heuristic Enquiry assumes that the "question has been a personal challenge or puzzlement in the search to understand one's self and the world in which one lives" (Moustakas, 1990, p. 15). Moustakas (1994) explained that the "aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who had that experience and can provide a comprehensive description of it" (p. 13).

In the present study, I will employ the six phases of Heuristic Enquiry described previously to develop a phenomenological representation of the data. These six phases are initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication and creative synthesis followed by validation. For the present study, each of the phases followed by validation will be

implemented throughout each participant interview, data analysis and the synthesis of the data.

Phase one: Initial Engagement. This phase begins with the discovery of a passionate interest that holds social and universal meanings and personal implications for the researcher (Hiles, 2008; Moustakas 1990). Through this process the researcher's self and autobiography come together to form the basis of the question (Moustakas, 1990). This is also an inward tacit awareness and knowledge search to find the context in which the question takes place.

Phase two: Immersion. In this phase, Moustakas (1990) identified that the researcher immerses him/herself in anything and everything connected to the research question. The researcher looks at all possibilities in which to understand the phenomenon through people, places and reading, to give a few examples. This process is facilitated by self-dialogue and self-searching and pursuing intuitive ideas.

Phase three: Incubation. This phase is a period of consolidation where the researcher takes a break from the research question and material to allow ideas to germinate (Hiles, 2008; Moustakas, 1990). Just as Greek mathematician Archimedes was taking a bath when he had his "aha" moment discovering the principle of buoyancy (Moustakas, 1990; Moustakas, 1994), this period of incubation allows for new and profound meanings and realizations to come forth.

Phase four: Illumination. With respect to this phase, Moustakas (2001) has suggested that "once full knowledge of an experience is ingested and understood, the researcher enters into a process of illumination in which essential qualities and themes are discovered" (p. 270). In this phase, the conscious and unconscious elements of the phenomenon meet and the

synthesis begins to occur (Hiles, 2008; Moustakas, 1990). Insights and emotional connections are made and the universal significance of the phenomenon is realized.

Phase five: Explication. Here the researcher completes an elucidation and explication of themes until an individual depiction of the meanings and essences or depths can be investigated (Moustakas, 2001). This is a phase that involves continuous self-exploration (Hiles, 2008) and elements of the phenomenon begin to make sense in terms of the research question (Moustakas, 1990). At the end of this phase, two or three exemplary portraits are determined that are both unique and represent the group of data as a whole (Moustakas, 2001).

Phase six: Creative Synthesis. On the basis of the researcher's depictions and personal knowledge of the experience, the researcher develops a creative synthesis (Moustakas, 1994). Here the "data are used to develop individual depictions, a composite depiction, exemplary portraits of individual persons and a creative synthesis of the experience" (Moustakas, 2001, p. 270).

With respect to heuristic research, validity also is an important step after the final product has been produced (Moustakas, 1990). The researcher can do a validation by returning to the data to see if the themes or qualities of the study accurately represent the data or by returning to the co-researchers (participants) to see if they agree that the product accurately reflects their reports.

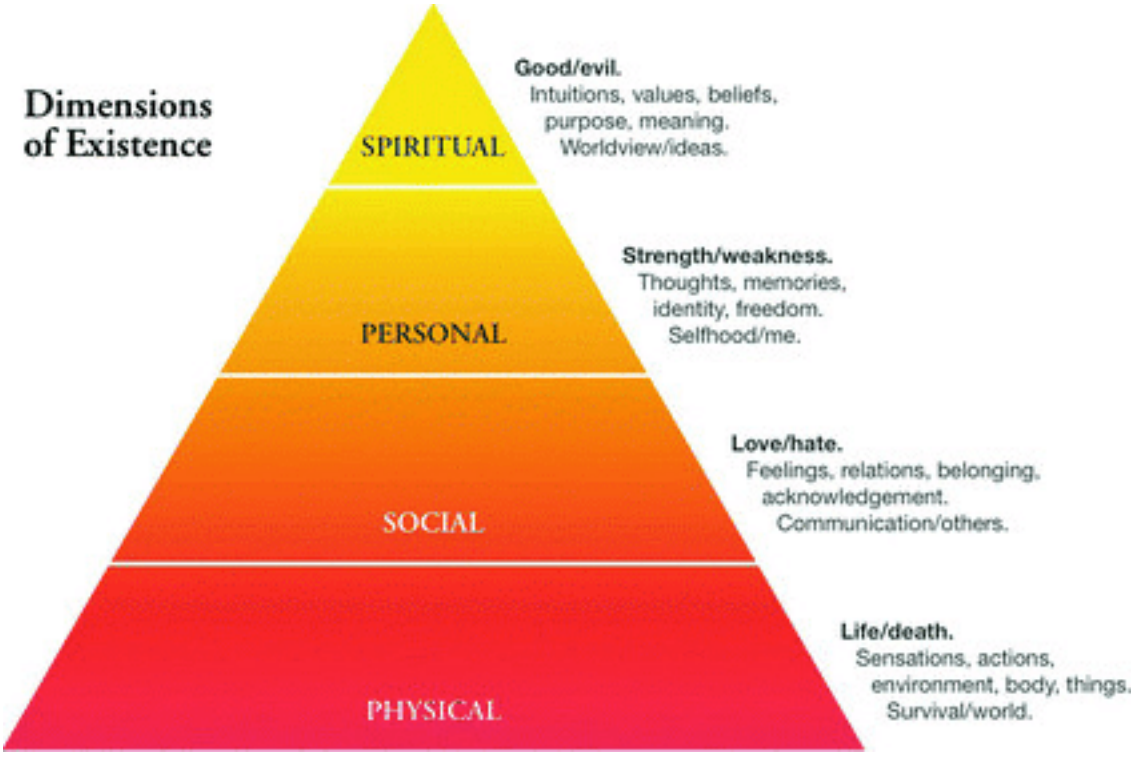
Heuristic research runs the risk of personal biases and preconceived positions influencing the analysis, as highlighted by Findlay (2002). The researcher's values and beliefs has been shown to influence the research process and its outcomes (Etherington, 2004a). Thus, being explicit about these aspects of the researcher's subjective limitations contributes to the

understanding of the data collected and analyzed. Findley (2002) further suggests that "reflexivity can be understood as a confessional account of methodology or as examining one's personal, possibly unconscious, reactions. It can mean exploring the dynamics of the researcher-researched relationship" (p. 224).

4.4 Existential Dimensions of Human Experience

Extreme experiences like working and living in the Arctic have a deep impact on various aspects of a person's life, which calls for an equally holistic framework of questioning that can express the emerging existential dynamics. Emmy van Deurzen's (2005) Structured Existential Analysis (SEA) offer researchers a guideline for existential enquiry into the physical, social, personal and spiritual dimensions (see *Figure 1*). She derived the physical, social and personal dimensions from Binswanger's writings, aiming to shift the focus from being primarily observing the clients' behaviour to adopting a more holistic view of the client's universe (van Deurzen, 2018). Van Deurzen added that the spiritual dimension includes our ideological world, spiritual world and world of meaning. According to van Deurzen, all of human experience can be mapped into each of these four dimensions. The dimensions are interrelated and we live in all of them simultaneously (van Deurzen, 2009). As van Deurzen (2005) has posited, "clarification of the way in which the person views and experiences their world on each of these levels can help us establish how they are situated in life" (p. xx).

Figure 1 Emmy van Deurzen's (2016) Existential Dimensions



4.4.1 Physical Dimension

The *physical domain* includes how we experience our bodies, our physical health and functions, our physical environment and seasons, drug and alcohol use, food and nutrition and physical comforts like tools, heaters, toilets and so on (van Deurzen, 2005). The struggle in this dimension is the search for domination over the elements and natural law often aided by technology (e.g., medicine to keep us healthy, the comforts of modern houses) (van Deurzen, 2011).

4.4.2 Social Dimension

The *social dimension* includes feelings of proximity with others, how we deal with others in our lives, what is trust in relationships, what do we seek in friendships, what are our family dynamics and whether we identify as dominant or submissive, cooperative or competitive (van

Deurzen, 2005). Nevertheless, van Deurzen (2011) argued that most people fall within the dynamics of rejection versus acceptance or isolation versus belonging.

4.4.3 Personal Dimension

The *personal dimension* includes how we define ourselves, what are our good and not-so-good characteristics, what we learn about ourselves from our experience of isolation, how we balance solitude and togetherness and so on (van Deurzen, 2005). While people search for identity and a sense of self, inevitably some events will plunge them back into a state of confusion or disintegration (van Deurzen, 2011).

4.4.4 Spiritual Dimension

The *spiritual dimension* includes what we are passionate about, how our beliefs and values impact those around us, how we determine what is right and wrong, if there any religious or special experiences that have led you to feel that you have some special secret about life, what your experience of opposition to your views and prejudice are and so on (van Deurzen, 2005). The contradictions often experienced with respect to this dimension include purpose versus absurdity and hope versus despair (van Deurzen, 2011).

4.5 Alternative Methods

In selecting the appropriate research method to meet the demands of the research question, I considered quantitative methods, Thematic Analysis, Narrative Approach, Grounded Theory and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

4.5.1 Quantitative Methods

Quantitative methods, rooted in the natural scientific approach, examines psychological variables by reducing them to quantifiable elements, utilizing a controlled experimental design

and seeking verification via replication (Spinelli, 2007). This methodology "disconnects psychology from its appropriate context" (p. 129) and would also disconnect my research question from a more humanistic description of lived experience. The lived experience of the teachers cannot be reduced to quantitative research because it means to describe events and what personal connection they had to these events.

As mentioned above, quantitative methods can be suitable to describe events such as suicide, homicide and child abuse but they are not able to express the better experiences of the teachers because they are individually meaningful. There have been several research studies producing statistics about the place. These are not fully representative of the experience in Nunavut because they do not discuss the more positive stories about living there.

4.5.2 Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis describes and organizes data into themes with rich detail and offers some form of interpretation (Braun & Clark, 2006). It can be applied in a variety of ways and no clear agreement exists as to what thematic analysis is. What is important is that the theoretical method and framework reasonably answer the researcher's question and that the researcher acknowledges and recognizes their decisions (Braun & Clark, 2006). With the wide variety of ways of doing thematic analysis, it is difficult to compare to/synthesize with other studies and it is difficult to invent the best way to analyze and represent the data.

4.5.3 Narrative Approach

Narrative approaches focus on account of events or series of actions in chronological order to tell a story (Czarniawska-Joerges, 2004). A "narrative" may involve writing, verbal or visual elements that convey meaning (Squire et al., 2014). Within narratives there is also a

movement between bits of information that creates a sequence or distinct path. By examining the narratives of each of the participants, we can uncover the many realities constructed by them. Czarniawska-Joerges (2004) offers a deconstruction of the stories using analytic strategies including revealing dichotomies and examining silences. Narrative research is concerned with using stories as resources for research in discovering what it says about the narrators and their experiences (Squire et al., 2014). Although, this approach would offer an understanding of the lived experience of my participants in the form of a story or biography it would miss the depth of meaning. It is not the story of the Nunavut that I hope to convey but the lived experience of those who live up there.

4.5.4 Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is a qualitative research method that seeks to develop a theory grounded from the data collected (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This involves advancing theory development at each stage of data collection and constructing analytic codes and categories from data not preconceived by logically deduced hypotheses (Charmaz, 2003). While this may be able to generate theories about life in the Arctic, grounded theory is not the best to describe the lived experience. Phenomenological methods offer a strong way to describe lived experience.

4.5.5 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Most strongly, I considered Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) because of its theoretical basis in phenomenology. Although there has been lots of literature describing how to do an IPA, there is not one predetermined method of how to do the analysis. Smith et al. (2010) states that IPA can be characterized by a "set of common processes (e.g., moving

from the particular to the shared, and from the descriptive to the interpretative) and principles (e.g., a commitment to an understanding of the participant's point of view, and a psychological focus on personal meaning-making in particular contexts) which are applied flexibly, according to the analytic task" (pp. 79). However, this task can be daunting and confusing for the novice researcher who does not know where to start. Therefore, it has helped many students to be given a series of unidirectional, successive steps. It may be helpful for some to have a series of steps only to learn that once they are finished, they will find for themselves that IPA is not about following a series of steps. Smith et al. (2010) suggest the following steps for such people that require it including reading and rereading, initial noting, developing emergent themes in one participant, searching for connections across emergent themes in the same participant, continue the last two steps with each participant and then looking for patterns across cases.

While IPA offers a strong way to research lived experience, it does not involve the researcher's reflexivity. Nevertheless, I could have proposed a mixed methods approach using IPA and reflexivity but I preferred not to because I wanted to use a well-accepted methodology that could connect easily with other research. Since I have had my own experience in the Arctic, it would be difficult to remove any bias entirely; therefore, I wish to make it explicit through reflexivity.

Also, out of all of the other research methods, I found that the concepts found in Heuristic Enquiry spoke to my values in conducting this particular research topic. The ideas of immersion and incubation fit well with my experience thus far with the research topic.

5. Research Procedure

In the present section, I will discuss research ethics, the selection of participants, data collection and sociodemographic information, interview questions, data analysis, validity, feasibility, dissemination plan and the timetable for present research study.

5.1 Research Ethics

The Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) requires that any psychological activity, including research, should adhere to the CPA Code of Ethics (CPA, 2017). There are four principles that should be taken into account when carrying out psychological activities. Whenever these principles are in conflict with one another, they are ordered by their importance and when compromises must be made e.g., Principle I is more important to uphold than Principle II. As I conduct the current research study, I aim to uphold all these ethical principles.

Principle I: Respect for the Dignity of Persons and Peoples. Its emphasis is on inherent worth, non-discrimination, moral rights, distributive, social and natural justice, generally should be given the highest weight, except in circumstances in which there is a clear and imminent danger of bodily harm to someone.

Principle II: Responsible Caring. This requires competence, maximization of benefit and minimization of harm and should be carried out only in ways that respect the dignity of persons and peoples.

Principle III: Integrity in Relationships. Psychologists are expected to maintain the highest integrity in all their relationships.

Principle IV: Responsibility to Society. Normally respect for the dignity, responsible caring or the integrity in relationships do not come into conflict with responsibility to society but these situations do occur and must be dealt with by honouring the first three principles more than this principle.

I received approval from the Middlesex University Ethics Committee on March 26, 2021 and the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI) on August 18, 2022. My first interview was conducted June 2022 after the participant had returned home from Nunavut and did not need approval from the NRI because they were then living outside of the territory.

5.1.1 Skype, VoIP and Ethics

The use of a Voice over Internet Protocol Program (VoIP) like Skype presents some additional ethical considerations (Lo Icono et al., 2016). ECHELON is a system for monitoring electronic communications including calls and emails so certain spoken words may alert intelligence services, such as "terrorism," the Skype video may be monitored. Skype also reserves the right to review content to enforce its terms of use (Skype, 2013) which includes the trading of information with copy rights, a falsehood or misrepresentation, sending information that is unlawful or racist, an advertisement for solicitation for business and impersonating another person (Skype, 2013 sec. 5.7). The possibility of the interview being monitored by monitoring systems such as ECHELON and Skype itself should be made transparent to participants (Lo Icono, 2016).

5.1.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality for the participants is maintained by giving each a pseudonym in the final report, discarding any identifying information from the transcript and having all participant

information (e.g., hard copies of research participant consent forms) kept in a stored safe with the combination. Electronic recordings and transcripts were kept in a password-guarded computer and not on cloud storage where it could be hacked (Buchanan & Zimmer, 2012). After successfully defending the dissertation, all hard copy documents and electronic files will be deleted and shredded.

There were several additional considerations made in terms of maintaining confidentiality given that there are only approximately 870 teaching positions in Nunavut (Macleans, 2022) and roughly half are from southern Canada. Teachers mentioned a few stories that, through a quick search on the internet, could easily identify which community they were coming from. Once being identified which community they are coming from, they could be 1 in 20 teachers from the south. A simple demographic fact of the number of years that they worked in Nunavut and/or religious affiliation might be enough to identify these teachers. For one teacher who had been there the longest, I did not give an exact number of years they have been working in number because they might be easily identified. For instance, if someone worked in Nunavut for 20 years, they might be the only one in Nunavut who worked there for that exact number of years. Many teachers work in Nunavut for 1-5 years so the other participants can keep their anonymity if I mention their exact number of years. Two participants mentioned unique diagnoses that might also single them out among the teachers in Nunavut.

5.1.3 Informed Consent and Safety

Before scheduling my research interviews, I obtained informed consent from all of the participants in written format. I let the participants know about the purpose of my research,

the limits to confidentiality, the right to withdrawal at any time, the nature of the study and the method for presenting the findings. The participants were not harmed in any way and there no deception was employed in the study. In fact, Heuristic Enquiry has been shown to be a vehicle for participants' personal development (Etherington, 2004b). I assumed that due to the some of more difficult experiences that the teachers may have to endure while living in Nunavut. Although some painful memories and experiences were surfaced during the course of the interviews. However, the participants showed courage in discussing some of these more painful memories and reflections. Through their place of employment, teachers have an Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) that offers counselling sessions over the phone free of charge and the communities I have chosen to study also have a psychiatric nurse that is publicly funded. I made the participants aware of these resources in the Debriefing Sheet.

5.2 Selection of Participants

I contacted the Principals or Vice-Principals of high schools and elementary schools of the Nunavut communities and sent out a call for participants to the teachers by phone or email. I also have access to various people in Nunavut, from whom I was able to seek assistance to find teachers interested in the study. The decision to include only Nunavut communities is based on their cultural, geographical, population size and community resources similarities. The rationale for choosing this method of participant recruitment ensured that I recruited the required number of participants for the study.

I attempted to achieve representation of all identified genders within the participants and recruited four female-identified and three male-identified participants. These seven participants had between one year and under 20 years of lived experience in Nunavut. I

recruited participants between the ages of 22 (the youngest age possible of graduation from a Bachelor of Education) and 65 years of age (the typical age of retirement). Each of the participants had a bachelor's of education and three participants were working on their master's of education. I did not decline to recruit any participants based on years of teaching in the Arctic, gender or age. One participant had past teaching experience overseas and one participant had past teaching experience in the Northwest Territories. Otherwise, all other teachers were recruited in Nunavut as their first teaching experience. One male participant was born in Africa and another male participant was born in Asia. The rest of the participants were Caucasian southern Canadians from British Columbia to the Maritime provinces. The participants were recruited from five communities. Three participants came from one community and the other four participants came from different communities. I choose not to mention the communities as it might work to identify the participants in the study.

5.3 Data Collection

Data collection in this study involved initial contact through email with the teacher participants to discuss the purpose of the research, interview times and any questions they might have. Next, I interviewed them over Zoom mostly during the school year so their experience of the Arctic was contemporary. One participant I interviewed right after her school year ended in June, and another participant in November 2022, after he had moved down south in June 2022. Throughout the interviews, the participants were encouraged to elaborate or diverge as we progressed through the questions. Each interview lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes and was recorded using a digital recorder.

In my personal experience, I observed that several researchers would visit Nunavut for a couple of weeks at a time to collect their data. It was a common feeling among the people who lived there that these researchers were not able to grasp the full depth of what they were studying because they had not spent a significant amount of time in the region. This extractive way of doing research also does not seem to produce representations of Nunavut in a real way. Therefore, I made sure to mention that I lived in Nunavut for five years, during my conversation with participants and in my emails to participants. I did this to help with some of my perceived legitimacy to conduct research there. Researchers who have not lived in Nunavat may require a significant amount of time to understand even the basic aspects of life there, such as access to resources. I visited all the communities from which the participants came during my time living in Nunavut, except for one participant's community.

5.4 Interview Questions

Before presenting the research questions, participants were asked a series of questions to identify certain socio-demographic characteristics. These included identified gender, age, months of living in the Arctic, months of living in the particular community, educational history, years of experience as a teacher, cultural or ethnic background, marital status (including whether they met their significant other in the Arctic) and whether they had children. In the final synthesis, each participant was introduced by their pseudonym and described in terms of their identified sociodemographic background.

Moustakas (1990) presents three different interviewing approaches that Heuristic Research can employ. The first is an informal conversation method that relies on a spontaneous generation of questions and conversations in a natural, unfolding dialogue. Second is the

general interview guide that outlines a set of issues or topics to be explored focusing on common information that is shared by participants. Third is the standardized open-ended interview that consists of carefully worded interview questions. I chose the third method as that will help in the final synthesis to discover the themes of the different participants.

To research the lived experience of Qallunaat teachers from a more holistic perspective, I derived eight questions from van Deurzen's (2005) four dimensions model. In *Existential Perspectives on Human Issues*, van Deurzen (2005) has proposed a set of questions for therapist to ask or ponder to better understand an individual's four dimensions. I derived my questions mostly from these and adapted them to be pertinent to the current study. The selection of questions was guided by their ability to facilitate the emergence of participants' lived experience and how well they aligned with van Deurzen's (2005) questions.

5.4.1 Nunavut Placement Questions

1. What events, experiences, goals or beliefs brought you to Nunavut?

2. What are you seeking in Nunavut and has this changed since you arrived?

5.4.2 Physical Dimension Questions

1. In the Arctic, environment conditions sun patterns and climate differ from those in the south. What is your experience of these conditions? How do they affect you?

2. How have your routines, lifestyle, ways you take care of your body been affected by living in the Arctic?

5.4.3 Social Dimension Questions

1. Feelings tell us about our relationships with one another. How would you describe your feelings around Inuit people?

2. How has your social life changed after arriving in Nunavut? Describe the quality of these relationships.

5.4.4 Personal Dimension Questions

1. How have you changed as a person and as a professional since first arriving in Nunavut?

2. Can you describe the range of emotions you have experienced while living in Nunavut?

5.4.5 Spiritual Dimension Questions

1. What have you learned about your cultural beliefs and values? How are they different than Inuit beliefs and values?

2. Describe any overpowering emotional or spiritual experiences that you have had.

5.4.6 Other Prompts

1. What was that like?

2. Can you tell me a bit more about that?

3. Could you give me an example of that?

4. Say more about that.

5. How did that make you feel?/ What were you feeling then?

5.5 Data Analysis

During the data analysis, I completed the six phases of Heuristic Research outlined by Moutakas (1990). As mentioned previously, these phases include initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication and creative synthesis. In addition to these phases, I followed Moustakas's (2001) steps for data analysis for Heuristic Research, which provides a structured and clear process. These steps are explained as follows:

1. The researcher gathers data from one participant. Before the interview begins, the participant is reminded that they have the right to withdraw their consent at any time.
2. The researcher enters into an immersion with the data from that participant. Forty-eight hours is a common length of time for a researcher to immerse him/herself in the data.
3. The data are then set-aside for a while. Afterwards the researcher re-engages with the data and develops an individual depiction of the experience.
4. Then, the researcher returns to the original data to ensure that s/he has accurately represented the data with the individual depiction. If it does, the researcher moves on to the next participant. If not, then the researcher works to revise their individual depiction.
5. The researcher completes individual depictions for each participant and then checks to ensure they are accurately represented.
6. The individual depictions are then all taken together and the researcher enters into an immersion process with the data. The researcher then constructs a composite depiction that represents the common qualities and themes of the participants.
7. The researcher returns again to the raw data of each of the participants and then selects two or three exemplary participants that represent the group as a whole. Both universal and individual dimensions of the experience of the phenomenon will then emerge.
8. The researcher's tacit intuitive awareness and months of incubating knowledge of the researcher will help with the final step of the creative synthesis (Moustakas, 2001).

As explained previously above in the phases and in the data analysis procedures, there are some times where immersion, self-reflection and returning to the original data are required to ensure the final creative synthesis represents the raw data well. The returning immersion

with the material creates a tacit knowledge of the data and experience that helps in the stages of the analysis process. Moustakas (1990) explained that the "self" is present throughout the entire study building self-awareness and engaging in a creative self-discovery with the research process. Returning to the raw data also helps ensure validity of the exemplary depictions of later stages.

This procedure and method of analysis of the data answered the research question well. The Heuristic Research analysis is a phenomenological method that explicates the lived experience of each of its participants and requires the researcher to review each of the interviews in depth to be sure the participants' voices are being properly represented. In the final presentation, I organized it into four sections for each of van Deurzen's (2005) four dimensions of physical, social, personal and spiritual. Within each of the four sections, I chose exemplary exerts from two or three participants.

5.6 Validity

Validity is concerned with whether or not the final analysis represents what is being researched. *Internal validity* deals with how the research findings match what the participants were trying to explain. Moustakas (1990) suggested that this validity assessment could be helped by the researcher going to the participants to check whether they agree with the final synthesis or by the researcher returning to the raw data to see if it matches the final product, which can be done at different stages throughout the data analysis. *External validity* deals with how much the findings apply outside the context of the study. This validity assessment can be improved by having a larger number of participants and by having less of a data collection instrument (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). With respect to the current study, having seven research

participants is considered a substantial number for this research method, and the data collection instrument comprised the questions being asked. Another way to increase the validity of the synthesis would be to search for any information that might disconfirm it (Maxwell, 1992).

External validity or generalizability can be difficult to show in qualitative research. In quantitative research, generalizability is often achieved through random sampling (Daymon & Holloway, 2010). Given the qualitative research method chosen, this will be a small interviewee sample and it would be difficult to generalize the findings here to that of the general population of Qallunaat teachers who work and live in Nunavut. One way to help increase a qualitative study's generalizability is to relate theoretical concepts found in one setting or condition to the present study (Morse, 1994).

Reflexivity also can help monitor a researcher's subjectivity and bias which helps to establish validity (Darawsheh & Stanley, 2014). Once I completed the data analysis, I found that I was not surprised by any of the findings or themes. I took this as a sign that my personal bias may have affected my analysis. To get a better sense of whether this was due to my personal bias, I returned to the data and attempted to find details of the experiences or themes that I had not considered. I endeavoured and wanted to find something that I had missed but was not able to. Also, having lived in Nunavut myself, I would naturally be unsurprised by the stories that they would have to say in general.

The themes below are plausible or believable "on the face" of it, meaning that they have good face validity (Krippendorff, 2004). It makes sense without having to give detailed reasons (Krippendorff, 2004) that given the fact that the teachers are going to an unknown and

unfamiliar cultural and geographical place they would experience a sense of having to overcome challenges in various aspects of their lives or that they would find two separate irresolvable differences between their culture and the other's culture, as I have explicated in the themes.

5.7 Dissemination Plan

I plan to disseminate my research as a journal article in *Existential Analysis* or the *Canadian Journal of Education*. Also, I wish to disseminate my research at the annual Nunavut Teacher's Association Conference held in different locations across Nunavut.

5.8 Timetable

In June 2020, I completed my research proposal and PAP viva. In July 2020, I completed the Advanced Research Seminar course that prepared me to write my ethics review. In December 2020, I submitted my proposal to the Middlesex University Ethics Committee and the Nunavut Research Institute (NRI). Middlesex University gave ethical approval on March 26, 2021 and I was given ethics approval from the Nunavut Research Institute on August 18, 2022. I completed the research interviews from August 2022 to December 2022. One interview was conducted in June 2022 with someone who had recently left Nunavut, and for this particular interview, I did not need the approval of the Nunavut Research Institute because they did not reside in Nunavut at the time.

5.9. Reflexivity

I started the process of obtaining research ethics approval from the NRI in December 2020, which was extended until August 2022 due to delays in receiving responses via email and staff turnover. From mid-2019 to December 2020, when I first sent my research ethics proposal to NRI, I fully immersed myself in the topic, reading everything that could assist with my dissertation. As the approval process took its time, I redirected my focus toward other aspects of my doctoral course work and internship. These nineteen months of being stagnant in the research was a long incubation phase of the research, during which I temporarily disengaged from the topic.

I knew that it would take time to get research ethics approval from NRI but I also knew that I definitely wanted to do this research more than anything else. At the time of finishing this dissertation, it has been eight and a half years since I left Nunavut and I still feel like I am readjusting to life in the south and look back with a wide array of emotions. I experienced very extreme feelings of isolation for which I am still building on creating connections. And yet, I still look back on those days as being very interesting and exciting. Even today, I enjoy looking back at the photos and love talking to anyone who has lived in the Arctic about their experience. On the other hand, my nightmares of some of the experiences of living up there have seemed to only recently stopped. I absolutely needed to do this research to have the satisfaction to express to others what it was like to live up there.

In conducting the interviews and transcribing them from audio, I was completely energized. At times, I paced around the room afterwards thinking about how well this fit with my research and how much I felt connected to some of the words that they were saying. I was

also deeply touched by some of the vulnerable information that was shared with me and had both joyful and difficult memories surface that I had not thought about in a long time.

In January 2023, I closely read over the transcripts and found emerging themes of each of the participants. I organized their most important quotes related to these themes in a document to reduce the amount of accessory information.

My experience is close to that of the teachers because I was a substitute teacher for my first few months upon arrival in Nunavut and, as a Child and Youth Outreach Worker, I often went into the classrooms to teach specific mental health and wellness programs and ran a number of after school sports. Given my proximity to the experience, it offers me some insight and context into the teacher's experience and a risk of my own experience creating a bias. Through my reflexivity, my intention is to keep my biases and expectations formed from my personal experience explicit and to note the differences between my own experience and those of the participants.

It has also been a personal bias throughout the research planning and data collection and analysis that I wanted to show both the good components and difficult components of living in Nunavut. In the interview process, I was careful not to be asking many leading or additional questions other than the research questions to ensure that I allowed them to talk freely about their experiences no matter how positive or negative. Without any effort of my own, the participants seemed to share a close balance of positive and negative experiences.

