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# Roots and Pathways to Secure and Transformational Leadership

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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

Roots and Pathways to Secure and Transformational Leadership

by

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A THESIS

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## Abstract

This hermeneutic phenomenological and narrative research study obtained information about the participants' early family environment indicating secure or insecure beginnings and tracked developmental pathways toward secure and transformational leadership behaviour. The 12 participants shared their views on diverse leadership topics and their life history in two interviews. The participants aged 50-67 fulfilled the selection criteria of having secure-attachment and transformational leadership styles, based on their completion of the Adult Attachment Scale and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. The findings indicated that the support of others is important to the development of secure leadership behaviour. However, *demonstrated* belief in these individuals and support for their autonomous behaviour enhanced the development of participants' ego-strength to carry out leadership requirements. Components of self-determination theory, such as responsiveness, belief in others, and support for autonomous behaviour, were shown to affect individuals' ability to be transformational leaders. These three types of behaviour, when internalized, are interconnected and reinforce each other resulting in positive spirals of development. The findings of the study include pathways to self-confidence, autonomy, and gaining support from others, as well as developmental pathways to overcome anxious and avoidant-insecure attachment. Becoming secure and therefore positive is critical and a pervasive need for leaders and the organizations they work in. Being constructive and focusing on the positive in others supports the potential in others and enhances productivity. Having a secure-attachment style correlates with individuals' ability to be self-determining and seek the support of others. Additionally, pathways to four components of transformational

leadership: internally-directed, other-focused, externally-open, and purpose-centered behaviour, are included in the findings. Recommendations for the creation of an assessment tool for use in professional settings, as well as important implications for enhancing the security and number of transformational leaders, are key outcomes of this study.

*Keywords:* transformational leadership, attachment theory, self-determination theory, leadership development, self-efficacy, autonomy, security, ego-strength, ego-resilience, positive self-schemas, positive other-schemas, positive leadership, support seeking, belief in others, autonomy support, Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, Adult Attachment Scale.

## **Preface and Acknowledgements**

Much of leaders' impact is dependent on their ability to extend their capabilities positively into the world. Secure leaders are effective in the midst of changing circumstances and differing interactions with others. Yet the ability to be secure takes resilience, based on thought processes that both support and challenge self to be effective. Leadership development programs often focus on leadership competencies without addressing the deeper thought processes that underpin leaders' ability to be effective. This dissertation discusses the influence of deeper thought patterns on the development of secure leaders.

You will meet the participants through quotes that demonstrate their deeper thought patterns. I will also introduce you to their thoughts through generalized collective findings. In either case, busy leaders are behind these findings. They generously gave of their time in support of this study. However, I could not utilize all of the interview material in the dissertation and want to thank all the leaders who supported me within the study.

My dissertation committee consisted of four members all of whom gave me feedback, advice, and support through this process. The chair of my committee, Dr. Sloane Dugan ensured that I chose a topic that motivated me. For this focus, I am deeply grateful. His valuable advice helped me stay interested in the topic over the course of the research study and dissertation. He also supported me throughout the process as much as possible. Dr. Julie Rowney supported and challenged me to keep progressing and in a myriad of ways throughout the entire process. She came through for me in the final stage, which was nothing short of miraculous due to her busy schedule. Dr. Veronica Bohac Clark supported me with her ideas and feedback and by picking me up both spiritually and intellectually. Dr. Carole Lynne Le Navenec helped me focus my study and provided very timely and thorough feedback.

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Lastly, I would like to thank my husband, Ian Watson, for the millions of small and large ways he supported me through this process. I cannot thank him enough.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to leaders who struggle to learn and are able to behave in secure ways, creating a safety net and secure place for those who work with them. They create an environment that enables their colleagues to be the best they can be, supporting and challenging them to operate at optimal levels.

## Table of Contents

Abstract .....	ii
Preface and Acknowledgements .....	iv
Dedication .....	vi
Table of Contents .....	vii
List of Tables .....	xii
List of Figures and Illustrations .....	xiii
Epigraph.....	xv
 Chapter One: Introduction .....	 1
1.1 Background, Research Focus and Guiding Questions.....	1
1.2 Pertinent Transformational Leadership Literature.....	3
1.3 Research Objectives, Procedures and Portrayals of Participants.....	4
1.4 Ethical Issues .....	5
1.5 Requirement of Revealing Pre-Understandings .....	6
1.6 My Pre-Understandings .....	6
1.7 Chapter Contents.....	8
1.7.1 Chapter 2 .....	8
1.7.2 Chapter 3 .....	9
1.7.3 Chapter 4 .....	9
1.7.4 Chapter 5 .....	9
1.7.5 Chapter 6 .....	10
 Chapter Two: Literature Review .....	 11
2.1 The Need for Relatedness: Attachment Theory.....	11
2.1.1 Models of Self and Others.....	12
2.1.2 Attachment Figures and Style over One's Lifespan.....	18
2.1.3 Attachment Style, Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem.....	19
2.1.4 Attachment Style, Relationships with Others, and Support Seeking Behaviour .....	20
2.1.5 Attachment Style and Exploration.....	21
2.1.6 Attachment Style Affecting Positive Impact and Comfort with Positive Emotions .....	21
2.2 Summary of Relatedness through Attachment Theory.....	22
2.3 The Need for Autonomy: Self-Determination Theory .....	26
2.3.1 Autonomy: Responsibility, Flexibility and Resilience.....	27
2.3.2 Autonomy and Competence .....	28
2.3.3 Autonomy and Others.....	28
2.3.4 Autonomy and Attachment.....	28
2.3.5 Autonomy and Secure Attachment Support Competence .....	29
2.4 Summary of Autonomy through Self-Determination Theory.....	31
2.5 The Need for Competence through Self-Efficacy .....	32
2.6 Summary of Competence through Self-Efficacy.....	34
2.7 Transformational Leadership Theory .....	37



2.7.1 Components of Transformational Leadership .....	38
2.7.2 Transformational Leadership Rated High in Outcome and Subjective Ratings .....	39
2.7.3 The Fundamental and Normal States of Leadership .....	40
2.7.4 Self-Efficacy, Internal Orientation, and Transformational Leadership .....	41
2.7.5 Attachment Theory and its Impact on Transformational Leadership .....	42
2.7.6 Autonomy and its Impact on Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Intellectual Stimulation, and Responsibility .....	44
2.8 Summary of Factors that Impact Transformational Leadership .....	45
2.9 Views on Development .....	48
Chapter Three: Theoretical Perspectives and Methodologies .....	54
3.1 Methodologies .....	54
3.1.1 Branches of Phenomenology .....	54
3.2 Hermeneutic Phenomenology .....	57
3.2.1 Hermeneutic Phenomenology Features .....	59
3.2.1.1 Purposive sampling .....	59
3.2.1.2 Hermeneutic interviews. ....	60
3.2.1.3 Text. ....	60
3.2.1.4 Rich descriptions .....	60
3.2.1.5 Time, context and interconnections. ....	61
3.2.1.6 Use of biography .....	61
3.2.2 Analysis .....	62
3.2.3 Themes .....	62
3.2.4 Reflections .....	62
3.2.5 The Hermeneutic Circle .....	64
3.3 Narrative Inquiry .....	64
3.3.1 Features of Narrative Inquiry .....	65
3.3.1.1 Identity. ....	65
3.3.1.2 Development. ....	66
3.3.1.3 Social context. ....	67
3.3.1.4 Plot. ....	67
3.3.1.5 Agency. ....	68
3.3.1.6 Performance. ....	68
3.3.1.7 Meaning. ....	69
3.3.1.8 Temporality .....	69
3.3.2 Analysis .....	70
3.3.2.1 Content or form. ....	70
3.3.2.2 Parts or whole. ....	71
3.4 Assessing Qualitative Studies .....	71
Chapter Four: Plan and Method of Inquiry .....	74
4.1 Timeline .....	75
4.2 Participants .....	75
4.3 Sample Size .....	76

4.4 Ethical Obligations to Participants .....	76
4.5 Participant Recruitment Process .....	77
4.6 The Interview and Assessment Processes.....	78
4.7 Plan of Analysis .....	82
Chapter Five: Analysis and Results .....	85
5.1 Introduction.....	85
5.2 First Stage Analysis and Results.....	85
5.2.1 Roots to Secure and Transformational Leadership .....	89
5.2.2 Motivated by Fear Less Generative.....	89
5.3 Second Stage Analysis and Results .....	90
5.3.1 Supportive Others, Belief in Me, and Autonomy Results .....	93
5.3.1.1 The significance of the support and belief of others.....	94
5.3.1.2 Support and belief internalized. ....	95
5.3.1.3 Role models for believing in others. ....	97
5.3.1.4 The importance of believing in others. ....	99
5.3.1.5 The significance of autonomy.....	100
5.4 Results as Pathways .....	101
5.4.1 Pathways Out of Insecure Attachment .....	102
5.4.1.1 Pathways out of initial anxious-insecure attachment.....	104
5.4.1.2 Pathways out of initial avoidant-insecure attachment. ....	106
5.4.2 Pathways to and Evidence of Self-Confidence, Autonomy, and Support Seeking Behaviour .....	110
5.4.2.1 Pathways to self-confidence. ....	110
5.4.2.2 Evidence of self-confidence.....	112
5.4.2.3 Pathways to autonomy. ....	116
5.4.2.4 Evidence of autonomy. ....	121
5.4.2.5 Pathways to meeting relational needs. ....	124
5.4.2.6 Evidence of meeting relational needs. ....	126
5.4.3 Pathways to and Evidence of Transformational Leadership .....	128
5.4.3.1 Pathways to other-focused behaviour. ....	128
5.4.3.2 Evidence of other-focused behaviour. ....	132
5.4.3.3 Pathways to internally-directed behaviour. ....	135
5.4.3.4 Evidence of internally-directed behaviour.....	136
5.4.3.5 Pathways to externally-open behaviour. ....	136
5.4.3.6 Evidence of externally-open behaviour. ....	138
5.4.3.7 Pathways to purpose-centered behaviour. ....	141
5.4.3.8 Evidence of purpose-centered behaviour.....	145
5.5 Third Stage Analysis and Results .....	147
5.5.1 Pathways to Secure Leadership Based on Gender .....	149
5.5.1.1 Female participants need to lead with their strengths.....	149
5.5.1.2 Male participants need to work on their interpersonal skills.....	151
5.5.2 Participants Demonstrate Ego-strength .....	151
5.5.2.1 Stepping up to opportunity/responsibility/challenge. ....	152
5.5.2.2 Keep things progressing.....	154

5.5.2.3 Challenge. ....	156
5.5.2.4 Learning or benefiting from failure. ....	157
Chapter Six: Discussion and Implications .....	159
6.1 Discussion .....	159
6.1.1 Pathways to Security .....	159
6.1.1.1 Pathways to security through countering insecurities.....	160
6.1.2 Pathways to Secure and Transformational Leadership .....	162
6.1.3 Pathways to Security through Support Seeking, Self-Confidence and Autonomous Behaviour .....	163
6.1.4 Secure and Transformational Leadership Requires Autonomy Support and Belief.....	163
6.1.4.1 Belief supports transformational leadership quadrants.....	166
6.1.4.2 Believing in others correlates with secure and transformational leadership behaviour. ....	166
6.1.4.3 Others believing in participants overrode their fear of failure.....	167
6.1.5 The Importance of Autonomy .....	168
6.1.5.1 Autonomy supports secure and transformational leaders in being comfortable with negative emotions. ....	169
6.1.6 Roots and Order of Support Seeking, Self-Efficacy, and Autonomy.....	170
6.1.7 Ego-Strength Based on the Three Components of Self-Determination: Support-Seeking, Self-Confidence, and Autonomy Enables Leaders to Carry out Their Roles.....	170
6.1.8 Interconnectedness of Support Seeking Behaviour, Self-Confidence, and Autonomy .....	172
6.1.9 Generalizable Nature and Limitations of the Research .....	174
6.2 Implications .....	174
6.2.1 Implications for Leaders as Individuals and in their Roles .....	174
6.2.2 Implications for Leadership Development .....	176
6.2.3 Implications for Assessing Leaders.....	178
6.2.4 Implications for Theory .....	179
6.2.5 Implications for Future Research .....	180
6.3 Conclusion .....	182
References.....	185
Appendix A: Contents of Initial Telephone Conversation with Potential Participants ...	197
Appendix B: Contents of E-Mail to Potential Participants .....	198
Appendix C: Letter of Consent .....	199
Appendix D: Interview One Protocol .....	203
Appendix E: Life History Questions.....	205

Appendix F: Modified Adult Attachment Scale .....	206
Appendix G: The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire .....	208
Appendix H: Emerging Themes from Interviews.....	209
Appendix I: Themes 40 or More Occurrences in the Data .....	212
Appendix J: Highest # of Co-Occurrences .....	213
Appendix K: Questions that Guided Narrative Inquiry .....	214
Appendix L: Co-Occurrences with the Theme “Supportive Other” .....	216
Appendix M: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Others’ Belief in Participant” .....	217
Appendix N: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Confidence” .....	218
Appendix O: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Autonomy/Internally Directed” .....	219
Appendix P: Occurrences of Factors that Impact Individual’s Purpose-Centered Behaviour .....	220
Appendix Q: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Step Up to Responsibility, Opportunity, and Challenge” .....	221
Appendix R: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Challenge” .....	222
Appendix S: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Learning from Negatives” .....	223

## **List of Tables**

Table 1: Attachment Styles with Characteristics .....	17
Table 2: Secure-Attachment Style .....	24
Table 3: Insecure-Attachment Styles .....	25
Table 4: Transformational Leadership Qualities .....	39
Table 5: Participant Details, n =12 .....	86
Table 6: Holistic Themes of Participant Life History .....	88
Table 7: Co-occurrences of the Themes “Others’ Belief in Participants” and “Participants’ Belief in Others” .....	98

## **List of Figures and Illustrations**

Figure 1: Interrelated and Reinforcing Analysis.....	30
Figure 2: Summary of Positive Parental Behaviour Patterns that Meet Children’s Psychological Needs .....	35
Figure 3: Summary of Unsatisfactory Parental Behaviours that Interfere with Meeting Children’s Psychological Needs .....	36
Figure 4: Meeting Three Psychological Needs Support Components of Transformational Leadership Behaviour .....	47
Figure 5: Highest 44 Themes Occurring Within the Data and the Number of Times They Occur.....	91
Figure 6: Behaviours that Support the Potential in Others .....	165
Figure 7: Positive Impact of the Belief of Others, Within Self, and Then to Others.....	166
Figure 8: Benefits of Autonomy .....	168
Figure 9: Outlining Importance of Self-Determination to Performance of Leadership Tasks .....	173
Figure 10: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Others’ Belief in Participant” .....	217
Figure 11: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Confidence” .....	218
Figure 12: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Internally Directed” .....	219

## List of Symbols, Abbreviations and Nomenclature

### Abbreviations

M.L.Q.

### Definition

Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

### Nomenclature

Secure-attachment style

### Definition

Individuals with secure attachment hold positive self-schemas, a positive view of themselves and positive other-schemas, a positive view of others

Anxious-insecure attachment style

Negative self-schema, positive other-schema

Avoidant-insecure attachment style

Positive self-schema, negative other-schema

Positive other or supportive other

Supportive person

Support seeking behaviour

Reaching out for support from positive others

Autonomous behaviour

Autonomy acting from a sense of choice:

Being the originator rather than the pawn in life's circumstances

Autonomy support

Individuals support autonomy in others by respecting their ideas and way of doing things

Self-determination theory

The conditions that support positive processes of individuals: fulfilling the need for competence, relatedness, and autonomy

Self-efficacy

An individual's belief in his or her capabilities to accomplish a task or set of tasks

Transformational leadership style

Influence that changes others; it arouses transcendental interests in followers, elevating their aspiration levels, and creating changes within them

Holistic

Characterized by the comprehension of the parts of something as intimately interconnected and explicable only by reference to the whole

## **Epigraph**

When starting this study I said to my supervisor that leaders need to develop and be like a tree and this statement by Ryan (1995) conveys the qualities I wanted to communicate. The branches of a tree help individuals extend themselves, while at the same time the roots help them integrate:

Psychological development thus entails individuals' working to elaborate or expand themselves while striving to maintain or enhance integration and harmony among all aspects of themselves (p. 136).

Grolnick, Deci and Ryan (1997) elaborate on Ryan's initial thoughts saying individuals that actualize themselves can extend themselves and act on their world. How participants came to be strongly rooted in self and able to extend themselves positively toward others describes the journey to secure and transformational leadership.



## Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter contains a short explanation of the background, research focus, and guiding questions for this research study. It outlines the gaps in leadership literature and presents opportunities for new findings. The chapter discusses the research objectives, procedures, and the portrayal of participants. The chapter outlines ethical issues that pertain to the study, the researchers' pre-understandings, and the contents of each chapter.

### *1.1 Background, Research Focus and Guiding Questions*

In my role as an executive coach, I have noticed that some clients were resistant to feedback and the coaching process. My assessment was that they did not want to grow and develop into leaders that are more effective and I could see their defensive ways were blocking their success, and potential. These were the most difficult type of clients for me in my coaching work.

I entered the PhD program to continue my learning in the area of leadership development. Through my studies within this program, my PhD supervisor introduced me to the topic of attachment, specifically secure and insecure-attachment styles. In researching these topics, I found a study that correlated secure attachment with transformational leadership (Popper, Mayseless, & Castelnovo, 2000). Transformational leaders inspire and motivate others to change and they do this to some extent by changing themselves (Quinn, 2004). Insecurities block one's willingness to change. This research elevated my curiosity regarding transformational leaders' ability to change themselves and others. I hold a developmental perspective and continue to be interested in the terrain where individuals' internal processes support and hinder their ability to be effective leaders.

In order to pursue these topics I interviewed ‘admirable’, secure and transformational leaders hoping to learn from the participants’ developmental experiences and lives. The importance they placed on experiences, their ability to overcome insecurities, details about their successes and challenges, and their behaviour itself could inform my coaching and teaching of leaders. The details of effective transformational and secure leaders’ development could inform me and I could share these insights with others enabling more competent leadership behaviour to emerge and flourish.

I intended to listen for patterns that supported or thwarted secure attachment. Revealing other internal thinking patterns and habits that proved effective or that blocked the leaders’ potential and performance would also prove interesting.

My primary question that drove the research process was:

*How did these secure and transformational leaders become who they are today?*

Additional questions that elaborated and deepened the study were:

- What are the different developmental trajectories and patterns over the participants’ life spans?
- What do participants indicate supported and was most important to their development?
- What inhibited these leaders’ development?
- Which leaders were the most resilient and self-actualized? What did they do or say that was different from the other participants?

Focusing on these questions would provide roadmaps for supporting the development of effective leadership skills through teaching, coaching, and training. New theoretical constructs can evolve through deep listening to answers to these important questions and intersections with relevant literature.

### *1.2 Pertinent Transformational Leadership Literature*

Popper, et al., (2000) suggest that the developmental precursors and behavioural details of effective leaders in everyday life are missing in the psychological literature. These researchers believe that mining the written biographies of current or past leaders would inform an understanding of secure-attachment and transformational leadership behaviour. Instead, I chose to mine the histories and narratives developed through qualitative interviews with local, professional, and admired leaders.

Also missing from the developmental literature are the differences in developmental needs depending on which style of insecure attachment individuals exhibit. Patterns that support secure attachment and transformational leadership include holding both positive self-schemas and positive other-schemas (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), whereas insecure patterns manifest themselves as negative self-schemas and/or negative other-schemas and get in the way of the fulfillment of relational needs. Different developmental needs occur because of the tendency for different insecure proclivities.

Further, three more leadership research areas have not received much attention in the literature. The first being the literature that refers to leaders as parental figures (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). Parental behaviour that supports or thwarts the individuals' full potential is important; it becomes the beginning template, which individuals use to view themselves, others, and their lives. Summaries about parental behaviour that supports and blocks the fulfillment of three major psychological needs – specifically relational, autonomous, and competence needs – lead to optimal functioning in individuals. Leaders can learn from effective parental patterns because like parents they act as authority and attachment figures who aid others' development. The second gap is within the transformational leadership literature; specifically, only three of the

four components of transformational leadership correlate with the secure-attachment style, other-focused, internally-directed, and externally-open behaviour (Popper, et al., 2000). The details of how secure attachment supports these three areas of transformational leadership would add to the knowledge on leadership development. Another important contribution would be indications of what could positively affect the development of fourth area of transformational leadership, individuals' purpose-centered behaviour.

Findings based on participants' thoughts about experiences that were critical to their progress and development pointed to the importance of satisfying three psychological needs that make up self-determination theory. Participants' relational needs explored through attachment theory; their autonomy needs explained through details within self-determination theory; and their competence needs discussed through leader self-efficacy. If the individual satisfied the three needs then they could realize their potential (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Missing in the literature on leadership is the detailed development of meeting *all* three needs in supporting the effectiveness of leaders and the implications of the three needs reinforcing each other.

### *1.3 Research Objectives, Procedures and Portrayals of Participants*

The objective of this research is to distil themes, listen for patterns, and key aspects of development by reflecting on the interactions, ideas, histories, and assessment materials of participants. Self-reflections, reflections on participants, and the research literature formed the key insights and findings (Piantanida & Garman, 2009). While all of the participants were successful leaders, some were more resilient and self-actualized than others and their development patterns became important to opening up their own and others' development. How participants overcame blocks or used their thinking to support their effective development of leadership skills became the focus of this study.

Finding participants occurred through using the snowball technique. I asked people in my network to identify executives they admired who demonstrated transformational leadership qualities. I approached these leaders, asking them if they would participate in a research study. Participants consented to two interviews, to fill out a life history sheet, and to complete two self-assessment tools. All the interviews took place in Calgary with executives in private business and public service organizations. I qualified participants by utilizing self-assessment tools measuring their attachment style and transformational qualities. I used hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative methodologies to listen deeply and assess patterns over the lifespan of participants and used narratives to learn their opinions on important aspects of leadership. I analyzed the interviews and life histories provided by participants manually very thoroughly and then used qualitative software, specifically Atlas.ti, to assess themes again.

Participants' quotes include: a) the most effective participants' developmental patterns, b) methods used to overcome problems that blocked participants, c) patterns to successful outcomes, and d) themes generated through deep listening and the use of qualitative software. Leader participants eliminated from the data set did not score as transformational or secure in their self-assessments. This study includes in the findings reflections on behaviour that limited these participants' leadership capabilities and eliminated them from the study.

#### *1.4 Ethical Issues*

Utilizing a constructivist approach, I reflect on my own experience, participants' experiences, and the research literature. I am conscious that my own attachment tendencies may influence how I interpret this data and I have endeavoured to emphasize the avoidant-insecure attachment style as well. I was especially curious about the details and trajectories that support people's development within the avoidant-attachment style, not my tendency.

Leader participants self-assessed their leadership and attachment styles over the course of the study. Leslie and Fleenor (1998) argue that the determination of transformational leadership qualities could only occur, if followers assessed their leader. However, I did not involve the followers in the assessment process. I thought having two self-assessment measures gave me a clear indication of individual participants' transformational qualities. The criteria overlap because the two constructs correlate with each other.

### *1.5 Requirement of Revealing Pre-Understandings*

I chose to use hermeneutic phenomenology as one of the research methodologies used in this study. This research methodology requires researchers to uncover their pre-understandings and values at the beginning of the study. Where differences occur between the researcher and participants, the researcher can learn from these diverse understandings. Researchers utilizing this methodology most likely will enlarge their understandings over the course of the study. The researchers' experience becomes a part of and contributes to the findings of this type of study.

### *1.6 My Pre-Understandings*

Here I highlight my stance in relation to the research concepts that follow. My own experiences are included in the study because they reveal information of interest to the study – specifically my background, stance and pre-understandings. I am not bracketing or trying to separate my biases from the study, awareness of my understandings up front are my pre-understandings about the study. I assume that the study will reveal new understandings and I am excited to learn from secure and transformational leaders about the details of their development. Reissman (1993) discusses how individuals' background influences their point of view and informs their studies. My interests and my attachment proclivity influenced my point of view and

informed my study. I have worked as a developmental professional, whereby I carried out career and executive coaching, facilitated workshops to enhance development of professionals, and lectured in university settings. Both my curiosity and interest in the development of leaders and my highly attuned skill of listening developed through coaching clients align with my research methodologies.

My interest is in learning ways to overcome problems of defensiveness in my development work with individuals. My attachment tendency reflects the anxious-insecure attachment style in new situations when I am not comfortable. My desire to understand how individuals develop secure and transformational behaviour is personal as well as professional.

I believe that the attachment style of individuals is an important factor in their ability or inability to succeed. I assume that developing a secure-attachment style is an important factor in enabling individuals' effectiveness as leaders and availability to others. I think insecurity, leading to self-oriented behaviour, has contributed to the lack of ethical behaviour we are currently experiencing with financial professionals such as those involved in the subprime mortgage scandals of 2008. I believe that security leads to other-focused behaviour and this engenders trust in individuals that encounter such leaders. I do not know the details of how individuals develop this security. I assume that the participants in the study will have experienced differing ways of overcoming insecure attachment demonstrated over their lifetime. I assume that the development of security within leaders may enable them to effectively carry out their leadership functions.

I believe that the participants may have their own versions of transformational leadership however; I do not know how they would vary from each other. I believe the leader participants have developed an empowering style, however, I do not know how they developed this style. I

believe that leaders have created goodwill and care toward themselves and others but I do not know how they created this within themselves and others. I think that being internally directed will be important to leadership, but I do not know details of the ways the leaders would have developed these abilities.

The participants may have higher levels of self-esteem however, the details of how they created this are not clear to me. The ability to be empowered by taking responsibility will be important to these leaders effectiveness, yet the details of how they developed this skill is not known.

I hope that the research informs my understanding of the interconnections and correlations between secure attachment and transformational leadership. Some research studies outline these correlations. However, I hope that by experiencing the study process the leadership development community will come to understand the details and specifics of the development of both secure and transformational behaviours more clearly.

## *1.7 Chapter Contents*

### *1.7.1 Chapter 2*

Chapter 2 reviews the literature that is necessary for interpreting the results, outlines theory and also develops theory. This chapter examines the research on meeting individuals' need for relatedness through attachment theory, one's need for autonomy through self-determination theory, and one's need for competence through leader self-efficacy. This chapter also discusses parental behaviour that results in the healthy development of the psychological needs of persons. This chapter also details the contribution of others, in addition to parents, to meeting these three psychological needs throughout an individual's life. The parental patterns contribute to individuals' secure or insecure beginnings. Chapter 2 also examines



transformational leadership theory and its relationship to the previous theories mentioned.

Finally, the chapter ends with a discussion about development theory.

### *1.7.2 Chapter 3*

The chapter outlines the methodologies used to carry out the research study. The methodologies utilized were qualitative in nature. They both allow for exploration of topics and co-construction of findings by the participants and researcher. The two methodologies chosen, hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative analysis, provide different content and richness, and allow for triangulation of the data. The chapter ends with analysis of the two chosen methodologies as well as information on assessing qualitative studies.

### *1.7.3 Chapter 4*

This chapter describes the method used to carry out the research study and plan of analysis. It contains the research question, brief descriptions of the methodologies, and the systematic sequencing of the research study. Sections include the timeline, participants and their recruitment, the interview process, scoring of assessments, and plan of analysis.

### *1.7.4 Chapter 5*

This chapter is divided into three stages of analysis and corresponding results. The first stage contains four points: the process used to qualify participants, results of manually generated themes, an overall analysis of the transcripts, and the roots of the participants' secure or insecure beginnings. The second stage contains five points: an analysis conducted using qualitative software, references Tables and Figures generated using the software, analysis utilizing the hermeneutic circle, themes of importance to participants, and a number of different pathways and proof of secure and transformational behaviour. The third stage of analysis and results contains

three points: a discussion on findings that are important but not the focus of this study, results based on more narrative analysis, and details of demonstrated ego-strength by participants.

#### *1.7.5 Chapter 6*

This chapter contains a discussion of the findings relating to other studies, and to broader theories, as well as the implications of the findings. The chapter discusses the specifics of becoming a positive force for self, others, and one's organization dependent on individuals' early lives. The impacts of being a negative force are profoundly limiting and unfortunately quite pervasive in society. Being constructive and focusing on the positive in others supports the potential in others and enhances productivity. Also outlined are pathways to security and transformational leadership, which support development of these important qualities. The secure-attachment styles correlates with individuals' ability to be self-determining and seek support from others. This chapter explains details of support, and belief in others, and autonomy, components of self-determination theory, which contribute to the development of leadership capabilities. Discussed are components of self-determination theory and the interrelated and reinforcing characteristics of these components. Finally, the chapter discusses limitations in the research study, the implications of the results for leaders, those who develop leaders, the assessment of leaders, theory and further research.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter outlines three psychological needs essential for the growth and development of individuals: needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Meeting these needs ensures individuals are able to reach and maintain optimal functioning. Supporting one's inner resources maximizes functioning and is the basis of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This chapter explains the need for relatedness through attachment theory, which outlines individuals' ability to reach out to others to gain support in difficult circumstances. The chapter outlines the need for autonomy outlined through a discussion of self-determination theory, which explains people's ability to make choices and originate action. The chapter explains the need for competence through discussions of self-efficacy, which details specifics about individuals feeling effective in their environments. In addition, this chapter outlines parental behaviour and people, other than parents, whose actions can result in meeting the three psychological needs. This chapter also outlines relevant literature linking transformational leadership theory and its relationship to the other theories. The chapter ends with details and a discussion on different aspects and views of individuals' development.

### *2.1 The Need for Relatedness: Attachment Theory*

This section defines attachment theory and different styles of attachment. It also outlines varying parental behaviour that influences individuals' self and other models resulting in different attachment styles. This section also contains a discussion of how attachment style affects individuals over their lifespan and how the different attachment styles affect individuals' self-esteem, relations with others, support-seeking behaviour, positive impact, and comfort with positive emotions.

John Bowlby, the originator of attachment theory, conceptualized attachment as a behavioural system designed to regulate proximity to a person, a protector who maximizes one's chances for survival and protects one from danger (Diamond, 2001; Mikulincer, Shaver, Gillath, & Nitzberg, 2005). Attachment behaviour is defined as maintaining proximity to caring and supportive others, specifically attachment figures who provide support and protection, a safe haven, in times of adversity (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009a; Mikulincer, et al., 2005). If children realize an attachment figure is attentive, accessible, and nearby, they will feel confident, secure, and loved (Crowel, Fraley & Shaver, 2008). Bowlby compared humans to other animals, and determined that because human infants are born developmentally immature relative to infants of other species, they require a prolonged period of care to ensure survival (Diamond, 2001). Attachment behaviour is most evident in infancy and childhood, and continues to be important across the life span (Mikulincer, et al., 2005).

Other researchers take the attachment concepts further. Mary Ainsworth was instrumental in defining attachment behavior and attachment bonds. Two major types of attachment styles exist that are highly dependent on parents' behaviour. Ainsworth (1989) defines attachment relationships as secure or insecure, and describes attachment styles as patterns of attachment behavior that have the potential to influence an individual's relationships. Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, (1978) state one secure-attachment style exists. However, insecure attachment includes avoidant and anxious/ambivalent styles. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) determined a third category of insecure attachment, the fearful/disorganized style.

### *2.1.1 Models of Self and Others*

The internal working models within attachment theory consist of mental representations of the self, significant others, attachment figures, and relationships with others (Bowlby, 1973;

Crowell, et al., 2008; Main, Kaplan, & Cassidy, 1985; Mikulincer, et al., 2005; Popper, Mayseless, & Castelnovo, 2000). The patterns depict the felt security the child experiences in close relationships (Cobb & Davila, 2009; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). The self- and other-schemas represent expectations about the worthiness of the self and the availability of others (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Individuals internalize experiences with caretakers and form their own internal working models of their self-worth and of their expectations of care and support from others (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). As children age, their relationships depend on the quality of their internal working models (Bretherton, 1992).

The following pages outline the parental behaviour that creates the different attachment styles in individuals. Parents, who are responsive and assist in providing comfort and relief, create internal working models of secure attachment in their children. Thus the youngsters feel they are worthy of assistance and affection (Bowlby, 2005; Cobb & Davila, 2009; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Securely-attached children have internalized positive self-regard from their interactions with their parents (Crowell, et al., 2008). Such experiences act as resources for resilience, helping to sustain emotional well-being and adjustment, and creating positive working models of self and others (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009a). Securely-attached individuals have higher self-confidence and also place more confidence in others (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Researchers indicate that secure individuals exhibit low anxiety due to their higher self-confidence and low avoidance of others, believing that others will be available when needed (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994; Mikulincer & Florian, 1997) (Refer to Table 1, Attachment Styles with Characteristics). The higher levels of self-esteem and confidence of securely-attached individuals in turn enables them to be responsive to others' needs (Mikulincer & Nachsohn, 1991). Shaver and Mikulincer (2009) outline the broadening

effect, larger than just the self, attachment security has, due to the securely-attached person's willingness to provide support and care to others who are in need or are dependent.

Parents, who are emotionally unavailable and insensitive, and consistently do not give care to or constantly reject their children, create internal working models of avoidant attachment and desires for self-sufficiency in their children (Davidovitz, Mikulincer, Shaver, Izsak, & Popper, 2007; Karen, 1994; Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994; Popper, et al., 2000). Like securely-attached individuals, avoidant-attached individuals have a positive self-schema, although theirs is a falsely high view of themselves (Mikulincer, Shaver, Cassidy, & Berant, 2008). They defensively prop up their self-concept in response to the rejection they received from their caregivers (Refer to Table 1, Attachment Styles with Characteristics). Unlike securely-attached individuals, avoidant-attached individuals have a negative view of others. They exhibit low anxiety due to their positive self-concept and high avoidance due to their negative other-concepts (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). These responses are part of a deactivating strategy that makes it less likely that the avoidant person will reach out to others for support or protection (Mikulincer, et al., 2008). The individual often sees themselves as better, stronger, and wiser than others, therefore not needing support and assistance (Mikulincer, et al., 2008). Avoidant people handle distress by negating the importance of relationships and maintaining their distance by relying on their independence (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Mikulincer & Nachson, 1991). They view interaction as painful and avoid others (Mikulincer & Nachson, 1991). Avoidant individuals have less resilience and higher hostility in interactions with others because of their negative view of others (Popper, et al., 2000; Mikulincer, et al., 2008).

Infants with avoidant-attachment styles demonstrate attention inflexibility. They focus away from the parent and on their surroundings instead (Hesse, 2008). Researchers have found

that avoidant-attached individuals give care when it benefits them and they do not give care when self-benefit is not present (Mikulincer, et al., 2005). Avoidant infants turn into avoidant adults who focus away from relationships, hampering abilities to establish ties later in life. Mikulincer et al (2008) call the avoidant-attachment style an organized form of insecurity.

Parents, who are neglectful, inconsistent, or react with distress when children require support, create internal working models of anxious/ambivalent attachment in their children (West & Sheldon-Keller, 1994). Similar to securely-attached styles, individuals with the anxious/ambivalent-attachment style hold a positive view of others. Unlike securely-attached styles, they have internal mental models that reflect a negative view of themselves (Refer to Table 1, Attachment Styles with Characteristics). Due to these internal patterns, they exhibit high anxiety and low avoidance of others (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). Anxious/ambivalent-attached individuals demonstrate core feelings of shame. The defences they exhibit include feelings of unworthiness, therefore, they do not ask for others' support (Berlin, Cassidy, & Appleyard, 2008; Karen, 1994; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008). Other defensive patterns include catastrophic appraisals, amplification of threats, pessimistic beliefs about their ability to handle difficulty, and demanding behaviour (Mikulincer, et al., 2008). Individuals with an anxious-attachment style have a tendency to focus on their own distress, demonstrating tentative and anxious behaviour rather than focusing on solutions to the problems at hand (Mikulincer, et al., 2008). This focus results in an inability to provide care to others and lower levels of relational outcomes (Berlin, et al., 2008; Mikulincer, et al., 2005; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008; Rom & Mikulincer, 2003). Due to their negative self-schemas, individuals with anxious-attachment style project negative thoughts on group interaction and continually search for external sources of affirmation instead of utilizing their inner resources, unfortunately diverting their energy away

from task performance (Rom & Mikulincer, 2003). Due to inconsistent parenting, anxiously-attached individuals have trouble accepting affection at face value and instead intensify distressing thoughts and emotions (Mikulincer, et al., 2008). Mikulincer et al (2008) call anxious-attachment style an organized form of insecurity.

Parents, who are frightened or frightening, create internal working models of fear and disorganization within their children (Holmes, 2001). Unlike securely-attached individuals, those with disorganized-attachment styles, have internal mental models that reflect a negative view of self and others (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994) (Refer to Table 1, Attachment Styles with Characteristics). Griffin and Bartholomew state that individuals with disorganized-attachment styles exhibit high anxiety and high avoidance (1994). Mikulincer, et al. (2008) call this style seriously disorganized. Research articles on this attachment style are therapeutic in nature and not present in the normative literature. This paper will not focus on the disorganized-attachment style the focus is on research in leadership development, not psychological or therapeutic research.



Table 1: Attachment Styles with Characteristics

<b>Secure-Attachment Style</b>  <b>Positive Self-Schema &amp; Positive Other-Schema</b>  <b>Low Avoidance &amp; Low Anxiety</b>	<b>Avoidant-Attachment Style</b>  <b>Positive Self-Schema &amp; Negative Other-Schema</b>  <b>High Avoidance &amp; Low Anxiety</b>
<b>Anxious-Attachment Style</b>  <b>Negative Self-Schema &amp; Positive Other-Schema</b>  <b>Low Avoidance &amp; High Anxiety</b>	<b>Fearful/Disorganized-Attachment Style</b>  <b>Negative Self-Schema &amp; Negative Other-Schema</b>  <b>High Avoidance &amp; High Anxiety</b>

### *2.1.2 Attachment Figures and Style over One's Lifespan*

The quality of relationships with attachment figures affects the unconscious behaviour that emerges early on and on an ongoing basis for individuals (Karen, 1994). Bretherton (1985) found substantial evidence to suggest these patterns emerge in the first 12 to 18 months of life. The internal working models evolve out of dyadic experiences. The child, however, internalizes the qualities of the relationship, as properties of the child, rather than that of the relationship (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994). These attachment patterns become less accessible to the individual's awareness as they become habitual (Bretherton, 1992). Crowell et al. (2008) agree saying that attachment is "normative - that is relevant to the development of all people, and active and important in adult life" (p. 600). Shaver and Mikulincer (2009) assert that the type of attachment behaviour individuals' experience with important figures, parents, and romantic partners, becomes the most commonly available internal representation and has the strongest impact on attachment expectations and behaviour over time. The internalization of these patterns as they become more habitual has implications for individuals' development. Bringing the attachment style to awareness of those who have insecure attachment would be necessary prior to working on advancing their development.

After childhood, attachment figures who are security-enhancing individuals can be peers, teachers, mentors, coaches, friends, counsellors, children, romantic partners and/or siblings, not just parents (Doherty & Feeney, 2004; Mayseless & Popper, 2007; Towler, 2005). Access to these persons can add to the options individuals have regarding their self- and other-schemas, and assist the individual's development at different points of access and time (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). Shaver and Mikulincer (2009) indicate that attachment figures are not just any relationship partners; they are special people to whom one turns for comfort and support. Any

interaction over time with an attachment figure can affect working models of the self (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). After positive contact with attachment figures, individuals believe that the world is a safe place (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009a). Mayseless and Popper (2007) extend security enhancement to religious groups, school or colleges groups, work groups, and political groups.

### *2.1.3 Attachment Style, Self-Confidence and Self-Esteem*

Secure attachment supports healthy self-confidence and self-esteem. Self-confidence is vital to effective leadership because others look to leaders for modeling, inspiration, and hope (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Research confirms that secure attachment contributes to individuals' self-esteem and ability to describe themselves in positive terms (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; Collins & Read, 1994; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003, 2004). This positive view of self contributes to individuals' success as leaders.

Securely-attached individuals have a sense of self-efficacy about dealing with difficult circumstances (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005a). Feeling positive about oneself, these individuals are able to regulate their emotions in difficult circumstances, seek support, solve problems, and continue making progress (Bandura, 1986; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005a). They can extend these skills to help others solve their problems in adverse circumstances (Mikulincer & Nachsohn, 1991). Bandura (1986) believes self-efficacy positively affects both the regulation of an individual's emotions and behaviour in positive, neutral, and difficult circumstances.

Whereas secure individuals demonstrate self-esteem that honestly and positively reflects their self-schemas, individuals with avoidant attachment hold a falsely inflated sense of self-esteem that negatively affects their relationships with others (Mikulincer, et al., 2008).

Anxiously-attached individuals also have a negative self-schema that hampers their effectiveness (Berlin, et al., 2008; Karen, 1994; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008).

#### *2.1.4 Attachment Style, Relationships with Others, and Support Seeking Behaviour*

Due to securely-attached individuals' ability to exhibit low avoidance of others because they believe that others will be available when needed, their strengths in relating to others (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1994; Mikulincer & Florian, 1997), result in many leadership advantages. Leaders get work done through others (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 2001). Their relationships skills aid their success. Securely-attached individuals can be responsive to others' needs due to their self-confidence and the positive modeling they have witnessed from their attachment figures (Mikulincer & Nachsohn, 1991). Successful contact with attachment figures who are people one can rely on, infuses securely-attached individuals with positive affect. This positive affect results in reduced hostility to others who are different, enhanced behavioural diversity, as well as displaying empathy, compassion, and service to others (Mikulincer & Florian, 1997; Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009a).

A number of researchers outline the long-term impact an individual's attachment style has on their emotional development (Berlin, et al., 2008; Bretherton, 1992; Keller, 2003; Mayseless & Popper, 2007; Mikulincer, et al., 2005; Tower, 2005). Seeking support in adverse situations is associated with a secure-attachment style (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). Shaver and Mikulincer (2002) found that seeking support is one emotional regulation strategy for dealing with adverse and stressful circumstances, other strategies include displaying distress and engaging in instrumental problem solving. Unfortunately, those with insecure attachment do not seek support. Avoidant-attached insecure individuals, due to their negative other-schemas, do not seek others' support, and because of anxious-attached individuals' low levels of self-esteem, they

do not feel worthy of others' support (Berlin, et al., 2008; Karen, 1994; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2008).

#### *2.1.5 Attachment Style and Exploration*

Individuals' secure-attachment style supports the confident exploration of their environment without fear (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009a). Securely-attached individuals activate security-enhancing self-representations during adverse events. These positive self-representations make it easier for them to lean into new experiences, be open to feedback, and learn (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). Secure individuals' high self-esteem supports them in taking risks (Mikulincer & Nachsohn, 1991). Secure-attachment figures aid individuals in their explorations by creating a secure base, thus allowing a child or adult to pursue goals in a safe environment and to carry out self-expanding activities (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009a). All of these qualities support successful leadership behaviour.

Attachment security enables individuals to have considerable ego-strength (Fraley & Shaver, 2008). Shaver and Mikulincer (2002) agree, stating that securely-attached individuals are open to learning and dealing with diverse circumstances. These individuals have recognized that, "[the] confidence in their skilled regulation of distress may allow them to open themselves to new, even threatening, information and then to develop suitable strategies for dealing realistically with environmental demands" (p. 140). Regulating distress through security-enhancing self-representations, securely-attached individuals can demonstrate ego-strength by exploring, learning, and opening themselves even in adverse circumstances.

#### *2.1.6 Attachment Style Affecting Positive Impact and Comfort with Positive Emotions*

Leaders need to be positive to attract others' motivation. Those leaders with a secure-attachment style can positively influence events and others. Securely-attached individuals have

internalized security-enhancing thoughts they have learned from attachment figures (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2003). Securely-attached individuals hold positive attitudes toward work and exploration because of these abilities (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). Mikulincer and Shaver (2004) discuss the outcomes of having secure and positive self-representations, “People who can count on such self-representations should find it easier to develop themselves along the lines of exploration, affiliation and self-actualization” (p. 187). Accessing security-based self-representations contributes to an individual’s ability to influence others beyond oneself, resulting in broadening and strengthening both people and situations (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). Secure attachment positively influences both interactions with others and within situations.

Individuals’ attachment style affects his or her ability to feel comfortable with positive and negative emotions. As the previous paragraph suggests, securely-attached individuals feel positive about themselves and others, and are more comfortable and familiar with positive feelings. Shaver and Mikulincer (2002) have found, however, that avoidant-attached individuals distance themselves from not only positive but also negative feelings, because they distance themselves from feelings in general. In addition, anxiously-attached individuals see positive emotions as threatening. They do not consistently rely on the positive emotions of others because of inconsistencies they have experienced by them with their attachment figures (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002).

## *2.2 Summary of Relatedness through Attachment Theory*

This section discussed the impact of an individual’s attachment style to their self- and other-schemas, self-esteem, relationship effectiveness, support-seeking behaviour, comfort with positive emotion, positive impact, and abilities to explore. Table 2 and 3 summarize the implications of differences in individual’s attachment styles and their resulting self- and other-

schemas discussed in the previous sections. The impact of a child's initial attachment style due to internalized parental behaviour may affect their success over their lifespan and remain unchanged unless other relationships or experiences alter the individual's behavioural trajectory and development. Refer to Figures 2 and 3 at the end of this section for a visual explanation of the parental patterns of behaviour that support or block children's relational needs. This section also outlined the implications of individuals' attachment style to their leadership behaviour.

Table 2: Secure-Attachment Style

<b>The Secure-Attachment Style</b>			
<b>1. Positive Self-Schema</b>		<b>2. Positive Other-Schema</b>	
<b>A. Self-Esteem</b>	<b>B. Self-Confidence</b>	<b>A. Confidence in Others</b>	<b>B. Generative View of Relationships</b>
Low anxiety	Responsive to others' needs due to personal self-confidence	Low avoidance of others	Inspires others
Positive affect due to successful contact with attachment figures	Positive and supportive about exploration	Likes to affiliate with others	Conveys hope to others
Self-worth	Open to learning, taking risks and feedback	Asks for help when needed	
Worthy of assistance	Positive attitude toward work	Believe in others' availability when needed	
Worthy of affection	Self-actualizing		
	Self-efficacy (believe in self) during adverse events and difficult circumstances		
	Able to solve own and others' problems		
	Resilience		
	Able to regulate emotions		
	Comfortable with difference and diversity		
	Empathy, compassion and service to others		



Table 3: Insecure-Attachment Styles

<b>Avoidant-Attachment Style</b>		
<b>1. False-Positive Self-Schema – Defensive Response</b>	<b>2. Negative Other-Schemas – Defensive Response</b>	
	<b>A. Negative Other-Schemas</b>	<b>B. Focuses Away from Relationships</b>
Displays low levels of anxiety	Demonstrates high avoidance	Displays attention inflexibility
	Negates the importance of relationship	Compulsively self-reliant
	Gives care only when it benefits them	Shows low resilience
	Devalues others	Demonstrates higher levels of hostility
	Does not reach out to others for support or protection	Distances self from both positive and negative feelings

<b>Anxious-Attachment Style</b>	
<b>1. Negative Self-Schema – Defensive Response</b>	<b>2. Positive Other-Schema – Defensive Response</b>
Displays high levels of anxiety	Demonstrates low avoidance
Internalizes core feelings of shame and unworthiness, self-deprecating	Blurs self-other boundaries
Shows low task performance	Over activates need to be with others, demanding, amplifies threats
Does not ask others for support	Demonstrates extreme need for validation from others
Focuses on own distress, catastrophic appraisals, rather than problems at hand, or others' concerns	
Unable to positively represent themselves, pessimistic beliefs about abilities	
Sees positive emotion as a threat due to parental inconsistencies	

### *2.3 The Need for Autonomy: Self-Determination Theory*

This section defines autonomy by outlining this aspect of self-determination theory. This section describes parental behaviour that supports and blocks children's development of autonomy. Autonomous behaviour creates responsibility, flexibility, and resilience in individuals, which are integral to leadership behaviour. Interestingly, autonomy, and attachment are interrelated constructs. Finally, autonomous behaviour supports competence and relationships with others.

Autonomy supports leaders' abilities to stand-alone and be authentic. It also supports responsible, resilient, and adaptable behaviour (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995), the very behaviours many leadership development programs develop in leaders. Loevinger (1976) explains that autonomous, self-initiating behaviour demonstrates healthy development in individuals. Self-determination is important to the topic of leadership because it is part of idealized influence, one of four areas within transformational leadership behaviour, outlined in a following section of this paper (Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006).

Autonomous behaviour is self-determining. Autonomy is not independence or detachment but rather acting from a sense of choice; being the originator rather than the pawn in life's circumstances (Reeve, 1996; Deci & Ryan, 2000). Acting from one's own needs, thoughts, and feelings gives one a sense of being the source of action (Reeve 1996; Skinner & Edge, 2002). Behaving autonomously entails acting from one's authentic self and entails taking responsibility for one's actions (Ryan, et al., 1995; Skinner & Edge, 2002).

Acting in autonomous ways begins through the kind of parenting a person receives (Ryan, et al., 1995). Parents that give children choice provide support for their autonomy and

self-determination. Skinner and Edge (2002) extend the definition of autonomy-supportive behaviour in the following statement, “Support for autonomy extends beyond allowing an individual freedom of choice and expression, to providing genuine respect and deference and encouraging individuals to actively discover, explore, and articulate their own views, goals and preferences” (p. 303). It is important that parents do not leave children alone, but provide an environment where the child can discover and express their true selves (Skinner & Edge, 2002). Refer to Figure 2 and 3 at the end of this section, for a summary of parental behaviours that meet or thwart the psychological needs of children.

### *2.3.1 Autonomy: Responsibility, Flexibility and Resilience*

Autonomous individuals are responsible, flexible, and adaptable in their behaviour, all of which are critical to leadership success. Deci and Ryan (2000) found that autonomous and internally-directed individuals take more responsibility for their problems. Autonomous responses enable a degree of flexibility and choice in the way one feels about and deals with events. Autonomy creates skills in regulating emotions and handling difficulty (Ryan, et al., 1995).

Being autonomous assists an individual to demonstrate resilient behaviour, which is vital to effective leadership. Individuals autonomously cope with situations when they have access to the psychological freedom to act on their preferences and goals, and when they expect others to respect and defer to their agenda (Skinner & Edge, 2002). In a number of studies, behaviour that supports autonomy aligns with the development of ego-resilience (Ryan, et al., 1995).

Individuals internalize the support they have received from others and therefore believe in their own ability to exert control and persevere in stressful times (Skinner & Edge, 2002).

### *2.3.2 Autonomy and Competence*

Autonomous behaviour also supports competence. Autonomy, an individual's internal locus of control, supports an individual's expectations that he or she can exert control over their environment, supporting competent behaviors (Tipton & Worthington, 1984). By placing importance on internal aspirations, support occurs for self-actualization and attainment of motivated goals (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The competence experienced by autonomous individuals helps them engage in challenges and supports the achievement of their goals (Deci, et al., 1995).

### *2.3.3 Autonomy and Others*

Autonomous behaviour supports effective relations with others, an important factor in leadership success. Autonomy flourishes in contexts characterized by security and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When authority figures treat children with respect and support their autonomy, children internalize these behaviours and values. Autonomous behaviour therefore results in the valuing of others' ways, and respect for relationships, and community (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

### *2.3.4 Autonomy and Attachment*

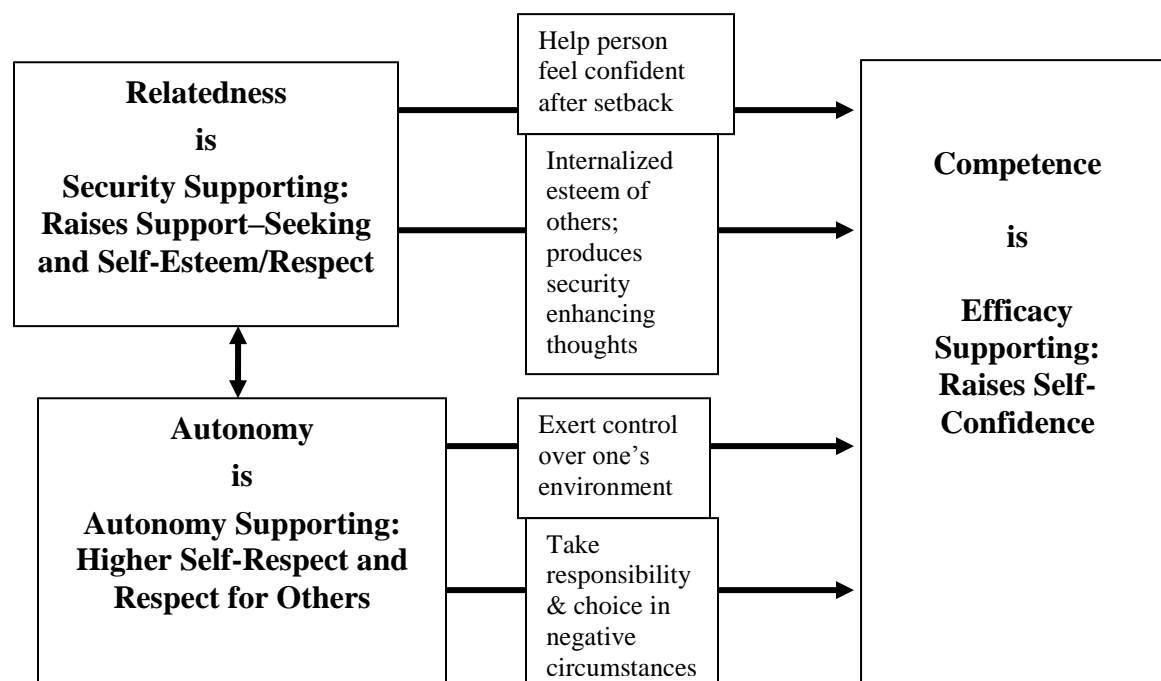
Ryan, et al., (1995) realized that individuals feel connected to others to the degree they can be themselves and feel secure in their connection with others only when others accept them. These researchers found that secure attachment and autonomy were interrelated. Conversely, if a person experiences an absence of autonomy support, the quality of relationships suffer and one's connections are more insecure (Ryan, et al., 1995). They explain that a child feels secure in exploring the world in a self-determining way, when supported to be autonomous by an attachment figure.

Parents with a secure-attachment style tend to grant their children autonomy yet are available as a secure source of support when needed (Towler, 2005). Secure children have the space and support from their parents to develop more self-awareness and a greater sense of self. The development of a positive model of self enables securely-attached individuals to explore and manage external obstacles and distress in their environment (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002). These security-based self-representations aid in the development of an autonomous self (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). Securely-attached individuals also hold positive other-schemas, which results in them trusting and believing that others have good intentions (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2002). Being able to feel positive and project positive feelings onto others supports individuals' ability to build their network of relationships (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004).

### *2.3.5 Autonomy and Secure Attachment Support Competence*

Relatedness and autonomy support competence in an interconnected way as competence supports relatedness and autonomy (Refer to Figure 1, Interrelated and Reinforcing Analysis). Relatedness supports internalized thoughts and feelings of being supported and protected resulting in individuals holding positive views of self, others, and relationships. Being autonomous supports the development of an internal locus of control and healthy self-respect. Individuals' abilities to stand-alone, and originate actions supports levels of self-confidence and competence.

## Relatedness and Autonomy Supports Competence



## Competence Supports Relatedness and Autonomy

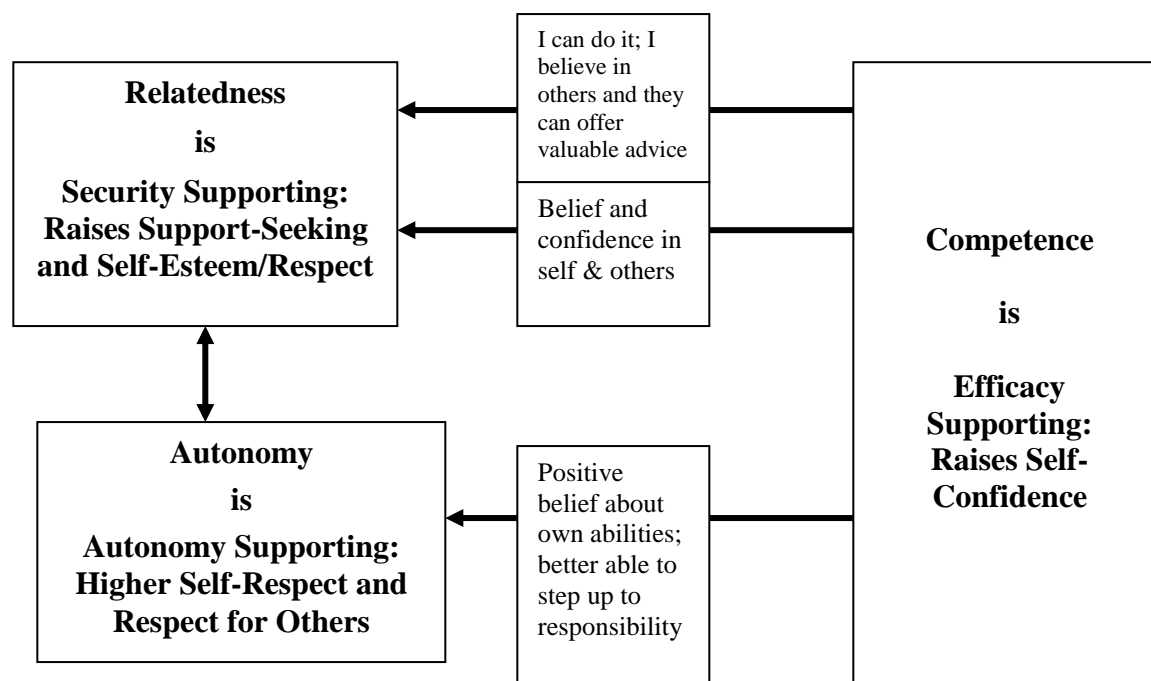


Figure 1: Interrelated and Reinforcing Analysis

### *2.4 Summary of Autonomy through Self-Determination Theory*

Autonomy equates to one's internal locus of control. Internal control is contained within the component of transformational leadership called idealized influence. Autonomy assists individuals to be:

- themselves, and therefore authentic,
- free to act on their preferences, enabling ego-resilience and enhanced coping abilities,
- responsible, taking ownership of their own actions,
- originators, acting from a sense of choice rather than pawns,
- competent, enabling engagement in challenging situations,
- adaptable, having choice in matters rather than blindly following others views, and
- relational, due to internalized respect, able to respect, believe in, and trust others.