In the end, through the research methodology, I was able to gather several experiences told through the best of what the participants could offer to have one understand what it was like to live in Nunavut. As any anthropologist would say of trying to depict a cultural experience

in a book, it always seems to fall drastically short of the inward knowing of the experience itself. In my experience, those who grew up in rural areas or who had lived abroad coped better for the reason that they had experienced some forms of isolation. Despite having travelled and lived much of my life across Europe and North America, there were few comparable experiences or feelings to my time in Nunavut. The signification of words falls short when there are not common experiences that the listener can relate to. The length of time spent there develops one's emotional attunement to the surroundings into emotions that were never really felt before. Those who may be able to relate to some of what was experienced in Nunavut would be those working in First Nations communities, those who have lived abroad and those who have lived in extreme rural and remote areas. Those working in First Nations communities often have the luxury of leaving the community to visit nearby cities easily. Those living abroad often are living in bigger city centres with many amenities or activities available to them.

5.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study will explore the lived experience of Qallunaat teachers in the Arctic and prepare those interested in counselling people with similar experiences as those had in Nunavut. Despite there being a few phenomenological studies completed in the Arctic from the perspective of Qallunaat none has adequately addressed the lived experience of the Qallunaatmiut outside of their teaching roles. This research will contribute to the field of existential therapy by depicting individuals going through an extreme situation that can elicit life and perspective changes. It will also contribute to the field of education research by describing the lived experience of teachers in the Arctic.

6. Findings

In the first section of this chapter, I introduced each of the research participants, beginning with my own story. Subsequently, I presented the participant results, along with the corresponding themes. My reactions to the participant's data during the data analysis process will also be included.

6.1 Introduction to the Participants

6.1.1 My Reasons for Going to Nunavut

I am from a city in the southern interior of British Columbia where I was raised on a farm. I never considered going to Nunavut until I had a girlfriend of mine at the time encourage me to move up there with her. At that time, I had just begun my MSc in counselling and was aware of challenges in finding counselling jobs without prior experience.

She shared that opportunities for employment were more accessible once I was up there so I left my government job in hopes of finding a job in mental health. As fate would have it, the community where I landed in there was a Child and Youth Outreach Worker job. My manager explained that she did not even know about it until she found the job description in the back of a filing cabinet. It assumed that they stopped posting for the job due to lack of eligible applicants. I stayed in one community for three and a half years and in another community for one and a half years.

6.1.2 Eva and Her Reasons for Going to Nunavut

Eva is a Christian in her early 30s and from a small town outside of Toronto, Ontario. At 16 years-old, she realized that financing her own education would be her responsibility. She was brought up in a low-income household and she moved up to Nunavut because of financial

reasons. She had heard stories from teachers who had worked in the NWT about their teaching experiences up there and those stories had stayed with her over the years.

She worked in Nunavut for five years, living in one community for three years before moving to another community to spend the rest of her two years in Nunavut. Some of the reasons that brought her to Nunavut were knowing that there were only supply teacher positions available in Ontario, and she wanted a full-time job to see her students develop over a couple of years.

6.1.3 Adrian and His Reasons for Going to Nunavut

Adrian is in his late 20s and grew up in rural western Canada. He graduated with his B.Ed in 2019 and moved to Nunavut with his wife in August of that year for financial gain. What brought him back to Nunavut was the connections that he found with the local people and students. He also appreciates the reduced pressure to strictly adhere to the curriculum, compared to the south. Moreover, he was eager to develop his teaching skills and eventually develop his leadership skills. After three years of teaching experience in one community, he moved to another one in an administrative role. He takes joy in working to improve attendance in his school and coaching sports for after school activities.

6.1.4 Jerry and His Reasons for Going to Nunavut

Jerry is in his late 30s and was born in Africa but spent most of his life in Canada. At the time of the interview, he was living in southern Canada after spending three years working in Nunavut. It was not easy for him to find a full-time teaching job in the south, and the financial aspects appealed to him. What kept him up there for a period of time was the connections he made and the learning experiences about the culture and teaching practices.

6.1.5 Anne and Her Reasons for Going to Nunavut

Anneis in her early 40s and lives in Nunavut with her husband. During her university years, she took a course that taught her about teaching in Nunavut, taught by a professor with extensive experience in the region. Coming from the east coast of Canada, which was also settled by the Scots, the professor believed that Brit's background made her well-suited to live in Nunavut, where Scottish culture has had a significant influence.

Unlike others who might have specific goals regarding years or financial accumulation, Brit held back from that seeing that as a colonial extractive mindset. She wanted to find a place where people cared about her and she cared about others and to contribute in a meaningful way. Brit distinguishes herself and her partner from others in the community because they own a house there, have no storage container in the south somewhere, and they rely on a visiting physician to Nunavut as their family doctor.

She mentioned several things in her experience that she was passionate about and showed a strong commitment to living in the community. She also reported extreme negative emotions that had led to self-harm and suicidality.

6.1.6 Brit and Her Reasons for Going to Nunavut

Brit is in her early 40s and lives in Nunavut with her husband. In university, she took some coursework that taught her about teaching in Nunavut by a professor that taught there for several years. Coming from the east coast of Canada which was also settled by the Scots the professor believed the would be a good fit in living in Nunavut because the culture there is influenced lots by Scottish culture. Finding others having a goal of how many years or how much money they wanted to accumulate, Brit held back from that seeing that as a colonial extractive mindset. She wanted to find a place where people cared about her and she cared

about the others and to contribute in a meaningful way. She finds her and her partner as different because they bought a house up there, have no storage container in the south somewhere, and their family doctor is a visiting physician to Nunavut. She mentioned a number of things in her experience that she was passionate about and would not want to move away from her community. She also reported extreme negative emotions leading to self-harm and suicidality.

6.1.7 Kyle and His Reasons for Going to Nunavut

Kyle is a Christian in his late 20s from northeast Asian decent. His family lives outside in a smaller city outside of Toronto, Canada. He spent one year teaching outside of Toronto, and this is his second year of teaching in Nunavut. Finding permanent full-time teaching positions in Toronto was challenging for him, but he had friends teaching in Nunavut telling him about the opportunities up there. He viewed Nunavut as a place to be working relationally with the students and giving back to the community to help create better outcomes for them.

6.1.8 Patti and Her Reasons for Going to Nunavut

Patti grew up in Calgary. She is in her early 60s and has around 20 years of teaching experience behind her. She connects well with the church. Her mother lived down south whom she would visit during the summers. She had been in Nunavut for five years since 2016. She had worked in an Arab country for several years before moving to Nunavut. She felt that going to Nunavut was a homecoming for her, because she was used to teaching English as a second language, and she discovered similarities in the Nunavut community compared to her experience in the Arab country. Additionally, she also liked the idea of a job that helped her build her pension. She felt less of an excitement by being amongst another culture after having

done so for several years previous. She feels like she has cultural burnout, not from Nunavut, but from her other teaching experiences. She started her teaching experience in British Columbia at a school where there were several high-needs students.

6.2 Emerging Themes

In carefully analyzing the interviews, four themes emerged corresponding to each of van Deurzen's four dimensions. However, within each of the dimensions their existed two sides of an apparent continuum or of two opposites. With no way to reconcile the two sides of what the participants shared, I found that having a paradox with each theme would be best to represent the two worlds, cultures or ways of thinking that they found themselves betwixt and between. I will summarize the four themes within van Deurzen's four dimensions below.

In the Physical Dimension, the major theme that emerged was health over illness. Some of the physical conditions of Nunavut, permeated the participants deeply and affected their energy and emotions. They either did what they could to counteract this by making a point of living a healthier lifestyle or fell into troubles with their mood and well-being.

In the Social Dimension, the major theme that emerged was making the most of the social world. Teacher participants both appreciated Inuit for their welcoming attitude and had trouble with some of the more social and economic problems within the community. It was also common for the teachers to have more social interaction, yet they did not feel deeply connected to the other people living there. With both Inuit and their social circles, teachers made the very most of the people in their lives in Nunavut.

In the Personal Dimension, the major theme that emerged was facticity and transcendence. As a completely different place there were a new set of resistances and

freedoms associated with it that were entirely different than southern Canada. Eva had to decide if she was able to transcend some of the difficulties in order to continue to enjoy some of the unique freedoms in Nunavut.

In the Spiritual Dimension, the major theme that emerged was living one's culture and not living the other's culture. Inuit showed themselves to have less of an understanding of some of white Canadian beliefs and values while white Canadians showed themselves to have less of a spiritual or cultural background that Inuit have.

6.2.1 Physical Dimension Theme of Illness and Health

In the physical dimension, a major theme among the participants revolved around the continuum of illness and health. Many teachers described feelings of exhaustion, fatigue, depression, and/or lack of motivation. They expressed a need to either slip down to feeling no energy and allowing their physical and mental health to deteriorate or to overcome these challenges and develop healthy coping strategies, such as eating well and exercise. For a few of them, they had a difficult time discerning what exactly this feeling was when they first encountered feeling it. They wondered if it may have been illness in the form of exhaustion, fatigue, or depression. The first year often marks a period of transition where the teacher first comes in contact with the 24-hour darkness or almost 24-hour darkness which begins shortly after their arrival to Nunavut. This is a time when they are taken aback by some of the new changes in their motivation and energy and begin to find strategies to help mitigate that. Doing exercise and eating healthier were two of the more common strategies. But there was also taking vitamin D and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) lamps.

Additionally, participants reported a period of physically isolation, as they initially knew few people in the community. Over time, they became more integrated with the community and connected with the other people who moved there.

6.2.1.1 Eva

In talking about the community that she lived in that had 24-hour darkness for approximately 3 months she explained:

> "So my first year with the dark season did not go so well by the time that Christmas came because also the first year that I moved up here was when COVID was a big thing so I couldn't go home for Christmas. It was my first 24-hour darkness and I also couldn't go home. And so by Christmas I was like not doing well… It's dark outside, it's dark in your house and it's just not awesome. So the light helped when I was just kind of in my home. But a big thing in the dark season is that you got to stay busy. You got to have events with friends. You can't just let yourself just sit at home… And so definitely those conditions [24-hour darkness and isolation] affect your whole personality, it affects your energy, it affects how you want to interact with other people with your grumpiness" (p. 6).

Eva had a very serious encounter with isolation. While she did mention later on that she was helped by a few strong connections in the community not everyone has these. Like many in Nunavut, she tried using some light fixtures to manage the levels of darkness at least in her house. As a bit of dark humor, she adds, "it's just not awesome." Instead of staying with the suffering, she moved on to talk about the importance of staying busy during the dark season, which she again repeats later on for emphasis. Like orders coming from a doctor, she urged,

"you got to stay busy," "you got to have events with friends" and "you can't just let yourself sit at home." She seemed to be speaking from experience by saying that the first dark season was hard on her in part because of the isolation. Other than keeping the body busy, she found some of the connections that she had built in the community were helpful in getting through this time.

Other than the above quote, Eva also mentioned the importance of working out at the gym and meal prepping. She mentioned that there is a lot of time in Nunavut because no one is going out to dinner with friends, going to the movies, going to the mall, having a long commute to work or other things to fill up one's time so she began working out at the gym. Also with her newfound time, she decided to be doing meal prepping. After talking about working out at the gym and then meal prepping, she added:

> "I guess I have definitely elevated my care for my body since I've been up here. It could just be that my mental side deteriorated a bit and so I upped the physical side a little more."

By keeping the body busy and active by either visiting or working out at the gym, she seemed to alleviate some of the effects of isolation and darkness.

6.2.1.2 Adrian

Of all the participants, Adrian presented as being more optimistic about some of the differences in climate and daylight as it did not impact him as much. He mentioned that sometimes he felt a bit lazy, and that there were less opportunities to go out places. He communicated that he did not "have to feel bad about not going outside," which suited him because he enjoys more being inside. However, when he does go outside, he finds it "exciting"

to confront the extreme cold and blizzards. Even though he has an All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV), he tends to stay within the community.

> "So, I do a lot more stuff at home. I've gotten into puzzles, paint my numbers, and just put it on little tasks like that. I clean the house more often. Physical activities. I participate in a lot of extracurriculars with the students. So that is how I've maintained that…To be honest, there's a lot of boredom here."

As shown in the above quote, Adrian has developed a number of activities to keep himself from boredom but they do not always seem to be successful. In terms of nutrition he feeds to his body, there is less access to affordable, fresh and healthy foods, which can contribute to some of the reduction in energy. In terms of the health of his body, access to healthy food is the main thing that he identifies as an issue.

> "Otherwise health, I think access to fresh foods is an issue. Tend to eat a bit less vegetables. So a lot less fresh fruits and vegetables I would say that is a negative impact on my health. But it goes for a lot of people in the north. And I think maybe I've increased my sugar intake. But physically, I haven't been thin this whole time."

Adrian is aware that he has not been making the healthiest choices in terms of his food intake and it has increased his weight. However, he struggles to find a solution as fresh fruits and vegetables are not readily available.

6.2.1.3 Jerry

Jerry found the first year without sunshine very challenging along with being isolated, as it was his first year in Nunavut, and he had to walk to work no matter what the weather

conditions were. Although, he initially was not sure about his feeling, when he discussed them with his friends and family back home, they told him that he sounded depressed and he agreed.

> "I always say it was kind of depressing to me in the first year when I got there in some way June…Well, when it got to October or there about, you don't get to see the sunshine going to school and by the time you come home it was also dark. I was living alone. I didn't have a roommate or anybody. That was really, really depressing to me."

Along with Eva, Jerry described the first year as being particularly hard with the darkness of being isolated. While Eva seemed to have more of an opportunity to have other people to connect with, Jerry found himself more isolated.

Consistent with Eva, Jerry also described the first year as being particularly challenging due to darkness and being isolated. While Eva seemed to have more opportunities to connect with other people, Jerry found himself more isolated.

Jerry really struggled to confront the weather on his way to work and did not feel like he could do it. He then continues to talk about his lack of motivation to do the things that he normally does.

> "I used to work out before moving to the North, but I felt so depressed I couldn't. I was teaching the elementary school. The high school had a gym, but I was sort of like done. Like I couldn't do those things anymore."

Jerry's reported depression is closely linked to his lack of motivation in the north, which left him feeling too exhausted after a day's work to engage in routine exercise. Instead, he

subscribed to lots of internet packages. We can conclude that this is the result of not pushing oneself to counter the feeling to be less active. As Eva repeated, staying busy during the dark season is crucial, and perhaps here is an example of what happens when someone fails to do so. The outward physical conditions and their affects on the individual need to be overcome or transcended.

> “I ate heavily. I became so fat at a point in time and after a year in that area, I decided to change my eating habit and try to eat less. I wasn't exercising actually, but I tried to change my diet, to come back to my normal way and all that. Because I was just depressed and I would just eat and eat, be on the bed and I would just go back to the fridge and grab something and keep eating. It affected my body. I became so fat.”

While making efforts to change his habits, Jerry slipped back into his poor eating habits due to his mood. The isolation during the dark season had a profound effect on his healthy habits of eating and exercise. His energy levels kept him in bed with not much else to do but to return to the fridge.

> “In my last year I said, no, I can't do this anymore. I'm coming back to the south. And so, I had to change different things to just keep in shape. So I did. I did change my eating habit and it helped me. But I still couldn't get the morale to go to the gym. And I still can't go to the gym. I'm still sort of depressed. But I'm getting well. It's getting better.”

Eventually, Jerry came to the conclusion that he could no longer continue living in Nunavut due to his diminished motivation and persistent depression. Even after returning to the south for several months, he still struggled to return to his healthy habits of going to the gym. The depression had transformed him from a more outgoing person to someone who

mostly kept to himself. He found it hard to make connections or to connect with people easily since his return from Nunavut.

The scarcity of some of the amenities, food and water made Jerry rethink his relationship with resources, such as how to spend money and avoiding to waste food because everything was more expensive in Nunavut. This made him feel more grateful for what he does have in the south.

Jerry described times in Nunavut when the water truck broke down or there were delays in its arrival, leading to a need to conserve water. This involved monitoring shower lengths and refraining from flushing urine. As food was expensive in Nunavut, he became more conscious about not wasting food. By having to conserve resources better, it made him think more in terms of how to take care of the environment.

6.2.1.4 Anne

Anne shared several things that required extra effort, leaving her feel exhausted by the end of the day. These included preparing more engaging projects to keep her students interested, taking on extracurricular activities, and organizing special school events. She also shared that going to work in the cold or extreme wind, or not going outside because there is a polar bear in town "makes everything harder."

> "It's harder to get to work and you definitely have to compartmentalize it. So you're like, I have a job to do but my first goal is just to get to my place of work, which normally will take me 15 minutes but today it's probably going to take me about 25 minutes. But then you're stressed because you're like, this is really bad weather and ideally, I want a phone call saying I'm not coming in today."

Anne also mentioned that often the phone call does not come through because the person responsible for making it was not currently in the community. The wind and the cold significantly slowed her journey to work in the morning. She shared that she has to "compartmentalize" it and try to put them out of her mind when thinking about her journey back home after the workday. Often, she had to scramble to find a ride or else brave the elements on the walk home.

> "We've had a few blizzards where I've been like sitting at home. And I get a phone call just as I'm going to step out the door that I can't make it to work because it's minus 50 and the wind gusts are 55. So, I've definitely had those days and then I've had those days where it's been about 49 gusts, but it's still minus 40 and I'm still expected to come in to work."

While there are some days where she stays at home during blizzards, there are still occasions when she must go to work, if the wind and cold are not severe enough to shut the community down. Anne also talks about having some very power reaction to the cold of Nunavut.

> "A lot of my extreme emotions are kind of like negative. And I don't know if that's because I don't like the cold too much. Like I love the cold, but I found that when I went out on the land, I got too cold and it made me an absolutely horrible person where I was just like hating my life in that moment. Because we went out on the land with a bunch of students. And we were out going out on the kamotiks[3] and it was really bumpy and I

[3] Kamotik – An Inuit style sled.

kept banging my head at the top of the kamotik that was really cold and I was just getting so angry about my life. Like why did I do this? This was so stupid of me."

The cold evoked feelings of anger towards Anne's decisions to move to Nunavut. These negative thoughts were likely related to some of her emotional struggles. It seemed that the cold was something she found challenging to embrace or endure.

Anne shared that, at times, she takes a "mental health day" due to a combination of factors, including behavioral concerns in the classroom and the exhaustion that she feels during the dark season. The demands of managing student's behavior takes a lot of energy and further depletes her. This exhaustion make her sleep a solid 12 hours to catch up on her energy.

Not having a "workout buddy" or boot camp director to keep her motivated to exercise made Anne more prone to stay in her home. Her exhaustion leaves her with limited energy for outside of work. She also reported eating more unhealthy food than ever before in her life. In addition, she also revealed going for chiropractic, massage and counselling appointments as self-care in the summers when she is in the south.

6.2.1.5 Brit

Brit is another one who speaks very optimistically about living in Nunavut. She shared that she loves the cold and loves the 24-hour darkness. She talks more about physical comforts and activities for both the 24-hour darkness and 24-hour daylight.

"24 hour darkness is so cozy, it's such a lovely experience to just be tucked up you know when you're little house and have a safe place to kind of be when it's storming and cold outside and nothing beats Arctic summer and 24 hour daylight, nothing is more fun than

> paddle boarding all day or berry picking all day and night… so really different conditions but I love them."

Clearly, Brit reported to be getting the most out of the seasons, doing lots of kayaking, fishing, hunting and working out at her home gym. She enjoyed being at home while the outside was cold and stormy in the dark season and doing outdoor activities in the 24-hour daylight.

Brit expressed a sense of mastery with the Arctic environment being able to have her gym in her home and grow her own fruits and vegetables instead of getting "sketchy" produce from the grocery stores. While maintaining physical wellness through healthy food and exercise is harder, she is adapting strategies to increase this side of her life in Nunavut.

> "So it's definitely harder to stay active, if the main way you'd like to be active is outdoors through the coldest winter months, we're really lucky in our community to have a gym. But I also have a gym in my house that I wouldn't probably have if I lived in the South, because I would just be active outside. So definitely, it's harder, I think, to maintain physical wellness. And just like access to foods or access to fresh produce is sketchy. And a lot of times, you're right. So like my husband, I just ordered an indoor, like, garden thing to grow fruits and vegetables.

Furthermore, Brit enjoys the short walk between buildings and to work, comparing it to living in the south where so many people have to commute for long periods of time to get to work. The immediacy of everything in the small community makes life a lot easier for her and there is more family time and more time in general.

> “And I think, yeah, I'm thinking terms of routine though, we have a lot of bonuses, like there's no commuting here. That's fucking incredible. You know, and that's a lot of people that live here and then move south through like how the hell do I get used to an hour-long commute to work again, in the south, when we walk five minutes, I can walk to work in five minutes, you can walk anywhere in town in five minutes, right?”

6.2.1.6 Kyle

Kyle noticed in his first year a drop in energy and mood after it became much darker in October.

> “I guess because I kind of knew what to expect but I had never experienced it. So just physically I felt kind of fatigued all the time. And I didn't really process it. I wasn't really able to process this in the moment… It's just physically not getting the sun and perhaps the vitamin D and everything that affects my energy level, my mood, and things like that. So I would say that it did affect me more so my first year. Just kind of feeling low on energy and emotionally feeling quite low as well.”

Like Jerry during his first year, Kyle was somewhat unsure of what to make of this energy loss. He described that he was not able to process it and explained that it was feeling low energetically and emotionally. This might indicate that it is a new feeling that they had not experienced much in the south.

In response to this loss in energy, Kyle noticed the things that could boost his energy levels, including meeting and talking with others.

> “But I guess I was really fortunate in the sense that I'm lucky to work in a community where everyone is very welcoming, including the local staff as well as the Southern staff.

> And so I just tried my best to go out as much as I could, participate in any kind of community sports and whatnot. Just minimizing time when I was just alone with my thoughts too much basically. And that would be a lot."

Regarding his energy levels, Kyle noticed that having a slower pace in the Arctic seemed to positively impact his perception of time. There were less appointments and fewer commitments with friends or family. He perceived this as a positive change as he was able to cook healthier meals for himself. He may have had less energy but more time to slow things down. Like Eva and Adrian, Kyle makes an effort to keep himself busy to avoid alone time. Kyle mentioned that although he had low energy and may not have been at his best, the slow pace environment of Nunavut allows him to take it easy.

> "But coming to the Arctic, one of the first things I noticed and kind of really found soothing was the slow paceness of it. And I think people who enjoy that slow pace kind of will thrive in this kind of environment. Other people may find it very tough."

Much like others, he found exercise and structured activities to be very helpful forhis mood and gravitated towards this.

> "We have a small gym which isn't crowded at all so I've been going to the gym regularly. I'm kind of forcing myself to along with the other teachers because we all know that that impacts our energy and mood and everything."

Despite his low energy levels, Kylie understands the importance of self-discipline when it comes to engaging in physical activities. He certainly recognizes its significance in his energy and mental health. He mentioned that during his second year, he bought more supplements and ate healthier.

6.2.1.7 Patti

Patti described experiencing a sense of depression or fatigue during the 24-hour darkness in the winter. In consistent with Adrian and Kyle, she was unsure about what this feeling was when she reached the 24-hour darkness.

> “I think during the winter, I feel a bit depressed kind of but not really depressed. I can't even really answer that question. I think fatigue. I think it fatigues me a lot. I've been in different because it's changed from year to year, right? Like the first year, I felt super, super, super exhausted. And it seemed dark. And then last year, I was thinking the dark season was light. How did the dark season become light all of a sudden? Because I was used to it being dark, but it didn't really seem dark anymore.”

Along with some of the other teachers above, Patti mentioned that she experienced fatigue in the evening, believing it has a lot to do with the lack of sunlight.

> “I think the fatigue is the worst thing. I think it's only from the lack of vitamin D. It just feels like your whole body feels drained of energy. Because I've lived in the Middle East and so my body felt energized all the time from the sun because it's so sunny and warm over there. So coming here it's like... I think that's the biggest thing.”

Along with the feelings of fatigue, Patti talked about feeling less connected to the church and other people and further mentioned it might have something to do with the environment. She attributed it to the absence of sunlight but also deliberated whether age or some other aspect of the environment might be contributing to her fatigue.

> “I don't know. Maybe that's related to sunlight. Maybe when the sun comes out like... But that could also be... It could be a lot of things. I'm definitely not as energetic to do things in the evening as I was, and I don't know if that's an age thing or environmental

thing, or both. Cold. I don't feel like doing anything. But I'm kind of the same as what I usually am."

Patti described a feeling of lack of motivation, similar what Jerry described. There also seems to be a lot of uncertainty about the root cause of this lack of energy.

Patti also expressed missing swimming in Nunavut, which she very much connects with. Even though the darkness left her with the feeling of fatigue, she identified that not having a swimming pool has profoundly affected her routine and self-care. It really sounds like this is a significant loss in her life. However, as an alternate, she incorporated going to the gym and exercise into her routine.

Patti also explained that she has begun cooking more, which is new and positive development in her life.

"I would say 100% I have learned to cook because I don't really like cooking. I'm not a big cook. So, I actually had to really figure out how to eat properly up here."

Patti's motivation to start cooking stemmed from a desire to avoid spending money at restaurants or resorting to eat the fast food in the community. She fee that she has now made a change to eat healthy in Nunavut. Unlike others, she does not relate this to her overall health or energy.

6.2.1.8 Personal Reflection

As Eva talked, I remembered my own experience in the dark season. I remembered feeling a heaviness as I walked, especially after arriving home after a day of work. Sometimes, I would take a short nap before making dinner and then still taking ten or more hours to sleep at night. During my second dark season, I lacked strong relationships to support me through it, an

there were no other opportunities for exercise. The only physical activity was floor hockey on the weekends with a couple of fellow teachers. I was terrible at it and expended a lot of energy chasing the ball, while the other teachers were much more skilled and made it look easy. I did not like going to something where I felt so terrible at, but continued to go because it was the only option for physical exercise. A year later, I ended up doing push-ups and sit-ups every other day and jogged around the inside of my office building after everyone had left for the day. It was about 30 seconds a lap for 20 or 30 minutes of jogging. I also played badminton a few times.

The feelings of exhaustion, fatigue, depression and lack of motivation encountered by such experiences is a very all-consuming feeling that deeply affects those who live there. For clients like these, thoughts do not initially have form and take time to form. Patience by the counsellor to bare this silence and allow for space for the client to collect their thoughts. There were the obvious elements of months of 24-hour sun and 24-darkness that would lead to feelings of fatigue but naming some of the challenging aspects of one's life up there increases energy by feeling more connected. It would be worthwhile for the counsellor to check in with activities of sleep, nutrition, exercise and social outings to ensure that they are keeping up healthy habits and doing what they can to make the most of the time up there. Building an acceptance of the quality of food, the activities available and social outings available so that they are able to make the most of what is offered in the community is an essential area of growth for all who move to Nunavut that a counsellor can assist with. This may also mean properly grieving the life that they had in their home community or city.

6.2.2 Social Dimension Theme of an Earned Family Mentality

In the Social Dimension, the central theme revolves around making the most out of the social environment within the small communities of Nunavut. There really seems to be extreme opposites of social connection and disconnection that are felt in these communities. Social connection felt by strong Inuit hospitality, by the ease in developing friendships, by a sense of community and by developing positively in the social world. And disconnection in hearing the stories of some of the social problems of mental health, addiction, suicide and violence and economic problems of families not having enough money. Each of the teachers must carefully balance this out and decide whether the feelings of connection outweigh the feelings of disconnection. This often becomes the deciding point of whether to stay in Nunavut longer or not. Most of the participants talked about being reluctant to connect socially to the people there but believe that meeting with other people is important to their well-being. They also explained that their social circles in Nunavut often include individuals they would not typically associate with in the south.

Within the Social Dimension, there needs to be an effort to overcome some aspects of the social world to better adapt to the situation. Anne explains that with the Inuit community, there is a family mentality but you have to earn it. This stands as a main theme for the social world, where social connections are built on trust and care. However, just like family, these are not always about deep personal connections or the absence of conflict. One can earn their place in the family by being flexible to the needs of others and open to connecting with others in the community.

7.2.2.1 Eva

When asked what it is like to live among Inuit people, Eva first mentioned some close Inuit friends, who have taught her so much about their culture. She had been shown far more about their culture than she would have hoped for. And then added that:

> "…and then there are some students that have told me some truly heart-breaking stories about their home lives and how they're treated. And how they can't go to school because they are the worker in their family. They have to provide. Those who bring their charges to school because they are the ones that have to pay the electrical bills. And then when I think of that upbringing, that breaks my heart. But on one end, I don't then associate those heart breaking feelings with the race of Inuit people. I think I associate those feelings with that one family and how that one child is treated. I see just like in any race there are people that treat each other well and people that treat each other poorly. I see that there are some people that welcome Qallunaats or kadloonas into there community and some that very much do not."

Another valuable experience she had was when she first arrived to a community and had several grocery bags after shopping. Instead of having to walk them home,

> "a student pulled up and asked 'do you want a ride home?' And I was like 'absolutely.' So I hop on and she drove me home. And when I got home I realized, I didn't even tell this lady where I lived. And I realized what a small place this was. I know it's rough when you first arrive. I know its hard to make those bonds. To know that a student within the

> first month saw me struggling and took me home – she knows where I live, which is interesting. And she helped me out and I was like 'this is going to be awesome.'"

In terms of her feelings about Inuit people, Eva shared that she had some really positive experiences with her friends and she also had some difficulty in hearing some of the students in her class talk about their hardships at home. However, she made it clear that she does not associate these hardship stories with Inuit children or people. She added that there are people who treat others poorly or better in any community, and the same applies to these communities, where some welcome white people while others do not.