Effective leaders demonstrate the important qualities of authenticity, responsibility, and adaptability. These qualities are key areas of focus in leadership development programs.

Autonomy also supports leaders' options and choices, which are especially important when facing difficulties. The autonomous individual is able to have a positive influence on others and their environment. Autonomy and secure-support-seeking behaviour are interrelated because secure parents grant their children autonomy whereas insecure parents either control their children or leave them to their own devices. Autonomy represents self-respecting behaviour, and relatedness represents a positive expectation of the support of others. These two enhance and support competence within individuals. Competence, the belief that one can carry out tasks successfully, supports autonomous behaviour. Seeking support for one's actions when needed also supports autonomous behaviour. These three constructs represent interrelated and reinforcing constructs.

### *2.5 The Need for Competence through Self-Efficacy*

This section describes self-efficacy, which supports competence in individuals. This section defines self-efficacy, as well as parental behaviour that creates this behaviour in children. Finally, the section explains the importance of this behaviour to leadership effectiveness.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in his or her capabilities to accomplish a task or set of tasks (Walumba, et al., 2008). This self-belief has impact on achievement, and motivation as well as individuals' ability to support others' self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Kanter, 2004; Walumba, Avolio, & Zhi, 2008). Bandura and Lock (2003) explain that efficacy beliefs:

affect whether individuals' think in self-enhancing or self-debilitating ways, how well they motivate themselves and persevere in the face of difficulties, the quality of their well-being and their vulnerability to stress and depression, and the choices they make at important decision points. (p. 87)

Higher levels of internal locus of control and self-esteem align with higher levels of leaders' self-efficacy (Hannnah, et al., 2008). Silverberg (1952) discusses components of self-esteem:

Throughout life, self-esteem has these two sources: an inner source, the degree of effectiveness of one's own aggression; and an external source, the opinions of others about oneself. Both are important, but the former is the steadier and more dependable one; the latter is always more uncertain. Unhappy and insecure is the man who, lacking an adequate inner source for self-esteem, must depend for this almost wholly upon external sources. (p. 29)

Silverberg (1952) defines aggression in this context as general activity leading to competence.

Self-esteem encompasses both the respect that one has for oneself and the levels of esteem one receives from others (White, 1963). Individuals can gain self-efficacy through supportive communication with significant others and problem-solving activities (Martin & Dowson, 2009). Parents can buoy up their child's self-esteem through praise or they can crush their esteem through contempt (White, 1963). Figures 2 and 3 summarize parental behaviour and its impact on children's efficacy levels at the end of this section.



Self-efficacy plays an important role in task-related achievement and performance (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Walumba, et al., 2008). Self-efficacy levels affect work outcomes, leader potential, and the number of attempts individuals initiate in taking the lead (Hannah, Avolio, Luthans, & Harms, 2008). High self-efficacy supports leaders' ability to test alternative courses of action when initially unsuccessful. By contributing to a successful resolution of a challenge, leaders demonstrates resiliency (Martin & Dowson, 2009).

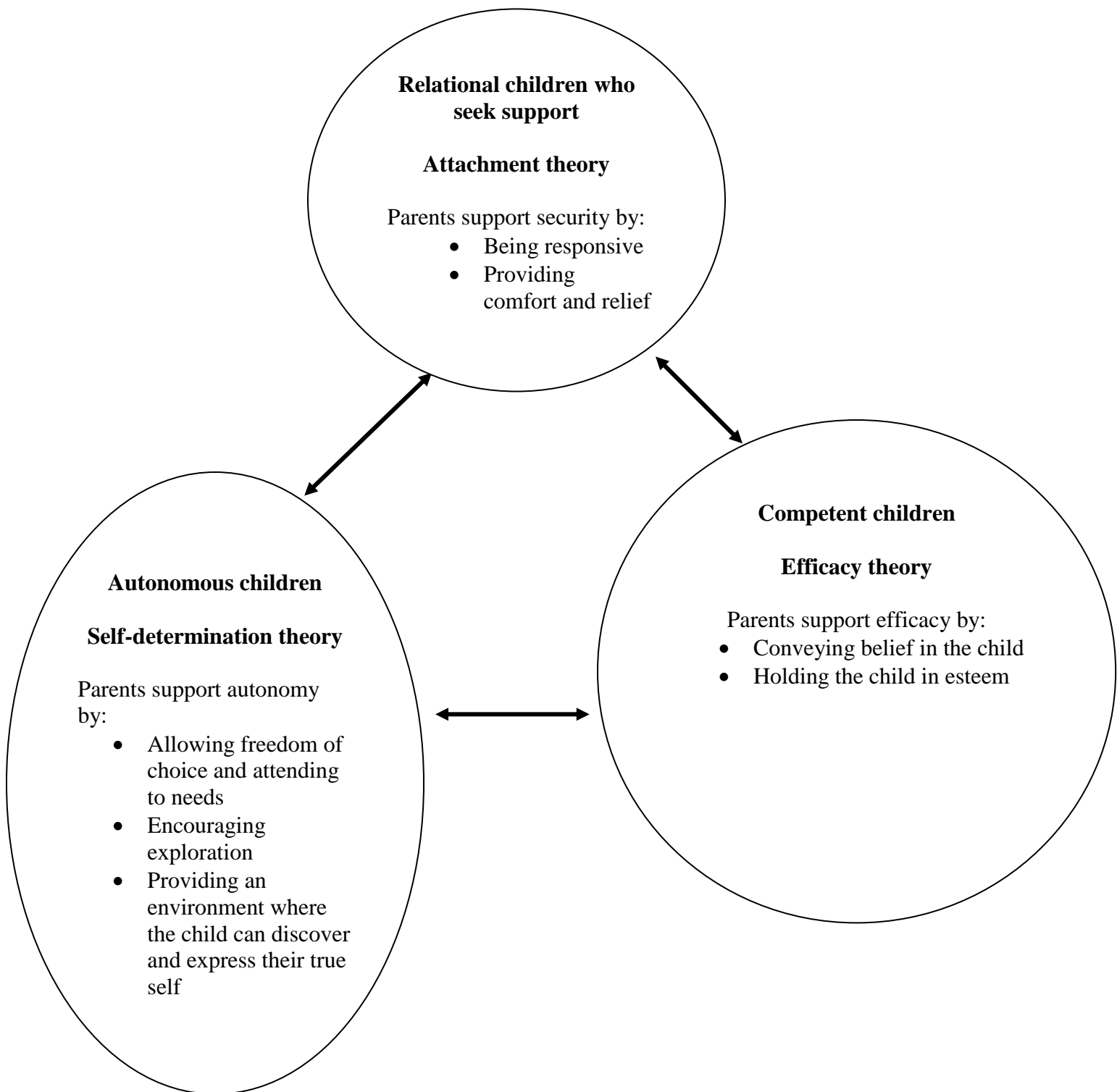
A key part of leaders' role is getting work done through others (Charan, et al., 2001). De Cremer and van Knippenberg (2004) say that leaders' self-efficacy underpins self-sacrificing behaviour, that is, leaders need to be self-confident before they can be self-sacrificing. Most leadership literature uses the terms "efficacy" and "confidence" interchangeably (Hannah, et al., 2008) and I follow this convention in this paper. The next paragraph outlines additional ways that leaders' self-efficacy influences others.

Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996) suggest that transformational leaders develop followers' feelings of self-efficacy by providing regular feedback to their followers. By understanding how followers view themselves, transformational leaders support employees' self-belief that they can successfully deal with challenging tasks (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996). House and Shamir (1993) suggest that the primary motivators used by transformational leaders to influence their followers are enhancing followers' self-efficacy and self-worth. Leaders' can also role model appropriate behaviour (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Morrman, & Fetter, 1990). Then followers identify with positive and effective role models (Bandura, 1986; Martin & Dowson, 2009). Developing followers' self-efficacy and self-confidence serves to empower followers to achieve the leader's vision (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Yukl, 1998).

Literature on self-efficacy suggests that this belief in oneself has a positive impact on achievement, motivation, and others' self-confidence. Leaders are able to motivate others because of the respect and self-enhancing thoughts they have for themselves and others. These positive thoughts help them face difficulties, enabling them to cope with stress, and ultimately achieve and perform. Self-efficacy also underpins and enables self-sacrifice in leaders. Finally, leaders build others' self-confidence and model self-efficacy, which their followers internalize.

### *2.6 Summary of Competence through Self-Efficacy*

Individuals' belief in their ability to carry out tasks supports competence. This chapter explains that underlying levels of self-esteem need to be higher for self-efficacy to occur. Having the support of others elevates self-efficacy levels. Individuals have internal positive regard and believe they are able to complete work.



**Figure 2: Summary of Positive Parental Behaviour Patterns that Meet Children's Psychological Needs**



**Figure 3: Summary of Unsatisfactory Parental Behaviours that Interfere with Meeting Children's Psychological Needs**

## 2.7 Transformational Leadership Theory

This section defines transformational leadership and the behaviour this type of leader exhibits. In addition, it discusses the four components of transformational leadership, *individualized consideration*, *idealized influence*, *inspirational motivation*, and *intellectual stimulation*. Transformational leadership rates highly in both outcomes and by followers in research findings. This section also explains both transformational and normal states of leadership. A discussion about idealized influence occurs here, representing one component of transformational leadership, which requires leaders to have strong self-esteem, self-efficacy, and internal directedness. In addition, it discusses researchers' findings about the direct correlations between attachment theory and transformational leadership theory. Researchers have found that secure attachment correlates with three of the four components of transformational leadership, *individualized consideration*, *idealized influence* and *intellectual stimulation*.

Over the past thirty years, transformational, charismatic, and inspirational leadership theory has appeared in organizational literature (Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978; Conger & Kanungo, 1987; Kurnert & Lewis, 1987). Transformational leadership is influence that is transformational in nature; it changes others (Bass, 1985; Torbert, et al., 2004; Kegan & Lahey, 2009). This type of leadership transcends the ordinary exchanges of compliance that are the province of transactional leadership (Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership arouses transcendental interests in followers and elevates their aspiration levels, and creates changes within them (Bass, 1985).

Many authors of leadership agree that transformational leaders act as catalysts of deep change (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Quinn, 2004). Bennis and Nanus describe a transformational leader as, "one who commits people to action,

who converts followers into leaders, and who may convert leaders into agents of change. We refer to this as ‘transformative leadership’.” (1985, p. 3). Leaders need to lead change; therefore, transformational leadership supports the role of leaders and change within organizations.

### 2.7.1 Components of Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is transformational influence; acting in ways that enable transformation or change in others. Transformational leaders act with *individualized consideration*, *idealized influence*, *inspirational motivation*, and *intellectual stimulation* (Bass & Riggio, 2006). *Individualized consideration* includes the ability to see followers as having ideas, contributions, and needs of their own and increasing followers’ self-efficacy. Leaders pay special attention to each follower’s needs by being their coach and mentor (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Popper, et al., 2000; Walumba, et al., 2008). *Idealized influence* characterized by self-esteem, self-efficacy, and integrity, and inspiring trust, respect, and admiration, individuals’ focus on the greater good. Leaders are excellent role models when they act in these ways (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Popper, et al., 2000; Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006). *Intellectual stimulation* characterized by openness to external input and inspiring creativity in followers. Leaders stimulate followers’ efforts to innovate and create by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching situations in new ways, demonstrating openness to new approaches and feedback (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Popper, et al., 2000; Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006). Creating meaning, challenge, and facilitating shared values and goals characterizes *inspirational motivation* (Refer to Table 4, Transformational Leadership Qualities). Leaders motivate and inspire by providing meaning and challenge to others (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Popper, et al., 2000; Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006).

Table 4: Transformational Leadership Qualities

<b>Individualized Consideration:</b> Pays attention to each individual follower's needs for achievement and growth by acting as a coach/mentor. Quinn's Fundamental State of Leadership – "Other Focused"
<b>Idealized Influence:</b> Transformational leaders behave in ways that allow them to serve as role models for their followers. Admired, respected and trusted leaders. Followers identify with the leaders and want to emulate them. Quinn's Fundamental State of Leadership – "Internally Directed"
<b>Intellectual Stimulation:</b> Stimulates follower's efforts to innovate, reframes problems, questions assumptions, open to new approaches and feedback. Quinn's Fundamental State of Leadership – "Externally Open"
<b>Inspirational Motivation:</b> Provide meaning and inspirational leadership to inspire and motivate followers and those around them. Team spirit is aroused, enthusiasm and optimism displayed. Quinn's Fundamental State of Leadership – "Purpose Centered"

### *2.7.2 Transformational Leadership Rated High in Outcome and Subjective Ratings*

Transformational leadership is high in both outcome and subjective ratings (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass (1999) says transformational leaders go beyond their self-interests, thereby engendering trust in those they lead. Followers need to trust their leaders to identify with their organizations' values and goals. Transformational leadership enhances commitment, loyalty, involvement, and performance of followers, and reduces the stress of followers thereby enhancing the impact of leaders (Bass, 1999). Transformational leaders arouse self-esteem and self-evaluation within their followers (Bass, 1999). When leaders think in self-enhancing ways, exhibiting confidence, which is self-motivating, the impact on decision-making enables higher performance levels (Hannah, et al., 2008).

Transformational leaders inspire extraordinary outcomes from their followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). They assist followers to strengthen their leadership capacity and align with their

needs and objectives (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders gain stronger commitments from followers by providing both challenge and support, thereby adding to followers' sense of self-worth, and increasing their commitment and involvement in tasks and projects (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders focus on the potential in people and situations (Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006). Transformational leadership develops inspiring, motivating, and intellectually stimulating environments that enable followers to transcend their own self-interests for collective purposes.

### 2.7.3 *The Fundamental and Normal States of Leadership*

The fundamental state of leadership has four components which correspond with Bass's concept of transformational leadership: 1) being other focused which corresponds with *individualized consideration*, 2) internally directed corresponding with *idealized influence*, 3) externally open which corresponds with *intellectual stimulation*, and 4) purpose centered corresponding with *inspirational motivation* (Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006) (Refer to Table 4, Transformational Leadership Qualities).

Robert Quinn's slant on transformational theory outlines individuals' ability to change through challenge. He believes they enter a psychological state, the fundamental state of leadership (Quinn, 2004; Quinn & Quinn, 2009). He explains that this temporary state, which individuals move in and out of, consists of four different behaviours. Individuals become other focused, internally directed, externally open, and purpose centered. Quinn believes that when individuals are in the fundamental state of leadership they have a positive effect on others. He believes individuals in this state impact others because of who they are being in that moment, through being in their foundational state (2004). Quinn quotes one person who entered this state, "I know it all happened because I confronted my own insecurity, selfishness, and lack of



courage” (2004, p. ix). Quinn and Spreitzer (2006) believe individuals can enter the fundamental state of leadership during naturally occurring challenges or events that heighten the need for change. The fundamental state of leadership increases individuals’ transformational influence, however Quinn does not believe this state is constant within individuals.

Quinn and Spreitzer also outline the “normal state” of functioning whereby individuals are: 1) self focused, 2) externally directed, 3) internally closed, and 4) comfort centered. In the normal state individuals seek to reduce uncertainty, increase their relative sense of comfort, and increase self-interested strategies of acquisition. Quinn and Spreitzer (2006) see this as normal, however, due to the rigidity, shrinking nature, absence of change, and external locus of control, outcomes of the normal state represent a *slow death*. They see people preserving the status quo by focusing on solving existing problems in the normal state; in contrast, a challenge requiring transformational change involves creating new outcomes or contributions that can occur when one is in the fundamental state of leadership (2006).

Changing conditions and/or crises require transformational leaders (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). Individuals turn to a secure base in new or difficult circumstances wanting security, protection, and guidance (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Individuals regulate their felt sense of security by maintaining proximity to transformational leaders in difficult, ambiguous, and chaotic circumstances (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). Anxiously-attached individuals’ need transformational leaders even more than others, in changing or critical circumstances, because of the underlying fear they feel (Mayseless & Popper, 2007).

#### *2.7.4 Self-Efficacy, Internal Orientation, and Transformational Leadership*

One component of transformational leadership, *idealized influence* (internally-directed), is underpinned by an individual’s self-efficacy and internal orientation (Bass & Riggio, 2006;

Popper, et al., 2000; Quinn & Spreitzer, 2006). Individuals with attachment figures who are responsive to their needs benefit by developing greater self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005a). Individuals who received support for acting autonomously are able to develop skills in internal-directedness and demonstrate greater levels of self-efficacy (Ryan & Deci, 2000, Tipton & Worthington, 1984). Respect or autonomy support reinforces individuals' self-efficacy levels, internal orientation. Respect also underpins one's belief that they are worthy of the support of others, enabling them to be relational. Autonomy, competence, and relatedness are therefore interrelated constructs that are mutually reinforcing (Refer to Figure 1, Interrelated and Reinforcing Analysis).

The secure-attachment style positively correlates with *idealized influence* (internally directed) (Popper, et al., 2000). The lack of self-esteem and self-efficacy of anxious-attached individuals result in negative correlations with transformational leadership qualities (Popper, et al., 2000). These findings speak to the importance of transformational leaders having strong levels of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-efficacy.

#### 2.7.5 Attachment Theory and its Impact on Transformational Leadership

Secure attachment has been positively correlated with three components of transformational leadership: *idealized influence* (internally directed), *individualized consideration* (other focused), and *intellectual stimulation* (externally open) (Popper, et al., 2000). *Individualized consideration* includes the ability to increase followers' self-efficacy and be other focused (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Popper, et al., 2000; Walumba, et al., 2008). Other researchers concur with this view by saying that leaders require strong interpersonal skills, a positive sense of others (Day, 2001), and the ability to get work done through others (Charan, et al., 2001).

Securely-attached individuals have a pro-social attitude because of their positive-self and positive other-schemas (Davidovitz, et al., 2007). Their confidence and positive expectations of relations with others supports their ability to be other focused. Both types of insecure-attachment styles exhibit behaviours that hamper positive relations with others. Popper, et al., (2000) found that the avoidant-attachment style negatively correlates with *individualized consideration* (other focused). Additionally, anxiously-attached individuals' persistent anxiety hampers their focus and consideration of the needs of others (Popper, et al., 2000; Berlin, et al., 2008).

Researchers found that more men were avoidant in their attachment style therefore hampering their relationships with others (Schmidt, 2003). The implications are negative for men as anyone with avoidant-insecure attachment does not demonstrate individualized consideration (other-focused behaviour), thus limiting their ability to be transformational leaders. If men exhibit avoidant-attachment behaviours this limits their ability to lead effectively.

*Intellectual stimulation* is another construct within transformational leadership affected by individual's attachment style. In three studies done by researchers, secure attachment positively correlates with *intellectual stimulation* (externally open) (Popper, et al., 2000; Quinn, 2004). Both insecure styles of attachment, anxious- and avoidant-attached individuals, correlate negatively with *intellectual stimulation* (externally-open behaviour) (Popper, et al., 2000; Quinn, 2004).

Quinn (2004) believes that leaders need to be adaptively confident, "to move forward into uncertainty knowing that continuous clarification of purpose, continuous movement, and openness to feedback will result in the creation of a better state" (2004, p.56). He also believes that exchanges of information give rise to new and more complex solutions (2004). Secure

attachment enables a sense of confidence to occur which assists individuals in learning from new situations and feedback. Securely-attached individuals exhibit self-confidence, a positive sense of self, while avoidant-attached individuals exhibit defensively high self-confidence, and anxious-attached individuals demonstrate low self-confidence.

Other attachment-related traits that are important to the development of leadership abilities include:

- one's ability to keep things progressing by reaching out to others when stuck or in difficulty,
- one's ability to explore, learn, obtain feedback, and be strategic,
- one's view of relatedness and responsiveness to others versus one's defensiveness with others,
- one's ability to regulate their emotions and exercise resilience in stressful circumstances, and
- one's ability to focus on and solve problems enabling performance and positive outcomes.

The implications of individuals' attachment styles correspond to the degree to which they are able to carry out the above activities.

#### *2.7.6 Autonomy and its Impact on Idealized Influence, Individualized Consideration, Intellectual Stimulation, and Responsibility*

Individuals' autonomous behaviour supports aspects of transformational leadership, specifically *idealized influence* (internal-directed) and *intellectual stimulation* (externally open). Individuals are internally-directed and have choices in their thinking when they are autonomous (Avolio, 2004). Individual's ability to explore, obtain feedback, and be strategic are part of the quadrant within transformational leadership called *intellectual stimulation* (externally open) (Bass, 1990, Quinn, 2004). Following others' thoughts does not aid outcomes if the situation is negative. If one demonstrates autonomy of thought, they can accomplish positive outcomes in adversity. Leaders can pursue positive and alternative outcomes by challenging the core

assumptions others hold in situations that are not aiding the situation (Avolio, 2004). If leaders have a strong sense of autonomy or choice and believe they are originators of action, they will exhibit choice when others see only difficulties or when the current assumptions about situations are not giving the desired result (Reeve, 1996; Skinner & Edge 2002). *Intellectually stimulating* (externally open) leaders also create an atmosphere where it is safe to challenge and encourage followers to question their assumptions and mental schemas (Avolio, 2004).

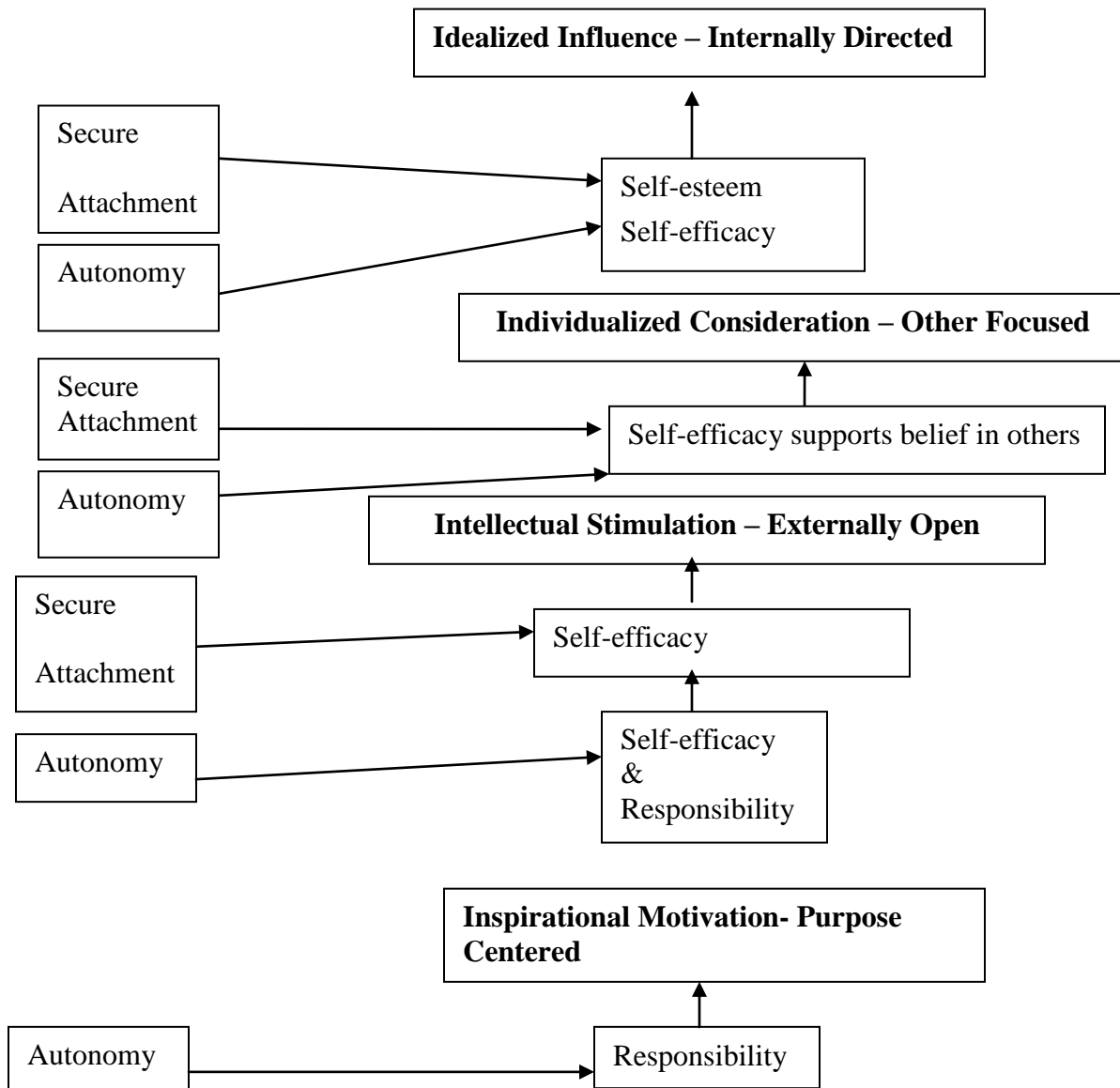
When individuals are autonomous, they are able to interact with others successfully. Both internalized respect and the role modeling of respect from authority figures enables autonomous individuals to demonstrate respect for others (other focused) (Bass, 1990). Individualized consideration (other focused) consists of leaders' ability to respect the unique ways of others.

Being originators of actions allows for enhanced responsibility (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Quinn (2004, 2009) believes that we can change results and ourselves in the process when we empower ourselves by taking responsibility, or we can be victims by staying stuck, feeling overwhelmed, or in a trap. Individuals can choose to take responsibility and change for the better, and through influence, assist in changing others (Quinn, 2004). Taking responsibility positively influences one aspect of transformational leadership, *inspirational motivation* (purpose centered) (Refer to Table 4, Transformational Leadership Qualities).

## *2.8 Summary of Factors that Impact Transformational Leadership*

Secure attachment has been positively correlated with three components of transformational leadership: *idealized influence* (internally directed), *individualized consideration* (other focused), and *intellectual stimulation* (externally open) (Popper, et al., 2000). Autonomy supports individuals' levels of *idealized influence* (internally directed), *individualized consideration* (other focused), *intellectual stimulation* (externally open), and

responsibility levels, which influences one's *inspirational motivation* levels (purpose centered) (Reeve, 1996; Skinner & Edge, 2002.) Self-efficacy supports *idealized influence* (internally directed), *individualized consideration* (other focused) and *intellectual stimulation* (externally open). Figure 4 depicts these statements pictorially.



**Figure 4: Meeting Three Psychological Needs Support Components of Transformational Leadership Behaviour**

## *2.9 Views on Development*

This section describes different views of development. Some researchers argue that transformational leadership is a state that one moves in and out of, yet other researchers argue that this style of leadership becomes a pervasive stage. Certain levels of ego-development equate with transformational leadership qualities. Individuals' mental models become more complex and broader as they develop. Numerous researchers discuss the importance of autonomous behaviour as supporting transformational leadership behaviour. Interactions with others over one's lifespan aid individuals' development especially with others who act as a secure base. Finally raising awareness in different ways supports individuals' development. Individuals who change themselves can act as catalysts in aiding change in others.

Quinn's fundamental state of leadership aligns closely with Bass's transformational leadership model. The four quadrants of transformational leadership line up with each other (Refer to Table 4, Transformational Leadership Qualities). Where they differ is that Bass sees transformational leadership as trait-like behaviour, stable over time. Bass measures leaders quantitatively asking leaders and their followers what style of leadership behaviour these leaders demonstrate. Quinn, however, sees people moving in and out of the state of transformational leadership, moving into the transformational state when a crisis occurs. Quinn would not agree with measuring transformational behaviour as a leadership stage or as trait-like as Bass does. Rather Quinn believes transformational behaviour is a temporary psychological state.

Quinn says that individuals can operate from this fundamental state of leadership more and more; however, he refrains from saying that individuals operate at a different stage of development or exhibit trait-like behaviour (2004). Bass (1990), Kegan and Lahey (2009),



Wilber (2006), and Torbert, et al. (2004) believe individuals attain stages of development that are more pervasive than states. Torbert argues:

I agree with Quinn that leadership is a state which circumstances may bring about at a particular moment in just about anyone, just as I think we'd find that the right kind of in-depth interview would reveal Strategist or Alchemist 'moments' in just about anyone's experience. However, at the post-conventional action-logics, persons are increasingly actively seeking to cultivate such moments, are increasingly quick to see when they have fallen back into earlier action-logic/non-leadership states, are increasingly comfortable with the exercise of non-coercive, mutually-transforming power, etc. Hence, I guess the developmental empirical proposition would be something like, the more frequently a person exhibits 'leadership states' the more likely s/he is to be measured at a late action-logic. (W. R. Torbert, personal communication, October 25, 2009)

Cook-Greuter (2004) and Torbert et al. (2004) believe that as a state becomes a more pervasive way of being, it becomes a stage. For example, when one thinks of the Dalai Lama who lives in a pervasive state of mindfulness, his mindfulness would indicate a *stage* of consciousness, not a *state* of consciousness, because of its inherent stability.

Cook-Greuter (2004) believes in a stage model of development. She argues that the broader stages represent stages of ego-development and categorizes them as pre-conventional, conventional, post-conventional, and transpersonal or ego-transcendent. The four stages consist of the following: 1) the pre-conventional stage - focuses on and meeting one's own needs in an opportunistic way, 2) the conventional stage - means operating within existing structures and values, 3) the post-conventional stage - is the ability to envision, anticipate, and creatively adapt to changing circumstances, and 4) the transpersonal or ego-transcendent stage – operates with an interplay of awareness, thought, and actions (Cook-Greuter, 2004). Her work further develops the ego-development studies conducted by Loevinger (1966).

The autonomous and strategic stages of ego-development are equivalent to transformational leadership qualities at the post-conventional stage. Cook-Greuter (2000) calls

the stages of ego-development pre-social, symbiotic, impulsive, self-protective, conformist, conscientious/conformist, conscientious, individualistic, autonomous, construct-aware and unitive (Cook-Greuter, 2000). She elaborates saying that the individualistic and increasingly more mature stages are post-conventional. Cook-Grueter (2000) and Torbert, et al. (2004) believe that the autonomous or strategist stage of ego-development represents transformational leadership behaviour. Loevenger (1976) also outlines the importance of the development of autonomy as central to the development of adults.

Cook-Greuter's (2004) views on development are that individuals' mental models become more complex and broader as they progress (Cook-Greuter, 2004). Cook-Greuter indicates "only Strategists can take a fully developmental perspective of self, others, and organizations and comprehend the complex dynamics of interrelated systems" (2004, p. 280). Cook-Greuter (2004) believes individuals grow vertically so that they become able to see with new eyes, can see more territory, and thereby see with new views of reality. Each more complex stage of development influences what individuals notice or can become aware of and what they describe, articulate, influence, and change. She believes individuals develop in a spiral fashion and that movement is possible both horizontally, broadening behaviour and vertically, seeing with new eyes (2002). The circle of influence widens as individuals move to each next stage. Cook Greuter (2004) outlines two types of learning: 1) lateral growth, happens through schooling, training, inner-directed and life-long learning, and through exposure to life; and 2) vertical growth, when we see with new eyes, and individuals' realities transform. She believes that changes in our reality are more powerful than horizontal growth and learning. Cook-Greuter outlines effective development strategies that transform individuals including practices such as "self-reflection, action inquiry, dialogue and living in the company of those further along the

development path” (2004, p. 277). Torbert, et al. (2004) conducted a study where they found that post-conventional professionals, those at the individualistic or higher stages, were more likely to understand others’ frames, test constraints in situations, undertake negotiation with their superiors, notice discrepancies with their principles, and gain acceptance by being aware of other’s points of view. Cook-Greuter (2004) believes that as development unfolds individuals become more autonomous, free, tolerant, flexible, reflective, and skilled in interacting with their environment while decreasing their defences.

Interaction with others can aid individuals’ development. White (1963) outlines different sources of support for development over one’s lifespan. He outlines parents’ or caregivers’ support of ego-development to the age of five. Then, other aspects of life, contribute to individuals’ development after this age. By the age of ten, friends or contemporaries can help individuals’ development and by the age of fifteen and beyond romantic partners can aid in the support and development of the individual. Mayseless and Popper (2007) discuss equalitarian relationships such as peers, friends, relationship partners, and others as providing support in adulthood. An important theme in the growth of the individual is that alternative sources other than parents can support individuals in their effectiveness and health (White, 1963).

Interacting with a person who acts as a secure base helps to sustain self-development especially in times of need or stress (Davidovitz, et al., 2007). Periods of threat and/or change create conditions where individuals need reassurance, protection, and alleviation of anxiety from others (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). Transformational leaders can act as attachment figures in times of difficulty by satisfying the needs of adults in the same way that parents do for their children (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). Freud (1939) first outlined the topic, equating the bonds

one has with one's parents as similar to the bonds one has with another authority figure such as one's leader.

Interactions with persons who act as a secure base are especially important because feedback from these individuals supports the development of individuals' confidence and competence, enhancing their effective leadership abilities. White (1963) points out that people with higher self-esteem and self-efficacy demonstrate greater ego-strength. Higher levels of ego-strength are associated with strong leadership tendencies and effective intellectual abilities. In contrast, individuals with lower levels of ego-strength exhibit anxiety and dependence. White (1963) explains this theme by outlining research that those with higher ego-strength are able to tolerate tension and excitement more skilfully, and are able to carry out their goals more effectively in the face of hindrances. Higher levels of competence and confidence support one's ego-strength. This increases individuals' ability to deal with their environment because of their greater abilities to receive feedback (White, 1963).

Many researchers believe that leaders need to both change themselves and continuously focus on developing themselves; this also acts as positive modeling for others' development (Avolio, 2004; Quinn, 2004; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Action inquiry takes the form of acting and inquiring which aids individuals to become more capable of self-transformation and thus more creative, and more aware (Torbert et al., 2004). All of these researchers stress the importance of transforming oneself as a necessary condition for transforming others and organizations. Quinn (2004), and Kegan and Lahey (2009) say individuals often resist the deep changes they need to make. Quinn (2004), Bass and Riggio (2006), Bennis and Nanus (1985), and Kegan and Lahey (2009) all state that transformational leaders are catalysts of change, by changing themselves they act as change agents.

A number of researchers discuss the importance of raising awareness, thereby raising one's knowledge of the need for change, in leaders through reflection and mindfulness practices. Heightened awareness can lead to development of individuals. Quinn and Spreitzer (2006), Wilber (2006), Torbert, et al. (2004), and Joiner and Josephs (2007) indicate that heightened awareness or 'mindfulness' are important to the development of leadership skills. Quinn and Spreitzer (2006) promote awareness building, reflection, and mindfulness by asking leaders to question themselves frequently. Avolio (2004) also believes in the importance of reflection to raise awareness and ensure individuals apply their learning in the workplace. Wilber (2006) believes individuals can accelerate their development by being involved in mindfulness practices such as meditation or tai chi. Torbert, et al. (2004) believe leaders who engage in spiritual practices enable, "heightened ongoing presence to [themselves] ourselves" (p. 95). Torbert, et al. (2004) says this type of practice allows more internal development and increases one's awareness and the occurrence of individuals' intended outcomes.

### Chapter Three: Theoretical Perspectives and Methodologies

Both of the research methodologies utilized are qualitative in nature. The ways in which participants have developed over their lifetime, are personal, subjective, and diverse, requiring a qualitative lens. The methodologies chosen were *hermeneutic phenomenology*, enabling deep listening for themes about becoming secure and transformational leaders, and *narrative inquiry* allowing for the details of the participants' identities, psychosocial development, and histories to emerge.

The methodologies support exploration of topics and co-constructed knowledge, gathering both the participants' and researcher's views and experiences. Seeking information and patterns in the evolution of secure and transformational leaders over their lives may advance and inform leaders and developmental specialists. Hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative inquiry methodologies focus on the subjective experiences of participants rather than relying on the perspective and knowledge of the researcher alone (Lopez & Willis, 2004; Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998). The results can be richer when the research considers themes from the perspectives of both the participants and the researcher.

#### *3.1 Methodologies*

Below I explain the rationale for using hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative inquiry methodologies. The chapter discusses each methodology's features and methods of analyzing hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative inquiry. The chapter ends with a section about assessing qualitative research in general.

##### *3.1.1 Branches of Phenomenology*

There are different branches of phenomenology, which represent the diverse philosophical approaches within this methodology. Outlined in this section are Husserlian or

transcendental phenomenology and existential or hermeneutic phenomenology. I highlight these two because they convey very diverse ways of utilizing phenomenological methodologies. I have chosen to use hermeneutic phenomenology as a methodology for this study and explain my rationale for this choice.

Husserlian or transcendental phenomenology supports duality, the existence of both subject and object, and rests on the foundation that we live our lives through knowing the world (Thompson, 1990). Walters (1995) explains that Husserlian phenomenology focuses on what is known and conceptualizes human reality as *objects* that can be known. The goal here is discovering real, static, and permanent knowledge that withstands time (Bernstein, 1983). The problem with utilizing a philosophy that is dualistic and ultimately knowing what “it” is that makes things what they are is twofold; individuals change and what they lived and knew at one time varies over the course of history and time.

Within this type of phenomenology, researchers utilize their consciousness to find knowledge (Palmer, 1969). Bracketing or suspending one’s beliefs enables the study of concrete experiences (van Manen 1990). An attempt to separate the researcher from his or her bias facilitates objectivist results (Walters, 1995). This methodology prefers describing rather than understanding. Researchers describe their experiences before they have thoughts about them.

Phenomenology need not necessarily disclose individual’s *consciousness*, it can also explain individual’s *being* (Palmer, 1969). To understand this we turn to Heidegger’s views on phenomenology. Existential or hermeneutical phenomenology rejects the notion of subject and object and maintains that we cannot have a world except through the interpretation, understanding, and experience of it (Thompson, 1990). Heidegger who was the originator of existential phenomenology views individuals as *beings* entailing more than just their

consciousness (Palmer, 1969). I believe we bring our minds, hearts, intuition, spirituality, bodies, experiences, and relationships to our knowing the world.

Hermeneutic phenomenology emphasizes ontological views of how individuals live or are in the world. There is no such thing as letting the facts speak for themselves or knowledge that is independent of interpretation (Walters, 1989). We come to know our world by participating with it and being involved with it (Hein & Austin, 2001). We are part of our interpretations and understandings, which we view with a lens that takes into consideration our experience, and our lives lived so far.

Hermeneutical phenomenology, developed by Heidegger does not require the suspension or bracketing one's beliefs (LeVasseur, 2003). Researchers uncover their pre-understandings and values over the course of the study staying curious as to what differences they can understand and learn from research participants (Drew, 1989; Hein & Austin, 2001). Smythe, Ironside, Sims, Swenson, and Spence (2008) explain the importance of revealing pre-understandings:

In other words, who one is as-researcher is fundamental to the thinking of research, for thinking does not happen as a mechanistic process divorced from being in the world. Rather thinking is lived, breathed, and dreamt, felt, run-with, laughed, and cried. (p. 1390)

Our pre-understandings are our lens through which we look at the study. We define what we are interested in within the study when we outline our pre-understandings and then we bring our curiosity to the study.

Thus by relaxing but not eliminating pre-understandings, researchers enlarge what they understand (Thompson, 1990). LeVasseur (2003) discussed this type of learning within studies, saying individuals cannot rid themselves of their backgrounds and intentions but can suspend them momentarily when new information presents itself. New understanding and interpretations



of participant experiences can fuse to the pre-understandings of the researcher resulting in expanded or broadened understanding (Gadamer, 1989; Hein & Austin, 2001). A difference in understanding between the researcher and participants ultimately affects and expands the standpoint of the researcher (Thompson, 1990; van Manen, 1995). The understanding of the researcher becomes larger and goes beyond his or her pre-understandings.

Heideggerian phenomenology also recognizes the important contribution of the researcher's experiences in the interpretation process (van Manen, 1990; Thompson, 1990; Walters, 1995). Utilizing hermeneutic phenomenology enables researchers to compare and use their own experiences with participants as data sources (van Manen, 1984, 1990). van Manen (1984) explains, that "the author recognized both that one's own experience are the possible experiences of others and that the experiences of others are the possible experiences of oneself" (p. 52). My own experiences can be included as data while utilizing this methodology.

I utilize hermeneutic phenomenological informed by Heidegger and Gadamer within this study and the benefit is a true co-construction of data. Ideally, this research study will use rich description, text as data, themes, co-constructed results, and understandings based on participants' particular context, time, and interconnections, and the researchers' experience as data.

### *3.2 Hermeneutic Phenomenology*

This type of phenomenology fits with interpretivist worldviews (Gadamer, 1989), as interpretive researchers listen to and learn from the experiences of others, which lead to an eventual understanding (Thompson, 1990). Smythe, et al, (2008) explain that carrying out phenomenology is the process of pursuing complex and compelling ideas in a way that requires a "thinking together" for understandings to emerge. Thoughts that come together to form the

findings; combine the participants' subjective experiences and the experiences, understanding, and interpretations of the researcher.

This research can unearth stories, descriptions, and understandings of participants' development, providing access to deeper structures of meaning. Quantification cannot accomplish the exploration of deeper structures of essential meaning (Baker, Wuest, & Stern, 1992). Thompson (1990) explains that hermeneutic phenomenology "can lead to more insightful, more reflective and hopefully, more liberating kinds of research" (p. 228). Phenomenology turns away from science and scientific knowledge, at the starting point of the research, and returns to the participants themselves to discover new things and understandings about lived experiences (Enrich, 2005). Diekelmann and Ironside (2006) state that "the description of the common practices and shared meanings is intended to reveal, enhance and extend understandings of the human situation as it is lived" (p. 260). In this way, turning to and listening deeply to experiences, phenomenology can contribute new understandings about topics of study.

Interpretations depend on the researcher's point of view and therefore multiple interpretations are possible within hermeneutic phenomenology. The researcher's prior experience affects their interpretation (Whitehead, 2003) and therefore, more than one interpretation is possible (Hein & Austin, 2001). Many possible perspectives exist and the analogy of a prism illustrates this point (Hein & Austin, 2001). When a prism is turned, it changes and the perspective changes, similarly, when different researchers look through their differing backgrounds and contexts they view the phenomenon through different lenses (Hein & Austin, 2001).

Understandings revealed through hermeneutics are difficult to obtain in other ways. Sitting with experiences for long periods reveals details of these experiences. The use of

hermeneutics reveals information hidden in human experience (Lopez & Willis, 2004).

Hermeneutic phenomenology is a technique that captures rich details of participants' lived experience and structures of meaning (Enrich, 2005; Gadamer, 1989; Suddaby, 2006). van Manen (1995) explains saying, "phenomenological research consists of reflectively bringing into nearness that which tends to be obscure, that which tends to evade the intelligibility of our natural attitude of everyday life" (p. 41). Participants talk about meanings and explain details through the stories they tell and the analysis reveals hard-to-get-at information that extends understanding of the phenomenon.

### *3.2.1 Hermeneutic Phenomenology Features*

This section outlines features of this methodology including purposive sampling, hermeneutic interviews, text, rich description, time, context, and inter-subjectivity, and the use of biography. Purposive sampling enables researchers to interview participants who have lived experiences of the phenomenon of focus in the study. Hermeneutic interviews focus on opening up the phenomenon. Texts become data within this methodology. Hermeneutic phenomenology enables rich descriptions to emerge in the words of participants. Understandings take into consideration time and context of participants as well as inter-subjective understandings. Finally, accessing participants' experiences over their lifespan, through the collection of biographical information, assist in the development of themes that explain leader's development over time.

#### *3.2.1.1 Purposive sampling.*

Use of purposive sampling enables a strong focus on selecting participants with targeted experience and allows details of their experience to emerge. Purposive sampling entails choosing participants that have experience with the research interest or phenomenon (Baker et al., 1992). Researchers' present data in its raw form to ensure they do not contaminate the units of data and

because of purposive sampling, raw data explicate the phenomenon under question (Moustaka, 1994). The raw data, therefore, provide examples and detail for further understanding.

#### *3.2.1.2 Hermeneutic interviews.*

Researchers ask open-ended questions enabling new knowledge to emerge from focused participants. What matters is the researcher's openness and their being caught up in the conversations with these select participants, which results in an interview about something of meaning to the study (Smythe, et al., 2008). Non-structured or semi-structured interviews with participants gather details of their experience (Baker et al., 1992; Crewswell, 2009). The openness of the questions facilitates new understandings to emerge within the research process.

#### *3.2.1.3 Text.*

Following interviews, researchers develop transcripts that become text and data for further study. Hermeneutical theories of understanding are never without words as language is the method of inter-subjective understanding and establishes meaning. We do not have understandings except through language (Thompson, 1990). van Manen (1997) explains that hermeneutic phenomenology is the study of lived experience through text. The researcher develops understanding and knowledge through initially listening to, reading, and re-reading the details of text containing the subjective experience of the research participants (Lindholm, Nieminen, Makela and Rantanen-Siljamki, 2006). The text of interviews becomes data that researchers study for important details of the phenomenon.

#### *3.2.1.4 Rich descriptions.*

The type of data obtained from hermeneutic phenomenology is a rich description of the phenomenon under study. The researcher aims to create rich and deep accounts of the phenomenon and to uncover details of it (Hein & Austin, 2001). The detail and nuance, gathered

through extended time with the interview texts and reflection, aids in elaborating the phenomenon (Suddaby, 2006). The time spent transcribing the text, reading, and re-reading it enables rich details to come to the fore.

#### *3.2.1.5 Time, context and interconnections.*

Individual participants act as cultural agents with specific standpoints that reflect interconnectedness, time, and context. This method recognizes these realities (Bleir, 1984; Heir & Austin, 2001; Lincoln, 1998; Thompson, 1990). Thompson (1990) says understandings are not separate from individuals' social interests, history, and standpoints that they assume and live out. Differing times, contexts, and relationships reflect diverse understandings and ways of being in the world. This diversity brings richness to the data and results and, thus, adds to understandings.

#### *3.2.1.6 Use of biography.*

Developmental experiences over the lifespan of participants are important knowledge areas for this research study. Researchers' use of biography is to capture existential meanings of participants' experience over time (van Manen, 1990). The understandings drawn from participants' experiences can reveal the details and events over their lifespan. Lived experiences can also aid in understandings that reflect participants' evolution over time.

Smythe, et al. (2008) emphasize the importance of illuminating the process or phenomenon as it *is lived* as critical to hermeneutic phenomenology. van Manen (1984) discusses looking at participants' lived time, lived space, lived body, lived relationship, revealing existential understandings. In the area of leadership, the lived development of behaviours that participants stress as important to leadership can reveal existential understandings of leader participants' development.

### *3.2.2 Analysis*

The hermeneutic phenomenology methodology uses three major ways of analyzing data. First is generating themes from the text. Second is carrying out five forms of reflection outlined in further detail below. When researchers carry out all five levels of reflection, comprehensive results occur. Third, analysis using the hermeneutic circle, comparing and contrasting partially understood phenomena to larger theories and pre-understandings to new emerging understandings.

### *3.2.3 Themes*

Looking for themes within participant interviews and across participants' transcripts is vital to findings regarding lived experience. van Manen (1984) outlines the importance of thematic analysis while reflecting on lived experience. He elaborates, "phenomenological themes are more like knots in the webs of our experiences, around which certain lived experiences are spun and thus experienced as meaningful wholes" (p. 59). Themes found in the data are a way of signalling to the researcher the regions in which further reflection and interpretation should occur (Smythe, et al., 2008; Thompson, 1990). Themes are the building blocks for further reflection, interpretation, exploration, and focus.

### *3.2.4 Reflections*

The goal is to reflect deeply so that researchers can emulate lived experience and come to new understandings in their results. Five forms of reflection include reflecting on 1) others, 2) self, 3) theory, 4) questions, and 5) value which give the findings of hermeneutic phenomenology richness (Piantanida & Garman, 2009). Writing and re-writing findings can also add to understanding of the phenomenon. First, van Manen (1984) explains that reflectively orienting self to the texts, and thereby focusing on participants, brings the phenomenon into

view. Second, self-reflection enables researchers to detail similarities or differences with participants' experience (Enrich, 2005). When the researcher reflects on their experiences that are similar to participants, confirmation occurs, whereas unfamiliarity with participants' experiences reflects differences, both of which add to understandings. Third, basing reflections on theoretical literature links data to theory (Goulding, 2005). Looking at theoretical literature that reflects the understandings participants convey helps elaborate understanding within the research. Fourth, asking questions is another form of reflection. Continually reflecting on, "What is it like?" reveals the phenomenon, bringing researchers into more direct contact with the lived world (van Manen, 1984). Reflecting on questions, like the prior one, and one's curiosity combined with a felt sense of what could happen next, helps move the research forward (Smythe, et al., 2008). Asking questions brings whatever is in question into the open for further understanding (Bontekoe, 2000). Fifth, Schwandt (1996) outlines the importance of reflecting on the value of the findings. By reflecting on the value of the research, practical applications of the research come into view. Reflection occurring in different forms deepens the understanding of researchers involved in phenomenological studies.

Writing and rewriting acts as reflection and adds to understanding of the phenomenon. Goulding (2005) suggests that writing and rewriting, combined with additional theoretical reflections, provides new insights and increases the level of abstraction. These outcomes occur by moving from the particular to the universal sphere enabling the results to be more comprehensive to others. The process of writing and rewriting enables reflection on the findings as well as the emergence of new insights.

### *3.2.5 The Hermeneutic Circle*

Researchers look at parts, whole meanings, and pre-understandings and understandings within the hermeneutic circle. Researchers enter into the hermeneutic circle by reading and re-reading transcripts for parts to whole meanings and whole to parts (Gadamer, 1989). Baker, et al. (1992) say, “Transcripts of interviews are read to achieve a sense of the whole, the transcripts are reread and segments of data that potentially reveal some aspect of the phenomenon are identified” (p. 1358). The parts inform the whole and, at other times, the whole informs the parts.

Furthermore, comparing pre-understandings with new understandings in the hermeneutic circle is another way to utilize the circle. The details of the text affect and engage the researcher in exploration and this new information deepens the researcher’s understanding of it (Leonard, 1999, Welch, 1999). Packer and Addison (1989) explain that the knowledge the researcher understands creates a tension with what is not apprehended thus creating curiosity and forward movement within the circle. Smythe, et al. (2008) explain this principle further by suggesting that insights emerge as researchers go with thoughts that excite, confuse, and perplex them. Maintaining openness and focus on these insights moves understanding forward. Experience confirms expectations and new experience negates expectations creating movement in the circle (Bontekoe, 2000). Thus, researchers create new understandings as they move through the spirals of the hermeneutic circle as interpretation impacts understanding.

### *3.3 Narrative Inquiry*

Narrative inquiry results in understandings co-constructed by both participants and the researcher (Clinchy, 2002). When utilizing narrative inquiry, participants outline their experiences, and the researcher can polish their accounts (Grubrium & Holstein, 2009). Reismman (1993) explains that using narrative inquiry, researchers can relate to the stories and



experiences as one inside the experience. Narrative inquiry assists researchers to experience, read, and understand the participants' experiences, and through summarizing and honing the participants' accounts, create co-constructed knowledge.

My interest in narrative inquiry is in developing applicable and practical solutions. Lieblich, et al., (1998) explain that using narrative inquiry aids researchers in obtaining real-world measures and real-life solutions. The insights from the stories of the participants could represent models for others' development. Exploring leader participants' narratives has the potential to explain and inform researchers about practical methods that aid in developing leadership qualities.

### *3.3.1 Features of Narrative Inquiry*

Narrative often reveals participant's identity, development, and social context. The plot of the participants' story and their ability to tell their story reveals themselves through the narratives. Explanations follow of the narrative features of performance, meaning, and the depiction of time.

#### *3.3.1.1 Identity.*

Participants reveal themselves by what they say, what they do not say, and how they say it. Analysis of narratives gives windows on a person's inner life (Gubrium & Holstein 2009). Those with a psychological or developmental interest in stories can view the narrative as the embodiments of the participants' inner life (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). Reissman (1993) explains that when participants tell the researcher about their experience, they are also creating a self, outlining how they want to *be known* by the researcher. Lieblich, et al. (1998) concur saying life stories are multilayered and as complex as human identity. If we want to know participants, we need to know the details of who they are through their stories.

Details within stories reveal how researchers can know participants. Chase (2005) and McAdams (2008) explain participants outline vivid and meaningful events that define their sense of self. Participants choose stories as examples that define what is important to them. The choice of the stories defines who they are.

### *3.3.1.2 Development.*

Narratives assist researchers to understand participants' development (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Using life history, with narrative analysis, focuses learning on decisions and actions individuals take in different periods of their life (van Manen, 1990). Narrative inquiry enables researchers to get beneath the surface, thus to understand with greater depth the decisions, actions, and ways of participants (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009).

Narratives reveal various themes occurring over individuals' lives as follows. For example, narratives offer a window on experience. Gubrium and Holstein (2009) say that analyzing narratives becomes a way of analyzing experience. McAdams (2008) discusses how narrative inquiry reveals themes of generativity and stagnation. In addition, themes of redemption, contamination, emancipation, growth, and empowerment are possible within participants' narratives (Chase, 2005; McAdams, 2008). The narrator's first person voice can express the quality of their lives, their psychological development, their ability to take risks and cope with loss, and their psychosocial development (Chase, 2005). Identity, generativity, growth, empowerment, emancipations, and redemption are important to the work of leadership.

Researchers often learn about high points and low points of participants' lives when talking to them about their life histories (McAdams, 2008). There is considerable potential to learn about reframing situations and participants' development when successful participants talk about high and low points in their lives. Mature participants can become more explicit about

generative and reframing mental models; through self-exploration and elaboration on events and circumstances (McAdams, 2008). McAdams (2008) explains further, “In every life generativity is tough and frustrating work” (p. 255). Researchers using narrative methodology vicariously draw on participant’s experience to gain understanding and knowledge.

### *3.3.1.3 Social context.*

The stories participants share, reveal details about their context and culture. Reissman (1993) explains that narratives go beyond text giving inferences about the context of the participant as the narratives incorporate participants’ community life. The context of the story helps explain the internal organization and meaning of accounts (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). We study narratives for the details they reveal about social life as culture speaks itself through individual stories (Reissman, 1993). The context of social interaction gives shape to stories, and makes the story understandable (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009).

Analyzing how the personal and social consequences shape the storytellers’ accounts is important (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). For example, researchers study taken-for-granted gender inequalities and other practices of power conveyed by individual speakers (Reissman, 1993.) The substance of stories becomes the basis for noting similarities and differences among participants’ social worlds (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). Participants’ narratives may reveal differences in how they live as well as their social and cultural contexts.

### *3.3.1.4 Plot.*

Stories contain a plot that describes actions and decisions (Klenke, 2008). One way of looking at plot is to determine where the narrative is advancing steadily, where the narrative is regressing through deterioration or decline, and where the narrative is stable, when the plot is steady and does not progress or regress (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Lieblich, et al., (1998) elaborate

further that combining these three, advancing, regressing, and stable narratives, will construct complex plots. Although not outlined as plots, McAdams (2008) discusses similar themes of generativity or stagnation emerging in narratives.

#### *3.3.1.5 Agency.*

Participants construct their realities to share in research interviews and become intentional agents (McAdams, 2008). An agent is someone who has the capacity to create stories from their experience (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). “The capacity relates to the issue of agency—the possibility of actively entering into talk and interaction to compose accounts” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009, p. 149). The participants’ ability to share, reveal details, and finish their stories conveys the level of agency they can attain.

#### *3.3.1.6 Performance.*

The performance within story telling reflects how one chooses to carry out the storytelling and is an integral part of narrative reality. “Narrative practice brings what is told and the telling together to deploy a rich empirical terrain” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009, p. 17). Constructed stories are creatively authored and rhetorical, and contain assumptions and interpretations (Reissman, 1993). Both the narrative’s substance and how it is told are important to notice (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). The artful telling of stories helps convey what is most meaningful to participants.

Participants bring together information from their past in ways that demonstrate its importance and convey this importance through their stories. For example, participants convey importance by repeating words or concepts, completing the expression of an idea, using partial or full sentences, and emphasizing certain phrases in tone or words (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Reissman (1993) elaborates differently saying that narratives about important life experiences

are typically long, full of asides, comments, flashbacks, flash-forwards, orientation, and evaluation. The researcher needs to become sensitive to the narrator's voice and meanings through the performance of the story (Lieblich, et al., 1998). By spending time with the narratives and the details of them in content and nuance, researchers can come to understand the importance participants convey within their stories.

### *3.3.1.7 Meaning.*

Participants share meaningful stories of relevance to the topic and interest of the study. The story may have a purpose beyond straightforward description and may have a focus beyond the immediate (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). The importance of meanings – meaning the participant gives to an event or situation – occurs as participants discuss particular life stories (Chase, 2005). What is included and excluded in the narrative of events affects the meaning and says something about that topic in participants' lives (Riessman, 1993). Participants choose stories because they are worth telling and, in retrospect, are meaningful to the questions posed by the researcher (Chase, 2005). What participants say to researchers reflects something meaningful; participants know the researcher will summarize and share it with others (Frank, 2010; Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). These meanings are of interest to a study because of the importance they convey.

### *3.3.1.8 Temporality.*

We construct meaning between our personal past in the here and now with an eye toward the future. The participants' stories change as they change, but in telling what they do, they reveal their identity in this timeframe. Looking at the past, we retrospectively make meaning and decide why particular narratives are worth telling (Chase, 2005). Frank (2010) outlines that

memory functions as a vehicle that transforms and elaborates narratives. Polkinghorne (1988)

discusses:

We are in the middle of our stories and cannot be sure how they will end; we are constantly having to revise the plot as new events are added to our lives. Self, then, is not a static thing nor a substance, but a configuring of personal events into a historical unity, which includes not only what one has been but also anticipations of what one will be. (p. 150)

Participants will juxtapose the events of their past with subsequent periods of their lives.

### 3.3.2 Analysis

This section describes different techniques utilized in narrative analysis. The techniques include analysis utilizing content versus form, and whole versus parts.