In Eva's relationships with the other teachers from the south, we find a different dynamic of greater acceptance of others.

> "You have so many options [in the south]. There's so many options to choose from. Up here, I find that my heart has opened to a lot of different kinds of people. Up here there are people in my friend group up here that I know I wouldn't have chose to hang out with if I had seen them down south. I would not have pursued a friendship with them had I been down south. But one thing for sure, we as teachers up there know that we were in isolation. We are all that everyone has. So we didn't have time to be picky or to say, 'I don't really like that side of them.' Not to say that we allow ourselves to be bullied but I think down south you can be – I don't want to say superficial because it's not superficial to choose somebody who has a lot of common interests with you but it's easier. But up here you have to expand your horizons and take an interest that you would normally not take an interest in because you want to make sure everyone is

> feeling supported and have someone to turn to if they need to. So I find myself interested in things that I have never been interested in before."

Moreover, Eva explained that she has been involved in Star Wars movie nights at one person's house and practiced martial arts with other teachers. These are two activities she would have not otherwise been interested in, but to connect with other teachers, she joined in with them.

Eva also compared her social life in the north and her experiences in the south, where she had more options to connect with others with similar interests. It seems that she senses a kind of depth in connecting with others over things that are not common interests. She also felt like she was expanding her horizons or being flexible in the ways that she connects with those with other interests.

6.2.2.2 Adrian

Being around Inuit, Adrian noticed that the pace of activities is much slower. They are often late and take their time to get things done. On the one hand, Adrian strived to assure me that he finds the people very welcoming and that he accepts them fully. On the other hand, he hinted on that there might be people that would be judgemental of them.

> "I have a good relationship with the locals. I'm a very open person. I'm not a critical person, so I usually get along with everyone. And I don't judge them. I don't judge people. I may not agree with some of the ways of life here. Very different from ours, but I have great relationships with them."

Adrian further describes the interdependent nature of the community where everyone helps each other out and relates this to smaller community life. When in need, people offer

help. In addition, he believed the community as being more of a big team where everyone is working together. It sounds like there exists a real sense of interconnection at the community scale. Events, such as vehicles breaking down, can be a very difficult time because there are no tow truck drivers available. However, the community offers to help in such moments.

.

Adrian added that his social life has not changed much since arriving in Nunavut because he was not very social down south other than connecting with his partner and that has not changed.

> “And then occasionally I'll have social hangouts with work people at home. So really not a big change. Honestly, not at all. Not really at all. I spend more time with my significant other at home. We're home more often. But for me, no, not a great change. I don't keep really much contact with the long-distance relationships that'll be with friends.”

Adrian remains a unique example of the participants, as there was not much of a change upon arriving in Nunavut. Being with his significant other is enough social interaction, and that remains consistent regardless of his location. For those who do not have a rich social life in Nunavut and do not have much interest in going out on the land, there are not many other options than to stay at home.

Adrian, nevertheless, highlighted the importance of social support after talking about the second-hand trauma that he had experienced.

> “And like I was saying, I didn't come alone. I've noticed that if you come up here alone, you have to have a friend. You have to make friends with another co-worker and have

social interactions if you want to make it. You can't go home by yourself. I know that if I didn't I would not have made it. If I was by myself, I probably wouldn't have survived."

In no uncertain terms, Adrian clearly expresses the importance of social support as a requirement for getting through some of these more difficult times, especially when one first arrives. He does not believe that it is possible without having someone to confide in. In the above quote, he is referring to his partner with whom he came to Nunavut.

6.2.2.3 Jerry

Jerry talks about how easy it is to connect with people in Nunavut as compared to living down in southern Canada.

"I would say that I was able to connect to a lot of people in person easily than I was in St. John's because in the big cities in Canada, you can't easily meet people and make friends with."

He explained that simply by going out into the community, people would approach him, and want to get to know him. While it was easy for him to begin making some of these connections, he also mentioned about going through a period of isolation during the first dark season.

"Here in Nunavut, you go to the store and people want to get to know you, to start a conversation with you. You go to the airport and meet different people and they want to get to know you and you start interacting. So, my social life with people over there started like once I got there, it just kicked off, making different connections with different people and sharing my past experience with them and also them telling me about their own."

As opposed to connecting with people on social media, he found it easier to connect with people in person, perhaps because he would run into the same people day after day in the small community.

> “And It was so easy because you don't have to reach them through social media or somewhere else to start connecting to them. You can connect to them in person. That was like really good. Just that the weather was not so good that you can always easily go out and make those connections, but the moment you get to go to the stores, to go to the airport, to go to any other public places, you are able to strike a conversation with people. And that was awesome. You won't find it here in Canada, like other parts where you can just go out and be talking to people.”

Jerry certainly was able to find easy connections with people there as compared to other places in Canada. However, he did feel isolated in the first dark season by himself. He felt a connection to the Inuit because of the similarities he observed in their cultures, where there were lots of outdoor activities, hunting, sharing meat, and a strong sense of community.

Nonetheless, Jerry shared that he finds his culture and Inuit culture to have enough in common that he feels a strong connection to it. He did not find the sense of unity where people gathered outside of their houses to play or to do other outdoor activities in his community in southern Canada. This affects the way he feels socially with them, in that he connects to them on a cultural level.

> “Then, because I'm used to that kind of life where we do things together, they would hunt and share the meat together, they go fishing and they would share the fish to the whole of the community were all things that I would say made me feel that this is a

place to be in spite of whatever other things that might be going on. It gives you the chance to connect with people all and easily because they feel like a community, right?"

Jerry stated that he can easily connect to people in the community. This is really the sense of community that he feels like he missed in the southern Canada. Some of the cultural activities that they do together are reminiscent of his African culture, which is not foreign but familiar. There is a real comfort that he feels with them on this level that he is communicating with me.

6.2.2.4 Anne

Anne explained that she has been impacted by many negative social interactions that have changed her feelings of being up there. Some of these include being yelled at or drunk people hitting her friend for being white while walking down the street. Experiencing or witnessing verbal and physical abuse has left her feeling hurt. She explained the difficulties that many of her students face in their homes and with their families. In addition, she often feels sick after hearing about the abuse or rape that they have endured.

After discussing some of the more difficult experiences of her social dimension, Anne talked about some of the more uniquely positive parts of her life around other people. She talked about a white teacher who had lived up there long enough to be considered to be Inuit by the Inuit living there who dropped off a care package and another time would not let her walk home and drove her instead. Anne added that it was an part of Inuit culture to really care for people who were sick. She also talked about how she often gets invited over for food from the local Inuit, adding that they really want to take care of others. Anne really appreciated the

kind gestures that are shown by the Inuit including being invited out on land trips. At times, teachers can really be treated as essential people to the community.

Anne goes on to talk about how the students in particular can show real appreciation towards her.

> “And the kids can be so thoughtful and so nice. They're constantly making drawings for me and saying, ‘You're the best teacher. You're so nice to me.’ I don't really feel that all the time but you have those good days that you would I guess would have some more good days down south.”

With some of the drawing made for her and compliments, Anne enjoyed them but also wondered if there would be more of that down south. Another thing that she found with being amongst Inuit culture is that, a level of trust needs to be achieved before being considered family by the Inuit. There she is able to get a lot of connection but not from the whole community.

> “But they are very much like community, family mentality here. But you've got to almost earn it. Like you have to be here, you definitely have to just say the right things and do the right things to get into like a family. And then you're in that family. But you're not in like the whole community's family.”

Anne shows some reluctance to get involved in social interaction but certainly sees the need for it in her life as her support group. She describes them as almost mandatory meetings to engage with the other teachers. As Eva shared some of the strategies that needed to overcome the challenges of the dark season, Anne also discussed the same prescriptive language to express her need for this social aspect of her life in Nunavut. As for the friendships

that are developed, Anne explains they are out of convenience rather than actual choice, adding that she would not have chosen to hang out with them down south.

Anne described an incident where she tried to get a student A to go to the principal's office after the student hurt another student. The situation led to her going to her classroom and student A following her. Anne locked the door to her classroom with the other ten or so students, while student A smashed the small door window with a [metal object]. A fight broke out between student A and student B, who was trying to help so the hall monitor got between them.

> "I was with the hall monitor and he told me to leave because I was triggering the kid as well. So then I left. That was the most fear I've ever felt in my entire life. No one has ever tried to attack me, especially because they were trying to attack me because I was trying to hold them accountable for being so mean to another kid. So the most fear I've ever felt."

Anne returned to the classroom the next day in spite of feeling quite frightened by the experience. But the experience left a significant impact.

> "But now, loud voices scare me. A student will drop their water bottle and I'll jump. I'm like, I can't. I don't know but I can't get over that right now. Extreme noises kind of trigger me a little bit. Like my anxiety jerks. That's the extreme fear that I experienced. And then with that comes the regret. Going with everything else and I've said, I don't know if I'm doing anything good with these kids because they don't seem to be learning."

These are somber feelings of inadequacy brought up by this experience. It can be a common feeling of incompetence felt by the teachers, which is sometimes overcome and sometimes not. It is quite clear that if she felt that she was effective in her teaching, she would feel much less regretful about the experience.

6.2.2.5 Brit

Brit found connection with the culture there because both her area and Nunavut were influenced by Scottish culture.

> “I remember moving here and being at a community feast, and like, fiddle music's happening and starting to jig and people being like, why the fuck do you know how to do that? And I was like, girl, that's the thing, your cultural thing is not my like, the Scots brought this to all of us. So really similar, I think, like just being colonized yeah, by the same group of Scots.”

Brit, furthermore, discussed the differences between southern Canadian culture and Inuit culture. Canadian culture has a work ethic to not be late, while Indigenous culture prioritizes family time and relationships.

> “And people show up late for everything all the time. And you'll hear a lot of that, like people are, nobody wants to stay late, and nobody wants to and you're like, Okay, you can view that as the shitty work ethic. Or you can view that as our priority of family and familiar relationships, and prioritizing different things as important rather than capitalist culture and work culture.”

Brit connects well with the focus of Inuit culture on family as opposed to a strong work ethic value. Identifying herself as having an awkward personality, she found that people would

normally make snap judgements about her down south but in the small community everyone gets to know her with all of her more positive qualities.

> "So for me, I have a much better experience of life because the people around me know me a myriad of different ways. You know, you kind of can't get away from each other in a community that is small… So for me, people getting to know me, or having to know me being forced to know me, more intimately that they might if I lived in a big city, and that's really beneficial for me."

Brit also mentioned as Jerry had about seeing people consistently out in the community where people bump into each other and maybe have a short conversation. As opposed to living in a big city where there are more people, she finds that she is not able to build the same depth of social connections where she feels more disconnected from people.

Brit talked about an instance where an Inuit girl saw Brit jig dancing and was surprised to see that. She happily told her then that they do the same thing where she is from and it seemed a connection was felt in that time. While Jerry connected to the culture socially by seeing them do things together in the community, Brit connected to Inuit culture through jigging, music and loving to laugh and joke around.

6.2.2.6 Kyle

What mostly stand out to Kyle is that his social dimension has been quite satisfying, because of the welcoming of Inuit in their land. And the positive people who he has met in the community, particularly the teachers who have been there for some time and who have mentored him to some extent. He talked about the open-door policy, where if you are going to

visit an Inuit home, you do not knock but just walk in. This helped Kyle feel more welcomed in the homes of Inuit.

Kyle shares that he can try some of the tradition food, even though it is not very appealing to him because he knows that the local Inuit appreciate him trying it. Some of the more common traditional food there is raw seal meat, frozen raw Arctic Char and Narwhal skin.

> “So I'm very careful about what I say or how I react to different things in the community things like if I'm trying new food. Even if I'm not a big fan of it, I just pretend that I love it especially knowing that that has a big impact on how they view teachers.”

It seems that Kyle made efforts to create a good impression as a person from the south to the local Inuit, hoping to repair some of the damage left by colonialism. He also sees that by showing interest in participating in their culture, he can gain respect from the locals and his students. In connecting with the local Inuit, he also shares about some of the challenges that they face.

> “But yeah, I do obviously see the challenges as well. People dealing with depression and addiction and whatnot. It's not easy to see it, especially when I see that carrying over to students in the school. So I would say overall, very positive, very welcoming, but also cognizant about the challenges that are happening around me. And it's something that I can't really ignore.”

Like Anne, Kyle also talked about how these social issues would affect his students. He holds the perception of the Inuit as being very welcoming and also struggling with mental health and addictions.

Being more of an introvert in the south, some of the circumstances of Nunavut forced him to meet and socialize with new people, something Anne also mentioned above where people put pressure on others to join social events. Kyle was challenged to do some growth in terms of interpersonal skills by being forced to socialize and being in a role where he had to look after several kids on a sports trip out of the community. He had to be in more of a leadership and parental role with the students. This experience compelled him to mature and grow.

6.2.2.7 Patti

Upon her first arrival in Nunavut, Patti found that she needed to soften her voice to avoid causing a fuss amongst the students. She had to relearn to communicate in a lower volume after coming from an Arabic culture.

> "Well, personally I found it really strange at first because I've come from an Arabic background where the Arabic people are super, super, super loud. And when I was teaching overseas, I had to learn how to actually somewhat yell to get any point across. So when I came up here I was still in a really loud volume of voices. I freaked all the kids out because... I thought, oh my gosh, this is a really quiet culture."

Perhaps coming from her own lengthy cultural placement, Patti does not perceive a significant social difference when being amongst another culture. Although she finds that the people in the community are less friendly, she does have local Inuit friends. It seems that on the surface, Inuit can be very friendly but what she is looking for is a friendship that is more in depth which she is not finding. Patti's feeling that the Inuit were less friendly may have had something to do with her previous experience in the Arab country where the people there were

very friendly. Patti also mentioned that she avoids delving too deeply into conversations with others due to the small community's tight-knit nature because “everyone’s going to know what you said.” She also explained that she came up to Nunavut with a friend of hers and spent lots of time with her.

Patti also observed that some people have strong connections within the community. Looking at other people who feel very connected to the community, Patti has a very different experience. As we have seen from the above, many people seem to find it very welcoming and kind, however, they also recognize that there are some aspects of Inuit that make it difficult to connect with them socially. In the case of Patti, it appears she see more of the sides of people that connect well to the Inuit.

Patti continued with the interview until she seemed to get a sense of insight about feeling disconnected. The church was something that she often connected well to, but she does not feel much connection there as people from the church did not approach her to welcome her to the church or invite her over for tea or dinner.

> “I guess what I feel up here is the disconnect. I can't seem to connect with the Catholic church. I'm not really connected with the Anglican church. It's like a weird little thing that feels like a little bit here and there. So I would say how I changed up here is my faith has really gotten worse. I don't know.”

Having a hard time to discern what it is she is actually experiencing with the feeling of disconnect, she continues:

> “Maybe that's related to sunlight. Maybe when the sun comes out like... But that could also be... It could be a lot of things. I'm definitely not as energetic to do things in the

evening as I was, and I don't know if that's an age thing or environmental thing, or both. Cold. I don't feel like doing anything."

As we observed in the findings of the Physical Dimension, there was a lack of energy and low mood that was initially attributed to the climate and limited sunlight. However, here, she suggested that her feeling of disconnect may be related to the lack of sunlight.

Patti found that some Inuit can be outwardly racist but they expect white people to show no preference for other people. It can be a new experience for white people to be the recipients of racism but it does happen in Inuit and First Nations communities.

> "[Inuit] are being outrightly racist. Like if it's Inuit then it's nothing. For example, when we had a Professional Development day, all the Inuit staff, they were having their little happy picnic in one of the kitchens and it's like nobody is invited to that picnic. And it's like, well, why are we trying to work together as a staff?"

Being excluded from picnics held by the other Inuit staff is another way of racial exclusion. More than the feeling of isolation, racism has a more negative impact, knowing that not only are you excluded but you are excluded and disliked because of the color of your skin.

> "So it's kind of like a catch-22 like how this is going to be. Not everybody, right? This is not a blanket statement because I have a young Inuit friend, she gets heartbroken all the time. Because there's this person within the staffroom making like slanderous comments about something or other and she says 'I don't see why they're doing that.'"

Patti also seems to be saying "I don't see why they're doing that." There are no short or easy answers about why some Inuit are outwardly racist against white people. However, keeping with the theme of this dissertation, I might say that the cultural differences felt by the

teachers are likely also felt by the Inuit and just as some teachers might feel harshly within their own homes, Inuit often do not hold back what they are thinking. Following the same conversation, she talks about feeling disconnected showing that it is quite connected to her experience of racist Inuit.

6.2.2.8 Personal Reflection

It is a common experience that there are people who treat children or Qallunaats as good or bad in any community. For me, I experienced extremes on both sides while in Nunavut, incomparable to my time in southern Canada or anywhere else. There were some times when I felt like white people had a lot to learn from Inuit about how to treat others and there were other times where I was very shocked at how some people, including myself, were treated. At other times, I really focused on how everyone was just different in how they were with others and they were different at different times. Either way, I found my experience up there socially with Inuit was that of extremes of either positive or negative and less in between feelings as compared to living in Southern Canadian communities. While I feel amongst white people in southern Canada, I do not tend to see people in any extremes of either treating people good or bad. I suppose there is a lot more normative behavior with more subtle signs of rejection or acceptance.

On my third year, I started a satisfying poetry group where I invited several individuals from the community and we shared poems either written by ourselves or by published poets. Without many “events” coming to town or things to distract us, we found this among the more exciting things that we did. It was there that I was able to make some deep, life-long connections with some teachers and others in town. These were some of the more fun and

interesting things I did with my time there to overcome the lack of energy felt by the dark season. In a few instances I developed friendships within the community and had some young adults take me out on the land for a hunting trip. With all of my friendships, they were of people that I would normally not ask to hang out with on the weekend if I were in Southern Canada.

In counselling those that live up there, one of the main themes is deciding upon a new balance between alone time and social time. The people living there need to take stock of the potential social relationships and opportunities that would often not be their first choice of friends in the south. Being away from one's family, friends and culture leaves one feeling vulnerable and likely in need of social support instead of isolating oneself further. For this reason, social engagement to some degree is for most people a necessity and finding how much one needs and what kind of social interactions are available is a task for the people living there. Learning to be with others who share likely less in common with you means questioning and overcoming some of our personal preferences for our taste in friends, which I found helpful to explore in counselling.

Another theme that would come up in counselling would be some of the new social experiences from the Inuit. On the one hand, Inuit are very welcoming and endeavour to helpful, making one feel very close to the people in the community. On the other hand, the closeness felt can make some of the social tragedies in the communities all the more difficult to overcome. In some of these communities, one may experience for the first time teaching or interacting with a youth the day before they died by suicide. Hearing about some of the violence, abuse and financial strife can also leave an empathetic listener with much to work through personally. Shortly after I arrived in the community, there was a murder that marked my few years up there as I was working with the people affected by it and had to process lots of my own anger.

6.2.3 Personal Dimension – Theme of "Really Awesome Stuff and Really Hard Stuff"

In the Personal Dimension, Brit said it best when she said that there were some "really, really awesome stuff and really, really hard stuff" about living in Nunavut that well describes the theme in this dimension. There seemed to be such a wide stretch of emotional experiences to be had in Nunavut where even the teachers who had left or were leaving because it was so difficult that they still had reservations about their decision. Some of the conditions of Nunavut made living there difficult and the teachers needed to find a way to transcend or overcome this to make the most out of the experience or they may find a balance of the good and the bad. Either way, emotions are felt to their extreme limits like the night and day in Nunavut.

Within this dimension, the participants share that it was very hard for them in the first six months to a year of teaching. They had to work to overcome the disconnection or distance from others and overcome the emotions that they had. The social problems in the community and behavioural problems in the classroom were not easily felt by the participants but they did manage to become more open, flexible, patient, culturally aware and understanding as a result. There was also a sense of gratitude felt as they recognized the conveniences that they had down south that they did not have in the north. It is only natural to feel grateful for what you have when being in contact with a culture that does not have the same conveniences. Seeing the growth of the students was especially gratifying when given their challenges. Experiences like this either left the participants more unsure about their chosen profession or more certain about how they wanted to be living their lives.

6.2.3.1 Eva

Before coming to Nunavut, Eva was aware of some of the challenges that she might face as a teacher living there.

> "I had to consider things like 'can I handle isolation? Can I handle extreme behavior? Can I handle violence?' Things like that."

Eva was questioning whether or not she had the fortitude to bear what the north had to offer. At the same time, she considered what opportunities or freedoms she could have in Nunavut. Some of the things that drew her to Nunavut instead of supply teaching were wanting a full-time position to make lesson plans and be a steady person in the student's lives. Shortly after arriving in Nunavut, she was confronted with some of the things that she had anticipated would happen in Nunavut.

> "…my very first week of school I experienced two lockdowns. Um… very serious ones and my kids actually walked me through my first lockdown because I didn't know what was happening because we hadn't even gone to that in our orientation yet. Um… I have – so I think I have aged. I have been exposed to a lot of trauma. I've experienced a lot of second-hand trauma."

Eva developed a sense of maturity in seeing and experiencing some of the harder realities to deal with in Nunavut. It changed her outlook on life and about the struggles that other people are facing. As a result of some of this "second-hand" trauma, she has changed personally to not worry so much about the little problems that life can bring.

> "And that is shown when I go down south. I hear my friends talking about different issues that they're going through and different problems that they are facing and I never want to minimize them but I am thinking, "that's nothing. Like, why are you complaining

about this? Do you know what other people have gone through? Do you know what I have gone through? But that's not right. You're not allowed to do that. That's not how it works. But I think I've been exposed to a lot."

Eva now finds her emotional attunement as greatly impacted by this experience. She has now come to a greater understanding of herself and what is important in this life. At the same time, this experience isolates her from others' experiences. As her friends talk about some of the things that are troubling them, she cannot connect to the way they are reacting to this.

"As a person it has certainly aged me and matured me and I think on one half it sensitized me to what everyone can go through and what everyone's home life could be like. On the other hand, I am very much desensitized and that is partly why I am leaving the north, not necessarily forever but for a little while because I've realized that I don't react."

Eva observed the struggles of others within a much wider context of what is possible in its extremes. Having understood what some of her students go through, has helped her to see life from a different perspective. And enabled her to see what other people have to endure in their lives. It has made her reflect on her own worries and problems and to see them as less serious. This is the growth that she is referred to. She then described being desensitized to some of the problems facing the community. Her emotional landscape is changing, and while some aspects are being welcomed as maturing her, others are being held suspect to a less humane reaction.

> "We had a student commit suicide this year and I didn't cry. I was barely sad. I was like "yeah, that happens." And I was like what the hell kind of reaction was that? And I'm realized how numb I've become to these sort of events. So that as a person had changed me in a way that I don't want to be changed. And so I'm saying that I don't want to say that I'm not coming back to the north but I am saying that I need a break because I think if I continue up here it will continue to desensitize me."

Eva found herself being quietly critical of her friends for causing concern over issues that, in comparison, seemed minor to the problems she had experienced in Nunavut. However, she later showed concern for her own thinking when she reacted to the death of a student by being "barely sad." Her experience raised many questions for her in terms of how one should react to certain situations. She wants to react to things in a way that she sees fitting but, at this point, she cannot seem to do that. Just as she appreciates the idea of having freedom in teaching style, but has to deal with some of the difficulties of living in Nunavut.

6.2.3.2 Adrian

Adrian talked about some of the more positive developments for him personally.

> "Well, I definitely think I've become more of an open-minded person. I'm more culturally aware. And also, I feel like I've become more compassionate and understanding of the people I work with, the youth."

More open-minded, culturally aware and compassionate are three related developments that Adrian noticed. It showed that he has really attempted to understand other culture and people from their point of view, which means suspending one's own beliefs.

Adrian described a very common experience of working on a job that one is not fully trained for. Although he is trained for Kindergarten to grade 6 but he found himself working in a leadership role in a high school after only a few years of experience. Eva mentioned this as well when she was asked to teach outside of her subject areas during her first week. This gets them out of their comfort zone and helps them grow quickly professionally.

> “So I think I've definitely gotten more worldly experience up here. And I've gained more of an appreciation for the access to things. We can't leave here unless it's on an airplane.”

Just as Eva talked about becoming more mature, Adrian related his experience as having more worldly experience. It seems that he referred to his appreciation for the privileges he enjoyed, realizing that not every part of the world has access to the things we often take for granted. Many things that are simply not offered in these communities and at times means a flight outside of the community.

> “I've had to deal with a lot of more traumatic experiences, I guess. Well, not my own traumatic experiences, but working with trauma, people living with traumatic experiences. So I guess, I don't know, man. How do I phrase this? It has given me more of a deeper background in working with PTSD in indigenous communities.”

Like Eva, Adrian talked about his own experience with second-hand trauma, to the extent that at first he slipped saying his traumatic experiences. It seems he held himself back from getting into it too deeply and instead said that it gave him a deeper background. Dealing with individuals with traumatic backgrounds is an experience that cannot be fully prepared for, as you cannot know what kind of reaction you might have.

Adrian notices the pace is much different from that of the south. The pace of the day is much slower and takes time as compared to life in southern Canada where it is well-accepted that people show up late. As opposed to a strong reliance on rules and rule-following, he finds that it is better to be more accepting for people about where they are. Right after talking about accepting people for being late, he talks about understanding where students are coming from. While there are a number of problematic behaviors that one might see in the school or classroom, it is important to consider what the students homes and family history is like.

After being able to work in Nunavut, Adrian considered that these skills allow one to work anywhere after this. I heard it repeated a few times that one year of working in Nunavut is equal to having three years experience in the south. I shared it myself to a number of people up there who also agreed.

Adrian continued by elaborating on some of the second hand trauma he had experienced.

> “Well, the first year of being here I was shocked to see very young kids with cigarettes or 15-year-old kids with half their teeth gone. It was a shock. I was upset by that. Also, seeing kids with black eyes or with no fresh clothing, like they've been wearing for weeks. And it was upsetting at first. I didn't think I could handle this.”

Adrian was quite troubled by seeing some of these things when he first arrived. He describes getting used to it much like Eva described that she did. Also, like Eva, he questioned whether or not he could handle this experience.

Adrian acknowledges that there are these troubling things that are still going on but he is able to get used to them and no longer notices them by changing his attitude and

perspective. His realization that he could not do anything about what was going on was something very helpful to his path of acceptance.

> “It was hard emotionally, mentally. It was hard for the first couple of months. But since then, I am not surprised when things come up. The suicides, that was hard to take at first. There was one student I knew personally that committed suicide, I think two years ago now. That was hard. But I'm pretty tough. I had some tough experiences growing up. So, I feel like I was somewhat prepared coming up here.”

While some individuals who arrive in Nunavut may feel less prepared to deal with some of these events, Adrian’s upbringing in a rural and remote area exposed him to experience that happened in the Nunavut community, which offered him strength. We might say thatbeing less surprised by the events that happen in Nunavut also serves as a protection against the overwhelming feelings that come with such events.

While wondering at times whether or not he is making a difference, Adrian notices the impactful difference in focusing on the areas in which he can make changes outside the classroom in extra-curricular activities.

> “It has also been hard being away from family. My mom who leaves on her own on a farm and she said that I can't help when things go wrong and it's kind of held her prisoner too. So there's been times where you're stuck and you feel it's super... We feel pretty upset at times. I guess they range from being kind of in depressed times to the right times. I don't know.”

Adrian has spent more time talking about how Nunavut has been working for him but now he also mentions feeling depressed. Feeling like he would like to be closer to family is a factor but then he also talks about boredom, which also seems to contribute.

As Jerry had mentioned above, Adrian also noticed a shift in his motivation to do things. Similarly, Patti described a sense of fatigue in the evenings after work. The boredom is quite difficult to get out of. He lacked the motivation to do things to keep himself busy. A sense of purposelessness confronts him as he attempted various other activities.

6.2.3.4 Jerry

When he came to Nunavut, Jerry became aware of several privileges that he had taken for granted in the south and now he is grateful for them. This gratefulness is related to the way Eva talked feeling like she has matured more. Both had seen and experienced elements of living in Nunavut that had made them re-evaluate about their own lives outside of Nunavut.

> "I've gone in different places where students are more respectful and are willing to learn. But when I came here, I realized that it wasn't like that. In the first year, I thought the students were just being deviant, but I realized it wasn't about that. It's about a different whole lot of things, like generational trauma and what have you. So it made me to understand that the students are acting out. They are not being deviant, but there are other forces, other things that are making them to be that way. So it made me become an extra patient teacher."

Jerry shows a good, empathetic understanding ofsome of the struggles that Inuit children and youth go through and how that impacts their behavior in the classroom. As Adrian talked about how there was nothing that one could do to change the situation, Jerry also did

not mention doing anything to change these behaviors in the classroom. Much like other participants talking about being more accepting and understanding, Jerry has learned to be more patient.

Jerry is affected by hearing about all of the different social problems within the communities including suicide, shootings, domestic violence, rapes and other problems. Interacting directly with those affected may leave him feeling a second hand trauma which has already been discussed. On the other hand, he describes very positive emotions.

> "I also feel as excited because I was able to have three years of opportunity to help different students, different group of people. I know that no matter how small it was, I was able to touch someone's life, I was able to impact some positiveness to some students. And no matter how small it is, it gives me joy that I was able to stay in the community so hard like this for three continuous years without a problem, without getting involved in any criminal record or anything. So it was a mixture of happiness, sadness."

Jerry talked about some of the simple and larger acts of help that he was able to offer to the community, as being sources of happiness for him. He described this experience as a mixture of happiness and sadness, as many of the respondents talked about the positive and negative aspects of the experience of living in Nunavut.