#### 3.3.2.1 Content or form.

Analyses of stories in part or in whole, and in content or form, are two ways to analyze stories (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). First, we will look at the analysis of content and then we will address form. Content analysis gives researchers the details of participants' experience (Lieblich, et al., 1998) and entails breaking the discourse into parts and submitting them to either descriptive or statistical analysis. Lieblich, et al. (1998) outlines:

Some readings concentrate on the explicit content of an account, namely, what happened, or why, who participated in the event, and so on, all from the standpoint of the teller. Another content-oriented approach aims at getting to the implicit content by asking about the meaning that the story, or a certain section of it conveys, what traits or motives of the individual are displayed, or what a certain image used by the narrator symbolizes. (p. 12-13)

Content analysis can offer detailed descriptions about how participants became the individuals they are today (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Content analysis through narrative inquiry can also reveal the pathways of participants' development over their lifespan (Lieblich, et al., 1998).

Second, other readings of narratives refer to its form; the plot, sequencing of events, the narratives relation to time, its complexity, coherence, feeling evoked by the narrative, the style of narrative, and the choice of metaphors or words (Lieblich, et al., 1998). The form helps researchers understand deeper aspects of the narrator's identity (Lieblich, et al., 1998).

Analyzing the form of participant texts contributes to understanding.

#### *3.3.2.2 Parts or whole.*

Narrative readings can also look at either parts of the story or the whole story. For example, the researcher could compare the content of interviews at three different ages. This example has both content and parts analysis (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Content and holistic analysis is another form of analysis. An example of this form of analysis is looking at the topic of change across a person's lifespan (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Researchers can carry out analysis utilizing content, form, parts, or wholes depending on their curiosity, questions, and needs.

### *3.4 Assessing Qualitative Studies*

Excellent qualitative research demonstrates a number of factors that complicate the process of doing it well. First, if the results make sense the results will fit with the readers' intuition, logic, or experience. Second, the results may contribute to the field or at least add value to the reader. Third, good qualitative studies include both participants' and the researcher's voice in the results. Fourth, within strong studies, others are included in verifying transcripts and interpretations. Fifth, the researcher needs to be reflexive or self-critical during the study, to ensure he or she gathered and presented the findings properly and fully. Finally, the study needs to reflect the complexity of all these criteria. This section describes these in more detail.

First, Koch (1994) discusses the importance of transferability. She further explains that readers relate to findings within their similar contexts, thus, the findings need to be meaningful

and applicable to others within their own experience. When individuals other than the researcher relate to the findings, the results reflect more quality.

Second, findings need to add value to current understandings and advance the knowledge in the field. Parker and Addison (1989) speak to the importance of answering the practical concerns that the inquiry initially presented as important to the quality of the results. Guba and Lincoln (2005) and Sadelowski (1986) explain that the co-created constructions need to provide some advancement of understanding. Schwandt (1996) outlines the importance of supplementing or at least complementing knowledge. That is, the quality of the findings, need to go beyond the researchers' understanding regarding theory, expectations, and experiences.

Third, including both the participants' and researcher's voices improves the findings within qualitative research. van Manen (1990) outlines the importance of both the participants' and researcher's voices being present in findings. Guba and Lincoln (2005) elaborate further, saying that both these voices need to be real and authentic. Koch (1994) explains that the researcher enhances their credibility by describing and interpreting their experience. For the sake of quality, authenticity, and credibility, the findings must reflect both the participants' and the researcher's voices.

Fourth, another indication of quality findings is including others in verifying transcripts and interpretations. Parker and Addison (1989) explain the importance of involving others to ensure researchers' interpretations make sense. Guba and Lincoln (2005) emphasize that having a form of community consent ensures that interpretation is plausible. They explain that including additional realities besides the author support the validity of qualitative research. Koch (1994) explains that dependability occurs when others can confirm the researcher's decision trail and when the researcher shows others the way they arrived at interpretations. Including participants,



other researchers, and/or committee members that react to the content of transcripts, research procedures, and interpretations reflects thorough and quality processes.

Fifth is reflexivity, which occurs when a researcher is self-critical about the steps they take and their results. Guba and Lincoln (2005) discuss reflexivity as the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, a human instrument of the research. Humans carry out studies and the more critically the researcher can examine their own processes, the more thorough the study can be.

#### Chapter Four: Plan and Method of Inquiry

This introduction reiterates my research question, methodologies, and the sequence of the research project. A section on participants follows that includes details on the sample size, how I protected the human rights of participants and ensured confidentiality. The participant section ends with a discussion on the recruiting of participants. The final sections of this chapter discuss the interviews and plan of analysis for this research study.

My research question addresses both the early experiences of participants and events that occurred over the lifespan of participants, as I am interested in both the early beginnings, and developmental trajectories of participants. To this end, the following question shaped my research investigation:

*How did these secure and transformational leaders become who they are today?*

I wanted to learn about impactful experiences in participants' lives that enabled them to develop into the successful leaders they are today.

I used two qualitative research methodologies as these strategies fit my way of thinking and understanding, and enable exploring my area of interest. Using two methods enables crosschecking, corroboration of evidence, and triangulation within the study (Rudestam & Newton, 2007). The ways in which participants come to develop secure-attachment and transformational-leadership behaviour would be personal, subjective, and diverse. Using a qualitative lens, allows for taking into consideration different paths to the same goal. I chose *hermeneutic phenomenology* and *narrative inquiry* discussed in detail in Chapter 3. Both hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative inquiry methodologies allow the subjective experiences of participants come forth (Lopez & Willis, 2004).

#### *4.1 Timeline*

I conducted two pilot interviews in the spring of 2010 to test the interview process. No changes were made to the interview process. Subsequently, recruiting participants and doing interviews occurred in the fall and winter of 2010 and in the spring of 2011. Two final interviews occurred in the fall of 2011. The creation of transcripts occurred immediately following the interviews, and the first stage of my analysis occurred after the completion of the interviews. I wrote up the findings and continued with analysis in the spring, summer, and fall of 2012.

#### *4.2 Participants*

Eight woman and seven men, who were all executives, composed the fifteen participants who contributed to the study. The leader participants worked in private and public sectors. The different industries represent diverse working environments, social contexts, and cultures. This diversity ensured the research contained multiple viewpoints. Narrative inquiry and hermeneutic phenomenology are inductive methodologies (Goulding, 2005; Josselson & Lieblich, 2003). Thus, hearing multiple views about diverse social contexts are important in enabling participants' rich experiences to emerge.

Executive roles are the highest level of accomplishment leaders can obtain in organizations. The promotions attained represent significant accomplishments by these participants. The participants all held leadership roles for a long time, and being executives gave them authority to speak (Gubrium and Holstein, 2009). Six of the participants were CEO's, evenly split, three were men and three were women. Nine of the participants were executive vice presidents, vice presidents, or chief operating officers. Of the nine who were not CEOs, five were women and four were men. The majority of the participants, ten of the fifteen, were senior

executives within private industry, and the remaining five executives operated within public organizations. Participants also lived in Alberta and their ages ranged from 50 to 67 years of age.

#### *4.3 Sample Size*

Research conducted by Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) determined that major themes occur by the sixth interview and saturation by the twelfth interview. The estimated sample size for this study began with twelve participants. Upon interviewing twelve participants, it became clear that I needed more participants to ensure saturation of the data. Interview details indicated that three participants' answers did not correspond with transformational leadership behaviour. One of the three did not readily delegate to others, another participant stated that he found it very difficult to trust his direct reports, and the third acted very intensely and destructively rather than constructively when giving feedback, thereby not supporting others. Bass (1999) says transformational leaders go beyond their self-interests, thereby engendering trust in those they lead. This lack of belief and trust in others does not depict transformational leadership behaviour. In all it took fifteen participants to ensure I had twelve participants that demonstrated transformational leadership behaviour. I found an additional three participants and saturation occurred wherein no new topics occurred when I reviewed the transcripts of the final participants. All fifteen participants completed two interviews, filled out assessments, and completed life history pages.

#### *4.4 Ethical Obligations to Participants*

I took a number of measures to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. I ensured privacy by conducting the interviews in a private and comfortable place chosen by participants. I ensured confidentiality of information by using participant numbers on transcriptions. The name of the participant only appeared on the consent form.

Participation in this study was voluntary. Participants could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and they had the right not to answer any question or to stop the interview at any time. To maintain confidentiality I secured all data, hard copies, electronic copies, and audiotapes, in a locked filing cabinet in my home. I was the only person with access to this information.

A number of actions also protected participants. The Conjoint Facilities Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary approved the research proposal and checked on ethics throughout the participant interaction period. Upon ethics approval, I contacted potential participants inquiring about their participation in the study.

#### *4.5 Participant Recruitment Process*

I utilized the snowball technique to find participants for the study. Participants came through recommendations from developmental professionals in my network and participants in the study. I carried out purposive sampling looking for participants who demonstrated secure and transformational leadership qualities. The study's participants needed to have secure-attachment and transformational leadership styles. By choosing such participants, I was able to study the self-explorations, experiences, and development that occurred in these transformational and secure participants' lives. I asked people in my network if they knew of leaders they admired and indicated the qualities I was looking for in a leader participant. I was looking for leaders with some of the following qualities: ethics, strong interpersonal skills, demonstration of openness to feedback, and holding inspiring visions or purposes.

By choosing admired and executive leader participants, I wanted to ensure gathering rich descriptions of the essence of behaviours, experiences, thoughts, and choices in the development

of transformational leadership and secure-attachment styles. Laverty (2003) describes the qualities of ideal participants:

The aim in participant selection in phenomenological and hermeneutic phenomenological research is to select participants who have lived experience that is the focus of the study, who are willing to talk about their experience and who are diverse enough from one another to enhance possibilities of rich and unique stories of the particular experience. (p. 18)

Lived experience and varied ways of becoming secure and transformational would be important to the success of the study.

During the initial call with a potential participant, I introduced myself as a doctoral student who was conducting a study to gain knowledge about leadership behaviour and how the individual had become the leader they were (Refer to Appendix A, Contents of Initial Telephone Conversation with Potential Participants). I indicated that I would use this information to help develop other leaders through teaching and facilitating course work, the writing up of findings, and when carrying out consulting work. I gave potential participants a verbal explanation of the purpose and process of the study and if they indicated interest, I sent a follow-up e-mail to them containing this information (Refer to Appendix B, Contents of E-Mail to Potential Participants). I outlined the requirements and expectations of them within the study, for example the time commitments of approximately 5 hours for their full participation in the study. I was willing to answer questions that prospective participants had about the purpose of the study and their role in the study. I also set up future appointments with willing participants.

#### *4.6 The Interview and Assessment Processes*

I arranged the interviews according to the schedules of participants. The participants also chose the privacy arrangements and lengths of interviews with one condition, all interviews would occur during the day. Many of the interviews occurred in the participants' work premises

either in their own office or in their company's boardroom. Interviewing participants in their natural settings enables careful observations of their context (Creswell, 2009; Klenke, 2008). One interview occurred in a restaurant in downtown Calgary. This was problematic because I recorded the interview and the recording contained background noise. We chose, instead, to have the second interview in this participant's office. Three participants chose to have their interviews at the University of Calgary in the Human Resources and Organizational Dynamics area boardroom within the Haskayne School of Business. The privacy of the offices and boardrooms was ideal for the interviews and recordings.

At the beginning of the interview, I reviewed the letter of consent with the participant and they signed it prior to us commencing the first interview (Refer to Appendix C, Letter of Consent). I digitally recorded the interviews with the consent of the participant and took notes during the interview in the event my recorder malfunctioned. Recording was necessary because of the deep listening, and analysis required within hermeneutic phenomenology and narrative inquiry methodologies. The research protocol used a semi-structured interview process. Understanding occurs for the researcher because of the openness of the interview process and the listening and probing of participants' answers (Bontekoe, 2000). Participants need to be able to tell their stories regarding what is important and meaningful to them from their perspective.

The recording of interviews enabled the creation of transcripts after this time together. In the first interview, I asked participants open-ended questions regarding their views of leadership (Refer to Appendix D, Interview One Protocol). I utilized a consistent process of interaction and interviewing in general with participants. I varied one question with the third participant because the first and second participants struggled with one question: *How do you develop the confidence to create a vision and direction for your organization?* The new question from then on became

*Tell me about a time you were your best self.* This resulted in an easier interview process.

Another question that some participants struggled with was a question that a few participants felt had two parts to it. *How do you handle and lead change?* Because a few but not all participants struggled with this question, I did not change it.

Rather than ask participants directly about transformational leadership experiences or secure attachment, my questions were more general and open in nature. The question, “Tell me about you as a leader”, addresses the participants’ leadership behaviours and styles. Asking general questions enabled me to enter into the participant’s story to understand him or her and become aware of the participant’s experience. The general questions helped me to hear answers different from my own pre-understandings or lens and helped to open up the interview to allow the participants’ perspective to emerge. I asked probing questions as follows:

*Tell me more about that experience.*

*How did this person influence you?*

Probing the research participant’s answers allowed for the teasing out of additional details about the nature of the participants’ experiences.

At the end of the first interview, I left participants with a large piece of paper, 8 1/2 by 14 and prompting questions (Refer to Appendix E, Life History Questions) enabling participants to complete their Life History Page. I also left participants with two assessments, the Adult Attachment Scale and the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. I answered any questions participants had about the assessments and the Life History Page at this time. I asked them to complete these and bring them to the second interview. We also scheduled a time for the second interview.



Details of the two qualifying assessment tools follow. First, attachment style has a psychological assessment associated with it. Participants received a modified version of the Adult Attachment Scale to complete (Refer to Appendix F, Modified Adult Attachment Scale) (Collins & Read, 1990). I modified three questions that talked about *love partners* and inserted *people closest to me* instead. I wanted the tool to reflect professional business relationships in the workplace rather than personal relationships. The Adult Attachment Scale measures anxious, avoidant, and secure-attachment styles. It does measure these styles by asking questions about the respondents' ability to depend on others and have others depend on them. The assessment tool asks questions about anxious feelings regarding abandonment, affection needs, merging, and one's ability to get close to others. Scoring The Adult Attachment Scale entails adding up areas within the three domains of dependence, anxiety, and closeness related to secure, avoidant, and anxious-attachment styles. The participant demonstrates the attachment style related to one of the three styles that has the highest score.

Participants also completed The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), (Refer to Appendix G, The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire), to determine their leadership style. The MLQ instrument measures a number of leadership styles including transformational, transactional, contingent reward, management by exception, and laissez faire. This instrument measures four areas of transformational leadership separately. The four components are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The MLQ is a copyrighted tool so I cannot go into detail about its scoring, except to say there is a scoring key that individuals receive when they buy the manual that outlines correct use of the assessment tool.

In the second interview, the participant and I spent most of our time reviewing their Life History Page. At the beginning of the second interviews, I asked questions that were not completed and/or needed further clarification from the first interview. I also gathered the two completed assessment tools from the participants. The second interview was very open ended. The participant took the lead and explained to me the details of their Life History Page. This page usually contained words and/or diagrams depicting life and work events representing a timeline. I would ask questions if I wanted more explanation or if the participant was explaining the page too quickly for my understanding or glossing over important details. Here, participants outlined biographical events that affected them and occurred over their lifetime. In this way, they revealed details of events that enabled them to be who they are today. Participants could talk about their evolution, their high and low points, their growth and development, and the impact experiences had on them because of the historical and comprehensive timeline this biographical data provided.

#### *4.7 Plan of Analysis*

The hermeneutic phenomenology methodology generates rich description by having the researcher spend long periods-of-time with the data. Ideally, the researcher creates the transcripts as part of hermeneutic phenomenology because of the need to read and re-read and immerse oneself in the content of interview data. Then to ensure accuracy of the transcripts and triangulation of the data within them, participants review and verify the accuracy of the transcripts.

The transcripts as text become data for study and analysis. The researcher continues to analyze this data by reading and re-reading transcripts. Reading the content for parts or detailed themes and the whole transcript for holistic themes informs the researcher. I plan to analyze the

data manually by using flip charts as a base and putting quotations up on them in an organized manner thereby coding the information from the interviews. Then I plan to create headings based on the contents of the overall flip chart. The headings will represent themes within the data. I hope that rich details of participants' experiences and development will emerge through this analysis process and provide understandings, which were previously obscure.

Reflections on the following can add value within the study:

1. participants,
2. my experience as a researcher,
3. on the theory related to the emerging themes,
4. on questions, and
5. the importance, meaning, and value participants convey about leadership and development.

I plan to keep notes on my experiences throughout the research study, recording researcher as participant data.

Writing and re-writing can also act as a form of reflection, refinement, and analysis. Lastly, reflecting on the hermeneutic circle with regard to both parts and whole, and pre-understandings and understandings can add value to the analysis within the hermeneutic phenomenology methodology. Reflection can help move the themes from the particular to a more general level.

Analyzing both the details or content and its form will be important when analyzing the data utilizing the narrative inquiry methodology. Content analysis could include aspects participants report as important to leadership showing up as *lived leadership*. One could pursue a couple of important questions to analyze the content of their interviews, as follows:

*How do participants live important aspects of leadership?*

*How did they develop these important self-defined, leadership behaviours?*

Content analysis regarding the social context participants live within is important to narrative analysis. The culture of their families and organizations consist of aspects of social context, as well as the gender of the participants. Analyzing whether gender differences occur in the interviews will be important to the analysis of participants' social context. Components of form analyzed using narrative inquiry include identity, development, coherence, plot, agency, meaning, performance, and sequence of events.

Verification of findings by others and reflexivity or researcher self-criticism are important aspects of ensuring quality within the findings. It would be important to include my committee members in verifying the interpretations of the data. This represents a type of triangulation and enhances the findings. It will also be important to be self-critical of my results and look at my findings from other angles. All these levels of analysis will help uncover the complexity required of this research study.

## Chapter Five: Analysis and Results

### *5.1 Introduction*

This chapter contains three sections, which represent three stages of analysis, and the results found within each of these stages. The first stage contains the process used to qualify participants, results of manually generated themes, an overall analysis of the transcripts, and some differences between participants with secure versus insecure beginnings. The second stage contains analysis done using qualitative software, tables and figures generated using data from the software, analysis utilizing the hermeneutic circle, themes of importance to participants, and different pathways to security and transformational leadership. The third stage contains a discussion on *range of experience* and *learning* themes that are key findings in the data, and results based on narrative analysis such as societal factors and demonstrated ego-strength of participants.

### *5.2 First Stage Analysis and Results*

After all of the participants' interviews were complete, I scored all of the fifteen participants' assessments of The Adult Attachment Scale and Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. This sequence insured I did not vary my interactions with participants over the course of the interview process. From the initial fifteen, the data of twelve participants were usable because their assessments scored as both transformational and secure styles. Table 5 outlines demographic and position details of the twelve participants.

Table 5: Participant Details, n =12

Participant Letter and #	Title	Gender	Age
A. - 100	C.E.O.	Male	67
B. - 101	Vice President	Male	50
C. - 103	Executive V.P.	Female	60
D. - 104	C.E.O.	Female	52
E. - 105	C.E.O.	Male	53
F. - 106	Vice President	Male	58
G. - 107	Vice President	Male	50
H. - 108	C.E.O.	Male	52
I. - 111	Executive V.P.	Female	54
J. - 112	C.E.O.	Female	50
K. - 113	Vice President	Female	51
L. - 114	Vice President	Female	53

All of the participants were 50-60 years old except one who was 67 years of age. Participants' internalized the leadership lessons more thoroughly as they aged.

I typed half of the interviews and used a transcription service to type the remainder of the interviews. After the transcription company sent me the completed transcripts, I verified the content for correctness. I was at the interview and knew what the transcript should contain through experience and memory. I also referred to my notes of the interviews as needed. After I verified the transcriptions, I returned the text to participants by e-mail to verify accuracy. Participants ensured the correctness of the transcripts' content by reading them and giving me feedback on the content. In most circumstances, the participants confirmed the transcripts as correct; however, a few times participants requested minor modifications.

The exploratory nature of the study required that the personal experiences of the participants emerge. The first part of my analysis utilized hermeneutic phenomenology resulting in the emergence of themes from the leader participants. I analyzed the transcripts the first time

to get an overall impression of the interview content. I immersed myself in the data by reading and re-reading the interview transcripts looking at parts and wholes. I started to see certain topics repeat themselves within the interview transcripts. Themes were beginning to emerge. I coded the themes manually. I began to analyze the data for themes by putting quotes on my office walls, down the hall and down the stairs, and then created headings. I reviewed whether quotes were under the appropriate heading and moved the quotes as necessary. I also reduced themes and consolidated them under headings that had similar meanings.

I noticed many of the themes represent admirable character traits or qualities such as learning, positive activities, humility, internally-directed behaviour, other-focused behaviour, being strong when they needed to be, keeping things moving, being open, thinking about things, being aware, and purposeful. Themes about “having the support of others” also emerged, as was the behaviour of “trusting others” (Refers to Appendix H, Emerging Themes from Interviews).

Narrative analysis began to reveal early family circumstances of participants as well as impactful decisions and actions participants took throughout their lives. van Manen (1990) indicates that narrative inquiry of a biography helps researchers learn about decisions and actions that individuals take over different periods of their lives. Attachment style begins in childhood. Therefore, learning about the early life of participants became important to the success of the research.

I read participants’ transcripts assessing the journey they had lived through their lives. From each participant’s combined transcripts from both interviews, I looked at the life experience of the participant holistically and identified overall themes. Table 6 lists the overall themes listed for each participant.

Table 6: Holistic Themes of Participant Life History

Participant	Overall Themes
Participant A - 100	Insecure Start, Secure Producing Instructor, Determination/Aspiration, Autonomous Behaviour
Participant B - 101	Secure Start, Insecure Producing Father After Mother Died, Surrounded Himself with Positive Others, Family Held High Expectations
Participant C - 103	Secure Start, The World is Your Family, Determination/Aspiration
Participant D - 104	Secure Start, Family Held High Expectations, Autonomous Behaviour
Participant E - 105	Secure Start, Family Held High Expectations, Autonomous Behaviour
Participant F - 106	Secure Start, Hard Work, Determination/Aspiration, Responsible and Generative Leader
Participant G - 107	Secure Start, Hard Work
Participant H - 108	Insecure Start, Positive Mother in Law Made All the Difference
Participant I - 111	Very Secure Start, Win-Win, Robustly Secure Leader
Participant J - 112	Insecure Start, Positive Friends and Teachers in Teen Years, Determination/Aspiration, Hard Work
Participant K - 113	Secure Start, Family Held High Expectations, Determination/Aspiration, Hard Work
Participant L - 114	Secure Start, Determination/Aspiration, Develops Empathy through Difficulty

I have indicated the participants' early life influence to the degree to which they became either secure or insecure because the participants' attachment style is important to this study. By reading the whole text of both interviews, the themes of "hard work", "family held high expectations", or "determination/aspiration" came through these readings. These participants had earned their positions. Another theme that came through reading these transcripts was one of "autonomous behaviour". Participants talked about having choice even in adverse conditions.



### *5.2.1 Roots to Secure and Transformational Leadership*

Nine of the participants had at least one parent or grandparent giving them initial support in their early lives (Refer to Table 6, Holistic Themes of Participant Life History). These participants readily called on responsive others when they were struggling. This support was very important when the participants were young and provided strong roots of security in their lives. However, one third of participants lacked supportive relatives in their lives.

Two participants without a secure start had supportive others affect them in their teen years and this support had a positive effect on them. One of these participants worked very hard to attract positive attention because of the negative circumstances she experienced at home. Many researchers state that after childhood, persons find security-enhancing individuals in peers, mentors, coaches, friends, counsellors, romantic partners, children and/or siblings, not just parents (Doherty & Feeney, 2004; Mayseless & Popper, 2007; Towler, 2005). Interacting with a supportive person who acts as a secure base helps to sustain self-development especially in times of need or stress (Davidovitz, et al., 2007). A third participant, who had an insecure start, stood alone in his teen years against a bully and became autonomous as a result. He attributed his success to this internally-directed behaviour. He also had an instructor in his early twenties who had a very positive influence on him. The support of others and autonomy enabled these participants to be transformational and secure despite their insecure beginnings.

### *5.2.2 Motivated by Fear Less Generative*

Lacking a number of options and motivated by fear were not as generative for participants without supportive parental relations as those motivated by options, the support of others, and internalized belief in positive outcomes. It is as though the ability of the participants to extend their reach to others seemed positively correlated with supportive parents. Their impact

and influence are broader when both support and a strong work ethic exist. The outcomes differed, when one thinks of two scenarios in which a hard-working child has at least one supportive parent with relatively wide-ranging resources versus a hard-working child creating their future alone. I noticed in the interview transcripts that when supportive parents were absent and fear was the motivator, then the interview had less generative and positive content. Although they are very successful people, they demonstrated less resilience.

### *5.3 Second Stage Analysis and Results*

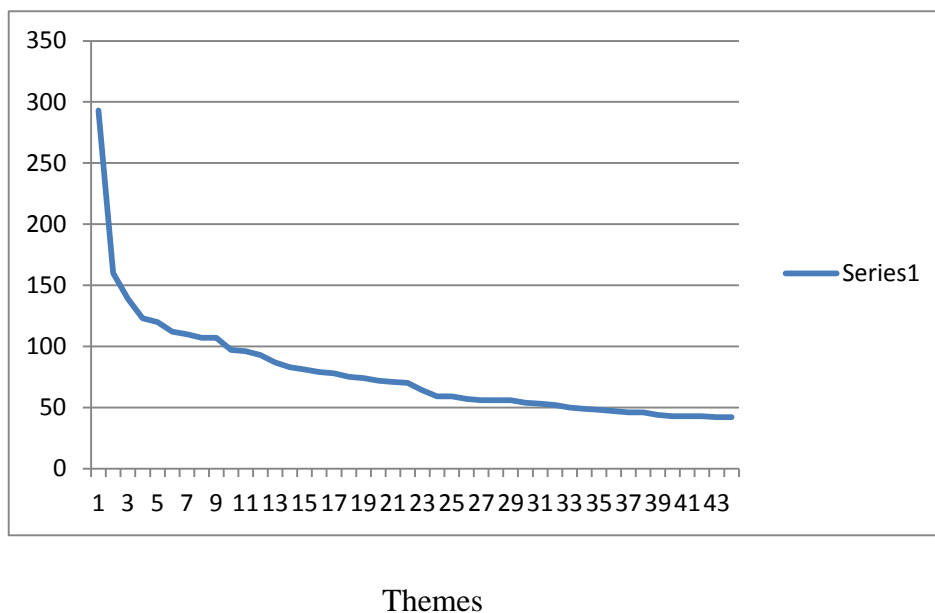
I decided to use Atlas.ti software to code the themes more thoroughly. Atlas.ti is a qualitative analysis program that helps researchers code for themes and sees co-occurrences within data. After hand-coding data, using this software enabled me to look at the interview material again in a more thorough manner. It helped me quantify and refer to quotes with increased speed and systematisation. It also helped me see co-occurrences that I would not have known previously because of the time and complexity required in analyzing these interconnecting themes. All of the information on co-occurrences resulted from using Atlas.ti.

Examples of coding categories utilizing Atlas.ti included “being strong when participants needed to be”, “choice-being in a good place”, “confidence”, “confidence builder”, “learning from negative circumstances”, “mistakes as part of the process”, and “stepping up to opportunity”. The coding categories also included the opposite of the original categories, for example, “not stepping up to opportunity”. I created *invivo* codes as well. That is, coding participants’ exact words as a theme. Coding the exact phrase used by participants helped me stay closer to the participants’ meanings.

The most frequently occurring themes were that of “learning” mentioned 293 times, “supportive others” mentioned 160 times, and “range of experience” mentioned 139 times in the

data (Refer to Appendix I, Themes 40 or More Occurrences in the Data). Figure 5 outlines the number of times themes occurred. The first three themes outnumber the other themes by a wide margin, as indicated in the Figure 5.

# of Times  
Occurring



**Figure 5: Highest 44 Themes Occurring Within the Data and the Number of Times They Occur**

Refer to Appendix J, Highest # of Co-occurrences. The highest co-occurring themes are “others’ belief in participants” and “supportive other” co-occurring 60 times, the themes “mentor” and “supportive other” which co-occur 44 times, the themes “diversity” and “learning” co-occurring 35 times, and “learning” and stepping up to responsibility” co-occurring 34 times.

This chapter summarizes the findings utilizing the atlas.ti software. Details of these findings are included in Appendix J-S. Participants who had “supportive others” in their networks demonstrated strength that enables them to “learn from negative situations”, be “other-focused”, demonstrate “confidence”, “step up to opportunity”, be “internally directed” and engage in “broad ranging experiences”. Having “others believe in participants” co-occurred with

“challenge”, “confidence”, and “feedback”. Participants demonstration of “confidence” co-occurred with their ability to meet “challenges”, have “broad ranging experiences”, “step up to responsibility”, “learn” and be “internally directed”. The theme “internally directed” co-occurs with “learning”, and “hard work”. Interestingly “stepping up to opportunities” co-occurs with many behaviours that require effort such as “learning”, meeting “challenge”, “range of experience”, “can do attitude”, and “learning from negative” situations. It appears that having the support and belief of others supports learning, responsibility and broad ranging experiences. The theme “challenge” co-occurs with themes of “learning”, “stepping up to responsibility”, “confidence”, “others belief in participant”, “supportive others”, and “range of experience”. Finally being able to “learn from negative” situations co-occurs with many positive characteristics such as “interpersonal skills”, having a “positive impact” on others, being involved in “broad ranging experiences”, having a “positive can do attitude” and “stepping up to responsibility”.