6.2.3.5 Anne

Among the participants, Anne expressed experiencing more negative feelings stemming from working in Nunavut. This experience left Anne feeling exhausted, leading her to question whether or not that is the reason she feels more negative. Anne describes being a bit

disintegrated not knowing what she is feeling or why. This continues as she questions whether or not this is the right profession for her not knowing if it is Nunavut or the profession itself.

> “People say I'm developing a lot professionally up here, especially in regard to behavior management but I don't know. I'm losing passion for this profession honestly. I don't know what this is. I've got to question if this is even the profession for me. And I don't know if it's because it's the North and things are so tough or if it actually isn't the job for me at this point. I'm only technically three years into this career and here statistics is about five years. If you can make it to five years you're usually good. But I don't know if I can make it that far specifically as a classroom teacher.

Developing in her work does not offer her much as right after Anne said that she is losing passion for the profession right down to her core as to question whether or not the profession she has chosen is for her. She finds it rather meaningless to spend all of this work after school to prepare labs, when no one seemed to care that she does them. She did not feel like the students wanted to learn or retain anything, so it was all for nothing. She has a sense of futility in the face of the non-motivation of the students that she experiences.

> “I actually tried to avoid tests but I need to test them because they've got departmentals in grade 12 and they need to learn how to take a test. So, I have to do it but I don't want to. I'd rather do project-based learning rather than anything. It is hard. These are hard questions. You're going to make me cry. Like now I'm like thinking about [why I’m losing my passion].”

It certainly means something to Anne to be losing her passion for the teaching profession. I had only asked the question of why she felt that she was losing passion and that

was enough to provoke some very strong emotions within her. She started out answering my question by saying that she thinks it is because of the lack of appreciation or feedback that is making her lose her passion. It seemed that she really thrived with some sort of positive feedback and was at a loss when her students did not seem to care about her well-prepared lessons.

Anne really seemed at a loss with her students and her profession. She has hit a situation where she feels she is not able to do much to improve the situation. Anne described the students coming to the school with problems from home and that it is draining her. She expressed uncertainty about her ability to perform her role as a teacher and whether the students could effectively do their job as students, feeling as though both parties are unprepared to be there.

> "If you're trained as a teacher, it's like coming with a mentality that they can do it. You just need to do [make some changes to your teaching approach] to help accommodate them. It is possible to change their lives and make a difference. But from what I'm seeing, I'm not seeing very many wins. I'm not seeing improvements educationally wise or even behavior-wise. Again, I don't know if that's me being a pessimist about everything that's going on."

Anne continued to describe a situation where she was not able to get very far with the students, and perhaps feeling the guilt that she, as a teacher, was not able to help them. While some participants were able to see some of the successes, she found it challenging to do so. When asked about some of the more positive emotions, she lightened up right away and answered:

> "Oh my gosh! It's just like night and day. I was just working out with a friend and we were even just talking about this where it's like you will have one day where you come home and you know like I said... Like I took a sick leave this week that was just a mental health day because I had such a negative experience with students and like so much disrespect. And then the repercussions or in consequences that should have been there were not. And so I felt stuck and I was like I need a day… something needs to be done. I want an apology. And I wasn't getting that. So, I took a sick day. And then the next day things are great. Like I loved my job. The kids are really low but they were getting it. And then when they get it that makes me really happy because it makes me feel like I am doing my job to some extent."

When Anne was able to see these successes within the students, it really lightened her mood and she felt like she did know what she was doing. It was challenging when she was doing her job and not seeing the results, and she seemed to seek the feedback from others about the good work she was doing. All of the participants talked about the presence of good and bad days in teaching, prompting the question of whether the good outweighs the bad. Anne was able to describe some very positive experiences in teaching in which she loved her job but found that they did not happen quite as often.

6.2.3.6 Brit

Brit was not able to identify any way in which she had developed as a professional because she had only worked in Nunavut after her schooling. She added, "forged in the fire. Beautiful, right?" and is very grateful for her life and career being up there. Brit finds her home in Nunavut as a place that is apart from more of a capitalist-individualist culture. In other parts

of the transcript she talks about a great sense of connection to Inuit, finding them more of a relational culture. Along with other participants, she feels that she has grown exponentially in her patience.

After having lived in Nunavut for such a long time, Brit is now forgetting what people back home know about indigenous issues or Nunavut. The majority of her social life is with Inuit, which now changed the cultural and information circles that she came from.

Even though she knows enough of the culture to educate her family and friends back home, she also feels like you cannot truly know about the community until you live there. This is a common experience amongst anthropologists recognizing that their anthropological texts still do not seem to prepare people for the experience with that particular culture. She will never be able to fully understand the Inuit experience and her friends and family back home will not be able to fully understand her experience.

When asked about the range of emotions that she experienced, she answered first that it was going to be hard but then quickly proceeded to talk about the more positive emotions.

> “This is hard. Yeah, so the absolute joy of I just two nights ago was paddleboarding on the Arctic Ocean. And as you know, the sun we're out of 24 hour daylight, but it's still bright, you know, most of the time. So I'm on the water from 8pm until midnight, I'm watching the moon rise as it's still sunny in the other half of the sky, and a seal the swimming around me for two hours. I just anchored out there and floated like paddle, paddle floated around in the Arctic Ocean and played with a seal for two hours, was that your Wednesday night? No, it wasn't, mine was cooler, right? That's so joyful. Yes,

> they're just like, and the peace, the joy, the, you know, the wonder of, but I feel like that outside anywhere."

Brit showed so much enthusiasm for her experience in paddle boarding on the Arctic Ocean with a seal. With her sense of humor she asked rhetorically if my Wednesday night was any better but felt that hers was certainly better. She really enjoys the outdoors in the Arctic of which she finds no comparison.

> "I think, you know, there's also some really hard stuff. I have lost, you know, more people than anybody could count to suicide, I have had the experience of losing kids that I really, really loved to suicide. I've had the experience of not being able to help a kid. And other kids going to look for them, and then having somebody come and tell me, you know, that kid chose to end their life in the middle of my workday. I'm just falling to my knees and screaming like it's a pain and anguish that there are no words for and you can't understand, unless you've experienced it."

Feeling so connected to the people, Brit has had some very serious losses in her life there and has dealt with several very difficult situations, some that may take a long time to process.

> "And that has happened, you know, over 20 times in 15 years. And with that, you know, also comes being a longtime community member and a longtime teacher also comes sometimes you are the safe person. And sometimes you're the person helping keep kids safe until you can get them to a mental health professional, which means sometimes

your you know, with your little ASIST[4] training and just doing the best you can do. Sometimes you might end up being a frontline worker to try and help stop somebody from ending their life and I've had that experience too. You know, I've had the experience of going to pick a kid I loved off the floor while they were self harming and having to take them to the health center. So I think that stuff and the vicarious trauma of those things takes a toll. I've, you know, was never anybody that experienced depression and used to say, I'm so thankful. But that's not like I've anxiety issues, I'm autistic, I got a lot of issues. But I'm so thankful that's not one of them, because I can't imagine what it would be like to struggle with that. But I know what that's like, now. I've had my own suicide crises three times now meaning, I myself was self harming, or was in danger of dying by suicide, including just this past June. Do I think that would have happened if I didn't live here? No."

Even in the face of her own suicidality, Brit wished to continue living in Nunavut. In considering all of these problems, she found that the good outweighs the bad about living there. In some ways, she feels like she is living her life to the fullest and in other ways she has thoughts of suicide.

"Though, you know, there's really, really awesome stuff and there's really, really hard stuff. So it's kind of the whole the whole gamut, but I would say there is nothing that can kind of prepare you for that hard stuff. And it's really hard. Anyways, sorry,

[4] Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training. A common training for community members and professionals to identify and intervene with people who are having thoughts of suicide.

> weeping. There is also joy of paddleboarding George, joyous. Did you get to play with a seal for two hours? No, you did not."

In doing the transcribing and reading this part repeatedly, I am still affected by these words. This is the crux of my experience with Nunavut, where I enjoyed working so much. However, I encountered challenges that proved too overwhelming for me to continue.

6.2.3.7 Kyle

> "I think it kind of solidified my values and how I want to live the rest of my life and do like the little things I can to help people around me. Because I believe it's in our nature that when we're able to help and contribute, we really feel happier, right? I think that's in our nature. So that's just solidified my kind of belief in that and giving me a stronger drive to keep living that way."

As Anne questioned whether or not she wanted to be a teacher, Kyle felt that his values of helping others were solidified. This may have to do with the differences in values, where Anne wanted to teach the students, while Kyle wanted more to help the people around him.

Consistent with other participants, Kyle argued that the first year was particularly difficult, both in terms of preparing for work and feeling socially isolated. These aspects are often considered together because they are interlinked. Later, Kyle found the need to change the way he balanced his social and professional life.

Along with some of the other participants, Kyle talks about the first year as being particularly difficult both in terms of preparing for work and feeling socially isolated, especially

in the first year. These are often considered together because the one seems to affect the other. Later Kyle finds the need to change the way he balances his social and professional life.

> "[The students] might big physically but emotionally they're still very much growing. They're still learning to find the right boundaries of what to say, what not to say. And school is one of the places where they learn that. So, naturally they say things that can be hurtful for teachers. Maybe sometimes intentionally, sometimes without even realizing it. Those moments have also been hard where students would blame you for something or I criticize you for whatever things."

Like the other teachers, Kyle strived to understand the students with whom he was working. Some of the participants have described what some of these students have been dealing with at home. Kyle discussed the emotional maturity that might arise from such conditions.

> "And also seeing kind of the true hardships, I would say it's a glimpse of what they go through like the people here. But seeing things like the unnecessary accidents that happen, the unnecessary deaths or suicides, even though I'm catching up very brief glimpse of what they're going through, it's very hard to see. I believe there were a couple of deaths last year as well. Some of them I think were very preventable. That was difficult to see. And seeing the people in the school who were impacted by it was also very difficult to see."

Kyle expressed the more difficult emotions he experienced when witnessing what some of his students are going through, in terms of incidents of the murders and suicides. The thought that some of these would be preventable, undoubtedly, adds confusion to the

difficulties he is experiencing. He repeated that it was difficult or hard to see, however, he refrained from delving into the associated emotions, which might be his own source of self-protection.

> "I would say some of the maybe higher moments would be when you see growth in your students, and I don't mean academically, I mean that's a huge part too, but my kind of priority as a teacher is more on social well-being, just them growing as more capable people. So seeing those kind of developments and seeing how the students can develop so much in such a short amount of time has been very meaningful and I feel very grateful to be a small part of that."

Different from Anne, Kyle focuses on the growth that he sees in his students social well-being rather than academic growth. Perhaps with the social well-being of his students in mind, he can see more growth. Being grateful is a common experience and perhaps a strong protective factor for these participants.

6.2.3.8 Patti

Patti explained that she is probably a better English teacher having developed her curriculum better to meet the needs of the students. She also improved in classroom management.

Although she discussed her faith that might be associated with the Spiritual Dimension, she is talking about her faith in how she has changed personally. The church has been a place of connection for Patti where she has overcome the isolation that comes from being an outsider. In addition, Patti seemed to have weird or strange feelings and could not define what this was about.

> “I just found it really strange when I came up here. I remember going to the Catholic church and then somebody came up to me, "Can you teach the blah, blah, blah?" Some course for catechism. I'm like, well, really I can't. It was my first couple of Sundays. But nobody actually ever invited me over to like a cup of tea, and I'm like, this is really strange. I'm being asked to do this whole thing of get involved and no one has even reached out to me and said anything. So I thought, well, this doesn't make any sense. I mean, it was dark so I didn't want to walk down the hill, but that was kind of one thing. I was really surprised because I thought maybe somebody would have a bit of an outreach.”

There is a sense of isolation that follows from Patti’s strange experience. She described certain social and spiritual interactions that just seemed to be not making sense to her, and in the end she felt disconnected from those people who she believed she would have found a connection.

As this is not Patti’s first cultural placement in teaching, she does not seem to focus much on the learning from the classroom and how this might have impacted her personally. This is a sign of some growth that she may have done in these other cross-cultural working experiences. After all of the places where she has lived, she seems to have made a habit of returning to the church as a place of connection though she has not found much in this particular community.

The feeling of disconnection from the adult world seems like it is made up for what the students can offer her in terms of connection.

> "Like the first week of post COVID, because I was teaching K-3, I would walk down the hall, and you'd get like 100 hugs going down the hall. So like every day it was like they're late to go to school. And I was just really, really festive and they just liked being in the class and it was nice. So I was always cleverly walking down the hallway. And then after COVID, it was a whole change because now they were isolated, they were all disconnected. I got a couple of hugs today, which was really nice."

Patti's experience is very heartwarming and hardly unique to her own experience in working with children and finds lots of enjoyment in her relationships with the students. She finds that the children and youth in Nunavut are living a more normal childhood where they can play in the streets. This seems to be a sense of relief for her to see children playing in the streets.

Patti described that hugging and playing in the streets are important aspects of a childhood, which are vanished in southern Canadian culture. She observed the children and youth playing there in Nunavut to be reminiscent of a time when there were less rules surrounding children and youth. As Jerry talked about enjoying coming to Nunavut because it reminded him of his own African culture, Patti enjoyed being in Nunavut because it reminded her of Canadian culture in the past. Either way, there is a difference between southern and northern Canadian treatment of children.

6.2.3.9 Personal Reflection

In Nunavut, I loved the freedom that I was given with my job. I spent half my time counselling children and youth with no pressure of having to work a certain way with them. I spent half my time doing fun after-school activities with the youth like sports. While I

connected well with my clients in the counselling sessions, I felt awkward and unsure of how to connect with the others in regular conversations. I felt very isolated for about a year by not being near friends or family for long time or being able to go and do certain things which are the conveniences down south. There were many tough stories that I heard, and the suicides of people I knew well. I would see grief on every face in the community for weeks afterwards. There was no escaping some of the difficulties I faced when there was so little to do and so few connections I had in the community.

For counsellors working with clients living in Nunavut, there is a lot of second-hand trauma, as Eva put it. Like Eva, I found people in southern Canada getting very heated and upset about things that seemed trivial compared to some of the things that I had or heard from others in the community. Even today I notice myself looking to other's faces as they are reacting to hearing some distressing news and feel like we have such a different emotional attunement to the world around us. In this regard, I continue to have a sense of isolation from other people. While this is a response to traumatic or second-hand traumatic experiences, I feel that this is personal growth, being able to see life in its wider context where familial suicide, violence and poverty are at the extreme end of difficulties we as humans face in this world. Once these difficulties are among those close to you, they can be then seen as your possibility. A feeling of gratitude emerges knowing that we can move back to our hometowns and slowly have our memory fade of experiencing this closely with the people who live there.

I do remember my counsellor suggesting that with all of the difficulties that I had experienced that I leave Nunavut. In part, I felt trapped as I was needing to pay off debt and not having sufficient experience to find a job down south but I also felt like I was learning

something amazing and building connections with Inuit who often expected that every new year would bring them new government workers. Brit shared that she felt that she would not have felt suicidal if she did not live in Nunavut but could not see herself moving away. I remember that tension of loving it so much there and having my mental health be so deeply affected. It was a sense of importance that I had built long ongoing relationships with at-risk youth who were difficult to reach and a sense of mastery that I could give a good introduction of Nunavut to the newcomers. For many of the programs that I started, I knew that after I left no one would be able to continue them, giving me a strong sense of purpose that I was building future leaders. If I were my own counsellor, I am not sure whether I would want my client to stay or to go. With my own clients since then, I believe that there is something that is needing to be learned that is keeping them in unhealthy habits, relationships or jobs that cannot be easily articulated.

6.2.4 Spiritual Dimension Theme of Traditional Communal Values versus Individualism

The participants noticed how southern Canadian values are very much different from Inuit values. The emerging theme is one of traditional communal values in contrast to individualistic values. As Christianity has long been a part of Inuit culture, they have developed their own strong religious beliefs that are different and perhaps more fundamental than those in the south. Some of the participants noticed that money management can be a struggle amongst Inuit. Nonetheless, gender roles are more pronounced than they are in southern Canadian culture and women more find the importance to stay with their partner despite violence being in the relationship. Parenting practices can be different where on the positive side, children are given more freedom to explore in the community and on the more negative

side, they can sometimes damage property. Nevertheless, several participants shared that they have culture envy of Inuit culture as they are more connected to their land, elders, animals and traditional beliefs and myths. There is also a slower pace in the community where Inuit take more time to start and finish activities with an emphasis on relationships.

6.2.4.1 Eva

Eva talked about some of the students in her class talking about the Bible and Christianity. Finding out that she was Christian, they engaged her in discussion about this.

> "I remember them quoting things at me and telling me they wanted every assignment to be on the Bible and then all of a sudden they needed to read the Bible and they never followed through with it. It was a lot of words and not a lot of action.… I was very confused because these were children that said that they really wanted to live by the Bible but none of their actions were portraying that."

Eva had never encountered so many students who were very fundamental in their beliefs but not living them out. It would make sense if someone was so strong concerning their beliefs that they would be acting them out. I had experienced this a number of times where I saw such a strong inconsistency but the adult or youth Inuit I was working with did not. This can be an epistemological difference between the cultures where we see something as inconsistent but Inuit youth thinking does not.

> "These were kids that were very rude, violent and aggressive at school or very lazy and they would say that they were. They knew that they were – they just didn't want to do anything and they would said like 'I don't feel like it. I don't want to.' OK. And I would see the way that they would treat other people. Or I would see them getting super high

> or drunk on the weekends. And so I would try and talk to them about it. 'well you opened the door so if you want to talk about Christianity so what about these verses or have you checked out this story that talks about this way of living?'"

Eva found these students as acting very much outside what can be expected for a Christian. She and her students were not connecting with this. Eva takes seriously living out one's faith and she really wants to help them see the importance of this.

Despite making sincere efforts to encourage her students to value her beliefs, Eva faced significant challenges with little success. Christianity is one example of a cultural belief system that was introduced to Inuit communities by white settlers. This might also be an example of how white thinking attempts to impose on their thinking. In her attempts to have her students to look upon their own behavior, she encountered resistance. The way that they interpreted about how a Christian should behave was at odds with what Eva was trying to show them. They seemed to disengage when she tried to get them to think in a different way.

While Eva was troubled by their differences in thinking about Christianity, she was envious that they had a rich culture.

> "As for my culture, I don't really – as for when I am up here, I feel like I don't have a culture. You guys have like elders and traditional tools and you are sticking to what you were originally always doing. And I'm like down south, you don't see anyone saying that they are taking a camping trip because they want to use their traditional tools. They just do it because they like camping. So we find that – like when I was asking my parents, where are we originally from? Or what did our ancestors do? And my dad's like 'we're from Canada. That's it.' I was like 'alright, cool.'"

Eva found herself in contact with a culture that had been living in the same area out on the land and having traditional hunting practices for hundreds of years. She was wanting the same for herself to have that history but was quite disappointed to not be able to find that with her parents. She now saw her culture as lacking certain dimensions that she had never considered before.

> "And so I do feel like they have such a gift that they can be connected to so many elders and traditional ways of living and so much access to the land. In one way, they suffer because they do not have as much access to technology or to those different things that communities have down south. But on the other hand, they are so lucky because with the lack of those they are able to be so connected. So I definitely find myself a little bit jealous that they have such a culture to go back to and be engaged in something."

Eva compares the southern access to more technology to the northern connection to their culture and the land. She leaves it open to say "so connected" as an almost poetic appraisal of their way of living before saying that she is jealous of their culture.

> "they talk about things or they teach me things about Nunavut that I didn't know. Particularly when we go to hunting. They think of hunting as food and clothes. And for the most part that is what it is. But they always want to get into, um… the respect for the animal or the spirit of that animal and how it can guide your hunting where you can find eggs. How you can't eat them all because then the bird won't go back. So the different ideas about how they hunted and respected the animal about how that animal thinks and feels and believes in order to hunt."

Eva respected that she found herself in contact with an old oral tradition around hunting and caring for the animals. What she shared probably was not very surprising in terms of information but was spoken with a certain care for the animals and the connection held between them. These are not her usual ways of thinking about hunting or animals. Inuit have a deep connection to the animals they hunt where they eat the meat, wear the skins and do their best to respect them.

6.2.4.2 Adrian

As I was looking to find the differences in the beliefs and values, Adrian began by talking about some of the similarities. Having grown up in a rural area, Adrian found the communal living where people help one another quite familiar. He then continued to talk about the differences.

In keeping with the communal focus, Adrian explained that they are very family focused and that everyone stays close to their home. I remember one Inuk asking me why I moved to Nunavut and then asked if I did not like my family because I moved away so far. Inuit would say that they care about their family more but I think they care about their family in a different way. Although they would not move away from their family, they also a have higher incidence of social problems within the family like abuse.

Adrian talked about the split between gender roles where men go out and hunt and women stay at home to look after the children. I cannot help but smile here because I remember cleaning the blubber off of a seal skin and one female Inuk found it so funny that I was doing that until finally she asked if I was gay because I was doing a woman's job.

> “Also, the importance of education is really not there. The focus is on traditional skills and hunting. That's very much understood by me. I know our system is relatively new. It's only like 60 years old here. So this is still developing. The value is placed on money is different. There's not really a lot of education in financial management. So, people run out of money very quickly.”

Adrian mentioned that “our system” is relatively new to the community and seemed to be saying this about our educational system and money. Typically our nonindigenous ancestors had experience of education and money and were shown the importance of it passed through the generations.

As Eva had shared, the youth are more connected to the Elders and Adrian also mentions that they locals have more respect for Elders.

While Adrian respected his grandparents, he still found that there was more respect for the Elders in Nunavut. He related less respect of Elders to children and youth to being more spoiled over time. Children and youth having respect for authorities is something that can help their behavior.

Adrian then talked about the slower pace of things as Kyle had also done (p. 65) and then he talked about people talking less. I found that throughout the day in the south, there would be such a quick exchange of words between people that contributed to the fast pace of everything.

> “I'm thinking culturally everything is a lot slower pace. People here do not use words so much. They think things through and they learn by watching and listening. That's taken a lot of time to get used to. I talk a lot. And I don't realize that they are actually listening.

> They may not be saying anything. And so communicating is a lot different. There's a lot more eyebrow-raising for yes and nose-scrunching for no.[5] So communication is different."

Adrian discussed the amount of physical and sexual abuse that he hears about in the homes. There are some things that cannot be easily adjusted to. The emotional impacts of the awareness of some of the social problems within the communities do not go away.

> "And that this is not punished. Women are, I'm sorry, I started getting upset about this, but the women stay with the man because the importance that women place on having a partner is huge. Basically, they feel helpless if they don't have a boyfriend or a husband even if they're beaten. Like they'll have nowhere to go. Which is a hard thing to take. It's not something that I agree with, but that often happens a lot in our culture as well."

The cultural importance of staying with the same partner is exacerbated by the fact that there is a housing crisis in every community and there are few single men in the small community to choose from outside of their relationship.

Adrian is strongly aware of the differences between himself and the culture around him. The abuse within the homes and the resulting behavioral problems in the classroom are matters of Nunavut that he describes as emotionally draining and hard to get over. The trauma that the students have experienced is apparent and affects Adrian knowing that it is happening every day.

---

[5] Inuit normally answer yes or no questions with both eyebrows raising for "yes" and nose scrunching for "no." The longer and more intense eyebrows raising or nose-scrunching means how strongly a yes or no it is.

6.2.4.3 Jerry

Jerry found Inuit culture to be similar to his own African culture. In both cases, their cultures are recently brought into post-industrial civilization.

> "I always say that indigenous people and Africans; they are almost the same because we keep doing things that our grandfathers taught us, you know doing things together. Only a few things like eating raw meat, eating raw fish, we would also go for hunting but we would cook our meat and try to cook our fish. But they don't cook their fish and meat, right? And they are big on their language, we are also big on our language. We speak our language, we respect our culture, we are proud of our language. They build camps. They have camps. We also sometimes have a farm and have those small buildings in there on the farm. They have beliefs and they have culture and they have values."

In Jerry's culture, they do lots of hunting but also have farms while Inuit culture relies lots on hunted meat and fish. He noted the difference that Inuit do not cook their meat, which is unique as most cultures cook their food.

> The only values that I find difficult are, as an African, we try to teach the kids that certain things are not good. You can't go around throwing stones at people's houses. We teach them some good values. But here I realized when kids do something, when they do things that would cause other people's property or life, the appearance doesn't seem to think that is that serious. But in my culture, I find it's serious that a kid could just go and break the windscreen of a car. You know, you're going to pay big for it. Those are the few things that are different.

Jerry found some of the values that should be taken seriously when children destroy other people's property. It seemed that he experienced this quite strongly in part because he

does feel his culture is similar to Inuit; however, this is something that is much outside of his own culture.

6.2.4.4 Anne

Anne shared how she saw Inuit more connected to the land and appreciation that the boys do a lot of hunting.

> "I love going out on the land and experiencing new things and boys still hunting. But just listening to their stories I really enjoy that. I think I would have enjoyed that a lot from my own family. I don't think we have very much culture to begin with and I would say I learned that being up here. The lack of culture in my own life. I've observed it up here and I've seen how much culture there is around me."

Like Eva, Anne felt that she very much has a lack of culture in her own life and some jealous feelings emerge, as she desires her own family would share stories like Inuit do. It took such experiences like Nunavut for them to realize this. Across the participants we see Inuit culture as quite rich and something to be treasured. Along with Brit (p. 114) and Adrian (p. 145), Anne finds that Inuit culture is very family oriented. She also adds that the Elders are often listened to.

> "I think their religion now is still entwined with their culture…Well, I'm really into yoga. I try to teach my students some mindfulness and everything and just like being still and then checking in with your body. So I'm yoga certified and I try to teach the kids about some yoga poses to kind of calm down. And I've had students refuse to do it because they said yoga is against their religion and it's in the Bible. It is not. I've read the Bible. I don't know. I just thought that was a weird interaction that they won't do things

because of their religion or their culture. I just found that interesting because I have the same religion. Yet there are differences I guess in the interpretation of it."

Like Eva, Anne found that there were some fundamentalist religious beliefs that were in contrast to her own religious beliefs.

"They really value the land. They're very much like hunters here unlike obviously where I'm from we don't. Not much about the land which is why I enjoyed it so much when I saw it."

As other participants had noted, Anne also saw the enthusiasm for going out on the land from Inuit people. It seems to be something missing from her life in that she can enjoy seeing other people take pleasure in it.

"So part of their culture is I guess using everything, making use of everything. So we did a seal dissection and then I saw my students eating the brains and eating the eyeballs, I was very taken aback. But I had so much respect for that because they don't waste anything. They make the value of absolutely everything. They thank the seal for giving up its life**.** There is a difference in that but it could potentially just be a difference in the fact that my family are very much not hunters. We are just city-living people."

Anne hints that because she is a city dwelling person that she wastes more than they do. Here she shows a lot of admiration for their culture in not wasting much and thanking the seal for giving its life. She seems to be describing Inuit having a lot of care and spiritual connection to the animal. Nevertheless, this is much different than buying packaged beef from the grocery store where there is not that sense of connection to the animal.

From Anne's previous experience in the Northwest Territories, she enjoyed it so much that she showed interest in going to Nunavut. Her once held value of traveling and exploring the land seems to have changed. Some serious events have happened in that time for her though.

> "I have had emotions of extreme fear because of a student's behavior and attacking either another student or trying to attack myself. Those are the ones that I'm remembering. I'm not remembering extreme joy or happiness or anything. More so just fear and regret about coming up here, it's just sounding so bad."

There is nothing inherently bad about not wanting to work up in Nunavut but she feels at odds with her own values as a teacher that she just needs to shift her teaching approach to accommodate the students but is not seeing many "wins."

6.2.4.5 Brit

The components of our culture that seem to relate to our economic system, Brit did not seem to find in Inuit culture. The rush felt by having to get ahead in the world is not as felt in these communities.

> "So the kind of non Indigenous slave to work extractive, you know, like what were called vulture culture. Just take, take, take, take, take, exploit, exploit, exploit, work, work, work, work, work. You know, that type of stuff, that industriousness of you know. Settler kind of - you always have to be doing stuff and be busy and work kind of that. That stuff doesn't exist here. Love that."

Brit found much connection with this way of life where one does not have to keep their lives busy with working.

> "Again, that priority of family and that concept of family being really expansive, to include not just blood relations, but you know, people you're connected to in other ways that are really important."

There were a few different ways of connecting that Brit found that we do not have as much in the south. The concept of family is expansive to include other people with important connections. Namesake traditions are also another unique example of finding stronger connections with other family members. Brit described the namesake Inuit tradition of believing that one carries with them some of the soul substance of that namesake (Searles, 2008). People who share names in common also feel a greater sense of connection between them. I remember it was so important for the Inuit in my community to have me meet the other "George." Although being white and coming from the south can set you apart from the rest of the community, having a name in common can help create some of those connections. Brit mentioned the differences in values here, and she also discussed about a sense of connection that seems to be missing in southern culture.

Brit, in addition, explained about her Scottish ancestry and how they had an influence on the Inuit culture. She mentioned the drinking culture along with the dancing culture, which she had mentioned earlier. She felt good by travelling to a culture far away and different than hers to find the similarities of the same settler Scottish culture.

Furthermore, Brit talked about being introduced to "Little Inuks" from a student who are mythological creatures who take children away for being bad. Part of her disbelief of the student's belief in these little Inuks, made it difficult for her to accept what she was hearing.

These beliefs are far from what she was willing to accept as true. However, little Inuk sighting remain a common report among Inuit.

> “So I had not heard about this. So I was like, oh, like, I can't remember the word I used. But I said something like, I asked him the old wives tale but I said something like that, like a like a story kind of. And one kid in my class is like no, they're real. My grandparents have seen them. So I was like, oh, okay, okay.”

The confidence that one of the student’s showed in saying that they were real seemed to stun Brit but she was quick to accept that as their experience. At another point in time she explained that the adults in the community performed rituals to keep the little Inuks from opening her husband’s office doors. Brit also talked about how one should not whistle at the Northern Lights or they will pick you up and away.

The sense of the natural world is something that Brit finds a strong connection within the Arctic. Here she talks about being away from human activity as giving her a sense of spiritual connection.

> “I think anytime I'm out on the land, but here I think the really magical part of it is it's easier to get totally away from any human activity noise light stuff. So if your spirituality has to do with nature, connecting with nature, which I would say is my only conception of spirituality really, then I, anytime you step outside, really or on the land, which is kind of why I do so much of that. It's why I was on my paddleboard playing with the seal two nights ago needing that kind of grounding and connection and yeah, just kind of spiritual centering. So I, for me, that's a huge component.”

After discussing the magical feelings of being out so far from human activity, Brit then talked about overpowering positive emotions coming from the community. She explained that there are community emotions and described moments of community joy and community grief. The whole community seemed to radiate joy and pride in having a young man return to the community after winning an important sports competition. She lit up when she was talking about this and seems to be purporting in general a sense of community that is not experienced in the south. She also talked about community grief when a young man drown.

> "Emotions, I think we view very much as personal, also in non-Indigenous culture. And I would say, in indigenous culture, there is very much more an element of communal emotion, if that makes sense. Which I think might, it might partly be indigenous culture, I think it's partly small-town culture as well. But I think those two things overlap here. So that whether something's really positive, or really sad, and really tragic, there's an experience we have. I feel very strongly of going through certain kinds of emotional events together and collectively, which is different than individual joy, or individual sadness."

The connections between community members are felt so strong as to have community emotions. Brit felt these community emotions of joy and sadness in much the same way that I did. The other participants did not mention about this, making me think that it is actually something that is sensed after being in the community for an extended period.

6.2.4.6 Kyle

As Jerry is coming from an African culture, Kyle viewed Inuit culture as coming from his northeast Asian family background values. He found similarities between his culture and Inuit

culture in the importance of helping others and being thankful for what you have. He added that he had received lots of free food like fish, sometimes from Inuit he did not even know, which he hoped to bring these values back to where he was from. The similarities that Kyle found between his family's culture and the Inuit culture seem to solidify what he wishes to bring back to the southern Canadian culture that is more individualistic.

> "Like where we're living at home, we don't even know our neighbor's names anymore. I believe we've shifted so much away from that sense of community to a very strong sense of individualism, which I understand that that's where a lot of modern societies are heading towards but I don't think it's very healthy."

Along with Brit and Adrian, Kyle also observed a significant split between southern Canadian individualistic values and communal living. These are significant differences where down south one does not know their neighbour and in the community where interconnections are felt so powerfully. He found this to be a better way of living so far as to say that the way society is headed is unhealthy.

Kyle appeared like drawn to the more communal way of living but also valued his alone time. With his values changing, he found himself caught in the middle somewhere between communal and individualistic values. As Kyle had mentioned before, Inuit do not like it when someone knocks on their door, they would much prefer you to just walk in. And I can add they want you to do this even if they do not know you or are not expecting you. The communal way of living can be so prevalent that there is little sense of personal space as for example in the home.

Kyle was a recipient to an act of altruism when his skidoo broke down and he was helped by a random community member passing by. Eva and Adrian also spoke about community members helping them and Jerry talked about how everyone in the community helps one another. The special difference of the Inuit, as Kyle describes and I found also, is that not only do they not expect you to do anything in return but that they do not even think that something should be done in return.

> "Maybe something of overpowering emotional experience might be at the end of the school year last year, one of the students who had gotten to the most number of fights, the district education authority had to take some measures to make sure that he was suspended for a period of time. He was a student who was going through a lot and at the end of the school year he just like expressed gratitude. He was very thankful for me and I'm sure the other teachers as well."

Along with praying when dealing with difficult behaviors in the classroom, another way that Kyle got through his time in Nunavut is his hope for students to finally get it in a very real way. The gratitude to the teachers is by no means a unique experience for teachers but to find one of the more difficult students share such gratitude is a very uniquely powerful experience. This seemed to teach him that although there are some very serious difficulties with the students that there is much growth that can be had by the students.

6.2.4.7 Patti

In terms of differences in values and beliefs, Patti mentioned that eating on the floor and smoking were a couple of sides of Inuit living that she felt were different from her values.

Brit talked about the sense of connection that was felt by the community and Patti talks more about the sense of disconnect other than the Christian people in the school.

> "Or I think the other thing is just the food issues. I would think feeding a child would be important. When alcohol is more important than feeding a child, well, that's an addiction, but it's like shocking. And then it just goes around, because it's like, well, why should I feed your kids? All right, I'm the English teacher, you're not eating in this classroom. I'm not quite sure about all of this stuff."

Patti's values are really being questioned here. If parents would rather buy alcohol than feed their children, then what does she do with children who are hungry or eating in the classroom? It may not even be that the family is buying alcohol instead because the budget that most families have to survive on does not seem like enough to pay for the food bill. She also described a time when an Inuk woman had won $5,000 from Bingo and the next day had no money. Patti may have been referring to this being spent on something frivolous or on addiction. But it would be best to stay uncertain about this. This could have happened but also when family members ask one another for money, they typically hand it out.

Patti is another participant who enjoys the natural surroundings of Nunavut and enjoys sharing that with the students.

> "I think one thing I really get captivated by is the mountains' view. That to me is where... Like, I feel good to take the kids to the mountains. Like the sun changing in the fall and in the spring. So I love that. And I think the other thing too … is the kids are like incredible. So I'm always having fun with the model because I like elementary kids."

Patti is another participant who enjoyed the natural surroundings of Nunavut and relished sharing that with the students.

> "I think one thing I really get captivated by is the mountains' view. That to me is where... Like, I feel good to take the kids to the mountains. Like the sun changing in the fall and in the spring. So I love that."

6.2.4.8 Personal Reflection

I remember seeing children and youth in the classroom not paying attention and the teacher constantly managing their behaviors. But when an elder was telling stories to them as a group, they sat so unnaturally still and attentive, as if they could not possibly be the same children and youth. The same children and youth causing problems in the classrooms with their behaviors seemed to be overly engaged in cultural activities like preparing a sled for hunting or setting up camp without a breath of direction from the adults present. There were times when I would get frustrated with how Inuit did not seem to understand the "right" way to do things in this white world we thrust upon them. But I reminded myself that these people survived in the most unfavourable environments of the world and chose to live there. One time I had an elder teach me how to clean the blubber off of a seal skin and I remember her being so frustrated to the point of almost giving up because I was such a slow learner compared to all the others she had taught.

In counselling people living there, one should be aware of the epistemological differences in thinking that provide the basis for holding such beliefs and values. I remember speaking with a biologist who was interviewing hunters about some of the fauna in the area. A hunter told her that he had not seen any of the animal she was interviewing him about. In

interviewing another hunter, he told her that the first hunter she talked to had seen lots of this animal. Perplexed she returned to the first hunter and asked him some more questions and finally he shared with her the information she was looking for. This is a very straightforward story of the same problem that I experienced in the counselling room with clients, never really knowing when I have fully understood their experience. This very fundamental epistemological difference in the way of thinking gives rise to different values and beliefs. I heard them repeat that Inuit care about family more than white people and, in some ways, I would agree with them, especially with their care for extended family or community, but in general I would disagree when considering the white and Inuit families that I know closely. The idea of familial care itself is different between the two cultures.

Counsellors should consider those living in Nunavut being given a very rare opportunity to consider one's own values and learn about Inuit traditional ways of thinking. After finding their values to be very different than my own was I then curious about my own values. How did my values develop in my life? For those values held by others in my culture, where did these values originate and do they have relevance for my life now? What Inuit values do I feel most drawn to? I felt drawn to their calmness in some situations, how I did not feel the need to "perform" with them and their connection to the land. One of the healthiest

7. Discussion

This study explored the lived experience of Qallunaat teachers in Nunavut in their physical, social, personal and spiritual dimensions. A theme throughout the findings is that the teachers are foreigners to a new social, cultural and geographical location in which they are struggling to adjust across their four dimensions of existence. Moving to any new environment

is certainly impactful but this seems to be more impactful than some of the cross-cultural experiences of those moving from one post-industrial country to another. Below I will discuss the findings in each of the four dimensions.

7.1 Physical Dimension Theme I – "You Got to Stay Busy"

Among the first things to experience in Nunavut is the physical world and how it differs from one's previous community. More generally speaking, human beings are first and foremost in the physical world (van Deurzen, 2005). It is in this dimension that people first see the landscape surrounding them and the houses and few buildings freckled across the land to make the community. They noticed the extreme patterns of the sun where it does not show for several weeks to a few months and then circles in the sky for the same period of time during another part of the year. In between these times are quick and dramatic changes. People are also in this community and environment with their physical bodies having to adjust to the new circumstances. Most often people's bodies go through lots of hormonal changes throughout the day that are linked to our circadian rhythm. In Nunavut one gets to experience for the first time what it is like to have this circadian rhythm disrupted. Our bodies need places to dispose of our bodily waste, ways to clean ourselves and to find food that will nourish us. In Nunavut, at times there is not water pumping in one's home or water needs to be conserved no longer allowing one to take for granted the ability to shower or flush the toilet. There is also not much fresh food that can be found in Nunavut often changing people's routine eating habits. In Nunavut, we learn about what people do with a deprivation of some of the physical comforts but there are also some conditions in the physical world that make Nunavut more appealing.

Within the physical dimension, I found the overarching theme of "you got to stay busy." This is a strong order or reminder to keep busy during the dark season when the body goes through changes that can be understood as a type of illness. This relates to van Deurzen's (2005) observation of the tension between wanting to be healthy and having to cope with illness and weakness. Below I summarized the different pieces that amalgamate to make this theme. First, I discuss the effects of the dark season on the participants which include a lack of motivation, fatigue and/or depression. Second, I explore the opportunity of having more time in Nunavut and what, if anything, they did in their time to help with the symptoms of low energy and mood. Third, I look at the participants' relationship to healthy and unhealthy food which is influenced much with their energy and the availability of healthy food. Fourth, I discuss the lack of resources and amenities that would have helped with their overall physical well-being. Fifth, I wanted to discuss how the environment, and particularly the cold, makes things more difficult for the people who live there. And finally, I will explore the meanings associated with their home in the community, a place for isolation where health deteriorates or protection where one remains safe from the outside world.

7.1.1 Lack of Motivation, Fatigue or Depression

Especially in the dark season, there was a common experience of having a lack of motivation, fatigue or depression among the participants from having lived in Nunavut. For her first dark season, Eva explained that she had to spend much up it alone because it was also during a COVID lockdown. For her, along with the first dark season was also followed by a time of physical isolation. It was such a powerful effect for her to describe that it affects her whole

personality including her energy and mood. Also as mentioned above, Adrian felt lazier and had a harder time to get out of bed in the morning.

Similarly, Jerry was also affected by the dark season in that with his low energy and motivation, he fell into depression. This affected his eating pattern and he wanted to leave Nunavut then. He had not even realized it until he was speaking with his friends down south who had suggested that he had depression. He described having the motivation to change his eating pattern but at the time of the interview when he was down south, he had still not been able to go to the gym and reported to still be depressed. Once being an outgoing person, Jerry found himself to be more withdrawn. Anne described feeling exhausted by the end of the day with a number of things requiring extra effort to complete. On days when she decides that she is becoming more irritable with the students, she took a day off and sleeps 12 hours straight. Wishing she had more motivation, she has no friend or boot camp director to keep her motivated.

Feelings of depression or low mood are common with experiences in other cultures (Ali, 2022). International postgraduate students reported feeling depressed about a number of things but not often related to the sojourn (Brown & Holloway, 2008). Shimo (2016) also reported to have been struggling with her mood several months after returning to the south from her experience in a northern Canadian First Nations community.

It was a tough time for Kyle when the sun first started to go down in October. He added that “physically” he felt fatigue trying to denote how his body was changing by not getting sunlight. He explained that he felt low on energy and in his mood. Both Jerry and Kyle talked about not being sure of what these changes were until it had affected them more fully.

Similar to Jerry and Kyle, Patti found it difficult to describe the feeling that she had up there. She said she felt “depressed, but not really depressed” and described it as feeling fatigue as a result of the winter or dark season. She further suggested some other ideas of what it might be including age or environmental. In the first year she revealed feeling “super, super exhausted” and it seemed her darkest first year. She described it as the worst thing that she had to overcome in Nunavut where her whole body feels a deeper level of drained than she ever felt. Eva also alluded to this being such a profound effect on her to say that it affected her personality, energy and mood. She added that she was not as energetic in the evening and did not feel like doing anything.

7.1.2 You Got to Stay Busy

Serious shifts in one’s personality, energy and mood also call for serious acts of resilience to move past it. Eva’s had strong recommendations to get through these times including “you got to stay busy,” “you got to have events with friends,” and “you can’t just let yourself sit at home.” Having experienced what it was like to not be doing these things, you have to be following through with these orders to stay well during these weeks or months. In staying busy, this meant to keep up with their own physical activity and visiting friends. Tolley (2003) similarly described the need of teachers to find balance in their work and personal life, needing to consciously make a schedule to meet each of the demands.

There is a sense of extra time given to each of the participants within their schedule that comes from not having to commute or with less pressures from other people to get them to do anything. There is no family there for the teachers and no long-term friends that they would not want to let down when being asked to go out for dinner or a movie. And also the routines

change quite naturally in Nunavut as there are less things to do in the communities. I remember joining yoga and ultimate frisbee, two activities I would never have considered myself doing, because there was just nothing else to do there. With the extra time, Eva chose to use it to have a regular work out routine at the gym. She noticed her mental side deteriorating so wanted to increase her physical activity to help. With everything being so close, Brit talked about there being more family time and that everyone goes home for lunch and dinner. For physical activity, Brit made the most of every season by doing things outdoors including hunting, fishing, kayaking and paddleboarding. Tolley (2003) reported a number of the teachers, like Anne, constantly pushed themselves to be creating better lesson plans that could reach the interests of the students. Van Deurzen (2005) argued that "learning to be in harmony with the natural world can make a big difference to their well-being" (p. 29). With more time, Anne used it to perfect her lessons and prepare for the next day. Its meaningful in that she took pride in her work as a teacher and believed that she is going to make a difference.

Jerry described much the same feeling of having lots of time only he did not do much to counteract some of the lethargic effects, finding that his lack of motivation was too great for him to go to the gym. Instead he increased his internet packages to include more programs to watch when he got home. He also did not get as much out socially which seems to affect his depression or lack of motivation.

With less things to keep him busy and giving him more time, Adrian described himself as becoming more lazy and not having to feel bad about not going out socially. However, he still has found things to keep himself busy including doing puzzles, cleaning the house and doing physical activities with the students. He noticed that he goes to bed earlier and found it more

difficult to get up in the morning. Still, as compared to the others and what he reports to be true compared to others living there, he is not as affected by the darkness and does not feel the need to counteract any of the effects. But he does speak of boredom that may come from less things to do in the community. Barr (2001) also did not experience the darkness as difficult and described conjuring the serene feeling one experiences before bedtime.

Kyle explained that he needed to do what he could to get himself busy either visiting people or doing sports. In the south, he kept himself quite busy with engagements with friends and family and other appointments. It was helpful for him to have welcoming local Inuit and other staff to help bear some of these emotions. Alluding to the absence of choice of sports he says that he would get involved in any sports. He meant to just be minimizing the time that he spent alone with his thoughts. He goes to the gym with a number of the other teachers because they all know that it helps with their energy and mood. Along with Eva, Adrian, and Anne he is doing his best to stay busy during the dark season to better take care of his emotions. Like Eva, Adrian and Brit, he talks about having more time than he did down south. In terms of time, he mentioned the slower pace of the community that was also helpful for him as his energy was not the highest. Gallagher (2007) poetically suggested “the biological seeds of winter depression must be sowed in the right environment” (p. 42). People wanting to maintain the same level of activity during the dark season as they do in the south during regular sun patterns are more at risk of feeling depressed than those who slow down their pace. The lesson here might be to keep busy and accept performing at a slower pace. Interestingly enough, I will explore below Inuit lifestyle having a slower pace (section 7.4.8), perhaps better adapted to the Arctic environment.

When feeling low motivation and fatigue, it can be more difficult to find that extra bit of self-discipline to overcome to do some more healthy activities.

7.1.3 Junk Food or Healthy Food

A number of the participants talked about differences in eating patterns as either giving in to one's junk food cravings or doing the work to eat healthy. The increased desire to eat junk food can come from problems in the physical dimension including poor sleeping habits or depression but also from not having good access to fresh foods. The eating problems are perhaps more of a symptom of a larger problem with one's mood and energy from the dark season but people with such problems are perhaps living more in the physical dimension at the expense of other dimensions (Schneider & Fitzgerald-Pool, 2005). The other dimensions would be hard to give fully to when having concerns of fatigue or struggling in eating habits. Some of the participants overcame some of the problems in eating and have found new solutions to keep themselves well nourished.

Jerry, Adrian and Anne all identified that they have been eating less healthy upon arriving in Nunavut. In part due to his depression or lack of motivation, Jerry described eating heavily and gaining weight and his attempts to change his eating habits were not successful. Both Eva and Adrian identified that it is more difficult to have access to fresh food. Adrian argued that his sugar intake has increased along with his weight. Moreover, Anne explained that she had never eaten so poorly in her entire life and that even though a box of pizza is more expensive she will purchase it often.

In terms of healthier eating behaviors, Eva, Patti, Brit and Kyle have all developed more of a habit of meal prepping and cooking, which is made possible with the extra time that they

find in Nunavut. Without doing this there is not much access to healthy prepared meals. Patti explained that even though she does not like cooking, she had to learn how to cook to eat properly up there. Brit calls the fruits and vegetables “sketchy” and grows her own fruits and vegetables in her home to eat healthily. Kyle said that from his second year onward that he used more supplements and cooked healthier food for himself. The extra time from not having to do as many things in Nunavut helped him to be able to do this.

7.1.4 Lack of Resources and Amenities

Within these rural and remote communities there is no access to several things that we take for granted. Jerry saw this as a reason to be grateful for the things that we do have. Having to conserve water by not showering or flushing down waste or how not to waste food made him more conscious of the resources that he has and wishes to better conserve them. He referred to the times when the water or sewage truck broke down.[6] Because food is so expensive, one is very much rewarded by not wasting food. I remember a time when I saw a spinach salad that was on sale for 50% off and about 25% of it was wilted. It was a sure good deal and wilted spinach keeps its nutrients. Patti mentioned that the hardest part about living up there was no swimming pool up there and that was something that she used to enjoy going to.

7.1.5 It Makes Everything Harder

In Nunavut, with the temperatures and the darkness, it can be hard going anywhere. Adrian mentioned feeling exciting to brave some of the cold winter conditions including the

[6] Being that there is no underground plumbing due to the permafrost, there are water and sewage trucks to deliver water and dispose of waste.

blizzards. I can relate to him where I used to love just going for walks in the blizzard dressed warmly where I could feel the heavy push of the wind and see the snow drifts rising. Going to work during these conditions felt like such an achievement or something to be proud of. Adrian and I are quite unique as some of the other professionals there do not appreciate it as much. In the cold, windy walks to work, Jerry thought to himself that he could not live in Nunavut like this. Thoughts like that contribute to one's level of depression. Along with Adrian, Anne also silently questioned herself being up there while being very cold in the back of a komatik. That one time she felt like she wanted to leave Nunavut but smaller cases of disengagement emerge on colder days where she wants to call the school to tell them she is not going in today. She added that she was angry at her life in that moment thinking that it was, as she put it, a stupid decision to move to Nunavut. She described that the extreme wind or cold "makes everything harder," affecting the perspectives of functioning there.

7.1.6 Home

A number of the participants talked about their home as either being a place of isolation or protection. The house is in the physical section because it represents an important physical place and space for the participants. It can be a place of isolation where one's physical fatigue is increased or a place of protection in which one becomes safe from the outside environmental elements or interpersonal world. In his book *The Poetics of Space*, philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1994) wrote that in winter, the outside is a non-house just as it might be seen as a non-I. Being home by oneself can be an overwhelming experience of oneself that is not easily managed. Eva and Jerry talked about their home as a place of isolation where it dragged them

down emotionally. Upon their first arrival in the community, there was not much else to do for them other than to be home. Kyle shared that he needs to not be alone with his thoughts.

But the home can also be a place of protection. Adrian talked about being home in more of a protection where he gets to stay away from activities he would rather not engage in by being home. Brit talked about the lovely feeling of being tucked up at home during storming and cold weather. Similar thoughts were shared by Bachelard (1994):

> "Faced with the bestial hostility of the storm… the house's virtues of protection and resistance are transposed into human virtues. The house acquires physical and moral energy of a human body" (p. 46).

Both Adrian and Brit revealed they were never quite isolated though because they have partners to go home to but whether or not it is a real storm or metaphoric storm, they return to their home and find great protection and resistance against it.

Anne also perceived it as a place to recharge after more difficult times in the classroom, protected from outside interferences. She also had little choice knowing that if she were to go out in the community, it would be likely that someone would see her that knows that she was taking a sick day.

7.2 Social Dimension Theme II – An Earned Family Mentality

The social world is one in which we are thrown into where we have to constantly navigate our relationships with others (van Deurzen, 2005). Within the Social Dimension, I found the theme of a family mentality that you have to earn, as quoted by Anne, was most representative of the results. The teachers described several positive facets about their social worlds that made them feel good and connected and they also talked about some of the more

difficult things that they had to endure socially. The strong sense of community and family was something that most of the participants could agree upon. The idea of family might be a good word to describe how these relationships are. Families often look after other people in very practical matters but may not be able to offer some of the deep connections that are sought after. Being in a family can also mean that one has to endure some of the good and not-so good qualities of other family members. There is also a sense that family or connection needs to be earned in some way or another. The participants earn their connection by being open to share with others their particular interests and open to be making connections with all types of people.

7.2.1 Inuit Hospitality

Upon initially arriving in the communities, the participants quickly identified that they received such a welcoming upon coming to the community as well as a general hospitality that the Inuit offered as part of their stay. The participants talked about Inuit helping hands in moments when they really needed it in a way that they had not experienced before. They do this by helping out the teachers in practical ways of when they are in need of help, inviting them to experience some of their culture like when a vehicle breaks down or when someone is sick. Eva felt grateful for the Inuit friends that had taken her in to show her more about their culture. When she first arrived in the community a student pulled up in their ATV to help her home with her groceries and it was at that point that she knew it was going to be an awesome experience.

Along with Eva, Adrian spoke about the willingness for Inuit to help out when they can. He gave an example of when his ATV broke down and the locals helped him to the shop. He

also participated in this by borrowing money to others when they are in need. He added that he gets along with the local Inuit and although he may find them very different, he does not judge them.

Anne talked about how it is a part of Inuit culture to really take care of people who are sick. She mentioned an instance where she was sick that a local white teacher who was considered Inuit brought a care package for her and drove her home. She added that she often gets invited to try their cultural food or to take her out on land trips and that they really wanted to take care of her. She also mentioned that the kids can be so thoughtful and nice.

Kyle found teachers who have been there for a long time and the local Inuit to be very welcoming and helpful. When entering their homes, Inuit take welcoming to a new level in their spaces where Kyle mentioned how Inuit prefer if you do not knock and just walk in. I remember my whole body cringing while I walked in when I was first expected to do this. Kyle had some students come to his house uninvited to visit and tried to walk in the door. It can be a constant dynamic of human experience to find the right balance between proximity and distance (van Deurzen, 2005). Within this new cultural climate, Kyle had to erect new boundaries of closeness and distance.

As a bit of a different experience, Patti found that on the surface, they can be very friendly but she did not find much connection. She seemed to observe this because she was looking for deeper connections with the local people. She also found that Inuit prefer more quiet voices in getting to know one another. After working in an Arabic culture, she had learned to be louder to get a point across and found that she needed to soften her voice. Her loud voice frightened the children and she concluded that this is a very “quiet culture.”

7.2.2 Sense of Community

Many of the teachers encountered a strong sense of community that they had not encountered in southern Canadian culture. In the Nunavut communities, there are children playing in the streets, hunting and feasting as a community, and dancing at community events. Anne mentioned that there is a strong sense of community or family. Barr (2001) noted that there were so many family connections in the school where they worked and would consider family politics in their school planning. One can get into the family if they say or do the right things. As Brit had mentioned, the idea of family can include people from outside of biological relations.

Jerry found some similarities with his African culture of origin and that of Inuit as he saw kids play outside and together in the evenings, unlike people in the south where people keep to themselves. In both cultures, they do things together like hunting or feasting. He finds it easier to connect with the people in this culture because it feels like a community to him.

Brit also found some similarities of culture with the Inuit in that they are both influenced by Scottish culture that helped her be part of the Inuit community. Some of the Inuit were surprised to see a white person knowing how to jig at the community feast and she seemed pleased to let them know how she knew. Patti explains that there are some people who come to Nunavut and feel super connected feeling like this is their new home. Chen (2015) also did not experience a strong sense of connection with the students or her coworkers and seemed to stay on the fringe of the connected community. Both Barr (2001) and Chen (2015) found more connection when they took a more sincere interest in the students and community.

The tight-knit nature of the community can always have another side. As Patti explained, she did not want to talk about anybody because everyone is going to know what you

said. She explained that no one from the church would invite her over for tea or dinner, which was a different experience from other cultures where she has been. She wonders too if this is because a lack of energy due to a lack of sun. As mentioned above, by being more affected by the fatigue due to a lack of sun, one enters more into the physical dimension at the expense of other dimensions, in this case, the social dimension.

7.2.3 Social Problems

The teachers were affected by some of the social problems that are common within Inuit communities that influence the way that they feel in their social dimension. Eva talked about how it was difficult to hear how some of the students are being treated in their homes. For instance, some students had to provide for their families and look after younger siblings, which has been found elsewhere (Tolley, 2003). Other students brought their cell phone chargers to school because they have to pay the electric bill in their house. As Harder (2004) explained, an important part of the culture shock from southern teachers is the level of poverty in Nunavut communities. Anne explained that hearing or experiencing the verbal or physical abuse have been hard for her. She feels sick when she thinks about how much abuse and rape her students have endured. Kyle also explained that he saw how the local Inuit were dealing with lots of mental health and addiction concerns and was affected by it.

Anne described an incident in the classroom where a student hurt another student and was sent to the principal's office. The student then came back to the classroom and attempted to physically attack Anne with a metal object. The experience affected her deeply where now loud noises trigger her anxiety. Chen (2015) also experienced behavioral concerns, like students

punching the walls in anger, and verbal abuse from the students and getting into power struggles with them.

7.2.4 Racism

Of the more negative things experienced by the teachers was some racism. Anne has been exposed to reverse racism where her friend was randomly hit in the street for being white. Patti talked about racism in the community with some Inuit making slanderous statements towards white people. She noticed one time when all the Inuit staff from the school were having a picnic in the school without having invited any white people. An occurrence that was not unique to that situation. Racism is something that was experienced by many teachers in northern Aboriginal and Inuit communities (Harper, 2000; Tolley, 2003; Mueller, 2006; Chen, 2015).

7.2.5 Importance of Social Support

In dealing with some of the difficulties that I have outlined of living in Nunavut, people find an increased need for social support. Adrian talked about the importance of social support after dealing with some of the second-hand trauma that can be experienced there, which is a common experience for professionals who live there (Harper, 2000; . He shared that one has to make friends if they are going to make it in Nunavut and cannot just keep going home alone. While he explained that he did not reach out to many people in social gatherings, he definitely recognized the need to have others in his life. Anne explained that although she tried to avoid social interaction, she got involved in weekly social gatherings because she needed the social support. She added that her social life has probably increased since being in Nunavut. Tolley

(2003) also found that her participants needed social support in order to perform well in the classroom.

7.2.6 Easier to Develop Friendships

There were sides of living in Nunavut in which it was made easier for the teachers to develop friendships. Eva, Kyle, Brit, and Jerry would say that it is easier to start friendships in Nunavut because a number of people are willing to meet up. As Eva noted, down south there is the opportunity to pick and choose your friends amongst a large selection but knowing that there are not many options, people are willing to make the best of the people who are there. Jerry explained that just by going out in the community some people would start conversations with him to get to know him. He did not have to connect with others on social media, he could just go and talk to them in the community. Brit also mentioned that it might be easier for her to build social connections because people get to really know her in a way that they would not if she lived in a bigger city.

7.2.7 Forced Development in the Social World

In Nunavut, there is a completely different social world than one is used to in the south because of the limited number of people up there and the limited number of people to play roles in the social world. Teachers have an opportunity to become more flexible in the people of whom they connect with, which acts as a maturing development in their lives. Eva explained that there are so many options in the south in terms of friends but in Nunavut she had to be open to associate with those that she would normally not with in the south. She and Anne found that there was no option to not associate with someone because they had one or two differences that she could not connect with. Not wanting to deal with isolation, Eva

recommended that you “have to expand your horizons” and take interest in those around you. Anne explained that friendships are formed out of convenience rather than similar interests. Eva found herself showing up for “Mandalorian Mondays” to watch Star Wars at someone’s house, which she would never do down south. This is with the understanding that the people in the community are all that everyone has and one has to make the most out of it and support each other through this. Eva and Anne certainly did their best to make the most out of who was in the community given the small selection of people to interact with. In discovering one’s social world, one eventually finds the difference between friendship and commitment (van Deurzen, 2005) as Eva and Anne have found.