After the analysis utilizing software I turned my analysis to what the participants thought and felt were most critical to them. Using narrative analysis I realized some participants conveyed importance through the inflections they used in their voices. Other participants repeated what they thought was important adamantly, a number of times within their interview. Still other participants chose words that emphasized importance such as the word, “huge”. The way participants performed or told their narratives conveyed the importance participants gave to these topics (Refer to Appendix K, Questions that Guided Narrative Inquiry).

I was looking through the lens of developing secure and transformational behaviour. Therefore, important topics that helped the participants feel secure or more able to be transformational interested me. I thought deeply about what participants had stated were most

important to them and empathised. I lived the stories as I thought about what participants stressed was important.

I realized through both hermeneutic phenomenological and narrative analysis, triangulating the results, that having supportive others in their lives was very important to participants. Many of the participants also said that having others who believed in them was critical to them. Some participants also stressed the importance of being autonomous. The prior holistic analysis concurred with this theme (Refer to Table 6, Holistic Themes of Participant Life History).

I utilized the hermeneutic circle to see interconnections among important topics. I drew a large circle on flip chart paper and utilized Gadamer's concept of the hermeneutic circle to see the interconnections among pre-understandings and understandings of the data (Gadamer, 1989). The themes that participants emphasized had some interconnecting aspects to them based on analysis utilizing the hermeneutic circle. I realized that the emphasis by participants and the overall themes of participants' lives led to these three areas of emphasis: the support of others, self-confidence through the belief of others, and autonomy that is acting from a sense of choice and being the originator of action.

### *5.3.1 Supportive Others, Belief in Me, and Autonomy Results*

Participants stressed all three, the support of others, the belief these others had in them, and the development of autonomous behaviour as very important to their development. Some developed autonomy through self-initiated activities while others developed it due to the internalization of others influence and behaviour.

### 5.3.1.1 *The significance of the support and belief of others.*

It became clear over the course of the study that participants gained immensely from having others' support in their lives. Supportive individuals became a central theme in the interviews showing up as positive parents, siblings, grandparents, in-laws, teachers, friends, friends' parents, romantic partners, bosses, and mentors. Participants mentioned the "support of others" 160 different times, representing the second highest number of occurrences within the data.

All the participants stressed the importance that supportive and positive others had on them through their narratives, even the participants that said no one had a strong positive impact on them or that interpersonal skills did not matter. For example, Participant A said that no one really affected him positively. However, at a different point in his second interview he spoke of an instructor that he had a close relationship with and who he mentioned was a very positive person to him. He went on and on about his good qualities and even mentioned that he was God Father to this instructor's son. Within narrative analysis, this was not consistent. In spite of this inconsistency, this person *did* have a very positive impact on the participant (Refer to Appendix K, Questions that Guided Narrative Inquiry). Another example of inconsistency was Participant H, who said that leaders could be any style and not necessarily have strong interpersonal skills. However, he mentioned a number of times the positive impact an in-law had on him. He even stated that this in-law had made all the difference to his life. This person was supportive of him and looked for the positive in him demonstrating unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1995). These two participants' narratives lacked coherence, they stated supportive others had no impact on them yet in other narratives, they stated the importance supportive others had on their lives.

Participants also talked about both the importance of having supportive individuals and “people who believed in them” in their lives. The theme of “supportive other” co-occurred with the theme of “having people who believed in participants” 60 times, representing the highest numbers of co-occurrences in the data. The participants’ body language, tone, words used, and narratives conveyed the significance of the positive impact this support and belief had on them. Statements such as “they believed in me 150%”, “they believed I could do no wrong” and “you can do anything, you are the best” convey the conviction of the supportive individuals’ belief in participants. The participants regularly said this type of support was “huge” to them. Participant I conveys the importance of the support which her family provided for her over her entire life, through this representative quote:

No question that my parents and my family were huge, very loving, very principled, very ethical people. I felt supported all the way through my whole life. And I’m still very close to my family, even though we’re all very geographically distant.

The participant gained consistent support throughout her life and still gains tremendous support even though members of her family currently live in distant locations. Participants emphasized that support of them and belief in them were critical to them.

Refer to Appendix L, Co-occurrences with the Theme “Supportive Other”. Numerous co-occurrences existed including the themes “learning”, “feedback”, “interpersonal skills”, “range of experience”, “challenge”, “stepping up to responsibility”, “confidence”, “hard work”, and “learning from negative”. Many of the themes that co-occur with “supportive other” are important to the role of leadership.

#### *5.3.1.2 Support and belief internalized.*

Within the first interview, history questions helped surface impactful people and experiences for participants. The historical, social, and political forces that shape experience are

important to analyze (Lopez & Willis, 2004). Participants often mentioned impactful people when asked about their history, as well as their promotions to higher levels of authority and responsibility. Impactful people who convey belief and promotions both came to represent the theme “belief in participants”.

Eleven of the twelve participants talked about the importance of having relatives or bosses who believed in them. Participant A was the only one who did not talk about the importance of this topic, because he developed his belief in himself autonomously through a difficult and significant trial he outlined in both his interviews. “Other people’s belief in participants” co-occurred with the theme “confidence” 17 times in the data (Refer to Appendix M, Co-occurrences with the Theme “Others’ Belief in Participants”). This co-occurrence is consistent with Mikulincer and Shaver’s (2004) observation about individuals’ propensity to internalize the messages of significant others. Others’ belief in and support of participants provided them with positive thought patterns, that they internalized. These positive beliefs serve as a source of support and protection for participants (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004, Mikulincer & Shaver, 2009). The following quote highlights the narrative of Participant H as he talks about the positive impact his mother-in-law had on him:

I think the example I would have made is somebody that is just unequivocally supportive, she works hard to find the good things in people. And I think she’s just one of those people in the world that I think whatever son-in-law she would have been dealt with, she would have tried to work as hard as she could to find the positives, but that, it created lots of confidence.

This participant described how his mother-in-law supported him and that this created great confidence in him. He was in his late teens when he first met this supportive person. This participant experienced what Shaver and Mikulincer (2009b) discuss as the “potential of interacting with sensitive others” resulting in an experience, which moves a person toward security. The experience was



transformational for him because he moved to increased levels of confidence. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) state that belief in oneself or self-efficacy allows individuals to confront their fear and build their competence. The internalization of others' belief and support helped participants feel confident, starting them off on a generative track as they moved toward increased success.

Refer to Appendix M, Co-occurrences with the Theme "Others' Belief in Participants". The themes include "supportive other", "mentor", "challenge", "confidence", and "feedback". Participants often approached supportive people to discuss challenging circumstances they were experiencing. It is interesting to note that these supportive others who believed in them were able to make the participant feel confident again, as indicated in Appendix M.

#### *5.3.1.3 Role models for believing in others.*

When others believe in us, in turn, we learn how to believe in others. Table 7, Co-occurrences of the Themes "Others' Belief in Participants" and "Participants' Belief in Others".

Table 7: Co-occurrences of the Themes “Others’ Belief in Participants” and “Participants’ Belief in Others”

Others’ Belief in Participants	Participants’ Belief in Others
<p>Participant C</p> <p>“My mother was probably the one, ‘you can do anything you want, you are the best’. That gives a tremendous amount of confidence.”</p> <p>“But usually it has come down to a stated belief in who I am.”</p>	<p>Participant C</p> <p>“You know having great faith and believing that most people want to do good.”</p> <p>“Don’t underestimate the power of saying to someone ‘you can do it’.”</p>
<p>Participant D</p> <p>“My mother’s parents, especially, and they just believed I could do no wrong.”</p> <p>“They believed in me and you could really see that they didn’t stand in my way of being who I was.”</p>	<p>Participant D</p> <p>“I still have a strong belief that people can change.”</p> <p>“She can do it, I have full confidence that she’ll do it and she’ll do it well.”</p>
<p>Participant F</p> <p>“He had a way of making us believe there were things that would get us [through] this very challenging journey.”</p>	<p>Participant F</p> <p>“To always challenge people to go beyond what they think they are capable of and reinforce that they are capable of doing that and probably more.”</p>
<p>Participant I</p> <p>“They started realizing they could actually look good if they let me take a bigger leadership role, because I was so motivated, so driven and was getting things done.”</p>	<p>Participant I</p> <p>“Because they know me, trust me, they believe in me, they know I believe in them, they know I’m doing everything I can to make them successful.”</p>
<p>Participant J</p> <p>“They have believed in me 150%.”</p>	<p>Participant J</p> <p>“And I’ve got such a strong team that I can draw on.”</p>

When leaders internalize this belief, they extend themselves further (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Participants internalized the support provided by others, which assisted them in extending belief to others.

When individuals believe in others, their leadership impact and influence widens, making them increasingly successful. Charan, Drotter and Noel (2001) emphasize the importance of getting work done through others as the most important value shift a person needs to make when becoming a new leader. Individuals regulate their felt sense of security by maintaining proximity to transformational leaders in changing and difficult circumstances (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). When a leader believes in others, they project outward to these others the thoughts and feelings that they can perform effectively, even in trying circumstances.

#### *5.3.1.4 The importance of believing in others.*

The description above conveys the sense that experiencing the belief of others and internalizing this belief enhances individuals' self-confidence. In addition, extending one's belief to others has significant positive impact for the participants in leadership roles. Two participant quotes on this topic demonstrate the importance of believing in others:

Don't underestimate the power of saying to someone that you can do it, and of course not throwing them to the wolves doing it. (Participant C)

To always challenge people to go beyond what they think they are capable of and reinforce that they are capable of doing that and probably more. (Participant F)

These statements convey belief in others, which empowers, motivates, and paves the way for successful actions.

Another finding that supports leaders' need to believe in others was found through analyzing why initial participants did not qualify for the study. In Chapter 4 I indicated that three individuals did not qualify for the study. I realized they did not convey that they believed in or trusted others. They

had not internalized the belief of others enough to extend belief to others. They did not delegate, trust, or believe in others.

#### *5.3.1.5 The significance of autonomy.*

Eleven of the twelve participants described the importance of being autonomous, having choice, and being in a good place because of their ability to be initiators of action. Some participants discussed it as the ability to stand on their own in the face of external pressure. Others talked about being in a good place when they had choice, being positive in the midst of negative others around them, and being generative or positive in the face of adversity. They did not align themselves with external pressure, negative situations, or limiting views. Instead, they demonstrated autonomy of thought, feeling, and action, which enabled positive outcomes when leading others. Participants provided examples that emphasize the importance of autonomy.

Eight participants stressed the importance of trusting their own views in the midst of adversity, (A, B, C, D, F, I, K and L) demonstrating autonomy. The following are representative quotes that demonstrate the importance of autonomy:

We were being shut down by the regulators. I was in a meeting with the top regulator and said to him you will regret this day because I will expose you. And I stood up and started walking out and he stopped me and said “What is it you need?” and he started listening to me. I knew intuitively that I had to do this, there was no other way to deal with them and what was occurring. It worked. (Participant A)

So that’s probably really important for development as well, that trust in who you are that so many kids don’t have, because they are not supported in a way that you know, they didn’t have strong roots, you know, as some kids don’t and they are always looking for approval. (Participant C)

So it’s kind of like, I trusted my judgment, we went with it and we had a really good outcome. (Participant D)

So I think it’s trusting myself, getting the support that I got from my husband to take my time and not jump into something and waiting for the right opportunity. I have learned a lot. (Participant D)

When individuals look for external validation in adverse or negative circumstances it does not help them. However, being autonomous and relying on themselves in negative circumstances allows for generative outcomes, which served these leaders and their situations. Participants were able to create positive and generative outcomes out of negative circumstances through their autonomous thinking and actions.

Eleven participants stated they were in a *good place* when they believed they had a choice about things (A, B, C, D, E, F, H, I, J, K, and L). This positive state occurred when they had a plan B or when they ensured they were a good fit for roles. If they were not a good fit, they would take themselves out of the situation. Perceiving oneself as the locus of causality demonstrates individuals' intrinsic motivation (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Inner control is important to producing greater flexibility, creativity, initiative, resiliency, and self-regulation. Autonomy also supports responsible, resilient, and adaptable behaviour (Ryan, Deci, & Grolnick, 1995), the very behaviour many leadership development programs develop in leaders.

The opposite behaviour occurs when a person lets events or external circumstances control them; individuals become tense and negative, and exhibit-lowered self-esteem (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When individuals believe they are the origin of causality they are empowered (DeCharms, 1968). This sense of being the originator of action supports choice in the midst of adverse external circumstances. It also enables choices that affect one's vision, the possibility of creating positive future outcomes even in the midst of negative situations.

#### *5.4 Results as Pathways*

I wrote and rewrote sections of the literature review, methods sections, and findings. The rewriting allowed for ongoing analysis of the findings and enabled increased levels of thick

description. While writing and rewriting the literature review, I realized I was explaining very thoroughly the roots or origins of secure and insecure attachment and transformational leadership. Having the participants' beginnings established so clearly I went to a couple of committee members with these findings. One committee member reminded me that I also wanted to look at the development of the leaders over their lives. After this discussion, the title of the study came together as "the roots and pathways to secure and transformational leadership". The developmental trajectories represented pathways that others can follow to secure and transformational leadership.

I absorbed the voices and stories of participants through their narratives. I utilized narrative inquiry to analyze how participants developed behaviour and their characteristics. I analyzed the narratives for the participants' patterns of experiences and choices. Narrative inquiry assists in revealing participants' self-identity, reality, and experience through the stories they tell (Chase, 2005). Content and holistic analysis are other forms of narrative analysis. Looking at the topic of change across a person's lifespan is an example of this form of analysis (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Content and holistic analysis fit with my need to assess specific topic areas over participants' lives and developmental trajectories.

#### *5.4.1 Pathways Out of Insecure Attachment*

The interviews contained questions that helped surface examples when leaders demonstrated effective and ineffective behaviour. When asked about their ineffective behaviour, many participants described their early leadership lives revealing two forms of insecure attachment, either anxious- or avoidant-insecure attachment tendencies. I realized these secure leaders had demonstrated early insecure proclivities within their new leadership roles. Later, however they exhibited secure-leadership behaviour. I realized that the leaders' development

over time would point to ways they had learned to be more secure. Subsequently I asked myself which of the leaders were most resilient and secure in their current behaviour. I realized that two participants representing both types of early leadership insecure-attachment proclivities were the most secure and resilient later on in their leadership lives. These resilient and adaptively confident participants understood others in ways that were the most positive, secure, and complex within the study. Cook-Greuter (2004) explains that individuals' mental models become more complex and broader as they develop. Quinn (2004) also believes that adaptively confident individuals exchange information and truths giving rise to new and more complex solutions and truths. Participant I modeled a way through anxious-insecure attachment as she emphasized ways to counter a negative self-schema and negative attributions of others. Later in her leadership life Participant I empathised with someone who was very aggressive with her by exhibiting empathy toward him. Rather than responding aggressively, she assertively wanted to create a win-win situation in the midst of another's extreme aggression. This exhibited her complex thinking and mature interpersonal skills. Participant F showed a way through avoidant-insecure attachment because he spoke about countering his initial negative other-schema and arrogance. He currently acts in ways that demonstrate the importance of supporting others' self-esteem. The behaviour they lived, how they developed themselves, and the details they stressed could become templates for others, and therefore routes to secure attachment.

The pathways to developing secure attachment differ depending on the initial style of insecure attachment individuals exhibited. The developmental pathways are diametrically opposed to one another as those with anxious-insecure attachment style have the opposite self- and other-schemas from those with avoidant-insecure attachment. Individuals with an anxious-insecure attachment style

have negative self-schemas and positive other-schemas, whereas those with avoidant-insecure attachment have positive self-schemas and negative other-schemas.

#### *5.4.1.1 Pathways out of initial anxious-insecure attachment.*

Participants with initial anxious-insecure attachment develop secure attachment through increasing their self-confidence, empowerment levels, and comfort with themselves. Mikulincer, et al. (2009) say that anxious-insecure individuals tend to access their weaknesses and do not talk about their strengths. This tendency fails to support their self-confidence and self-schema.

The participant with initial leanings toward anxious-insecure attachment developed more self-confidence or self-efficacy over time. She developed self-efficacy by emphasizing and leading with her strengths. Utilizing strengths was just as important as promoting her strengths. Focusing on strengths enables anxious-insecurely attached individuals to counter their inability to readily recall their strengths. By focusing on her strengths this participant took ownership of her abilities (Mackoff & Wenet, 2001).

Acting with courage, and thereby exercising one's personal power, also contributed to being an effective leader and helped to counter anxiety. Participant C said the following, "It is so important to know yourself and get out there." She demonstrates, courage, when she says, "get out there", and when individuals do, they test themselves. Eight of the twelve participants talked about the importance of challenging themselves and demonstrating courage. They also indicated that they found challenge fun, stimulating, or important.

Still other participants described their fearlessness, receiving negative input with a grain of salt. Performing these actions takes courage and personal power and exhibits confidence. Spreitzer, Kizilos, and Nason (1997) say empowered individuals do not see their work situation as given, but rather something that they shape with their actions. Participant I emphasized this when she said:



So I learned very early that you should have the courage to go after what it is you really like and want, obviously as long as it is not doing harm.

She was talking about the importance of being courageous, taking risks, and seeking work that one likes and wants.

Being your authentic self was also discussed a number of times by participants with initial leanings toward anxious-insecure attachment. Participant D's statement exemplifies a number of quotes and demonstrates the power of being oneself: "I really was me. I was really authentic. Generally I am, but I was really authentic." She was talking about the power of being herself and the effectiveness it gave her with others in her organization. Being oneself cures the lack of autonomy support provided by parents who are neglectful and inconsistent causing anxious-insecure individuals (Mikulincer, et al., 2009). Being comfortable in your own skin is important to those with initial anxious-insecure leanings.

### **Participant I Demonstrated Strength in Countering Anxious Insecure Tendencies**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had a secure start coming from a very close-knit family who supports each other. She worked in the private sector.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** She is confident having internalized the belief that her family has in her. Dad and sister were role models for a good sense of self. They both changed careers sticking to what motivated them. This participant is comfortable in her own skin and able to be vulnerable because of this. Her parents helped her establish personal autonomy by telling her not to listen to negative others, they and their comments are irrelevant, you are a wonderful person. Her success at school and on the job instilled her belief that she could do things. She feels when there is an opportunity that she has nothing to lose so she feels confident and steps up to a risk or a challenge. This participant demonstrates a confident can-do attitude. She is the same person, consistent in many different situations.

**Other Focused:** Participant I volunteers, mentors, and develops others demonstrating her other-directedness. She sees that shaping things for others is a responsibility and opportunity. She volunteered at an early age and volunteered throughout her working life. Participant I has a positive attitude about others' strengths and humanity. Her positive aptitude attracts

opportunities to her including opportunities to help others. She is a very resilient and mature leader who even sees aggression in others empathetically, emphasizing win-win solutions. She believes that everyone can win and believes that the best person should win, not necessarily her all the time. She is a very emotionally intelligent leader. Her parents are excellent role models for helping within the community. She is comfortable with our human condition and that we are destined to fail. She had some bad bosses where she learned what not to do. She has had the support of her family throughout her life. She offers support to others, cares deeply about people, and will give feedback if asked. She had a personal issue in her early life that she had to deal with and this helped her develop better interpersonal skills as she was able to identify and empathize with others going through difficulties.

**Externally Open:** She likes having diverse friendships, which demonstrates her external openness. She enjoys learning and challenging herself to learn.

**Purpose Driven:** Participant I excelled at music as a young person. She did very well at school. She always had aspirations to be an executive which may have been developed through watching her mother lead. She held many varying positions of increased responsibility. She works hard and exercises her intelligence. She has been involved in volunteer commitments for most of her adult life. She strongly wants to move things forward and will pull herself up by the bootstraps when things need to be going better.

#### *5.4.1.2 Pathways out of initial avoidant-insecure attachment.*

Participants with initial leanings toward avoidant-insecure attachment developed their interpersonal relationships and humility. One participant's development occurred when he worked on his emotional intelligence, strengthened his interpersonal skills, and focused on lifelong learning and humility. Mikulincer and Shaver (2005b) state secure people feel comfortable learning about and exploring their emotions because they view emotions as useful and positive expressions that help them grow and adjust. Mikulincer, et al., (2009) suggest avoidant-attached individual's block awareness of thoughts and emotions that might activate their need for others. Early in their leadership lives, some participants said they acted self-oriented, arrogant, or ego-oriented. Avoidant-attached individuals inflate their sense of self-worth, devalue others when they feel threatened, and fail to acknowledge their weaknesses (Mikulincer, et al., 2009). Participants used effective methods to counter their initial

defensive ego-inflation by emphasizing humility through continuous learning and developing their interpersonal skills. Thus, they countered their defence of feeling superior to others.

Early in some of the participants' leadership lives, they indicated a tendency toward doing things to boost their ego. These quotes from participants are representative of participants with these leanings:

So, who I am as a leader is when I'm being effective at helping them become better or I'm ineffective is when I don't help them be better, or say something offensive or inappropriate or make them feel less safe. So the good news is I do that a lot less than when I was younger. (Participant E)

It was when I – I think I know more than I do, you know you get full of yourself, you get that – I'm a 25-year-old male, and I'm invincible, kind of, thing going on. So, whether it's – it's mostly I think leaping to judgment, which isn't always a description of chronological time, it's I just met you, and I think I know everything about you now, because I'm a junior psychologist or something. You know, the saying you shouldn't judge a book by its cover is rooted in pretty insightful thought. (Participant H)

Ego in this context means inflating one's sense of importance versus acting more humbly, which conveys the opposite, as it helps individuals relate to others.

A quote by Participant H describes the problem of insecurity, where a person looks for what is wrong to boost his or her own ego:

Insecure bosses who believe that they can show their own value by finding faults, like a manager who goes into a department and it's a completely clean department and they just won't let it go until they find something wrong. A lot of times they see that as a reflection on themselves that they couldn't find anything wrong, and I think we do that as bosses sometimes.

Mikulincer and Shaver (2005b) discuss problems with the avoidant style of attachment. Even though the person acts confidently, it is a false confidence that they exhibit. In reality, they feel poorly about themselves and react defensively by inflating their own self-esteem and rejecting negative feedback from others. When people feel good about themselves there is less need for them to react defensively (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2005b).

Mature participants countered the typical avoidant-insecure attachment behaviour of blocking support from others by asking for help and support from others (Mikulincer, et al., 2009). Focusing on the development of one's interpersonal skills helps individuals relate better to others. Participant F talks about learning and relationships beautifully throughout his interview, and this quote is representative:

But recognize roles within the whole mix of connected roles and relationships and just examine how that might be improved, but not dwelling on the negative side of it, so much as the learning what can be derived from it.

These developmental trajectories worked well, as these leaders positively influenced others throughout the mid-to later stages of their leadership lives. Quinn (2004) states that individuals can choose to take responsibility and change for the better. The interview transcripts of these participants emphasized changed behaviour, demonstrating humility, an ongoing focus on learning, and strengthening their interpersonal skills.

I became increasingly inquisitive about the avoidant-attached style during the research process because my tendency leaned toward the other form of insecure-attachment style. I inquired and reflected on others around me who showed avoidant-attachment patterns through their behaviour over the remainder of the study. I am still highly curious about resolutions of this style of insecure attachment because avoidant attachment is not very familiar to me.

Men in western civilizations are generally prone to demonstrate avoidant-insecure attachment, which limits their interpersonal effectiveness (Schmitt, 2003). They tend to have skills in getting things done. However, in leadership roles, how they get it done is equally important. Participant F did not demonstrate avoidant-insecure tendencies. His interviews and life history describe a way to move through this type of insecure attachment to increased security.

## **Participant F Demonstrated Strength in Countering Avoidant Insecure Tendencies**

### **Development of Security**

This participant had a secure start as his father was a wonderful role model who was there for him and worked responsibly for his children. Participant F adored his father and for good reason. The family's beginnings were humble and they did not have many financial resources. However, through the role model of his father this participant has been able to live life very fully and ultimately very abundantly. He has a very growth-oriented wife who partners with him for his and others' development.

### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** He was able to trust himself and others. He enjoys physical fitness and dancing. He wanted to be his own person, distinctive in his large family. He is a mature and empowering leader. He has received votes of confidence from others as they asked him to take on roles of increasing responsibility. These promotions were readily accepted by this participant, demonstrating his autonomy and confidence in himself. He was offered diverse positions that challenged this participant. This participant enjoys life and has a deep and complex view of life and work which speak to his maturity as an individual and leader. He looks for ways of growing which strengthen his sense of self. This participant demonstrates autonomous behaviour as he realizes he has choice in situations, taking the good from the bad. He has strong self-awareness because of his choice of careers in human services and human resources.

**Other Focused:** Participant F was the only male participant who affirmed the researcher. He did not knock her down in their first meeting demonstrating his ability to be other focused. He is a positive force demonstrating his other-focused behaviour to those around him. He watched his first boss model doing what he believed was right and admired him as a role model. He had an instructor who shined the light on what was best about himself and others. He greatly admired this instructor.

**Externally Open:** His father was a model of lifelong learning who immigrated to Canada in his 60's demonstrating his adaptability and openness. Participant F is a lifelong learner demonstrating his external openness. He currently speaks multiple languages. He has a professional degree. He moved to different cities a number of times demonstrating his ability to perform and adapt in varying circumstances. He has also changed roles a number of times, learning diverse areas of specialties. He has lived a life of learning and he loves reading, coursework, degree programs, and holds many certificates. He talked about his leadership roles being fertile ground for life long learning. Participant F developed strong self-awareness because of his career focus, working in administering social work services and later holding human resource positions.

**Purpose Driven:** He had a responsible and giving father acting as a strong model for purpose to Participant F who gave all he could to look after his family. Participant F did very well at school. He was determined to work hard and gain entrance to university, which he accomplished. He was the first in his family to go to university and received scholarships to do so. He is a very

resilient person. Depth of experience is important to him, as is mastery in his work. He wants to add value in the circumstances he finds himself in. He sees shaping things for others as an opportunity and responsibility. It is important for him to make work meaningful. He likes to add value and wants to ensure he is the best person he can be. He has been promoted to leadership roles of increasing variety and responsibility.

#### *5.4.2 Pathways to and Evidence of Self-Confidence, Autonomy, and Support Seeking Behaviour*

Utilizing narrative analysis, I analyzed the experiences and choices of participants throughout their lives, and how they became more confident, autonomous, and support seeking. Participants emphasized these three areas as important to their leadership success. Early experiences within their family of origin and positive experiences with supportive others throughout their life supplemented the positive actions carried out by the participants. Pathways to and evidence of participants' confidence, autonomy, and relational abilities are outlined in the following sections.

##### *5.4.2.1 Pathways to self-confidence.*

This section outlines different pathways that enabled participants to develop self-confidence. Participants emphasized that having the support of others both early on and throughout their lives, strengthened their confidence. Broad ranging experiences and working hard added to experience and confidence levels. They also shared that personal and professional challenges increased their confidence levels. These challenges ranged from taking on responsibility, ongoing learning, responding to feedback, raising awareness, and leading with one's strengths as positive responses to challenge, all supporting participants' confidence levels.

Many participants talked about having supportive others in their lives which aided in instilling confidence within them. This was discussed at length in section 5.3.1.2 of this chapter. For participants who came from a difficult childhood, hard work brought them the positive attention of teachers and bosses. Working hard was not a direct path to self-confidence as participants who came from

supportive families, but it did eventually lead to enhanced self-confidence. Most of the participants were very hard working. However, leaders from difficult backgrounds used hard work to open up opportunities for them.

Some participants mentioned that experience and learning gave them confidence as they knew they could handle all kinds of different scenarios which came their way. Confidence co-occurs with the theme having a broad range of experience 17 times in the data. Every participant had broad experience through holding diverse roles and positions. Confidence co-occurs with learning 13 times in the data. These participants emphasized learning that supported their confidence levels. Learning from experience and learning in general strengthened participants' confidence levels.

Challenging oneself in a number of ways builds confidence. Putting one-self on the line by taking responsibility or stepping up to opportunity also raised participants' confidence levels. Participant A's quote demonstrates how taking responsibility helped him gain experience and confidence:

I take responsibility when things fail. I say it is my fault and then I do something about it. You shouldn't blame others when things go wrong. Things need to continually get better or they are getting worse. If I take responsibility, I can get things to go better.

This participant said that by taking responsibility and gaining experience, he raised his confidence and success levels. By moving into the experience, he kept things progressing, gaining experience, and ensuring success for himself and his organization.

Participants also said that enhancing awareness levels (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, I, J and L) and acting on feedback (B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K and L) raised confidence levels. Participants enhanced their confidence by being aware of their strengths and weaknesses and also learning what went well and what did not go well. Individuals are secure when they know both what they do well and what

they do not do well (Mikulincer, et al., 2009; Stein & Book, 2006). Alternatively, other participants who faced criticism spoke about leading with their strengths as a way to boost their self-confidence and counter this adversity.