Feeling a similar pull in another direction, Kyle shared he was forced to be more social while in the Nunavut community from some of the pressures from the other teachers to be more social. He also described a trip with the students where he found himself being forced into a leadership or parental role with the students. He appreciated that he was forced to grow in this way.

7.3 Personal Dimension Theme III – “Really Awesome Stuff and Really Hard Stuff”

Through some of these incredibly joyous moments and awfully traumatic experiences, the experience in Nunavut inevitably brings upon personal changes within the individuals. Generally, within the personal dimension our sense of self develops throughout the years through the things we do, the effect we have on others and what others tell us about ourselves (van Deurzen, 2004). After coming to Nunavut there is a break between one’s personal connections to the people around them, the place where they were from, the climate and sun patterns they had become accustomed to and the culture of which they were raised. There are

a number of differences in Nunavut in terms of the physical and cultural landscape of which can be daunting and make one feel more isolated. The teachers are given the task of adjusting themselves to the new environment by becoming aware of the problems and finding the more positive elements and connections in Nunavut to sustain their mental health.

7.3.1 Really, Really Awesome Stuff and Really, Really Hard Stuff

There are emotions on both sides of the extremes of the emotional map. There was no mention of a middle ground from any of the participants. No participant breathed a word that it was "OK" or "fine" or "just moving along as normal." Whether they seemed to identify more with happiness or more with sadness, they mentioned feeling very much on the polar opposite. From the previous literature, on the one hand Harder (2004) and Barr (2001) found it to be a very fascinating cross-cultural experience while Chen (2015) described her difficulties in the classroom as "not nearly as difficult as having a near death experience" (p. 49) as she had experienced the year previous in a car accident.

One teacher became more attached to the students than expected (Tolley, 2003)

For Jerry, he said directly that there was a mixture of happiness and sadness. While he talked about some of the more difficult experiences and emotions he was certain to talk about how exciting it was to see changes within the students. Adrian stayed on the more positive side to just how good it was working for him in Nunavut. But then Adrian also shared that he had felt depressed at times by being up there. He jumped to use the word depression on the other side of his emotions while there are much less severe ways of describing one's more somber emotions. He also described many times where he felt boredom along with the inability to do anything about his motivation.

Anne mentioned a time when she asked herself why she went up there on a hunting trip when she was feeling very cold. She went on to talk about how nothing in the classroom seemed to be working despite all of her strong efforts to have the students learn. While Anne described more of her struggle, she still did mention that she had days where she felt like the students were getting it and that loved her job even if those days were few. While she does not believe that she has been developing personally other than becoming more pessimistic, she believes that she is making positive developments professionally in terms of behavior management. Brit summarized that "there is really, really awesome stuff and there's really, really hard stuff." Brit talked about her amazing experience of being out on the paddle board on the Arctic Ocean with a seal and she also speaks of such a personal connection to the community. On the other hand, she has been the helper to many people who have attempted suicide and has been in danger of ending her own life by suicide on a few separate occasions. This was found in previous research where counsellors and teachers described not being able to deal emotionally well with the suicides (Wihak, 2004; Harper, 2000; Chen, 2015). Despite some of the difficulties, counsellors and teachers had learned valuable lessons from their experience (Barr, 2001; Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Wihak, 2004; Chen; 2015).

Kyle mentioned moments when he had regretted going to Nunavut when he was feeling very lonely. However, it was also a place where he decided to stay longer and it solidified his goal in life (or initial project as I will discuss below) in wanting to help people. Like Anne, he also mentioned that he spent lots of time preparing lessons and they did not go as he had planned.

7.3.2 Limit Situations, Overcoming and Attunement

There were many limit situations where the teachers had to accept their suffering as their lot and "live between the tension of acknowledging and not acknowledging, fighting it but finally [acknowledging] this suffering [as their own] (Jacobson, 2007 p. 34). Tolley (2003) reported that one of the teacher participants saw herself as a very patient person but that view of herself had changed as she found it difficult to deal with some of the challenges in teaching. For some of the behaviors within the classroom, it seemed that Eva, Adrian, Anne and Jerry all found that the behavioral problems within the school were seemingly impossible to overcome. Eva tried to have the students see the inconsistency between their religious beliefs and their behaviors but was met with resistance. She then gave up but the experience left her confused. Adrian shared that there was simply nothing that could be done about the behaviors. Anne explained feeling exhausted from the behavioral issues in the classroom and does her best to not take it personally. She explained that she is not seeing any improvements with the students in terms of their behaviors and she talked about spending lots of time preparing her lessons for students who do not care much for it. Anne wanted to make a difference and did not see one. She still seemed to be fighting hard against the limit situation but has not fully come to terms with some of the realities of Nunavut. Eva got the students to look at some of their behaviour both in and out of the classroom in terms of their beliefs in Christianity but was met with resistance.

In Nunavut, many students in the class have behavioral concerns. After having managed the behavior of one of the students, the teacher then has to manage another student's behavior and then another and then finally get around to the lesson. With so many students with behavioral concerns, a teacher really has to pick the right battles as Kyle explained and

accept other behavioral concerns as something that will just be there. It might go on mostly unnoticed in the south if a teacher was less patient. The other teachers would not take much notice. In Nunavut though, behavioral management of the classroom is an important priority. The teacher suffering from behavioral concerns in the classroom will ask other teachers if this is normal and they will answer that their class is pretty much the same and will give them some pointers but may not be able to offer the same type of empathy because it is just a reality that the teachers will have to deal with. A teacher does not get to suffer this as something out of the ordinary. In Nunavut, the teacher's assistants have not typically received any additional training other than high school. With so many students like this, you cannot send them all to the office. A teacher in the south might have one behavioral concern to vent about after the day is done. But in Nunavut, one has more to debrief about and so inevitably has to make some personal changes as to what they see as overly problematic behavior.

It seems that there is a certain noticeable overcoming of some of the realities of living and working in Nunavut. Getting over, understanding or accepting is part of the maturation or attunement process that needs to happen before one can enjoy the culture more fully for what it is. Eva spoke about the maturing process that she went through where she understood better a much wider range of human experience from those Inuit children and youth who are exposed and have experienced so many traumatic experiences before coming to the classroom to her friends who might be complaining about how long the Starbucks line-up is. Adrian shared his experience of being more open-minded, culturally aware, compassionate and more worldly, which also seems to be referring to a more widely held perspective of life in general. Being open-minded and accepting are some of the changes that teachers need to better attune

themselves (Harper, 2000; Barr, 2001; Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Oskineegish, 2015). Once thinking that the students were just being deviant, Jerry then realized that they were coming from generational trauma and other social problems within the home and community. Once this understanding was had, he felt more empathetic, accepting and understanding.

An example of overcoming difficulties is mirrored by how the workplace will give unexpected responsibilities to the teachers who are also out of their comfort zone. Eva arrived and had to teach a subject that she had not been trained to teach on her first day. After working in Nunavut for a few years, Adrian is now in a leadership position for the high school. In terms of his professional change, Kyle shares that he is letting go of some of the small battles and advocating for the more important things.

Another aspect of having something to overcome was getting used to having less access to amenities. There are some amenities that people can be fine with not having and there are some amenities missing where the teachers may not get over or accept. Patti described herself missing the swimming pool, something that she was having to get over.

Once attuned these people living in the Arctic spend most of their time taking things for granted only to be occasionally broken by a negative event or something similar. When the crisis happens it is a time of heightened awareness or, as Heidegger suggests, the world gets “lit up” when something goes wrong (Macquarrie, 1976 pp. 85). What is taken for granted varies from culture to culture (Kotarba, 1984) and can change once someone is embedded in a new culture.

Sartre (1942) following the Stoics sees that we must come to terms with our passions (emotions) to master them. This is part of Eva’s process to conduct herself “with regard to [her]

affectivity as man does with respect to nature in general when he obeys it in order to control it" (BN p. 441). In a sense, she obeyed the fact that these experiences are changing her and she did what she needed to do to better control it by moving back to the south. While Sartre (1942) is clearly referring to a more intrinsic process to obey to control the emotions, Eva found the best way is to make changes in her life to achieve her desired emotional attunement.

It is not my assumption that these problems or areas of growth began and/or ended in Nunavut. In my experience of being in Nunavut, the people who struggled the most may not have been struggling in the south because there were a number of factors preventing them from really looking at their own suffering. I remember a psychiatric nurse that was up there one time with me who suffered a great deal and was only there for five weeks (I have also heard of psychiatric nurses who got off the plane only to take the next flight out of the community). This psych nurse had a hard time waiting in line at Starbucks, her patience already low. Coming from a downtown core of a major city in Canada, things in her life moved at a tremendous pace. Down south students with behavioral problems might be few and far between and can be suffered as something out of the ordinary. Teachers might say "I got so and so in my class this year so it is going to be hard." Emotionally, teachers take such students and years as exceptions to the norm and can look forward to the next year when they do not have that particular student or students in their class. The other teachers around the other teacher can give them empathy letting them know that they do have a difficult student in the classroom. Teachers are also being given several trained educational assistants who can also help with the students.

7.3.3 "It was Hard at First"

The personal growth that happens in the first year begins with lots of difficult emotions. Tolley (2003) reported that the teachers felt disillusioned during the first few months of their experience in NWT with one feeling rejuvenated by Christmas. One of the teachers wanted to quit every day for the first few months and, at the end of the year, wondered how she survived. Other teachers realized how negative they had become and worked to make changes. As Adrian said, "it was hard at first." Both Adrian and Eva both voiced that they thought they could not do this at first. Eva explained that her first year during COVID was particularly difficult because she spent most of the time alone in her home doing nothing. Adrian used the metaphor of the odor in the room that one gets used to. This is a good example of being in Bad Faith, where he has somewhat put some of the difficulties experienced by others out of his awareness. The social problems in the community are still there just as the man's hand is over the woman's in Sartre's (1943) example of Bad Faith and if one were to more directly feel the effects of all of these social problems it would be very difficult to manage emotionally. This begs an emotional question of how much should one be aware of these viewpoints and to feel them. Eva's blunted response to the student's suicide is another example of Bad Faith where she did not feel much from this. How much should one feel when confronted with the daily troubles of the south? How about for the daily troubles of the north? What is the right emotional attunement?

Part of Eva's reason for leaving Nunavut was her blunted response to the death of a student. She wished to return to the south feeling that her emotions were wrong and to have more control over her emotions to feel sorrow during such events. With a changing emotional

attunement the reactions that she might have once had to terrible events are now blunted and she now is making a decision that she wants to feel sorrow.

7.3.4 Overcome Distance from Others

In terms of connection felt by many of the people living in Nunavut, there are several people with whom they are connected to outside of the community. In any place away from home, there is always a distance to traverse to get to loved ones. Nunavut is a place so far away and there is such a cost to get out of the communities by plane as discussed. Flying into the community at the start and end of the school year is normally a must but the teachers always have to decide whether or not to visit home for Christmas during the two-week break in the winter for $2500-$3500 CAN flight. Tolley (2003) noted teachers having to adjust being so far away from family members. Adrian explained that it has been hard to be away from his mother andhe is not able to just go and help when she needs it. Patti shared that her father died while she was living in Nunavut. When family members are in the hospital, the residents of Nunavut have to decide how important it is that they are there. Anne explained that she has a partner in the south. This can certainly happen as the pool of people within a community is quite small to choose from so some decide to keep doing a long-distance relationship. Brit seemed to have mostly established her friend circle in Nunavut but still visits her family in the south. She added that they have no storage container down south and that their family doctor is in the north. Two things that often signify a newer teacher coming to the north. With the internet, telecommunication is becoming better. Normally when talking on the phone there is a small delay that feels quite lengthy when trying to have a conversation with someone who you are

trying to maintain a connection with down south. Mueller (2006) found that this physical isolation set the stage for emotional isolation.

More than the physical distance, there is a distance felt in terms of the information that one's loved ones back home have of their experience up there. Patti explained that there was a friend who asked her to find something at the nearest Walmart. She had been talking with this friend for years about what it was like living up there but then felt that the friend had not been paying attention because the nearest Walmart was a couple of flights away. Brit explained that when returning home she is having to educate her friends and family about Inuit culture. Likely the people that you share these cultural experiences are not going to fully understand what it is like to live there and so while she attempts to teach them, they will never fully understand it in the way that she does.

There are some similar institutions that are in Nunavut that people can access but they are certainly different from those of the south. Patti explained that she did not feel very connected to the church even though normally that was the place where she found lots of connection with others. While some people talk about finding connection with Inuit as they are helping in situations when your skidoo breaks down, Patti explained that no one was there to help her down the hill from the church when it was dark. She thought that someone would have helped her but no one did. This is significant because Patti mostly reported to be adjusting well to being around a new culture as she had several cross-cultural placements previously.

7.3.5 Overcome Emotions

For some of the personal changes that they have had, depression is something that has come up with a few of them. As Harder (2004) explained, there are daunting risks that are

involved in self-scrutiny where the path to self-knowledge is not an easy on. For that first six months or year, things are quite difficult for those that move up there. Adrian said that it was hard emotionally for the first couple of months. Eva mentioned that it was hard for her first year. Harper (2000) also mentioned that the first year was hardest for teachers in northern Ontario where they felt overwhelmed by everything in the classroom. Harder (2004) shared that in the staffroom teachers digressed into negative talk about the day's events and was unsure of whether or not she had made a difference for the young people there. Chen (2015) explained that in her experience of burnout she was unsure of her teaching abilities and questioned her character. But there are also some signs that the depression never fully goes away. Adrian mentions depression as feeling depressed at times and struggling with boredom.

And with the depression and boredom, there seems to be a lack of motivation or fatigue that is associated with it. Adrian talked about wanting to learn another language or to learn to play an instrument; however, he lacks the motivation to do it, asking himself "why bother?" even though he identified as normally being very disciplined. Patti had similar concerns as she talked about feeling too fatigued after work to do much else.

7.3.6 Gratefulness

On the side of the more positive emotions associated with living in Nunavut, many of the teachers talked about feeling thankful or grateful for having such an opportunity to live there and experience some of the things that they did. Eva mentioned that she had matured a lot while living in Nunavut, which is a more positive way of viewing some of the personal changes that she has made. Jerry talked about being grateful for his privileged place within Canada where he was not suffering as much as some of the youth that he works. Eva and Jerry

both reported to use this experience of feeling grateful to re-evaluate their lives outside of Nunavut. Both Adrian and Jerry provided good examples of being grateful for the things that they do have. Brit said she is very thankful to have started teaching in Nunavut and that she had spent so many years teaching there because she felt like she was learning things that our culture had lost. Brit and Jerry, moreover, believed that every person from the south should have an experience in Nunavut. They reasoned that people should experience Nunavut to reconnect with a part of our lives that is missing in capitalist individualist society and that it is good to know how privileged southern Canadians are in what they have. One of the teachers who was raised in NWT and lived several years in the south from Tolley's (2003) study shared that she felt a great appreciation for other cultures and wishes that the children in NWT knew more about other ways of living.

7.3.7 Three Years in the North Equals Five in the South

The experience in which the teachers get up in Nunavut is a lot and can often be compared to a longer time to get such experience in the south. Adrian talked about quickly moving to a leadership role after a few short years of arriving in Nunavut. Anne mentioned that the other teachers feel like she has been learning so much about behavioural management in the classroom.

While there are components of Nunavut where people feel like they have been given more experience or opportunities in a short period of time, they also experience that it takes a long time to develop some of the relationships with the local community. Adrian spoke about gaining a sense of trust from the community by coming back consecutive years. Barr (2001) shared that she was going to stay in the Nunavut community until everyone in her grade 10

class graduated because she understood how disheartening it is for teachers to come and go for the youth. In addition, Brit discussed the relationships that she has been able to develop in the community over the longer period that she has been there so much so that the majority of her friends are Inuk. Being a couple of years into the community, Patti talked about not developing those relationships with the local community as of yet.

7.3.8 Growth with the Students

To feel like one is making a difference seems to be a strong protective factor in people staying up there. A number of the teachers noticed some of the growth outside of the academic parameters that were shown by the students as a feeling of excitement. Kyle mentioned that his goal in teaching is to develop social well-being rather than academic growth and this was a source of his "higher moments" felt in Nunavut when he was able to see this.

Not all felt that there was any development that was happening, neither academic nor non-academic. Anne did not see much change behaviorally or academically with her students and reported feeling less adequate in her role as a teacher.

The majority of the teachers found a strong connection to the students with whom they worked. Most prominently, Patti talked about getting 100 hugs going down the hall from all of the students after a COVID lockdown and talked about getting hugs regularly. Tolley (2003) also explained how a teacher being sick for two days was greeted by all of her twenty students with hugs. She really enjoyed this sense of connection after finding not many connections amongst the adults in the community. She also describes seeing the children playing outside in the community without adult supervision and it was nice of her to see this in Nunavut. Jerry also shared that it reminded him of his own African culture where children and youth were freer to

play outside in the evenings and night. Patti found a connection with the children playing outside because it was reminiscent of her own childhood whereas Jerry feels connected to it because it is like his own culture. There is a difference of the rules of children in present, southern Canadian culture that does not allow them to be outside. Eva talked about a particular student who was less happy with her who later started baking goods for her and not her previously favorite teacher.

7.3.9 Initial Project

Sartre (1943) talked about the initial or fundamental project that is a causa sui which is "the outline of a solution of the problem of being" (p. 596). The initial project is an example of freedom and the essence of what someone is (Gardiner, 2017). The extreme experiences of joy and suffering can at times uncover the very basis of what we really want with our lives, our initial projects. Such experiences like Nunavut are often turning points in people's lives. Brit's earlier experiences in her community seem to speak specifically to her own discontents with southern capitalist individualist culture. Kyle talked about his experience in Nunavut as solidifying what he had already believed in that he wanted to spend his life helping others. In realizing more strongly what he stands for, Kyle also has learned how to choose "his battles" in the classroom, deciphering what he can and cannot change. For Eva, she reached a turning point in her career when she found that she was not reacting to the suicide death of a student. After Nunavut, both Anne and Jerry question whether or not they actually want to be a teacher after leaving Nunavut. This was also questioned by Chen (2015) and one of Tolley's (2003) participants.

7.3.10 Being Oneself and Becoming Another

Once the initial overcoming of the realities of Nunavut has been worked through, there is a working of how one situates oneself between the two places, the two cultures, the two geographies and the two selves of who they are and what they are becoming. According to Sartre (1943):

> "To the extent that human reality tries to be itself, it finds it is not itself, but instead transcends itself; to the extent it tries to flee its being by affirming its transcendence, it discovers its inescapable facticity the givenness of past its body, its relations with others, and its historical situation" (Baugh, 2003, p. 97).

When coming into the classroom or into the community, although they wish to learn and be flexible with another culture they do not know what that means. In essence, they want to be themselves but they quickly find problems with some of the ways in which they think and behave that does not make it easy to do so. While they want to completely transcend who they are and be more attuned to the community they become more aware of their own facticity, their body as they deal with fatigue from the darkness, their past where they developed these values are quite hardwired, and relations with others letting one know that one is not a part of the community.

7.4 Spiritual Dimension Theme IV - Traditional Communal life vs Individualism

People tend to copy their beliefs and values from the world around them but at some point we discover that our opinions are different from others (van Deurzen, 2005). There are many ways in which Inuit and southern Canadian values differ but the main theme of the participants is of the difference of traditional Inuit communal values as compared to southern

Canadian individual culture. There are some ways that participants wished to adopt into their own culture and some things that they were troubled by.

7.4.1 Differences in Biblical Beliefs

Both Eva and Anne noticed some of the differences in Biblical beliefs between some of the Inuit with whom they worked and what they had been taught. In the classroom, Eva's students were wanting to hear more about the Bible and wanted to make the lessons all about the Bible. However, Eva noticed that there was lots of areas of their lives where they were not living out the values written in the Bible including working hard, not using substances and being kind to one another. This experience left Eva being very confused noticing the differences between her thinking and their thinking. In thinking that Christians strongly believed in their faith, she thought they should be doing more to act it out in their lives but she was not seeing this in the youth.

Anne found something similar as when she was trying to teach her class some yoga to calm down. There were several the students who were against this because the Bible teaches them something different. She suggested that there must be differences in interpretations with the Bible. It seems that the youth are more fundamental in their beliefs but may not do some of the other behaviors that are associated with living out the Bible's word.

From a previous study, it was noticed that Inuit often turned to religion after recovering from alcohol or drug addiction and the children would say of their parents that religion was their "drug of choice" (Wihak, 2004 p. 169). She also found that many students reported to see and talk to Satan (Wihak, 2004).

7.4.2 Financial Values

Some of the other value differences include the way that Inuit value money and finances that can have something to do with their traditional sharing and communal values. Adrian found that people are not very good at financial management and people run out of money quickly. Patti also mentioned that an example of someone who won $5000 at bingo who was then asking for money from other people a few days later. She also talked about feeling shocked that students are coming to school hungry. And then she is unsure about whether to feed them or allow them to eat in her classroom. She added that this may be due to substance use but is uncertain. It might not be as a surprise that a teacher from NWT mentioned that the community sees it as success if one can provide for the family and make it past grade 6 (Tolley, 2003), showing a difference in values and beliefs.

From my own experience, sometimes when people get more money than others, they generously give to other people. Of note, shortly after their settlement in communities and without much finances in the 1980s, Inuit donated $100,000 to Ethiopia during their famine. For a number of small communities who hardly have enough money to feed themselves, they donated a surprising amount of money (Globe and Mail, 2011) amounting to the highest per capita of donations to Ethiopia in Canada (Harvey, 2011). I also wonder to what degree we could say that they struggle with money management because I do not see that they find this as much of a problem because when in need, others help them.

7.4.3 Gender Role Split

It is worth noting that Adrian found a significant gender role difference where men go out and hunt and women stay in the home and bear children. Following this, I remember when I was cleaning a seal skin where the women jokingly asked if I was gay because I was doing a

women's role. Harper (2000) similarly found that women were not as respected as men in the Northern Ontario community. Tolley (2003) also had participants comment on how the northern Aboriginal women were not as involved in ceremonial practices.

7.4.4 Violence

With the warmth and acceptance inherent in the Inuit belief and value system, there is also a significant amount of violence in the homes. Adrian explained that this has in part to do with the cultural importance of women to stay with their partners. This cultural belief is exacerbated by the fact that there is a housing crisis in nearly every community and there are only a few single men to choose from in the community. There are no simple answers to as to why there is more violence in these communities but I see that they more easily forgive acts of violence more than we do. This may come from a tendency of abused women to stay with their partners but I also see a general tolerance of violence within the culture that one does not find in the south. For instance, I recall a situation where a father of a victim asked for the release of his daughter's former partner and murderer to be released to care for his grandchildren (CBC, 2012). Similarly, Wihak (2004) also mentioned a counsellor who shared her reaction when a man charged with child sexual abuse was defended by a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) because he was a "good hunter." This culture sees justice in a different light.

Adrian explained that he was shocked to find the amount of physical and sexual abuse in the homes and that the women continue to stay with an abusive partner. Adrian also talked about the violence seen in the schools from the students where they are violent to others and to themselves. He had seen several emotional breakdowns and they are violent because they are being abused in their home. He explained that it is not the student's fault because of what it

happening in the homes. This is a view that is commonly held when dealing with students with behavioral concerns in Nunavut along with a lack of counselling services (CBC, 2021).

Violence does not seem to have the same meaning as it does for them and us. Kyle mentioned a time when a student who was in the most number of fights expressed lots of gratitude to the teachers at the end of the school year. Kyle felt this as a powerful emotional experience where he was able to see some of the non-academic development that he believes is happening in the classroom. We often think of the individual who is in the most number of fights as being intentional with it and wanting in general to harm others. Instead, in these communities there is a vulnerability with these individuals who find themselves less in control of their emotions and they are very grateful for the help and tolerance that they are given. This understanding of the vulnerability behind violent offences might be in part the reason for Inuit tolerance of it.

7.4.5 Property Damage

In terms of material things, there seems to be less care in not damaging them. Jerry found that his culture is different from Inuit in that they are more strongly against children destroying property. He did not find that the community treats things like property damage as the same as in his culture where it is more punished.

In considering this difference, I think about the amount of time Africa has been colonized as compared to the Arctic being colonized. In traditional Inuit culture, there was nothing that could be broken that could not have been fixed easily. Things could be broken, the children were told that was wrong, but there is lots of evidence that Inuit would never worry about creating more work for themselves – they liked to stay busy (Briggs, 1970). In general, I

noticed that, whether it was their own or someone else's, they did not seem to put much care into taking care of material things. When something did break, I remember seeing such creative ways of fixing things.

While I was there, there were youth who caused $250,000 worth of damage to an airplane by trying to break into it. It caused the airline to decide to not leave their planes in the community overnight. Some report that Inuit children undisciplined behavior is the result of some of the changes in the community brought by Qallunaat (Williamson, 1992). I tend to believe that due to the number of changes in the community brought by southerners it will take some time for parenting practices to adapt to the many changes. Letting children play outside by themselves is important for children but they also need to have a strong internal morality to not cause problems in the community when left alone. In more tradition times, there would be much less that children could damage and stronger ties between the children and the people that may discourage this behavior. These adjustments may have been at work in our culture for a long time and were not perfected when I was a child growing up seeing the amount of damage that was created by my peers. Perhaps the reason why we do not see as much property damage in southern Canadian culture may have a lot to do with children being inside on electronic devices.

The boundaries between right and wrong with Inuit are often less defined in their traditional practices that seem to still have meaning today. Minor offences including theft and abduction went unpunished and the harmony of the group was seen as the most important (Fossett, 2001). Even murder, traditionally, went unpunished if the person was thought to never do it again. Anything that was seen as putting the community at a risk to survival or

cooperation was punished by shame and shunning and more serious disruptions of harmony was punished by banishment leading to death or execution (Fossett, 2001).

7.4.6 Culture Envy

Among the participants there was a general sense of cultural envy towards the Inuit. Previous qualitative research has also shown that teachers felt a strong envy to the preservation of traditional life amongst Inuit and northern Aboriginal cultures (e.g., Barr, 2001; Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004). Eva enthusiastically talked about Inuit connection to the land and their culture, as Harder (2004) also observed. She described how they go out on the land to use their traditional tools and live out some of the traditions of their Elders and ancestors. Wanting to know more about her all culture, Eva recounted a conversation with her father where she asked about where her family was originally from to perhaps connect with a culture from her family history but her father just explained that they were from Canada and she seemed disappointed in learning this. This led her to feel a lack that she had not noticed before in her culture. Also, professionals who live there gain a cultural consciousness where they realize that they have a culture being amongst a very different culture (Wihak, 2004).

Eva explained that while in the south youth have more access to technology, in the north Inuit youth have more connection to their culture and land. She described that when Inuit go hunting, they think of it in terms of food and clothing and where they do not waste any piece of the animal. I remember that there are a few different games that are played with seal bones and how seal eyes are a delicacy. This is different from buying meat at the grocery store, buying clothes at the mall and maybe respecting animals enough to stop our cars on the road to let them pass. Technology and industry have removed us from this process.

Eva talked about how respect for the animal can help guide your hunting. She remained fascinated to bear witness to a culture with a rich tradition of hunting and connection with the animals. Traditional Inuit beliefs find that the land is associated with where you find food and an interactive relationship with the land where if you look after it, it will look after you (Williamson, 1992).

Jerry was different in that he did not show much envy for Inuit culture because he found similar values in his own culture of origin. He added that they both do things that their grandfathers taught them. Adrian and Anne also said that there is a lot more respect for the Elderly and that in our culture, we do not respect Elders as much. Jerry's culture also relies a lot on hunted animals for food and adds that they do not eat raw meat like Inuit. Jerry shared that in both cultures they are proud of their language and respect their culture. So while he did not feel envy, he did feel a connection to the pride that he takes in his language and culture.

Like Eva, Anne also talked about how she enjoys seeing the youth going out on hunting trips with their families and that she would have enjoyed that when she was growing up. Adrian and Anne found that there is an emphasis on learning traditional skills and hunting and wished to have this in their own culture. Anne saw that Inuit really value the land and did not see this in her culture. In previous research, many counsellors linked their spirituality to the physical environment that was partly helped by being in contact with Inuit whose spirituality was deeply connected to the land (Wihak, 2004). Anne felt a lot of respect for their culture in the way that they did not waste any parts of the animal when eating it and that they thank the seal for giving its life. Also like Eva, she described there being a lack of culture in her own life.

Brit gave more examples about some of the viewpoints of the Inuit belief system that she wished to incorporate into her own belief system. She recalled being introduced to the idea of "Little Inuks" who live out on the land and take children who are bad. But they can also be pesky creatures who are held responsible by the community members as opening the front doors of office buildings. Ceremonial blessings involving burning sage were held to ward them away from the buildings. Coming from a scientific thinking background, Brit made efforts to make room for this in her belief system. The conversation about Little Inuks came about as Brit was talking about being out on the land to her students. Hastrup (2010) explained interconnections between people and land as well as how by experiencing the land in the Arctic can be a way to connect with the local people. Similar to Brit, Hastrup (2010) found that her own experience of a mythical creature helped deepen her sense of connection with the locals in Iceland.

7.4.7 Communal Values

Another piece of Inuit culture that was discussed lots was the communal nature of the community. Jerry said that this is like his culture where people are often doing things together as a community or as a larger group. Adrian explained that Inuit culture was quite similar to the rural community in which he grew up where neighbours help each other out and everyone looks out for everyone else. Different than down south is that they are more family-focused or -oriented where they do not move away from their family like white people often do (Harder, 2004). I remember one Inuit youth asking me why I moved to Nunavut so far away from my family assuming there must have been problems with them. It is a different understanding of love towards one's family. I can move away from my family and still love them whereas if they

were to do the same, questions would come up as to them of whether or not they love their family. In pre-settlement times, sharing food and other resources, often thought to be characteristic of Inuit communities, was only practiced in times of plenty whereas when food was scarce, there was less sharing (Fossett, 2001).

Brit explained that the concept of family is quite broad in Inuit communities and that they do lots of things together as a community or together with other community members. She also talked about community emotions of joy or grief. These were felt when a young man returned from an important sports competition and there was such a sense of community joy and pride when he returned. And then there was a time when a boy had drown and grief swept over the entire community. Comparing this to individual emotions, it becomes apparent that feelings of joy and grief are felt at a lesser level than the communal emotions.

Kyle also found that Inuit communal values as similar to his; however, he mentioned different similarities than Jerry. He found that his culture of origin and Inuit culture hold an importance on helping others and being thankful for what you have. He experienced receiving free food (e.g., fish) from members of the community – even from people who he did not know. He desired to take this with him when he returns to Toronto. He talked about how this is different than living in southern Canada where people do not even know their neighbours' names and adds that it is not very healthy. Not having a sense of community can be unhealthy towards us as smoking 15 cigarettes a day (Holt-Lunstad, Smith & Layton, 2010). While living in a communal place, he recognized his need to still engage in individual time in his home. Kyle also mentions that students would try to come in his house and he had to ensure that his door was locked.

Members of the community help each other out. Just as Adrian had mentioned when his ATV broke down and was helped by someone, Kyle also mentioned being helped back into the community when his skidoo broke down. He added that there was no sense at all that he needed to repay him.

While not mentioning a sense of community with the adults, Patti shared a lot about how excited the students are to see her and how happy she feels when they do so. From my own experience, I found the children to be so much more excited to see me than they are in the south, elevating my sense of self-importance.

7.4.8 Slower Pace

Inuit value a much slower pace of life as compared to southern Canadian culture, as argued by Adrian and Kyle. People can be late for appointment and events do not need to happen on time and everyone is fine with this, which was also noted by Tolley (2003). Kyle also mentioned that generally Inuit talk less, finding much more of a comfort with silence than southern Canadians do. This tendency towards talking less was noticed in other qualitative studies (e.g., Barr, 2001; Harder, 2004). Following this, Brit talked about how in south we have a "vulture culture" where we "take, exploit and work" to feed the economy. She loved that she does not find that in Nunavut.

7.4.9 Nature

"Nature reminds us that there is much we cannot fully grasp yet we are able to accept." (p. 97)

- Charlotte Harkness (2019)

Some people who arrive in Nunavut are profoundly drawn to the abundance of the natural world that surrounds the Inuit community as a source of traditional spiritual feelings. Both Inuit and southern Canadian people appreciate the significance of the land in their spiritual dimension. For instance, Brit mentioned how getting out on the land away from all of the noise of the community is really magical. She felt such a connection to the natural world there and mentioned paddleboarding with the seal again. She emphasized it as a grounding, connection and spiritual centering. Patti also talked about being very captivated by the mountains' view and loves the sun dramatically changing in the fall and spring. Connection to the land is perhaps something very old and forgotten within southern Canadian culture that only shows revivals on the fringes of our culture.

7.4.10 Dissonance

Davies (2010b) used the word "dissonance" to describe the "conflict between self and environment which may be experienced when first entering the [new cultural surroundings] or… when returning home" (p. 89). My time in Nunavut was a conflict between what I had come to take for granted in Southern Canada and the realities that I experienced. Before travelling to Nunavut, I believed fully in a wide range of ways of living but nothing prepared me for the shock and amazement. Chen (2015) echoed this when she talked about losing her sense of alignment and having to develop new ways of thinking about herself and her surrounding environment. The participants in this study also experienced a dissonance or conflict between themselves and the environment that was both difficult and illuminating. Long after they leave Nunavut, their experiences there, like mine, will likely continue to unsettle themselves in both life challenging and life enhancing ways.

After living in Nunavut for almost five years, it built stronger in me my sense of curiosity and fascination of the culture and life in Nunavut. I felt overly proud about living up there and for all of the personal and physical obstacles I had overcome. There were so many things that I got to do with my job building my understanding of so many facets. I counselled children and youth, facilitated after school sports programming, learned and then taught hip hop dancing, was a part of a project management team for the development of a youth centre, organized events where almost the whole community participated in, flew to other communities to facilitate suicide prevention workshops and so on. Living in a small community, I knew everyone in the community inside and outside of work, I knew all my client's parents and what they were like, I observed my clients playing in the community everyday, befriended all types of people from different ages and backgrounds who I would never have had the chance to know and I knew all of the big events that happened in the community involving the police, nurses or social workers. I met a number of celebrities that went up there and a group from Sweden boating across the northwest passage and I saw cruise ships full of millionaires that would stop by every couple of years These are some of the amazing things that I experienced that kept me excited to be returning to Nunavut after vacations.

Though there were difficult times, I always felt like I could keep overcoming them and feeling like I was becoming a better person because of them. Some of these things were accidental deaths and suicides in the community, so many people affected by trauma or second-hand trauma and feelings of isolation that you do not have "your people" there. In Nunavut, I would miss the luxuries of having family close by, restaurants, beaches, trees, grocery stores with more than just the basics, bakeries, paved roads, highways leading to another city, food from the garden, long showers, pools and buying a coffee from Tim Horton's. At the time in my life, I wanted to date and eventually wanted a family and I felt like that was mostly on hold up there. On one evening when I was talking with a friend, she finally told me that I should move back home. Never before have I taken such life changing advice like that but I knew that I had to leave long before she said it. From the deaths, the isolation and feeling like I was delaying the next chapter of my life, I decided to move down south.

8. Conclusion

The current study explored the physical, social, personal and spiritual dimensions of the lived experience of Qallunaat teachers. Below I will summarize the steps I took in the literature review and methodology sections, summarize the findings and discussion and then suggest some implications for counselling and research.

8.1 Reflections on the Research Process from the Research Question to the Data Collection

This study topic emerged because of the interest of many people being curious about what it was like to live in Nunavut, coupled with my own continued fascination with my experience there. I never found myself entirely satisfied with my answers and often my curiosity about my experience deepened. The way I was impacted was so much more than my previous cross-cultural placements, in Sweden as a student and in Turkey as a teacher, and has always made me very interested to know how other people have been impacted by their experiences in Nunavut. How does one explain such a life-changing experience? This dissertation has been my attempt to do so.

The profession of the participants was a significant consideration. First, I considered that I have more experience that could be relatable to mental health professionals and so I should research their experience; however, there might only be one or two mental health professionals in a community making my pool of potential participants of potentially sixty individuals. I wanted my participants to have lots of contact and ongoing relationships with Inuit and get to know them on a personal level. The only professions that might fit this description would be nurses, social workers and teachers. Among them, teachers would be working more closely with Inuit. I also wanted to use teachers because they are in the important role of educating the next generation of the leaders of Nunavut. I could have recruited teachers from several professions, but I saw the importance of having my sample of participants be strongly homogenous as recommended for qualitative research.

I began my research by searching the literature to try to find similar studies that I could use to express what it was like to live in Nunavut. In reviewing the literature, I found a few studies researching the qualitative experiences of the teachers but most of the studies were focused on the experiences in the classroom. These studies either did not include or limited the amount of focus on their experiences outside of the classroom. Given the extreme differences of the community and environment in which these teachers are working, they will certainly influence how the classroom is experienced. I wanted to express the teacher's experiences in a holistic way for everything that is happening inside and outside of the classroom.

The research method of Heuristic Enquiry seemed to be the best choice of research method that allowed me to explore the lived experience of the Qallunaat teachers in a holistic manner. It was very appealing to me that it assumes that the research question is a personal

puzzlement where the researcher endeavours to understand one's self and the world around them (Moustakas, 1990). This has been a puzzlement for me since I left Nunavut in June 2015.

The existential philosophical framework appealed greatly to me in that it was able to best express the experience of isolation and interconnectedness felt by myself and the participants. Drawing from my own experience in Nunavut, I found that I was extremely living the existential given of isolation where I cut myself off from all of my familiar surroundings and relationships, not knowing the impacts that would have had on me. In addition, I felt I was living out some of the extreme changes in my physical, social, personal and spiritual worlds which made it a natural decision to use van Deurzen's (2005) Structural Existential Analysis that provides the framework for exploring dimensions in a structured way. Within the physical, I became acquainted with the treeless tundra landscape, the extreme sun patterns and the extreme cold. In the social dimension, I found myself attempting to connect with the other Qallunaat from the south and the local Inuit and finding much difference between us. On a personal level, I felt like I developed tremendously during this time in my flexibility and appreciation of life. Within my spiritual world, I was constantly challenging my beliefs and assumptions about what was the right way to live and on an individual level how should we "be" to contribute to the well-being of those around us.

In sending out calls for participants and organizing the interviews with participants, I made it clear that I had worked in Nunavut for five years. The participants were happy to be sharing the story with me and interested in some of my experience there.

8.2 Summary of Findings

Upon leaving their familiar lives in southern Canada for Nunavut, there were a number of changes that needed to be made both externally and internally. The main theme seemed to be that of isolation where they were removed from their family, friends, and habitual ways of living and working. They were isolated or separated from all of the meaningful connections in which they found in southern Canada. The task that they were presented with in Nunavut was that of finding new connections amongst the new environment, the people living there and the cultural surroundings.

Throughout all of the interviews, the participants talked about several changes that they had to make to their physical, social, personal and spiritual dimensions. Within each of the dimensions, there was also something to be overcome leading me to have a paradox within each of them. For the physical dimension, changes of the sun patterns, climate and routines were significant changes. The participants seemed to be affected by the total darkness in several ways including their level of motivation or energy, fatigue, mood and depression. It seemed to affect them greatly in that they needed to keep themselves busy to help mitigate these concerns, which was a theme among the participants. They had to conserve water through not taking showers or flushing the toilet. Participants also discussed the need to eat healthy as there is less access to fresh fruits and vegetables. There were also several physical comforts that they did not have such as swimming pools. The cold was another factor that seemed to make a number of things difficult for living. The paradox was that each of the participants worked hard to stay away from illness and to move towards a healthier lifestyle.

For the social dimension, the participants found themselves in a different social environment where there were people who did not share the same interests but were the only

options for friends. The teachers were also aware of the social problems within the community that affected the way they felt in their social world; however, there were opportunities for feeling some very strong connections with the people there. With some of the difficulties in the community, there seems to be more attention brought to developing a strong social network to help endure their time there. There was such a strong sense of family and community within the communities. The participant interviews seemed to reveal a theme of a family that one had to earn. The idea of family seemed to fit where individuals were well looked after for practical matters but not for deep connections that people often search for. Family can also be a metaphor for enduring with others in spite of their not-so-good qualities. There is an overcoming of different factors of the social world in order to get the kind of social connection that they teachers may be searching for.

For the personal dimension, the teachers found a lot of personal and professional development during their stay in Nunavut. Some of the main characteristics that were developed within the teachers included flexibility, openness, acceptance and gratitude. The theme found here was that there was some really, really awesome stuff and really, really hard stuff to best summarize the amazing things that kept them excited about living up there and the second-hand trauma that needed to be endured. They had to develop this in light of some of the limit situations they encountered that could best be dealt with by acceptance. The participants had to endure being away from their normal surroundings and personal connections with their friends and family back home. Seeing some of the growth of the students was another aspect of living in Nunavut that was especially significant for the

teachers. Working in Nunavut has helped solidify what the participants want and do not want out of life.

For the spiritual dimension, there were several differences between Inuit and southern Canadian beliefs and values. There was a theme of traditional communal living versus individualism. The way that the Bible is interpreted and lived out had a few of the teachers perplexed. Financial or money management can be very different amongst Inuit as compared to southern Canadians and is possibly helped because Inuit help others financially more than southern Canadians do. There were also some noticeable differences in gender roles and women felt a strong importance to stay with their partners. There is a lot of property damage showing less value in raising children to respect others' property. Participants spoke about a sense of culture envy for the Inuit because they have traditions, respect their Elders and are connected to the wild animals and land. The pace of life was a lot slower and less drawn to a busy lifestyle of working. Some of the teachers also talked about a feeling of connection to the natural environment of Nunavut.

8.3 Implications for Counselling Practice

The findings of this study have given a comprehensive description of the lived experience of teachers in Nunavut. All of the participants to varying degrees of severity described experiences of feeling isolated or depressed or experiencing first- or second-hand trauma. This is in line with previous studies that found trauma in mental health professionals (Wihak, 2004) or an isolating experience leaving many teachers feeling negative (Harper, 2000; Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Chen, 2015). These are similar experiences that people may experience while working in remote and rural areas. Counsellors are often from larger city

centers and do not have much understanding of what it is like to be in some of these smaller communities. This research will help counsellors and other helping professionals to better understand and serve this population of people who live in rural and remote areas and, in particular, those living in the Arctic and/or Nunavut. The experience is very different from city living and even from southern living in general so describing a specific areas of their living without considering a wider picture of their lived experience would not represent them well. Being in this very unique environmental and cultural placement, perspectives from a number of different areas of their lives should be considered in order to more fully understand the people living there.

There are several different practical considerations for counsellors working with clients from Nunavut that might come from this study. The considerations may also be relevant to clients who share some but not all of the circumstances of Nunavut like working in rural and remote areas, working with Inuit or First Nations and working in northern areas. Along with the four dimensions explored above, the considerations will also be divided into four parts.

Physical dimension considerations for counsellors in working with those in Nunavut include:

- Giving clients time for the clients to collect and express their thoughts as they may be dealing with some of the exhaustion or fatigue as described by participants.
- Checking in with healthy habits including sleep, nutrition, exercise and social outings for them to continue to find the balance between work and these activities. An important finding is that participants felt

that they needed to stay busy to promote their physical and mental wellbeing.

- Exploring what options for social outings and physical exercise are to help make the most of their time in Nunavut from what they have. This may include helping them along the grieving process of the life they had before where there were many options for all aspects of life.

Social dimension considerations for counsellors in working with those in Nunavut include:

- Helping them find a balance between alone and together time amidst a new need for social support and learning to be flexible with those that are available in the community as friends. They might work towards helping the client be more flexible and/or open when working with another culture to help their attunement to the physical and socio-cultural environment as found by other studies (Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Wihak, 2004).
- Withholding judgement on their social experiences of Inuit. Some of the social problems discussed above can make the counsellor be concerned with what the client is dealing with. But there are few relatable experiences that can compare to the sense of Inuit hospitality and the positive experience of communal living.

Personal dimension considerations for counsellors in working with those in Nunavut include:

- Seeing both the really good things and really hard things of Nunavut. For those dealing with second-hand trauma, the return to the south reminded them to not get so heated about minor troubles arising. There might also be a sense of isolation in the new way that they relate to others, feeling a disconnect with those trifling with small things in life. In overcoming difficulties and attuning oneself to the community is something that will forever prepare one for often much less difficulties had in southern Canada or within one's own culture.
- Bracketing one's judgement on whether this is an unhealthy or healthy experience. As difficult as it might seem, the people who live there often continue to live there because they have the courage to bare the difficulty of being there by finding some reason to stay even if they cannot articulate it. Like any anthropological fieldwork report, it is hard to know what exactly it is like to live in the culture that they so carefully describe.

Spiritual dimension considerations for counsellors in working with those in Nunavut include:

- Modelling accepting the challenges of living amongst another culture that has a different epistemology. Curiosity is contagious and can be a choice to promote wellbeing. Having someone constantly remind them to suspend judgement and be curious can certainly be helpful.

Using this opportunity to reflect on their own cultural upbringing. Being amongst a culture that thinks very differently begets the questions of why we think and act a certain way.

8.4 Implications for Teacher's Qualitative Research in the Arctic

In the current study, the physical, social, personal and spiritual dimensions were explored to gain a more holistic understanding of the lived experience of teachers in Nunavut. I explored various areas that were not explored by previous research on living in the Arctic. The topics not previously explored include exercise, eating and health, the experience of the cold and extreme sun patterns, the lack of amenities, the experience of home, and the quality of the friendships developed in Nunavut.

From his experience in working in Iqaluit, Yue (2011) suggested that existential personal freedom offers insights into how to navigate difficult issues around pedagogy. Existentialism offers insights without dictating how teaching should look in the face of the facticity of education being a colonial practice. He presses for radical self-awareness through co-creating the education process with Inuit. Tolley (2003), Harder (2004) and Chen (2015) that being self-reflective in teaching children from a foreign culture and questioning one's own values allowed them to be better teachers. In the current study, existential dimensions of human experience offers a new perspective on the holistic lives of teachers living in the Arctic where one's in class behavior relates to the out of class behavior. As Tolley (2003) explained with some of the teachers that they were judged in the community as teachers by the Inuit community members and they needed effort to incorporate other aspects of their lives outside of teaching. Also, a number of teachers reported to be having struggles of identity (e.g., Tolley, 2003; Harder, 2004; Mueller, 2006; Chen, 2015), which is a central topic in existentialism. For these reasons,

existential philosophy may offer more insights to the work of teachers and professionals in general in Nunavut.

8.5 Implications for Culture Shock Research

Culture shock, though not explicitly mentioned by the teachers, played a significant role in their mental well-being. Participants described feeling shocked when finding out some of the social problems that the children faced in their homes. There was much that they had not anticipated leaving them feeling like they were unsure of whether or not they would be able to make it through the year. This is much like other studies where the teachers did not anticipate the extent of the culture shock which led them to leave early (Roskell, 2013). As Brown and Holloway (2008) suggested, living in a new environment can be one of the most traumatic events in a person's life. Given the large difference between our traditionally farmer culture and hunter/gatherer culture (Brody, 2001), there was a more pronounced impact of the culture shock experienced (Furham, 2012). Youth having to pay bills, working jobs, caring for younger siblings, having suicidal attempts, causing property damage, being exposed to violence and being victims of sexual assault are a few of the problems mentioned that affected the participants. Culture shock was also experienced by seeing Inuit struggle with finances and seeing the gender role split. The shock can come from more subtle forms as differences in interpretation of the Bible. There are also more positive forms of culture shock when hearing about Inuit hospitality, a strong sense of family and community, feeling a sense of cultural envy seeing how they respect their traditions, land and Elders and some of the mythical creatures lurking about. Some of the teachers spoke directly about the emotional impacts of experiencing

the different culture but further unpacking all of the emotions experienced in Nunavut are bound to reveal lots of these feelings being related to culture shock.

There were several similarities between the present study and previous studies completed on culture shock. In this study, I found that the first six months to a year were the hardest just as Stasel (2021) found in her study of teachers abroad. Both Stasel (2021) and I found that culture shock, along with the honeymoon phase, would come and go at different times and the teachers never seemed to arrive at a point where they were not affected by living amongst another culture. Also, apart from a more disease model of culture shock, Stasel (2021) and I both found some very positive experiences in cross-cultural placements.

It seems that culture shock is one of the many reactions had by those who experienced Nunavut. Following van Deurzen (2016), emotions can be like a compass to help us understand our values and, in turn, understand ourselves better. The emotions associated with culture shock lend themselves as an opportunity for greater compassion towards oneself and others (Cupsa, 2018). For this reason, culture shock as well as all of the positive emotions coming from a new cultural encounter are worth inquiry for developing a stronger sense of self. A few participants had mentioned that they had matured as a result of some of the difficulties they encountered. Others had spoke about developing leadership skills, personal gratitude, patience and flexibility. Harder (2004) used the opportunity to see herself in terms of her colonial background.

In the current study, I have shared a much wider experience of emotions and experiences that cannot be summarized by one concept. While culture shock might be a main emotion or experience had by the teachers, it does not describe all that is happening for them.

For all of the cultural learning experienced however difficult or enjoyable, there is an incredible amount of personal development happening. This will be further discussed in the next section.

8.6 Implications for Research on Personal Development in a Cross-Cultural Context

"*All experiences are indifferent… There are some that either do a service or disservice to man. They do him a service if he is conscious… A man's failures imply judgement, not of his circumstances but of himself*." (p. 68)

- Albert Camus (2013)

This study adds to the already growing amount of research on the broader concept of personal development in a cross-cultural context (Brown & Brown, 2009; Brown & Graham, 2009; Zhou et al., 2008; Wearing, McDonald & Ankor, 2016; Nada & Legutko, 2022). More general of a cultural experience than culture shock, there were several examples of personal development in a cross-cultural context that the teachers gained and identified through this experience. The most important opportunity for personal development is not having one's regular friends and family surrounding them. Teachers generally found Inuit too difficult to fully immerse themselves with and so turned to their southern Canadian peers for social support, even though they had little else in common other than being from southern Canadian culture. The teachers found reason to stay busy by increasing their physical activity and their social get togethers. They got out of their comfort zones socially and expanded their horizons in taking an interest in other people's interests. Similarly, anthropologists often found it helpful to withdrawal from the intensity of the immersive cultural experience in activities to help remind them of their home culture (Davies, 2010b).

Quite generally, they found themselves becoming more culturally aware, compassionate, open and flexible, attuning themselves to the cultural situation where they were able to enjoy it for its positive aspects. Almost all of the teachers directly identified a growth in cultural competence as is often found amongst those living in other cultures (Furham & Bochner, 1986; Brown & Graham, 2009; Zhou et al., 2008; Pacheco, 2020).

They also found that they had adapted healthier eating habits, meal prepping and cooking more than they had in the south, which eating habits is something not often captured in cross-cultural research. Being deprived of a number of different conveniences in the south, there was also the opportunity to feel grateful for a number of things they missed in Nunavut including the food and unlimited water coming through our taps. Being thrust into a number of unexpected work situations gave teachers unique opportunities to grow professionally.

Through some of the more difficult experiences already expressed here, one could see them as creating some distance from one's everyday experience which allows them the opportunity for great self-examination and self-knowledge (Hayes, 2007). When interviewing international students, independence, stress and strength went together for some but for those with less flexibility, growth was less apparent (Brown & Brown, 2009; Brown & Graham, 2009). While many international students described their changes in positive terms (Brown & Graham, 2009), other studies find that the anxiety and isolation outweighed the personal development benefits (Brown & Holloway, 2008). Given the marked difference between southern Canadian culture and Inuit culture, there was often more stress than strength at times but growth was apparent in all circumstances.

It is not through basking in the world of the everyday that people gain such self-knowledge but through the experiences that challenge them to the core of who they are. As Heidegger (1954) cited Holderlin, “but where the danger lies, also grows the saving power.” None of these experiences determine personal development alone but they can offer the opportunity to grow provided they have the flexibility and self-reflection. Brown and Brown (2009) suggested that after the anxiety and stress was processed did it offer the opportunity for self-actualization. From her experience in a northern Ontario community, Shimo (2016) described it taking months after to recover from the experience, similar to one participant who had left Nunavut several months before and myself. Some of the participants living in Nunavut have gained important insights and felt personal and professional growth beyond what they had experienced elsewhere. Given the vast differences in climate, culture, and remoteness there is constantly a need to overcome the enduring aspects of living there and an ongoing opportunity for personal development. Flexibility is an important personality characteristic in overcoming some of the challenges associated with cultural adjustment (Brown & Brown, 2009; Medica, 2016) and is needed to reap the benefits of the cultural experience. In other words, by being flexible one and self-reflective is open to the personal changes that are being encouraged in that cultural context.

In terms of my own flexibility and self-reflection to adjust to Nunavut, the quote here repeated in my mind for a few years while living there:

> “is not a matter of mourning something absent but cringing in the shadow of an incomprehensible presence… that this world is infinitely vaster and far more complex than one thought” (Jackson, 1998 as cited in Davies, 2010b pp. 88).

For these teachers and myself included, the troubling part is that one had no idea what they were going to learn when encountering such a different culture. As a simple positive reframe, when I found myself developing some of the difficult emotions with regard to some of the events I had experienced, I kept returning myself to be curious about what vast world I am not accepting.

Ethnocentric beliefs act as an obstacle overcome by one's flexibility and self-reflection. Feeling critical towards my own dominant culture, I found myself more curious to learn other ways of living and believing that prepared me for the flexibility and self-reflection needed in Nunavut. Those more strongly holding onto their dominant cultural values and beliefs as the right way of living were less prepared to confront these values.

8.7 Implications for the "Affective Turn" in Anthropology Research

The current study has a few implications for the research on emotions in the anthropological field. This field of research was included because it is relevant to help understand the teachers' experiences. These teachers in their lived experience of Nunavut, were not involved in a detached and uninvolved relation to the people there. From the "affective turn" in anthropology, anthropologists shifted their method to include their emotional responses (Davies, 2010a; Stodulka, Selim & Mattes, 2018). "Intellect" and "emotion" are not distinctions composing of the whole experience but rational categories that are created.

In my own work to understand this experience, I turn to my emotions as a never-ending cauldron of discoveries to help understand the people living there, the teachers and myself. As mentioned, there are more positive emotions such as joy, gratitude, sense of family and

community and also the negative emotions of exhaustion, fatigue, depression, lack of motivation and first- and second-hand trauma. The teachers are really being pulled emotionally in a lot of different directions. One might say that this is part of the process or the end point of emotionally attuning oneself to the community. There are two main implications that I wish to explore more fully below. First, I will explore one's attunement to the Inuit community and the emotions and emotional development from that. Second, I will explore how using some of these emotions in the field can help working with Inuit in counselling.

First, as we have seen, attunement to the community may not be a goal for the professionals who move up there. Eva felt that after experiencing the most recent student suicide that she felt nothing and Chen (2015) also described herself as "putting up a wall" after her most recent student suicide. A counsellor had observed that an Inuit mother did not seem as traumatized by the loss of her child to a chronic illness (Wihak, 2004). Eva's experience of feeling less grief troubled her and for her that was a sign that she needed to leave Nunavut. I remember questioning each emotion I felt in relation to events wondering how I should feel instead of being moved by emotion unthinkingly. We could see this as a symptom of dissociation or it could be seeing life through another perspective or it could be attuning oneself to a culture that was often seen as stoic (e.g., Goldring, 1986; Blake, 2000; Burgess, 2008; Sangster, 2016). The emotions felt by the anthropologist, or cross-cultural teacher or counsellor in the new environment can give them other options of feeling in this world of which they can allow themselves to be attuned.

For a personal example, while being there amongst the slower pace, I saw my life up to that point as being “hurried along before [I could] rightly decide where [I wanted] to go or before [I understood] all the consequences of what [I was] doing” (Macquarrie, 1976 p. 87). I had been always encouraged and praised for my motivation and never questioned it. Their slow-paced lifestyle and relaxed way of being, and making changes in my own life and feeling relief from doing so, was a powerful argument against my busy lifestyle that I was constantly confronted with.

My therapist observed that I experienced the trauma or culture shock from there more prominently because of a more primary loss of connection with my parents. This was not far off from the Inuit youth assuming that I must have had some problems with my family to move so far away from them, as I had mentioned above. While I only thought it was partly true, thinking that my relationship with my parents and family was not so different from other people in dominant southern Canadian culture, my behavior and emotions tell a different story.

When I see Inuit spending large amounts of time with their family, dance in the community hall with everyone and see them choose family over some transcendent opportunity, I feel envy and a sense of loss of what could have been. This I shared in common with a number of the participants. For vacations, I only ever had the desire to go home and visit my family, continuing to foster those family relationships that I once felt disconnected with. After I left Nunavut, I only had the goal of returning close to my hometown where my parents and sister lived. Once I moved down, my mother developed dementia and had a personality change that reminded more of how she was when I was younger. Those last few years with her were in every sense of the word reparative. It was some of the troubling things that I

experienced in Nunavut that made me crave familiar places and family time. It was witnessing their connectedness with their family and their slow-paced, communal lifestyle that made me realize why I craved this.

Second, emotions experienced in a cross-cultural place have implications for the counsellors working with clients remotely living in a place or from such a place. More than just being from a rural or remote area, the clients living in such a place are also affected emotionally by the other culture in which they are living amongst. When I am working with First Nations or Inuit individuals down south, I am reminded much of what it was like to live up there and emotions associated with it. In counselling with them, I slow my pace, recognize some of the differences in values when they arise and can appreciate what it feels like to live amongst a completely different culture, which for them is mainstream southern Canadian culture.

I learned to live with the uncertainty of what the client was feeling, as they often had a different emotional landscape or attunement to the events in their life than I would have. While I found that my thought processes were changing, it was difficult to articulate as it has been for others in Nunavut (Wihak, 2006). This may be due to the confrontation with a different epistemology than mine (Kovach, 2010). In other words, this may be due to my way of linear, cause-and-effect, thinking trying to understand a circular way of thinking, where people relevant to the problem who may have contributed to it also play a role in its resolution (Wihak & Merali, 2007b). These all seem to be different ways of saying that with these two ways of thinking that it is difficult to understand one another. While being uncertain about their way of thinking and not wanting to fully think like them, I believe that I am able to appreciate their way

of being as they are for the most part able to appreciate my culture's way of being without wanting to fully be like us.