In summary pathways to self-confidence included:

- Support from others, early and throughout participants' lives,
- Experience,
  - Broad range of experiences and learning
  - Hard work
- Personal/professional challenges,
  - Putting themselves on the line
    - By taking responsibility
    - Stepping up to opportunity
  - Raising awareness levels,
  - Acting on feedback, and
  - Leading with one's strengths.

Refer to Appendix N, Co-occurrences with the Theme "Confidence". The theme "confidence" co-occurs with the themes "stepping up to responsibility", "challenge", "supportive others who believe in participants", "broad range of experience", "creating internally-directed behaviour", and "learning". Internally-directed behaviour aligns with individuals' ability to "take responsibility", mentioned in the prior discussion.

#### *5.4.2.2 Evidence of self-confidence.*

Proof of participants' self-confidence exists in their self-management, as well as their behaviour and comfort levels with difficult and diverse situations. Participants exhibited their support for and belief in, as well as trust in themselves. The participants are positive people, who convey confidence and belief in themselves and their actions. They also showed their abilities to adapt, be courageous in the face of mistakes, lean into challenge, and feel comfortable with decisions and diversity, all of which demonstrate higher confidence levels. The following paragraphs give details of this evidence.



Confidence was present when participants believed in, and supported and trusted themselves, even in the face of adversity. Many participants talked about believing in themselves (A, C, D, E, F, H, I, K and L) and trusting themselves (A, B, C, D, F, I, K, and L) in adverse circumstances. Participant I demonstrated her confidence when she used humour to diffuse a potentially tense situation:

I remember that there was a question that came in from the audience and I didn't know the answer to it. And I chuckled and I said, "You know, I don't know the answer to that but I don't think anybody in the whole room knows the answer to that." And they all chuckled and we moved on, right.

She exhibited confidence by taking this situation lightly because she understood that no one else knew the answer either, demonstrating her belief in herself. Participants' ability to adapt and exhibit a *can-do* attitude also demonstrates strong confidence levels. Participant B outlines how believing he could succeed, being positive, and saying yes to opportunities helped him:

I had an opportunity to run the social club and be present in the hiring process. I kept my hand up.

He believed he could contribute and learn through this role and indeed it opened doors and attracted others and success to him.

Over the course of the interviews, I began to notice how overwhelmingly positive I felt leaving the interviews with the leaders. I was interviewing very successful people about their life journeys. Fredrickson (2009) says being positive produces success in life and reflects success in life. Leaders' influence is important and being positive has lasting impact (Fredrickson 2009). Participants' confidence showed up in their positive, generative, and win-win attitudes. Participant F's narrative conveys the way positive actions supported his confidence levels:

And I know that in creating a good outcome for others and facilitating that, it left me with a good feeling about myself, so that sort of keeps on regenerating, the wellspring of that kind of giving, and that support, and that sharing.

Being a positive force conveys participants' belief in self, and in demonstrating positive actions and outcomes. Participant I shows her positive attitude in two different ways in the following quote:

I'm competing very heavily against myself, but not others. I'm very much a believer that everyone can win and so why wouldn't you try for that? And I think that is what makes me that and kind of a can do attitude.

Researchers have found securely-attached individuals have pro-social orientations that positively affect their ability to lead (Mikulincer & Nachson, 1991; Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007; Mikulincer, et al., 2005). Fraley and Shaver (2008) have found evidence that secure individuals are more likely to act with positive affect.

Positivity makes people nimble (Fredrickson, 2009). Participant E's quote is a good example of many participants' ability to adapt:

So we're in the midst of doing a consult with a group of post-grads and because of a comment one of them made, I turned to my colleague and said maybe we should switch gears. I've worked with this woman for a long time. You don't need often to talk to be able to do what we need to do and we switched gears and I started doing a role play about that particular grad student about what would happen and Linda started asking them questions about what I was doing. Then we stopped it and we said is this what you're looking for? Then it just kind of rolled and it opened up space and we had a really good discussion.

This participant is able to switch gears easily, exhibiting her ability to adapt and thrive while under pressure to facilitate training with her staff.

All of the participants demonstrated that they were not afraid of making mistakes, freely admitting that they had problems, and their belief in the resolution of problems. These quotes demonstrate confidence:

But I think when you look at the failures, it's a bit like putting the rebar in the concrete that makes the foundation a little bit stronger and then you could build a self-confidence that you can trust. (Participant F)

Well, I guess, from a self-management standpoint, I understand that making mistakes is part of the learning process, and the important part is, obviously to learn from those mistakes when you make them. I certainly reinforce that with my direct reports is that it's – when you take risks, you're bound to make mistakes and just understand that that's part of the process, I guess that would be my answer to that. (Participant K)

Problems are not really blocks, and mistakes are not overwhelming. That is, they do not stop participants in their tracks, exhibiting participants' confidence.

Eleven participants showed their confidence by leaning into challenges and asking for more work (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, and L). Participant E demonstrated confidence as he explains his role and talks about asking for different work:

So really my first two years here were to translate all the good stuff for the people that knew the technical parts of the food business or to the people that were in the decision making power, and all I did is to provide confidence and I said, well, you don't need me to do this, so give me something else to do. So they gave me sales and a bunch of different things eventually the CFO role.

Some participants exhibited self-confidence through their love of challenge, and implored others to keep them stimulated so they would not become bored.

Participants also exhibited confidence when they demonstrated comfort with decisions, and diverse situations and individuals. Participants talked about taking time to feel confident in their decisions, and then after this occurred, deciding and acting. They also were comfortable with diverse individuals. Participant I outlines below how she has the strength to be different and surround herself with diverse people:

So I might as well just be who I am and my whole career I've been told you're different. But I've always been told you're different and it's been a positive, right? And so, I kind of just accepted the fact that I can be very logical, very matter of fact, so I can be that way, but I can also bring in the softer side and I'm happy to be feminine. I think I really am a believer in diversity. I surround myself with people who are very different than me.

Many participants had the self-confidence to embrace diverse viewpoints from their friends and employees.

In summary evidence of self-confidence included:

- Support, believe and trust in themselves,
- Positive attitudes,
- Adaptability,
- Demonstrating one's courage,
  - Not being afraid to make mistakes
- Lean into challenge, and
  - Ask for more and different work if bored
- Comfort with decisions and diversity.

#### *5.4.2.3 Pathways to autonomy.*

Participants in the interviews outlined a number of pathways to autonomy. They became autonomous by standing alone, creating options for themselves, taking responsibility and stepping up to opportunity. Other pathways to autonomy included knowing and being themselves, learning the importance of autonomy from relatives, course correcting after participants became aware of being out of alignment with their values, or spending time alone.

Participants emphasized the importance of standing alone in the face of difficult people or circumstances, which demonstrated their strength and autonomy (A, C, D, and E). Participant A developed a strong internally-directed behaviour by distancing himself from a mean friend. He was determined to be his own person, standing alone in the face of this difficult person and situation, as the following quote outlines:

I had a friend when I was in grade school, he was my best friend. I started to see that he was manipulative and mean. I decided that I needed to remove myself from him. So I did that. He gave me a real hard time for quite a while and then he stopped doing this. I was really glad that I wasn't around him and knew I would be fine on my own. This was a very formative experience for me. An important life lesson that I could be on my own and stand for what I wanted to stand for.

Participant A kept stating the importance of having an internal compass to succeed as a leader. He is an extremely successful and influential leader. Bandura (1977) would agree with the importance of having an internal compass as he says individuals' internal locus of control and standing alone aligns

with their ability to have and demonstrate impact. Studies have shown that less secure people tend to base their self-appraisal on unstable, conditional sources of self-worth, such as other's approval. However, indications of external disapproval or disinterest can further lower self-esteem (Shaver & Mikulincer, 2009b).

Some participants created options – plans for themselves in adverse circumstances – and then acted on those plans. Participant D went to a career counsellor so that she could make positive plans for herself:

When I was on my mat leave, I said I don't know if I want to go back and my husband said, 'this doesn't sound like you' and I actually went to see a career counsellor. What I learned at that stage was I really liked what I did, I probably didn't like where I was doing it anymore.

The option enabled them to be “in a good place,” a positive mental state in the face of adversity, and then they acted on these choices and charted their own destiny.

Participants told me that when they took responsibility for events and circumstances, they built their autonomy levels. Participant A took responsibility on behalf of his organization in a difficult situation:

At the end of the day, you have to stand on your own and make those difficult decisions. And that was one moment when I felt that probably. In that one moment, I can't imagine I think I know one person who would have the courage to have done the same thing. I don't mean to sound boastful about that, it is just a harsh reality. Not only that the next day, the board didn't even know I had the battle and the next day was our first annual shareholders meeting. I made the decision and I knew that I was going to have to wake up and face not only the press, but also my board, and the shareholders.

All of the participants talked about demonstrating the ability to “step up to opportunities, responsibilities, or challenges” when they *kept their hands up* or *volunteered* when no one else would. They talked about having nothing to lose when they stepped up to challenge. This stepping up took extra effort and required them to take extra responsibility.

Ten participants discussed the importance of knowing and being themselves (A, B, C, D, F, G, H, I, K and L). Some of the participants talked about the importance others' support, enabling them to be themselves. They discussed their parents or grandparents urging them to be themselves and discounted the importance of external criticism. They stressed that their own opinions of themselves mattered most. Family members of participants emphasized the importance of listening to their inner voice over those of others. To align with one's full potential it is important to realize that individuals who are not constructive are not worthy of being listened to. Participant D's grandfather would say to her "If you're going to be like them, who is going to be like you?" The participant said she still feels the sweetness of what her grandfather said to this day. Participant I's parents encouraged her in the face of taunting classmates by saying, "You are a wonderful person and what you look like outside is really irrelevant." All of these messages have helped participants to have a strong inner alignment with their own thoughts, feelings and values, allowing for autonomy and internal, rather than externally-directed behaviour.

Participant I outlines how consistency and being comfortable in her own skin helps others want to follow her:

I'm a pretty consistent person. My words and actions are pretty consistent whether I'm here at work or at home. I just kind of I am who I am and I'm comfortable in that skin. I would say that my leadership is very much about relationships and about people knowing who I am and being willing to take my input or follow in the case of people actually reporting to me. Because they know me, they trust me, they believe in me, they know I believe in them, they know I'm doing everything I can to make them successful.

Some also talked about learning early, when they were not themselves that things did not go well and they needed to return to being themselves to be effective. Other participants talked about feeling badly about their lack of alignment with their own values and making a course correction, to get back on track.

Quinn and Quinn (2009) state, “An internally directed state is a moment of dignity in which people experience the freedom and strength to act in ways that are consistent with their values” (p. 118-119). Participant I said the following about the importance of aligning with one’s values:

So I could say that those were probably the earliest and most profound things. I think having, knowing what your values are guides you throughout your whole life. And I had such phenomenal role models. I’ll give a couple of examples; my father was an engineer through and through, worked at an automobile company. They kept moving him up the ranks. And one day he said, “I’ve never wanted to be a Senior Manager and I’ve always loved the technical stuff. Let me just be an engineer. I don’t even enjoy the people management stuff.” That takes a huge amount of guts. I mean he was literally saying to the company, “Please demote me.”

Having a role model, in her father, who was internally directed, helped this leader align with her own values.

Other participants developed their inner awareness by spending time alone pursuing athletics or convalescing from an illness. Participant E outlines how spending time swimming helped him get to know himself and line up with his values:

One saving grace probably was that I was a competitive swimmer. I was probably doing 90 minutes a day. There was a lot of time to think and a lot of time to be alone.

Spending time alone gave participants time to align strongly with their own thoughts and feelings, thus getting to know themselves better.

In summary pathways to autonomy included:

- Standing alone in the face of difficult people or circumstances,
- Creating options and plans in adverse circumstances,
- Taking responsibility for events, outcomes and circumstances and learning from this experience,
- Stepping up to opportunities, and
- Knowing and being themselves
  - Family members supported aligning with their own motivation, ideas and values,
  - Being aware of times when out of alignment with values and course correcting, and
  - Spending time alone.

### Appendix O, Co-occurrences with the Theme “Autonomy/Internally Directed”.

These co-occurrences support the pathways to autonomy previously discussed. Co-occurrences exist between “internally-directed” and “adversity”, “supportive people”, “hard work” (hard work equates to stepping up to opportunities above), “learning” and “internal motivation” (internal motivation equates to aligning with one’s own motivation and values, similar to the above discussion).

### **Participant A - Demonstrated Strength in Being Autonomous**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had an insecure start in life as neither parent responded to his needs and provided the kind of support he wanted and needed early in his life. He watched his father be a good leader to his direct reports but was not a recipient of this same behaviour. While attending school he realized that his best friend was a bully and separated himself from this friend. The friend was mean to him as he was to others, but this participant realized that standing on his own helped separate him from his former friend. This ability to stand on his own served him well as Participant A developed the strength and autonomy, which ultimately produced security within him. He had a very positive role model in an instructor in his early adult years. This positive instructor became personally important to this participant.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** This participant knows himself well. He carries out tasks that he does well, aligns himself with what he does well and left a senior role when it required things of him he realized he did not do well. He doesn’t do work that not a good fit for him; he took himself out of an organization when it got to be a certain size because he realized he was a good leader for start up situations, not growth situations. He clearly demonstrated the ability to make decisions on his own. He demonstrated the value he puts in self-awareness as at one time he owned a company that did this type of work. He demonstrated his self-confidence by believing great things are possible, yet also demonstrated his humility in the interviews. One of his greatest life lessons is when he learned to rely on himself separating himself from someone who was a negative influence. He was readily able to make decisions on his own, and decisively stand alone. His autonomous behaviour enabled him to step up to responsibility, make things go well and keep things progressing.

**Other Focused:** He demonstrated early leadership in team sports in junior high and high school. He developed emotional intelligence through his life and demonstrated empathy for others. He realizes the importance of emotional intelligence for leadership and effectiveness with others. He enjoys mentoring and developing others. He realizes the importance of being a positive role model for others. He developed his interpersonal skills through early leadership in team sports in



school settings. Participant A demonstrates ethical leadership qualities, which were set up through college where ethics, morals and leadership were instilled in the students. His father was a good role model in as far as he was good with his direct reports and his flying instructor was a very positive role model to him.

**Externally Open:** This participant immigrated to Canada as an adult showing his ability to be adaptable and open to new situations. He held varying positions over time, which also demonstrated his openness. He values lifelong learning as he helped mentor others in a learning institution. He demonstrated his external openness by using another organization as a model and improving on the organization's processes. He kept his career interesting and an adventure through learning.

**Purpose Directed:** Participant A worked at some gruelling physical labour early in his life that made him aspire to do more refined work with better working conditions. He was determined to do well as he watched others who did and thought they were not particularly unique or special people. He is currently a highly successful entrepreneur. He attained a professional degree and went to a college that instilled leadership in its students. This participant held leadership roles of increasing responsibility. This participant demonstrated his ego-strength when he saw a problem he was able to take responsibility for it even though he did not create the problem. He thought that by stepping up to responsibility this action enabled things to move positively forward again.

#### *5.4.2.4 Evidence of autonomy.*

Behaviour that demonstrates strong self-respect and self-trust demonstrated strong autonomy levels. Participants also took feedback with a grain of salt and demonstrated choice regardless of external circumstances. Participants who supported others autonomy, were able to align and behave in accordance with their values. Participants demonstrated consistency, which displayed their strong sense of self and alignment with their values.

One leader spoke about an authority figure telling her that he and a board member did not like what she was accomplishing. She was willing to learn to state her outcomes in different terms, all the while realizing her style was different and worthwhile. This attitude conveyed her strong sense of self-respect and self-trust. The level of strength, autonomy, and strength Participant C demonstrated riveted me as I listened to her describe this situation:

One of my most difficult events was when I was an executive in time of great change, a new CEO came on board. I was head of Human Resources and I had a style that was very inclusive, and there was a new chairman of the board and a new CEO to whom I directly reported. And they were more cut and dried, hardliners business. I was used to working in *my industry* and I got people on board, having modeled myself after some very nurturing leaders. And believing in *my industry* that that's what gets people moving. In any case my CEO called me in one day, and we were having all the difficulties of recruitment and troubles of great change, new CEO, new chair. And he said there are several members of the board who don't think you can do this job and I was a Vice President at the time, who don't feel that you can do this. You note that you are having problems with recruitment, regardless of how valid those concerns are, we don't think you can do this job. So I want you to, I need to see these results X, Y and Z within the next couple of months and if you can't do it well, we will think of something else and I think you can do it, but I just want you to know that the chairman of the board doesn't think you can do it. I said to him o.k. well if I've got a month and tell me what you want to see, I think I can do that, I just want to tell you that if you have faith in me I'll be your best employee you have ever had. I took that feedback, because these were the deliverables they weren't seeing. I don't think I did anything tremendously different, I certainly framed it in the way they wanted, I was the only person in the next year that that CEO gave 100% bonus to. When he told me the next day after he had that conversation with me. He said "how are you?", I said "fine", he said it was a tough conversation yesterday I said "Yup, I'm working on it and I'll get back to you. I'm fine I understand what you are saying." He said to me, "You are so tough, you are one of the toughest people I have ever met." That adversity, that was a very tough situation for me.

Participant C also spoke about not selling others short in a new role that required some risk taking on the part of employees who reported to her. This participant valued and respected others as she valued and respected herself. She was not the only participant to talk about not selling employees short, thus demonstrating participants' abilities to value others in the face of adverse circumstances.

Eleven participants talked about being open to feedback or taking feedback with a grain of salt (B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K and L): seeing feedback as a gift and stating they could accept or reject the gift of feedback. Here is a representative quote of this:

Well, and the truth of the matter is it is – particularly as you get more senior, you can choose or not choose to do something. And I think in a way that makes me probably more receptive actually to negative feedback. It stops you from having the human nature of defensiveness go up, because it's [feedback] a gift. Take it or leave it, or take part of it or not all of it. (Participant K)

Many conveyed that they did not take feedback too seriously. They exercised choice over what feedback they internalized.

Participants demonstrated choice in the midst of threat, crisis, feedback, and negativity (A, B, C, D, R, F, H, I, J, K and L). Actions that reflect autonomy by participants included:

- carrying out reverse interviews,
- making other plans in adverse circumstances,
- choosing work they were motivated by,
- standing on their own in negative situations,
- challenging aggressive unethical people,
- creating change, and
- not aligning themselves with authoritarian leaders.

Participant I discussed how she focused on making a person a winner:

And I think that really refined my interpersonal skills and also my attitude around the fact that everyone can win. It doesn't have to be a competition per se.

The interesting aspect of this scenario is that the person she was talking about was trying to *take her down*. She exercised choice and generative behaviour in the midst of another's aggressive behaviour choosing to respond positively toward him. Participant E also spoke about being effective with the negative behaviour of others by figuring out ways to be impactful while not letting the negativity of others affect him.

Participants supported autonomy in others when they were able to support the best interests of employees even if it meant that a direct report moved out of the participants' department. Autonomy-support means acting in ways that allow others to feel competent and autonomous (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Grolnick, Deci and Ryan (1997) say, autonomy-supportive parents intrinsically motivated their children. Effective leaders need internally motivated employees to ensure the employees accomplish their responsibilities (Charan, Drotter, & Noel, 2001). Other participants were able to solicit, hear, and

respect multiple and diverse viewpoints and needs, thus demonstrating autonomy-supportive behaviour.

Participants said or demonstrated that, “It isn’t what happens to you but how you handle it.” Participants demonstrated autonomous behaviour by aligning with their values regardless of external circumstances. Other participants spoke about being consistent, that others relied on them for consistency and could trust in their ability to be consistent with their behaviour and values. The following participants describe the importance of aligning with their values and demonstrate consistent behaviour:

The bigger picture to me connotes what is the value and what is resonant with the core values that you try and stay true to, what are the guiding understandings and morals and principles that provide beacons to get you along the road you’re traveling in your career or the road you're traveling in life, and it's like that. (Participant E)

I think having, knowing what your values are guides you throughout your whole life. (Participant I)

I like to honour my values, and try not to betray them. (Participant L)

The ability to be consistent and aligned with one’s values displays individuals’ autonomy. Those who are not as consistent change when external circumstances change.

In summary evidence of autonomy included:

- Behaviour that demonstrates self-respect and self-trust and respect for others,
- Take feedback with a grain of salt,
- Exercise choice regardless of external circumstances,
- Support autonomy in others, and
- Alignment with own values and demonstrate consistency.

#### *5.4.2.5 Pathways to meeting relational needs.*

Similar to the section 5.3.1.2 on others supporting and believing in participants, others responding and providing comfort or relief met participants’ relational requirements. Participants discussed the impact that positive role models had on them. They also stressed that having the support

of others profoundly helped them be effective leaders. Many participants discussed the importance of supportive others in their networks or positive bosses and mentors. Participants discussed a number of ways they reached out to others, thus meeting their own relational needs.

In summary pathways to meeting relational needs included:

- Others support and belief in participants,
- Others responding, offering comfort and relief,
- Interacting with positive role models, and
- Keeping supportive others in one's network.

### **Participant B Demonstrated Strength in Meeting Relational Needs**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had a secure start as his mother believed in and supported him early in his life. This participant lost his major supporter though early in his adult life and had to work at providing sources of security for himself. His father unfortunately was very critical and not interpersonally inclined producing insecurity in Participant B. He had positive mentors in his grandfather, uncle, father-in-law and some bosses. Participant B develops many supportive and positive relationships through the network of people he maintains. He turns to these people when he is stuck, overwhelmed, or when something negative occurs ensuring, he gets back on track quickly. Supportive others' created confidence in this participant and included his mother, uncles, and grandfather. Some of these relatives were successful business people.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** This participant values not changing himself under pressure which demonstrates his internally directed behaviour. He admires those who are self-reflective, self-aware, and gave him advice. He has internalized the positive support of others and has become a positive person who affects others. He has solicited positive and constructive feedback from others, which supports his confidence levels. He spends time reflecting on his inner life which he says leads to the good life. Some of his confidence stems from having diverse experiences. He also remembers what he does well.

**Other Focused:** Participant B demonstrated leadership early in his in church settings and while attending university. He learned how to be a contributing member of a team and how to be interpersonally oriented from his experience being part of a band in his late teens and early adult life. This participant enjoys empowering and developing others. He also watched senior leaders in meetings. He realizes that giving is important for getting, and the importance of collaboration. He engages other and is accessible for others. He learned what not to do from some bad bosses. He offers support to others, cares deeply about people, will give feedback if asked and believes in others. He developed a strong belief in others from internalized belief from his mother and

grandfather. He realizes it is important to spend time with his family building a broad life. Life work balance is important to sustaining his energy.

**Externally Open:** Participant B challenged himself to learn in diverse and new situations. He moved a lot as a child and worked internationally demonstrating his ability to be intellectually open. He brings structure to complex situations and order to processes he is involved in. He has held many varying positions in his career where ongoing learning is important and moved locations many times taking on new roles. He likes to listen to others gathering knowledge in this way. He has learned from failures and demonstrated lifelong learning reading state of the art material to stay abreast of new knowledge.

**Purpose Driven:** This participant keeps his hand up and volunteers for things. He is a deliberate person who ponders what he wants to be remembered for. His aspirations were set up early being the oldest child in his family and part of a family who held high expectations of him. He enjoys adding value and intensely wants to do things that help others. He has held leadership roles of increasing responsibility.

#### *5.4.2.6 Evidence of meeting relational needs.*

Participants demonstrated the ability to ask for support in times of distress when they were stuck, overwhelmed, challenged, or upset. Some participants talked about needing support in a generalized way whereas others specifically talked about getting support in negative situations. Remember this was the second highest occurring theme within the data. Participants also talked about the importance of having supportive or constructive others in their network who helped them explore negative situations in a safe environment. Following this interaction with supportive others, participants would leave strengthened to face problems, move problems forward, and/or be the strong, confident leader they needed and wanted to be. Fraley and Shaver (2008) state, secure adults seek the support of others when they are distressed. The following quote from Participant B describes how he would get others to support him when he heard something negative:

I tend to build network support. I rally. If I get negative feedback or a business event that is not going well, I tend to reach out to my network for validation and check facts. I'm doing a validation step. If there needs to be something recovered or fixed, I'm reaching out for who could be around me for the fix.

This participant looks to supportive others to help him fix difficult situations.

The theme “supportive other” co-occurs with the themes “challenge” 15 times and “adversity” 12 times in the data (Refer to Appendix L, Co-occurrences with the Theme “Supportive Other”). The theme “supportive other” co-occurs with the theme of “feedback” 24 times and “learning from negative” 15 times in the data.

Being with supportive others assists participants to discuss the negative situation(s) in a secure environment where they expose vulnerabilities and sought feedback and advice. This statement parallels what Mikullincer and Shaver (2005) say about managing distressful situations effectively through security producing activities:

If I encounter an obstacle and/or become distressed, I can approach a significant other for help; he or she is likely to be available and supportive; I will experience relief and comfort as a result of proximity to this person; I can then return to other activities (p. 240).

Shaver and Milulincer (2002) see seeking support from others this as a strategy for increasing support and social adjustment. Periods of threat and/or change create conditions where individuals need reassurance, protection, and alleviation of anxiety from others (Mayseless & Popper, 2007). Supportive others provide a constructive environment that builds participants as they explore difficult scenarios.

In summary evidence of meeting relational needs included:

- Able to ask for support in adverse circumstances including times when they were stuck, overwhelmed, challenged, upset, and received negative feedback,
- Able to seek support in general,
- Maintain supportive, constructive others within network,
- Able to face problems and move problems forward, and
- Able to discuss negative situations in a secure environment where vulnerabilities exposed and feedback sought.

### *5.4.3 Pathways to and Evidence of Transformational Leadership*

This section discusses the pathways to and evidence of the four components of transformational leadership generated from the data. The four areas of transformational leadership include the participant leaders': a) other-focused, b) internally-directed, c) externally-open, and d) purpose-centered behaviour. The pathways and evidence to internally-directed are the same as the pathways and evidence to self-confidence and autonomy discussed in sections 5.4.2.1 - 5.4.2.4.

I used narrative analysis and the themes already developed to note how participants became transformational, and split them into the four areas listed in the previous paragraph. I asked participants to confirm by e-mail my explanations for their transformational traits. Qualitative research requires researchers to stay close to the participants' actual data. Rudestam and Newton (2007) assert that empirical grounding of a study's results occurs through focusing on participants' experiences. Most participants agreed with my findings. However, I did get input from three participants who added comments and further explanation to the information I provided.

#### *5.4.3.1 Pathways to other-focused behaviour.*

Pathways to developing other-focused behaviour occurred through experiencing the support of others and asking for support from others. Positive role models provided time and resources to participants and modelled effective other-focused behaviour for them. Many participants had early leadership experiences in their teen or early adult years and/or were involved in team activities that enabled them to develop their other-focused behaviour. Participants also discussed learning interpersonal skills from romantic partners. Management and Human Resource roles provided experience to develop interpersonal skills. Many participants talked about learning what not to do interpersonally from "bad bosses" or overconfident peer leaders.



A number of pathways to strong interpersonal or relational skills occurred through participants' experiences. Participants discussed the importance positive role models had in enabling them to focus on others. Specifically they mentioned they were the recipients of time and resources, and therefore wanted to give these same things to others. Here is a quote by Participant E outlining this intent:

My lifeline today is the memory of “to whom much is given, much is expected.” I can hear that saying that my parents said.

All participants stressed having the support of others and some participants talked about asking for ongoing support, which helped them to be available for others. Individuals regulate their felt sense of security by maintaining proximity to transformational leaders in changing and difficult circumstances (Mayseless & Popper, 2007).

Ten of the twelve participants were given or assumed leadership early as young teenagers in church, school, or camp settings or in early adulthood as young managers within organizations (Participants A, B, C, D, E, G, H, I, J and K). The early leadership roles gave them a chance at a young age to start thinking about motivating others. Seven of the participants (Participants B, E, F, G, H, J and L) learned about effective teams and leadership in their teenage years through their involvement in sports, bands, or church teams while attending junior and senior high schools. Here are two quotes about the positive impact of these experiences:

When people say where did you get your teaming ability if you weren't in a sports team, I said I was always in a band, I was in a youth orchestra, or I was playing in a rock band. (Participant B)

It was, so starting in junior high but for sure high schools where it really took on more of a presence but volleyball, basketball, track, and field. Yeah, I was captain of the basketball team and not too much the volleyball team. I might have been in our last year. I can't recall but when I was in grade ten I made the senior basketball team which was pretty cool. So, I got a chance to hang out with the girls in older grades and I really, really liked that. (Participant J)

Through involvement in sports, bands, or church, being part of a team helped participants learn about teams. Participants spoke 31 times in the data about bringing persons together in teams, and engaging, enabling, and collaborating with team members as well as the team “pulling together”. Participants A, D, H, I, and L also stated that they developed better interpersonal skills through experiences with romantic partners.