I developed an authentic curiosity wondering how exactly my clients reached the conclusions or decisions that they had made, feeling true to my roots as an existential therapist who believed in leaving no rock unturned when exploring clients' life worlds. I also had no expectations as to how they would be different at the end of counselling because changes were made gradually and ideas of healthy relationships and coping were different. It reminded me to be in the moment with them because I did not always feel like I got to the essence of what they meant to express, coming from a different epistemology. The best I could find was to have the "being-with"[7] qualities of existential therapy (Spinelli, 2007), not attempting to challenge or change their point of view but to simply be curious with all that they brought forth.

8.8 Implications for Geography's "Emotional Turn" Research

The physical geography and environment are often overlooked as an important contributor to one's emotions. As Harkness (2019) asserts, the "'where' of the client's existence matters. Bringing in 'where' to therapy as much as 'how' or 'what' shifts the focus and widens perspective" (p. 34). In Nunavut, the landscape and physical environment of the community is so different from southern Canadian communities that it can certainly be a subject of emotional inquiry. Emotional geography is to express people's temporal and spatial emotional involvement with places and how they coalesce around them (Bondi, Davidson & Smith, 2007).

[7] Spinelli (2007) described the "being-with" the client as existential therapists seeking "to give expression to their respect for and acceptance of their client's worldview as it presents itself in the current encounter" (p. 151).

It aims to use emotions to understand geography better (Bondi, Davidson & Smith, 2007) and understand the relationship between people and places (Davidson & Milligan, 2004).

The participants mentioned several elements of their emotional relationship to their physical surroundings that could add to the research of emotional geographies. Some of the stories of connection to the environment included being out on a paddleboard in the middle of the Arctic Ocean, enjoying the view of the mountains, being in places where one did not hear any human activity (of which there is an abundance of such places in Nunavut) and going out on the land on hunting trips. The participants noticed the connection Inuit had to the land and perhaps felt a stronger connection through them.

There were also challenging aspects of the geography, including the unique sun patterns of the region, the cold weather making things more difficult. Moreover, the absence of resources like swimming pools or other shopping outlets, the isolation felt from being away from loved ones. Also, the sense of home as being isolative, the physical proximity to everyone else in the community (feeling good being near to close connections as well as knowing that serious acts of violence happen in a few houses down), and the property damage changing the way the physical place of the community is felt.

The findings in this study are a reminder to attend to the geographical world of the clients we work with as counsellors. With the increase in seeing clients across provincial and national boundaries there is a wide variety of geographies that both client and therapist experience. The emotional geographies of clients can be taken for granted by therapists but can be intrinsically important to their well-being. It is something that I notice more in the lives of

my clients and hope to help them find the most of their particular place as I had seen and experienced in Nunavut.

8.9 Outro Reflection

On an occasion when I was working in my office, a community member in his early twenties, whom I had maybe spoken with two or three times who came and sat down in my office. Being as I was the child and youth counsellor, I was perplexed as to what brought him in. We exchanged questions and answers about how we were doing today and then he was silent. I already knew that some Inuit can be more silent than others so I took a moment to finish up my work before asking what he wanted from me and he answered “nothing.” He looked at me with such calm eyes and I smiled at him feeling my perplexed feeling rising wondering what this situation was about. After having done some counselling with Inuit I could appreciate that sometimes they just wanted to sit and be silent with me in the session but this was something new. He was not here for a counselling session. This was not some inner-city Buddhist group that organized a meeting with each other to sit and breathe in the same room. We were not waiting for anything. I did not know why he was just sitting with me, and I did not really know why I just sat with him. We just sat in silence for a long period of time and gently my perplexed feeling faded away.

9. References

Barr, O. (2001). *Teaching at the top of the world: An autobiographical inquiry*. University of Prince Edward Island.

Baugh, B. (2003). *French Hegel: from surrealism to postmodernism*. Psychology Press.

Bergen, P. J. (2020). *The development of the culture of non-Aboriginal government workers in remote Aboriginal settlements in Central Australia.* Charles Darwin University, Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Australia.

Billson, J. M. & Mancini (2007). *Inuit women: Their powerful spirit in a century of change.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.: Toronto.

Binswanger, L. (1963/1990). *Being*-in-the-*world*: *Selected papers* of *Ludwig Binswanger*. Basic Books.

Binswanger, L. (2004). The existential analysis school of thought. In May, R., Angel, E. & Ellenberger, H. *Existence.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: Oxford, UK pp. 191-213.

Blake, D. S. (2000). Inuit autobiography: challenging the stereotypes.

Bondi, L. & Davidson, J. (2007). *Emotional Geographies.* Routledge: London.

Bondi, L., Davidson, J., & Smith, M. (2007). Introduction: Geography's 'Emotional Turn'. In *Emotional geographies* (pp. 1-16). Routledge.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*, 77-101

Briggs, J. L. (1970). *Never in anger: Portrait of an Eskimo family.* Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Brody, H. (2001). *The other side of Eden: Hunters, farmers, and the shaping of the world*.

Macmillan.

Brown, L. & Brown, J. (2009). Out of chaos, into a new identity. *Existential Analysis: Journal for the Society of Existential Analysis, 20,* 341-361.

Brown, L. & Graham, I. (2009). The discovery of self through the academic sojourn. *Existential Analysis: Journal for the Society of Existential Analysis, 20,* 79-93.

Brown, L. & Holloway, I. (2008). The initial stage of the international sojourn: Excitement or culture shock? *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling, 36,* 33-49.

Buchanan, E. A., & Zimmer, M. (2012). Internet research ethics. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring2015Edition), Edward N. Zalta

Burgess, J. H. (2008). *Doctor to the North: Thirty Years Treating Heart Disease Among the Inuit* (Vol. 8). McGill-Queen's Press-MQUP.

Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC; 2012) Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) (2012). Pond Inlet, Nunavut, man pleads guilty to killing spouse. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/pond-inlet-nunavut-man-pleads-guilty-to-killing-spouse-1.1156870. Retrieved August 20, 2023

Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC; 2016). Inuk nurse to take charge at Pond Inlet health centre. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-first-inuk-supervisor-of-health-programs-1.3658519. Retrieved October 23,2019.

Canadian Psychological Association (2017). Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists. 4th Ed. *Canadian Psychological Association*: Ottawa, Canada.

Camus, A. (2013). *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Penguin UK.

Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. *In* N. K. D. Y. S.

Lincoln (Ed.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (2nd ed., pp. 249–291). Sage: London.

Chen, T. (2015). *Looking out, looking in: Social emotional challenges teaching in the northern arctic.* University of British Columbia.

Chen, J., & Zhu, J. (2022). False anticipation and misfits in a cross-cultural setting: International scholars working in Chinese universities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *26*(3), 352-368.

Craig, E. (2008). The human and the hidden: Existential wonderings about depth, soul and the unconscious. *The Humanistic Psychologist, 36*, 227-282.

Collins & Stockton (2018). The central role of theory in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 17*, 1-10.

Condon, R. (1988). *Inuit Youth: Growth and Change in the Canadian Arctic.* Rutgers University Press: New Brunswick, Canada.

CTV News (2021). *Watchdog calls rate of child sexual abuse in Nunavut a crisis*. https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/watchdog-calls-rate-of-child-sexual-abuse-in-nunavut-a-crisis-1.5482656#:~:text=The%20Arctic%20Children%20and%20Youth,209%20committed%20offences%20against%20children. Retrieved August 20, 2023

Cupsa, I. (2018). Culture shock and identity. *Transactional Analysis Journal*, *48*(2), 181-191.

Czarniawska-Joerges, B. (2004). *Narratives in Social Science Research.* Sage Publications: London.

Damas, D. (2002). *Arctic Migrants/Arctic Villagers: The Transformation of Inuit Settlement in the Central Arctic.* McGill-Queen's University Press: Montreal.

Darawsheh, W. & Stanley, M. (2014). Reflexivity in research: Promoting rigour, reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation, 21*, 560-568.

Davidson, J., & Milligan, C. (2004). Embodying emotion sensing space: introducing emotional geographies. *Social & cultural geography*, *5*(4), 523-532.

Davies, J. (2010a). Introduction: Emotions in the field. *In Emotions in the Field: The Psychology and Anthropology of Everyday Experience.* Stanford University Press: Stanford California.

Davies, J. (2010b). Disorientation, dissonance, and altered perception in the field. *Emotions in the field: The psychology and anthropology of fieldwork experience*, 79-97.

Davis, W. *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World.* House of Anansi Press: Toronto, Canada.

van Deurzen, E. (2005). *Existential perspectives on human issues: A handbook for therapeutic practice.* Red Globe Press: London.

van Deurzen, E. (2009). *Everyday Mysteries: Existential Dimensions of Psychotherapy.* Routledge: New York.

van Deurzen, E. (2011). *Existential Therapy.* https://www.emmyvandeurzen.com/?page_id=25

van Deurzen, E. (2009). Structural Existential Analysis: A phenomenological method for therapeutic work. *In* Schulengerb, S. E. (Eds). *Clarifying and Furthering Existential Psychotherapy*. Springer, Cham.

van Deurzen, E. (2014). Structural Existential Analysis: A phenomenological research method for counselling psychology. *Counselling Psychology Review, 29*, 54-66.

van Deurzen, E. & Adams, M. (2011). *Skills in Existential Counselling & Psychotherapy.* Sage

Publications.

Van Deurzen, E., & Arnold-Baker, C. (2018). *Existential therapy: Distinctive features*. Routledge.

Etherington, K. (2004). *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher.* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Etherington, K. (2004b). Heuristic research as a vehicle for personal and professional development. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 4*, 48-63.

Findlay, L. (2002). Negotiating the swamp: The opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research practice. *Qualitative Research, 2,* 209-230.

Fossett, R. (2001). *In Order to Live Untroubled: Inuit of the Central Arctic, 1550 to 1940.* University of Manitoba Press. Winnipeg, Canada.

Fraser, S. L. & Nadeau, L. (2015). Experience and representations of health and social services in a community of Nunavik. *Contemporary Nursing, 51*, 286-300.

Friesen, E. (2019). The landscape of mental health services in rural Canada. *University of Toronto Medical Journal*, *96*(2)

Furnham, A. (2019). Culture shock. A review of the literature for practitioners. *Psychology, 10*(13), 1832.

Furnham, A., & Bochner, S. (1986). Culture shock. Psychological reactions to unfamiliar environments.

Globe and Mail (2011) Archive: *Inuit urge Canadians to ponder famine.* https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/archive-inuit-urge-canadians-to-ponder-famine/article587605/. Retrieved September 20, 2023.

Goldring, P. (1986). Inuit Economic Responses to Euro-American Contacts: Southeast Baffin

Island, 1824-1940. *Historical Papers*, *21*(1), 146-172.

Grant, C. & Osanloo, A. (2014). Understanding, selecting and integrating a theoretical framework for dissertation research: Creating a blueprint for your "house." *Administrative Issues Journal: Connecting Education, Practice and Research, 4*, 12-26.

Harder, D. M. (2004). *Arctic sojourn: A teacher's reflections.* University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Harkness, C. (2019). *The Nature of Existence*. London: Springer Nature

Harper, H. (2000). " There Is No Way to Prepare for This": Teaching in First Nations Schools in Northern Ontario—Issues and Concerns. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, *24*(2).

Harvey, O. (2011). *Feed the World: Birhan Woldu and Live Aid*. New Holland.

Hayes, H. (2007). (Be)coming home. *Existential Analysis: Journal for the Society of Existential Analysis, 18,* 2-16.

Hastrup, K., Davies, J., & Spencer, D. (2010). Emotional topographies. *Emotions in the Field: The Psychology and Anthropology of Fieldwork Experience, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA*, 191-211.

Heidegger, M. (1927/2008). *Being and Time.* New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Heidegger, M. (1995). The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics, World, Finitude and Solitude. Translated by William McNeil and Nicholas Walker. Bloomington, IN.

Hiles, D. (2008). Heuristic inquiry. *In* Given, L. *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods.* Sage Publications: London.

Jackson, M. (1995). *At Home in the World.* Duke University Press: Durham, North Carolina.

Jackson, M. (2008). *Existential Anthropology: Events, Exigencies and Effects.* Berghahn Books:

New York.

Jacobsen, B. (2007). *Invitation to Existential Psychology: A Psychology for the Unique Human Being and its Applications in Therapy.* John Wiley & Sons: West Sussex, England.

Jaspers, K. (1965). *Nietzsche: An introduction to the understanding of his philosophical activity.* Translated by Charles F. Wallraff & Frederick J. Schmitz. Tuscan: The University of Arizona Press.

Kierkegaard, S. (1992/1846). *Concluding unscientific postscript to philosophical fragments.* Princeton University Press: Princeton New Jersey.

Kierkegaard, S. (1989/1841). *The concept of irony with continual reference to Socrates*. Translated by Howard Hong and Edna Hong. Princeton University Press: Princeton New Jersey.

Kitchenham, A., & Chasteauneuf, C. (2010). Teacher supply and demand: issues in northern Canada. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *33*(4), 869-896.

Kotarba, J. A. (1984). A synthesis: The existential self in society. *The existential self in society*, *1*, 222-234.

Kovach, M. (2010). *Indigenous Methodologies.* University of Toronto Press. Toronto.

Krippendorff, K. (2004). Content analysis. second ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Lo Iacono, V., Symonds, P. & Brown, D.H.K. (2016). Skype as a tool for qualitative research interviews. *Sociological Research Online 21*(2)12.

MacKenzie, C. (2016). Burnout north of 60: Supporting social workers in Nunavut, Canada. *Critical Social Work, 17*, 21-41.

Macleans Magazine (2022). Teachers at the heart of Nunavut communities

https://macleans.ca/sponsored/teachers-at-the-heart-of-nunavut-communities/. Retrieved September 22, 2023

Macleod, M. Garraway, L., Jonatansdottir, S., & Moffitt, P. (2018). What does it mean to be a nurse in Canada's northern territories? *In* H. Exner-Pirot, B. Norbye and L. Butler (eds.). *Northern and Indigenous Health and Health Care*. University of Saskatchewan: Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Malpas, J. (2012). *Heidegger and the Thinking of Place: Explorations in the Topology of Being*. Mit Press.

Macquarrie, J. (1976). *Existentialism.* Penguin Books: Markham, Canada.

Matthiasson, J. S. (1992). *Living on the land: Change among the Inuit of Baffin Island.* Higher Education University of Toronto Press.

May, R. (1958/2004). Contributions of existential psychotherapy. In May, R., Angel, E. & Ellenberger, H. *Existence.* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers: Oxford, UK pp. 37-91.

Maxwell, J. Understanding and validity in qualitative research. *Harvard Educational Review, 62,* 279-300.

Medica, K. M. (2016). *Cultural adjustment in the context of an aid-funded higher education sojourn: An exploratory case study that examines acculturation and re-acculturation challenges for Indonesian PhD Australian Scholarship awardees* (Doctoral dissertation, Monash University).

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.

Morse, J. M. (Ed.). (1994). *Critical issues in qualitative research methods*. sage.

Moustakas, C. (1990). *Heuristic Research: Design, Methodology and Applications.* Sage Publications: London.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological Research Methods.* Sage Publications: London.

Moustakas, C. (2001). Heuristic Research: Design and Methodology. *In* Schneider, K. J., Bugental, J. & Pierson, J. F. *The Handbook of Humanistic Psychology: Leading Edges in Theory, Research and Practice.* Sage Publications: London.

Mueller, C. (2006). Breaking the ice: Qallunaat teachers' journeys to Nunavik. McGill University.

Nada, C. I., & Legutko, J. (2022). "Maybe we did not learn that much academically, but we learn more from experience"–Erasmus mobility and its potential for transformative learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *87*, 183-192.

Nietzsche, F. (2008/1872). *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music. Trans.* Ian Johnson. Vancouver Island University.

Oberg, K. (1954). *Culture shock*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill.

O'Gorman, M., & Pandey, M. (2014). Cultivating the Arctic's most valuable resource: An analysis of barriers to high school completion among Inuit youth in Nunavut. *Accessed March*, *12*, 2015.

Onwuegbuzie, A. J. & Frels, R. (2016). *7 steps to a comprehensive literature review.* London, UK: Sage Publications

Oskineegish, M. (2015). Are you providing an education that is worth caring about? Advice to non-Native teachers in northern First Nations communities. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 38, pp. 1-25.

Pacheco, E. M. (2020). Culture learning theory and globalization: Reconceptualizing culture

shock for modern cross-cultural sojourners. *New Ideas in Psychology*, *58*, 100801.

Parks Canada (2019). Wrecks of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror national historic site. https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/lhn-nhs/nu/epaveswrecks

Pountney, L., & Marić, T. (2021). *Introducing anthropology: what makes us human?*. John Wiley & Sons.

Roskell, D. (2013). Cross-cultural transition: International teachers' experience of 'culture shock.' *Journal of Research in International Education, 12,* 155-172.

Sangster, J. (2016). *The iconic north: Cultural constructions of Aboriginal life in postwar Canada*. UBC Press.

Sartre, J-P. (1939/2002). *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions.* Routledge: London.

Sartre, J-P. (1943). *Being and nothingness: An essay in phenomenological ontology*. Washington Square press.

Searles, E. N. (2008). Inuit identity in the Canadian Arctic. *Ethnology: An International Journal of Cultural and Social Anthropology*, *47*(4), 239-255.

Shimo, A. (2016). In*visible North: Searching for Answers on a Troubled Reserve.* Dundurn: Toronto.

Siddique, S. (2011). Being in-between: The relevance of ethnography and auto-ethnography for psychotherapy research. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, *11*(4), 310-316.

Skype. (2013). Skype terms of use. *Skype.com*. Retrieved November 15, 2019, from http://www.skype.com/en/legal/tou-connect/.

Spinelli, E. (2007). The Interpreted World: An Introduction to Phenomenological Psychology. Sage Publications: London.

Smith, L. (1972). *A problem of survival : Kabloona society in small communities of the Eastern Arctic*. University of Manitoba

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2010). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research.* London: Sage

Smith, M., & Bondi, L. (2009). *Emotion, place and culture*. Routledge.

Solomon, R. (2002). *Spirituality for the Skeptic.* Oxford University Press: New York.

Stanghellini, G. & Rosfort, R. (2014). Jaspers on feeling and affective states. *In* Fuchs, T., Breyer, T. & Mundt, C. *Karl Jasper's Philosophy and Psychopathology.* Springer: New York.

Stasel, R. S. (2021). *Educator acculturation while living and working overseas: Stories from seventeen sojourning teachers and school leaders at international schools* (Doctoral dissertation, Queen's University (Canada)).

Statistics Canada (2019). Census Profile, 2016 Census. https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=6204020&Geo2=PR&Code2=62&SearchText=Pond%20Inlet&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&GeoLevel=PR&GeoCode=6204020&TABID=1&type=0

Statistics Canada. (2022). *Homicide in Canada, 2021*. https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00015-eng.htm#r36. Retrieved August 20, 2023

Stodulka, T. Selim, N. & Mattes, (2018). Affective scholarship: Doing anthropology with epistemic affects. *Ethos, 46*, pp. 519-536.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and

techniques. Sage Publications, Inc.

Squire, C., Andrews, M., Davis, M., Esin, C., Harrison, B., Hydén, L. C., & Hydén, M. (2014). *What is narrative research?* (p. 144). Bloomsbury Academic.

Tolley, M. (2003). *The induction experiences of beginning elementary school teachers in the Northwest Territories.* University of Saskatchewan: Saskatoon.

Tomkins, J. (1998). *Teaching in a Cold and Windy Place.* University of Toronto Press: Toronto, Canada.

Vukic, A. & Keddy, B. (2002). Northern nursing practice in a primary health setting. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 40,* 542-548.

Ward, C., Bochner, S., & Furnham, A. (2020). *Psychology culture shock*. Routledge.

Warnock, M. (1970). Existentialism. Oxford University Press.

Wearing, S. L., McDonald, M., & Ankor, J. (2016). Journeys of creation: Experiencing the unknown, the other and authenticity as an epiphany of the self. *Tourism Recreation Research*, *41*(2), 157-167.

Webster, R. S. (2004). Changing pre-service teachers' purposes of education through existential crises. *Australian Journal of Education, 48*, 82-94.

Wihak, C., & Merali, N. (2003). Culturally sensitive counselling in Nunavut: Implications of Inuit traditional knowledge. *Canadian Journal of Counselling, 37*, 243-254.

Wihak, C. A. (2004). Counsellors' experiences of cross-cultural sojourning. (Doctoral Dissertation) University of Alberta.

Wihak, C. (2006). Learning to learn culture: The experiences of sojourners in Nunavut. *Comparative and International Education*, *35*(1).

Wihak, C., & Merali, N. (2007a). Adaptations of professional ethics among counselors living and working in a remote native Canadian community. *Journal Of Multicultural Counseling & Development*, 35(3), 169-181.

Wihak, C., & Merali, N. (2007b). Racial/cultural identity: Transformation among school-based mental health professionals working in Nunavut. *Canadian Journal Of Education, 30*(1), 291-322.

Williamson, K. J. (1992). *The cultural ecological perspectives of Canadian Inuit: implications for child-rearing and education* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Saskatchewan).

Yang, G., Badri, M., Rashedi, A. A., & Almazroui, K. (2018). The social and organisational determinants of school commitment of expatriate teachers. *Journal of Research in International Education*, *17*(1), 33-48.

Yue, A. R. (2011). An existentialist in Iqaluit: Existentialism and reflexivity informing pedagogy in the Canadian North. *Journal of Management Education, 35*, 119-137.

Zhou, Y., Jindal-Snape, D., Topping, K., & Todman, J. (2008). Theoretical models of culture shock and adaptation in international students in higher education. *Studies in higher education*, *33*(1), 63-75.

The Department of Health and Social Sciences
Middlesex University
Hendon
London NW4 4BT

Researcher name & contact details: George Garrett georgegarrett83@gmail.com

Supervisor name & contact details: Charlotte Harkness admin@nspc.org.uk

Academic year: 2022/2023

Research title: The Lived Experience of Kadloona Teachers in Nunavut: A Heuristic Enquiry Study.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and ask if anything is unclear or if you would like more.

What is the purpose of the research?

This study is being carried out as part of a Doctorate in Existential Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy with NSPC Ltd and Middlesex University. The aim is to explore the holistic lived experience of Kadloona, or southern Canadian, teachers in Nunavut.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen for the study because you have been working or have worked as a teacher in Nunavut between 1 and 10 years. In order to keep a balance in gender, you may have chosen you on the basis of your identified gender.

Consent

Consent is entirely voluntary and you have the right to withdrawal at any time up until the publication date without having to explain your reasons for doing so. You will be given a copy of this information sheet for your personal records. You will also be asked to sign a consent form and consent for a local psychiatric nurse or nurse to be contacted should any immediate health concerns emerge during the interview.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you consent you will initially provide me (the researcher) with your contact details. I will then contact you to arrange a mutually convenient time between May and December 2022 for an interview that will last between 60 and 90 minutes over Microsoft TEAMS. Any streamed video over the Internet runs the risk of being hacked into or being monitored by ECHELON the United States government surveillance program. Before the interview, I will briefly assess you to manage any risk in case you become distressed. I will also go through the consent form with you to make sure you have fully understood it before signing. During the interview, you can speak as openly as you wish. A digital audio recording of the interview will be taken. You will also be offered a list of agencies and services available to you should you wish to seek help or support.

What are the possible disadvantages to taking part?

Talking about your experience in Nunavut may arouse some strong emotions and you may find it distressing to talk about it. If I monitor signs of distress, I will remind you that you can withdraw from the study. Please alert me to any distress you may feel and the interview can be drawn to a close at your request. While I will do my best to keep the data confidential and anonymised, within your small community, your participation may be discovered and some of the particular data in the interview may be identifiable by other members of the community.

What are the possible advantages of taking part?

Being interviewed about your experiences may have no direct benefits. However, you may find that reflecting on your experiences and having the opportunity to express how you feel may have some psychotherapeutic value.

What will happen to the data?

I will be personally transcribing all the data, which will then be anonymised, coded and transferred onto an encrypted USB stick. The file will then be deleted from the digital recorder. I will keep the key that links your details your data set separately and in a locked filing cabinet in my home for 10 years in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Excerpts from your verbatim may be published in my final thesis. You have the right to access any personal data collected by making a request to the address at the bottom of this form. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the data. There are a few exceptions to confidentiality. Under the Nunavut Child and Family Services Act (2010), I have a duty to report any harm done to a child. Under the Terrorism Act (2000), I am obliged to report any information that associates you with terrorist activities. Additionally, should I have reason to believe that you or another person is at risk, I will act in the interest of keeping both you and any other parties involved parties safe.

Who has reviewed the study?

All proposals for research using human participants are reviewed by an Ethics Committee before they can proceed. The NSPC Ethics Sub-Committee has reviewed and approved this proposal.

Thank you for reading this information sheet.

If you have any further questions, you can contact me at:
George Garrett, MSc. email: georgegarrett83@gmail.com

If you have any concerns about the conduct of the study, you may contact my supervisor:

Dr. Charlotte Harkness, email: admin@nspc.org.uk Tel: 011 44 207 624 0471
NSPC Ltd., 254-6 Belsize Road, London, England NW6 4BT.

Or the Principal, email: admin@nspc.org.uk Tel: 011 44 207 624 0471
NSPC Ltd., 254-6 Belsize Road, London, NW6 4BT

Middlesex University London

Middlesex University School of Science and Technology
Psychology Department
Written Informed Consent

Title of study: The Lived Experience of Kadloona Teachers in Nunavut: A Heuristic Enquiry Study.
Academic year: 2022/2023
Researcher's name: George Garrett
Supervisor's name and email*:* Charlotte Harkness, admin@nspc.org.uk

- I have understood the details of the research as fully explained to me by the researcher, and confirm that I have consented to act as a participant.
- I have been given contact details for the researcher in the information sheet to keep.
- I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, the data collected during the research will not be identifiable, and I have the right to withdraw from participating in the project up until the publication date without any obligation to explain my reasons for doing so.
- I understand and consent to my data being confidentially and securely stored in the researcher's own home for a period of 10 years.
- I further understand that the data I provide may be used for analysis and subsequent publication into a doctoral dissertation and a journal article, and I provide my consent that this may occur.

_____ _____
Print name Sign Name

date: _____

To the participant: Data may be inspected by the Chair of the Psychology Ethics panel and the Chair of the School of Science and Technology Ethics committee of Middlesex University, if required by

institutional audits about the correctness of procedures. Although this would happen in strict confidentiality, please tick here if you do not wish your data to be included in audits: _____

NSPC Ltd.
254-6 Belsize Road
London NW6 4BT

Middlesex University
The Burroughs
London NW4 4BT

DEBRIEFING SHEET

Researcher:

George Garrett, MSc.

Tel: 011 44 20 7435 8067 email: office@nspc.org.uk

Supervisor:

Dr. Charlotte Harkness

NSPC, 61-63 Fortune Green rd., London, NW6 1DR

Tel: 011 44 20 7435 8067 email: admin@nspc.org.uk

RESEARCH TITLE:

What is the Lived Experience of Kadloona Teachers in Nunavut?

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research project and for making a valuable

contribution to our knowledge about teacher's lived experience in Nunavut.

This research was designed to explore the ived experience of teachers in Nunavut.

I hope you have understood the overall aim and purpose of this study and enjoyed your participation in it. Should you be left with any areas of doubt or confusion as to your participation, have any queries regarding the research or wish to view the findings, please feel free to contact me (email: admin@nspc.org.uk). If you have any concerns about the conduct of the research or wish to make a complaint, you can contact my supervisor Charlotte Harkness at admin@nspc.org.uk.

The audio recording of the interview will be immediately transferred onto an encrypted device and the original destroyed. The interview will then be transcribed by me at which point it will be coded and anonymised and any identifying data will be removed. It will then be analyzed to find exemplary verbatim excerpts, which will form part of my final doctoral dissertation. The data will be securely stored on a password-guarded computer or in a locked cabinet in my own home and only me and my supervisor will have access to it. All data will be kept for 10 years before being confidentially destroyed. Should you wish to withdraw from the study and request your data be destroyed you can do this up until the publication date.

Should you wish to explore any issues that have arisen for you as a result of participation in this research, you can contact your local psychiatric nurse or your Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) at 1-800-663-1142.

Thank you again for participating in this research project.

Nunavut Research Institute / ᓄᓇᕗᒻᒥ ᖃᐅᔨᓴᖅᑐᓕᕆᔨᒃᑯᑦ
Box 1720, Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0 phone:(867) 979-7279 fax: (867) 979-7109 e-mail: mosha.cote@arcticcollege.ca

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH LICENSE

LICENSE NUMBER 02 047 22N-M

ISSUED TO: George Garrett
New School of Psychotherapy and Counselling
Middlesex University School of Science and Technology
4750 Lakeshore Rd., NE
Salmon Arm, BC
V1E 3N7 CA

TEAM MEMBERS: C. Harkness

TITLE: The Lived Experience of Kadloona in Nunavut

OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCH:
The aim of the present study is to fill the research gap by explicating the holistic lived experience of kadloona teachers living in the Arctic. This focus will benefit the research field in the Arctic by informing induction programs, giving teachers, and other professionals, an idea of what to expect in the Arctic. In addition, this research can contribute to the qualitative literature on emotions in the anthropological field, culture shock, and personal development in the context of a different culture/place. The study will prepare counsellors and psychotherapists to work with those that have had similar struggles and opportunities.

TERMS & CONDITIONS:

DATA COLLECTION IN NU:
DATES: January 1,2022 to Decembert 31,2022
LOCATION: Arctic Bay, Clyde River, Igloolik, Hall Beach, Cape Dorset, Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet

Scientific Research License 02 047 22N-M expires on December 31,2022
Issued at Iqaluit, NU on August 18,2022

Mosha Cote
Science Administration
Officer