Management and human resource roles enhanced some participants’ skills in connecting with others and caring about others, because of the interpersonal requirements of such roles. When participants were managers or leaders, they noticed overconfident or “cocky” leaders and leaders who acted “too far out ahead of their people”. They noticed these leaders as being ineffective in their roles. The following are quotes by participants exemplify these topic areas:

I think it’s getting that confidence piece. There are some people that are just cocky, and I wouldn’t mistake that with confidence. (Participant H)

I will write up an organizational communiqué and I am thinking about it and I feel a little bit too corporate speakish to me and I will say to my corporate communication guy. That is terrific could you do me a favor, just go ask three people on the floor to read it, and tell me if it makes any sense to them or not, and what they get out of it. So quite often my brilliant work of prose gets changed quite a bit as a result of feedback from somebody who has maybe their first language isn’t English and maybe – they don’t understand all the terms that are so common in the globe and mail business section. (Participant E)

If you bring people along, if you get – it’s just like anything it’s you know Muammar Gaddafi is going through it right now. He made the mistake of getting too rich and letting people get too poor, and since the beginning of time, the rich guys always burn at the stake when that happens. The same thing happens in companies, if you get too far ahead, if you have way too much information and your employees have none. If you got – if you’re holding stuff back from your board or if you create too much disparity of information, wealth, power, it always bites the senior person. (Participant H)

Participant E and H spoke about bringing people along, staying close to employees, and being accessible to their employees and stakeholders.

The workplace was a setting to learn about effective interpersonal relations and positively influencing others. Six participants, specifically B, D, E, F, H and I, talked about having bosses with poor interpersonal skills that they identified as “bad bosses”; participants clearly learned what not to do with others from these individuals. I noticed one participant was very respectful toward me in the interview and I asked her how she developed this behaviour. She responded:

Well I think having really bad bosses. By having really bad bosses [Laughs]. I think I even said that here the most – one of the things that was – the biggest challenge for me was having just really bad bosses. (Participant D)

Participants like this one learned from the negative experiences with bad bosses. They turned these negative experiences into positive learning.

In summary, pathways to “other-focused behaviour” included:

- Support from others and asking for ongoing support from others,
- Positive role models,
  - Recipients of time and resources from others, modeling how they themselves could be there for others
- Early leadership in teen years or as young adults,
- Team involvement in sports or musical bands,
- Learning interpersonal skills from romantic partners
- Management and Human Resource roles helped participants with their interpersonal skills, and
- Learning what not to do from “bad bosses” or overconfident peer leaders.

### **Participant H Demonstrated Strength in Other Focused Behaviour**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had an insecure start; he did not have anyone in his family who was responding to his needs. He as a young adult developed a very positive relationship with his future mother-in-law who made all the difference to him in his life. She treated him with unconditional positive regard, looking for the positive within him and supported him to develop confidence. He is married to a supportive partner who no doubt acts as a secure base for him. He knows both his strengths and weaknesses demonstrating his security. This participant is active and sports minded. He works in the public sector.

### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** He took a year off after high school and then when he went back to school he used his university to apply learnings within the work environment. His mother and father-in-law supported his inner confidence. He has internalized others' belief in him and he is also able to believe in others. He believed he could do well in situations. He believes that experience gives you confidence. He has been given votes of confidence through promotions of increasing responsibility, which he has readily accepted. He demonstrated autonomy and choice in difficult situations. He believes that you need to be who you are as a leader, you don't have to be anyone you are not. He recognizes that one needs to do what they do well and plays to their strengths.

**Other Focused:** He learned about teams and developed interpersonal skills through his early leadership roles as a young adult. His mother-in-law was a great role model for positively believing in him, helping him believe in others. He learned from both good and negative role models. He learned what not to do from negative role models. He demonstrates his other-directed behaviour by being accessible to his people and offering them support. He has highly developed collaboration and problem solving skills and was able to resolve things collaboratively in international settings where many others had failed. He realizes that people who work for him need to know how they contribute to the bigger picture. He engages them at work and strives to understand others. He has a strong ability to empathize with others' conditions. He realizes that giving is important for getting, and collaboration is important as well. He likes to listen, and gathers knowledge this way. He believes in the importance of corporate self-esteem. He doesn't want to get too ahead of others, which would demonstrate arrogance. He believes it is important to admit mistakes and stay humble as a leader.

**Externally Open:** He applied his degree to the workplace and learned more from doing this. He also learned from his failures. He moved a number of times with his job roles and this demonstrated his external openness and adaptability. He enjoys challenges as this keeps his mind young and fresh.

**Purpose Driven:** His older sister may have set up his initial drive, she was smarter than him and he competed with her. He is good at adding value to his organization and wants to ensure he makes progress occur through innovative problem solving. He takes time to think outside of work when he is constructing his cabin on some recreational property. This ability to reflect helps him gain perspective and keeps his priorities straight. He believes it is important to spend time with family to build a broad life, and creates some work-life balance. He has had varying positions and leadership roles of increasing responsibility.

#### *5.4.3.2 Evidence of other-focused behaviour.*

Evidence of participants' relational skills showed up in their ability to trust and believe in others. The previous sections 5.3.1.3 and 5.3.1.4 detail evidence of trust and belief in others that will not be repeated here. The internalized belief in self translated into a belief in others and supported

powerful leadership capacities. The participants were passionate about developing others and discussed the importance of spending unhurried time with their employees. Participants demonstrated the importance of gathering their teams together and collaborating with them because they wanted to empower and enable others. Many of their actions demonstrated their interpersonal and emotional intelligence skills. A number of participants stated their desire to be of service to their teams or stakeholders.

Eight of the twelve, specifically participants A,E, G, H, I, J, K and L, discussed their commitment to developing others and the satisfaction this intent brings to them. These quotes outline the strong interest participants have in developing others:

He took a great deal of interest in my career and provided me with a lot of the opportunities that I got early on in my career and I want to do that for people who work for me as well, and I'm always encouraging them to develop themselves and to look for opportunities for development and not stay static for too long. (Participant G)

To get them excited about how they might be able to grow and learn from the experience. All of that is just fun for me. I love – probably my biggest love beyond the learning and challenging and improving is helping others reach their maximum potential. It's such an incredibly rewarding thing to see people grow and blossom. (Participant I)

I mean I think those aspects of leadership I like, I feel more than others is developing people. (Participant K)

Many participants stated their enthusiasm for developing their employees.

Some participants talked about the importance of giving employees their unhurried time as a way: a) to build relationships (Participants B, and G), b) to ensure employees understood how they contribute to the overall organizational outcomes, or c) to explain why change was necessary (Participants A,B, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, and L). Participants also emphasized teamwork and collaboration, outlining their relational abilities. Participants discussed activities or situations that demonstrated the strength of their interpersonal skills or emotional intelligence. A number of

participants discussed being of service to the best interests of the team or stakeholders or the vision of the organization. These comments by participants reflected their orientation in meeting the needs of others and demonstrating strong interpersonal skills.

In summary, evidence of “other-focused behaviour” included:

- Demonstrated trust and belief in others,
- Commitment to developing others,
- Spending unhurried time with employees to develop relationships, explain why change, was needed, and explain how the individuals contributed to organizational outcomes,
- Demonstrated teamwork and collaboration,
- Demonstrated interpersonal and emotional intelligence skills,
- Abilities to empower and enable others, and
- Demonstrated service to the team, stakeholders and vision of the organization.

### **Participant L Demonstrated Strength in Other Focused Behaviour**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had a secure start through having an excellent relationship with her supportive father. She maintains her athletic focus, which helps lower her stress levels. This participant is very intelligent and capable.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** She has excelled in a male dominated industry showing her ego-strength. She has done a lot of development work on herself and knows herself well. She demonstrates a positive attitude about change. She said she wants to look herself in the mirror and be proud and able to say, “I’m living life consistent with who I am”. She wants to ensure she aligns with what has meaning for her. She found herself in roles and jobs where there was some values disconnect and this was not comfortable for her. She is very aware of the importance of sticking with her values.

**Other Focused:** Her father was a good role model for her as he is a people person. She also developed interpersonal skills through her human resource and leadership roles. This participant demonstrates empathy and other directedness through her interpersonal skills. She has done a lot of development work on herself and has passion for developing others. She went through some difficult times as a young adult and she has turned this into empathy for others. She is compassionate of the humanity in herself and others. She respects others greatly and is not threatened by others’ success. She gives to others readily. She believes in others and sustains trust with others by not blocking them.

**Externally Open:** Participant L likes to have diverse friends demonstrating her externally openness. She sees herself as a student of diversity. Her mother went to college and was a great

role model. Both of her parents hold advanced degrees. She finds learning energizes and refreshes her. She has moved cities a number of times and held varying positions demonstrating her adaptability.

**Purpose Driven:** Participant L likes to do meaningful things. This participant was given leadership roles of increasing responsibility and readily accepted them. She excelled in classroom and athletics in high school.

#### *5.4.3.3 Pathways to internally-directed behaviour.*

Same as the pathways to self-confidence and autonomy, sections 5.4.2.1 and 5.4.2.3 outline the details of these pathways.

### **Participant D Demonstrated Strength in Internally Directed Behaviour**

#### **Development of Security**

Participant D had a secure start as she had a special and supportive grandfather who was there for her and lived nearby. She worked at increasing levels of responsibility in the public sector, demonstrating her ability to be autonomous. Her grandfather was a great supporter of her. She will reach out and ask for help when she needs it demonstrating her secure attachment style.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** She believes in her ability to add value to her workplace. She has been promoted a number of times demonstrating others' belief in her. Participant D received numerous offers of employment and promotions in organizations where she worked, demonstrating others belief in her. Her grandfather said to her, "If you going to be like them who will be like you." This aided her in being herself. Through her choice of career she has become very self-aware. She took time to get to know what motivated her when she was experiencing some career dissatisfaction. She created choice for herself by doing this. She has a high degree of comfort with ambiguity, and trusts the process demonstrating her high degree of trust in herself. She even reaches out to competitors in adverse situations demonstrating her ego-strength. She exudes confidence and mastery in her work.

**Other Focused:** Participant D has a strong belief in others which may have been developed from her internalized belief in herself that she learned from her grandfather. She had a number of early leadership experiences. Participant D managers by walking around which demonstrates her ability to be accessible to her direct reports. She has the discipline to listen to others, bringing empowerment and complexity to situations. She is in a helping profession, and helps others in the community.

**Externally Open:** Participant D has three degrees. She helps her organizations create who it is as an organization. She holds a strong future orientation, to vision things unfolding due to her ability to recognize patterns. She is open to learning, ideas, and the input of others so that she can

make an impact on her community. She enjoys challenges, is intellectually fast, and does not enjoy being bored. Participant D is very well read and on top of strategic trends in her industry demonstrating her ability to be an industry expert. She is a student of diversity. Participant D has moved to different cities a number of times demonstrating her adaptability. She is open to others providing her feedback. She enjoys listening to others as a way of gathering knowledge.

**Purpose Driven:**

She is the oldest child of immigrants who had high expectations of her. Her Grandfather was a great role model, a learned man. Participant D likes to be part of something and aspires to make the world a better place. She said that having children and many position of responsibility teaches you things. She is a hard worker and has great capacity to work. She held many varying positions and leadership roles of increasing responsibility.

*5.4.3.4 Evidence of internally-directed behaviour.*

Same as the evidence for self-confident and autonomous behaviour, sections 5.4.2.2 and 5.4.2.4 outline the details of this evidence.

*5.4.3.5 Pathways to externally-open behaviour.*

Pathways to externally-open behaviour included learning and diversity of experience. Learning was the most coded theme, occurring 293 times in the data. The following quotes represent a small number of the actual quotes on learning:

Reading, listening to others, knowledge through others. (Participant B)

I like to learn about stuff, I will read directions on a new appliance here, just like I will do my homework about what HR is, I do like to do the research. (Participant C)

You know for me that comes from passion, it comes from a love of exploration, it comes from learning. (Participant C)

I've had opportunities through my industry to have all these workshops, and training and other things and then I sought courses, like I did that Banff program. I have a real quest for learning so I'm always doing something. (Participant D)

The learning. I have this practice of immersing myself when something comes, to understand it. So I'm good at that. (Participant D)

So for me what I learned from the MBA was not any particular discipline but how to actually talk to people from different areas. (Participant E)



I am constantly reading about how to be a more effective leader. (Participant F)

If you don't lend yourself to the experience and be open to learning from it, then you're just going to be a victim of adversity if you become its companion. (Participant F)

I am one of those people who learn best through experiences as opposed to reading or going to courses or something like that. (Participant G)

I'm a voracious learner. I'm a voracious leader, a voracious, voracious watcher. All of those are pieces of information. (Participant I)

Leader participants learned from course work, others, reading, experience, adversity, negative circumstances, and "bad bosses". Their learning served them well.

All of the participants spoke about diverse experiences that created externally-open behaviour. These included moving to multiple geographic areas, traveling internationally, speaking diverse languages, and holding different job roles. Experiences that helped participants understand different perspectives opened them to different views, ideas, and ways of living.

In summary pathways to externally-open behaviour included:

- Learning from coursework, others, reading, experience, adversity, bad bosses, and diversity, and
- Multiple geographic moves, international travel, speaking diverse languages, and holding different work roles.

"Learning" occurs 293 times in the data, "diversity" occurs 112 times, "learning from negative" occurs 75 times, and "moving locations" occurs 36 times in the data.

### **Participant E Demonstrated Strength in Externally Open Behaviour**

#### **Development of Security**

Participant E had a secure start. His family supported him and believed in him.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** He is accomplished at sports and developed autonomy through participating in competitive swimming as a teenager. He commented that spending the time alone swimming gave him time alone with his thoughts which lead to higher levels of autonomy. He was exposed to negative influences through contact with extended family and decided he did

not want to be like this, demonstrating his internal direction and ethics. |He demonstrated the ability to be internally-oriented by saying, “What others are saying about me, says more about them than about me”. His parents, teachers, and co-workers had confidence in him and believed in him. He was promoted a number of times.

**Other Focused:** His father helped others to succeed and extended himself, being of service to others, which was a good role model for this participant. He was exposed to team behaviour with sports teams in high school. He learned from some bad bosses what not to do and from great bosses what to do. A professor talked to him about the importance of engaging his heart as well as his head at university.

**Externally Open:** He was exposed to an extensive variety of music as a child as his father loved diverse music. He spoke multiple languages demonstrating his openness to diverse cultures. His family also travelled to a developing country with his father’s work when he was a child. He completed his MBA and learned the diverse “languages” of different fields within business through this experience. He handles diversity of stakeholders and a large board very well. He talked about the diverse languages that men and women have. Participant E moved cities a number of times demonstrating his adaptability. He moved up learning curves through promotions and felt energized and refreshed from these challenging experiences. He learns a lot through books, and is part of an ongoing book club. He learns from admired others, interesting people, bosses, and mentors. He was involved in some deep learning when a relationship of his broke up. He solicits feedback from teams of employees around him. His father-in-law gives him books which helped him gain perspective in difficulties. In his career he asked for different work assignments so that he would not be bored. He saw new roles as opportunities to develop new skill sets and an opportunity for a new start.

**Purpose Driven:** His immigrant family had high expectations of him. His parents instilled his work ethic in him. He was determined to pay for his own university and ended up working and studying while he earned his degree. He was exposed to a rich religious background as a child. Now Participant E is a senior executive in an organization with deep roots within the community. He assesses the vision of the community, and stakeholder needs for his organization. As a CEO he realized that he had to set, sell, and achieve the vision of the organization. He also had to set the tone of the organization. He was promoted to increasing levels of responsibility and said yes to these opportunities, demonstrating confidence and autonomy. He wants to serve the vision of the organization and move this agenda forward. He also wants to do a better job tomorrow than today. He worked hard to achieve his accomplishments. He has had leadership roles of increasing responsibility. He has held many varying positions.

#### *5.4.3.6 Evidence of externally-open behaviour.*

Behaviour that demonstrated external openness by participants included self-awareness, learning, and openness. Ten of the twelve participants (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, I, J, and L) focused on

raising their self-awareness through knowing or learning about themselves or going to counsellors in a crisis. Some representative quotes follow:

Get better at what you're good at. Get to know yourself. (Participant A)

Whereas my grandfather and even though he was my father's father and had the same name. He had the inner reflection, internal rapport kind of thing, he taught me that people do have that. He took up golf at a very old age, he took up golf at 60, this was a struggle for him, he grew up in an age where you didn't have time to play golf. He had this raging battle with golf for 25 years. He stopped playing in his late 80's he could talk about that and reflect about that. Every time I saw him he was in another battle with golf, and he could talk about that and reflect on that. (Participant B)

I will give you an example because I think it relates to confidence, it relates to. Having done a fair amount of self-work, one of the most helpful things for me that as a worker I had done a lot of work in social psychology. So as a leader as I was doing my MBA I had done a lot of personal growth work and I think that was really really helpful. (Participant C)

And so that old adage, know thyself, it is that simple and that difficult. (Participant C)

So to me it's really enforcing – maybe something reinforcing, but maybe what it is, it's an opportunity to step back and say, maybe you want to rethink what you are doing. (Participant I)

I'll give you my own personal model. So it's a lot about what we've talked about. Yeah, people have to know who you are and they have to know where you're headed and why. (Participant L)

Some participants spoke about noticing what went well and what did not go well, thus enhancing their awareness levels. Knowing themselves through heightened self-awareness helped participants ground themselves in their basic sense of self and helped others know them and follow them.

Asking for or seeking challenges was a way for participants to continually learn (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J and L). Many participants would be bored if they did not seek challenges. Therefore, they sought challenges out rather than being bored and this behaviour added to the range of their experience and knowledge.

All of the leader participants conveyed the importance of making an impact on their teams, organizations, and/or communities. To have an impact they needed to be open to understanding the views of stakeholders, learning from others, and seeing goals and results from others' perspectives.

In summary evidence of externally-open behaviour included:

- Self-awareness,
- Learning and seeking challenges
- Demonstrated openness, and impact by being open to others' ideas and perspectives.

### **Participant K Demonstrated Strength in Externally Open Behaviour**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had a secure start supported by family members. Her parents are great at building things/people up rather than being petty. Her family held high expectations of her. She has sisters, no brothers, and a father who wanted her to go into male-dominated university program. She is a very innovative person who thrives on forming creative solutions to difficult problems in a team. Participant K works in private industry.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** A friend of her father acted as a mentor to her. He saw and supported her potential. She excelled in a male-dominated degree program demonstrating and forming her ego-strength. She has been given votes of confidence through receiving a number of promotions. She plays to and promotes her strengths. She demonstrates fearlessness and is not afraid to make mistakes. Participant K is able to put herself out on the line and take risks.

**Other Focused:** Also demonstrates other directedness by collaborative-problem solving. Her collaboration takes the form of listening to and seeing as important the views of stakeholders. Demonstrated early leadership and hard work while at university when she held a responsible job looking after a large residence and students. She had an excellent relationship with her boss and continues this relationship to this day. This participant has long-standing friendships throughout her life demonstrating other directedness. She has excellent interpersonal skills and enjoys developing, others demonstrating her other-directed behaviour. She generally maintains excellent work relations with bosses. She is an outgoing, inspiring and energetic leader. She is a constructive person even in difficult circumstances. She learned what to not do from a few bad bosses. Her nephew and nieces are very important to her.

**Externally Open:** Participant K speaks many different languages demonstrating her openness. She has moved to different cities a number of times showing she can adapt. She loves travel and is good at getting immersed in different cultures. She has held many varying positions at work. She learns from her failures. She took unconventional degrees for a woman demonstrating her intellect and strength to hold her own as a minority.

**Purpose Driven:** Participant K is the oldest in her family. She is also competitive. She has a vision of what needs to get done. She is able to continually take on responsible roles. She was offered leadership roles of increasing responsibility which she readily accepted.

#### *5.4.3.7 Pathways to purpose-centered behaviour.*

Participants often described how they established their aspiration levels. Sometimes they learned their aspirations through expectations of them from family and teachers. Sometimes their aspirations emerged from difficulties that participants experienced at home or work; their hard work and aspirations provided a path out of the negative circumstance. Some participants talked about the richness of their backgrounds, *much had been given to them*, which they appreciated and turned into meaningful activity for others. In addition, some participants raised their aspiration levels because they experienced success at school and work.

A number of participants described how they established their internal drive. One participant said his aspiration levels emerged from his schooling where teachers instilled ethics, morals, and leadership in students. Another participant said his older sister was smarter than he was, establishing his drive to succeed.

Participants' families had an impact on their aspiration levels and work ethic. Being the oldest child in their family, or parental and cultural expectations increased participants' aspiration levels. The following quotes highlight the impact of family expectations on participants:

There was also a lot of cultural pressure. My grandparents were all immigrants. My parents didn't go to university so I was under a lot of cultural pressure to succeed and to do well. I don't think they would have been displeased if I hadn't gone to university, had four degrees or five degrees. They certainly didn't say 'you must do that.' I'm convinced that the family piece played a role in some of this, in addition to my quest for learning. Learning has been very important culturally in my extended family. They're a pretty educated, knowledgeable bunch - even those without degrees are incredibly learned. So

that piece was highly valued in my family and I have one brother who, like me, is very degreed and my youngest brothers are not. (Participant D)

I would say in terms of the people who significantly affected me throughout that whole period in a positive way were my Mom and my Dad. They just had very high expectations. They expected me to go to university. There was never even a question that I wouldn't go to university - the only question was which university. So they were very positive in terms of their expectations. My dad was always encouraging me to do this or that thing and my mother was always encouraging me to do better in school than what I did. (Participant E)

I think I was probably programmed from an early age to be responsible and to aspire and achieve. (Participant L)

Many participants stated that their parents instilled a strong work ethic in them. Participant G describes his family's influence on his work ethic:

One the biggest influences obviously are my parents. I mean they instilled a work ethic in me early on. I was working a summer job by the time I was 14. I always worked summers and when I was in high school, after school, to make my own money. I come from a single income blue-collar family that had four boys that they were trying to raise on that one income and we didn't always have – we didn't go hungry or anything like that, but we didn't have certainly a lot of the luxuries that people these day have, so that was an important influence.

This participant's background circumstances, early work experiences, and hard working father shaped his work ethic.

Another participant mentioned his drive occurred because of some difficult work he had early in his career. This work was so harsh he wanted to ensure he rose to higher levels enabling physical ease in his work requirements. The work ethic of participants L, G, and F occurred because not many options existed for theses participants, due to the poverty in their nuclear family. These participants had to work to create their opportunities, thus opening up doors previously closed to their families. They indicated that their hard work paid off, enabling them to gain entry into college, attracting the positive attention of teachers, bosses, coaches, and even the families of their friends.

A number of participants stated that success helped build their aspirations, and the richness of their experiences and backgrounds supported their focus on meaningful activities.

Participants (C, D, and E) appreciated their backgrounds, stating they were extremely lucky or came from a very rich background. Here is a representative quote:

So, maybe I think that we always felt very grateful for the kind of life we had, I think that was also it. When you're grateful, then you just don't take anything for granted, you don't think of yourself as any different from the person down the street, so I think that was a very big part of my upbringing, I think. So, I know some of those things I said to you before or that maybe that connects a little bit where that comes from, yeah.  
(Participant C)

This background provided depth of experience for participants, which translated into meaningful and purposeful activities directed at others. All the participants spoke about being successful at school or work activities (A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K and L) and these factors helped them realize they could keep aspiring toward accomplishing other goals.

In summary pathways to purpose-centered behaviour included:

- Aspirations through schooling where ethics, morals, and leadership expectations were instilled in students,
- Drive and work ethic set up by,
  - Competition with smarter older sister
  - Being the oldest child in the family
  - Parental and/or cultural expectations
- Difficult manual work which occurred early in life,
- Lack of other options, hard work would lead to positive attention and opportunities,
- Aspirations through richness of background and involvement in meaningful activities, and
- Aspirations levels increased due to and through successes.

Refer to Appendix P, Occurrences of Factors that Impact Individuals' Purpose-Centered Behaviour outlines the occurrences of topics that participants agreed aided to their purpose-centered behaviour. "Hard work" occurs 93 times and "success" occurs 33 times in the data. The

theme “rich background” occurs 19 times and “meaningful activity” occurs 43 times in the data. “aspiration” occurs 31 times and “first-born” occurs 13 times in the data.

### **Participant C Demonstrated Strength in Purpose Driven Behaviour**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had a secure start as her mother believed in her 150%. She had a rich-family background and her father provided a wonderful role model for her as well. Her father was intelligent and humble and knew that all individuals were of value, even the marginalized ones within society.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** This participant demonstrated self-awareness and autonomy. Others instilled confidence in her by providing opportunities to her that she readily stepped into. Her career focus had self-awareness as part of its focus. She knows herself through early awareness work. She talked about confidence supporting one’s ability to get out there and act. She was strong enough and aware that she did not have to take on others’ beliefs about her even in adverse situations. She demonstrated fearlessness in this regard. Her strong belief in self was instilled through her mother’s belief in her. She was very comfortable with herself. She countered challenges to her competence with grace. She knows who she is and gets out there demonstrating knowledge and confidence in herself. She is comfortable with her own company because she was an only child. She said yes to challenging opportunities, demonstrating confidence levels. She had some levels of faith and belief through her religious background. Her self-confidence and belief gave her a positive attitude that propels her forward.

**Other Focused:** Her family was steeped in a rich religious tradition, which provided access to role models who were other-oriented. She carried out deep work in the human services within the public sector. She watched her father help and volunteer within the community. She likes and values bringing people together. She likes to be part of a team and this may be because she was an only child. She held early leadership roles of responsibility. She has a strong ongoing desire to be diplomatic person, a citizen of the world. She had three fabulous bosses who were wonderful role models. She volunteers on boards of non-profit organizations and empowers, respects and develops those around her demonstrating other focused behaviour. Her strong belief in others stems from her strong internalized belief in herself instilled through her relationship with her mother.

**Externally Open:** Participant C excels at and speaks numerous languages demonstrating her external openness. She experienced richness in her religious and family background steeped in diversity. She completed an MBA in an international topic area. She works well in complex situations demonstrating her openness to new challenges and leadership maturity. Success at high school through awards. Shows vision and steps to accomplish it. She experienced a health scare in mid life and learned to be more balanced in the process. This participant loves learning, demonstrated through her early work in library. She loves reading and literature, and described



herself as a curious person. She loves travel and is a student of diversity. She held varying positions throughout her career and spoke of enjoying the intersections between fields of knowledge. This participant holds three professional degrees.

**Purpose Driven:** Participant C exercised an outstanding demonstration of purpose throughout her life. She demonstrates her ability to focus on meaningful work by volunteering at an early age and she continues to volunteer to this day. She realizes there are no givens or guarantees in life therefore she likes to go for it. She rose through the ranks. The roles were diverse and challenging giving her experiences to exercise her creativity and ability to take on responsibility. She has had responsibility for large areas within her organization, and can lead these areas and people with confidence. She sees shaping things for others as a responsibility and opportunity. This participant likes to be part of something, and aspires to make the world a better place. She learned her work ethic from her parents, she likes to roll up her sleeves and be of service.

#### *5.4.3.8 Evidence of purpose-centered behaviour.*

The participants' positive attitudes and responsible activities convey purpose-centered behaviour. Their positive attitudes and responsible activities were discussed in section 5.3.1.5. Some participants aspired to make the world a better place through the choice of their career or through their commitment to meaningful activities. Meaning comes from having a sense of purpose from the future benefit of our actions (Ben-Shahar, 2007). Here participants discuss the importance of being involved in meaningful activities:

I mean, that's what you are essentially – so I think the key function of a CEO is to provide meaning for the organization – the buzzword in management is you provide vision, but ultimately you need to create a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose, and do that mostly through language. (Participant E)

And there's very little separation. I think you need a guiding vision in your life as you do in the workplace, which is something that can get you out of bed every morning and makes you want to want engage in it in ways that are useful and are making contributions that have meaning. I think one of the things that separate humans from other species is their capacity to make meaning out of things. And for me, if this was a meaningless job and a meaningless set of goals for an organization, then I couldn't engage in it fully and I couldn't perform in it, and exploit the capacities and the competencies that I have. The profit motive is not enough of a picture to inspire me to action. (Participant F)

For me, personally, it's ensuring that what I'm doing is aligned with what I value as a person and as a leader, and trying to develop that purpose and meaning in helping my

team, is trying to articulate it in a way that it resonates for people that engages them, that interests them to want to do it. (Participant L)

The bigger purpose is evident in these quotes about meaningful activities. The participants' vision, purpose, and other higher order values provide the basis of meaning, for example, completing actions for reasons other than money.

In summary evidence of purpose-centered behaviour included:

- Positive attitudes,
- Responsible activities, and
- Commitment to meaningful activities
  - Want to make the world a better place
  - Their visions
  - Actions are taken for reasons other than money.

### **Participant J Demonstrated Strength in Purpose Driven Behaviour**

#### **Development of Security**

This participant had an insecure start as her family was poor. She lived through very difficult circumstances in her childhood. She spent time with friends and their parents rather than living at home on the weekends as a child. Spending time away resulted in her developing lifelong friendships through the extraordinary support provided by these families. She also had a teacher who provided her with support and helped her feel good about herself. She had support of others such as her sister, teachers, friends and their families, bosses, and mentors. She sought out support to learn to develop herself professionally and personally, demonstrating her secure sense of self.

#### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** Her parents were respectful of others and gave back to others. Her honesty and openness shows her comfort with herself. She was given votes of confidence through promotions on the job. She accepted increasing levels of responsibility and mentoring and direction from those in positions above her showing her confidence levels. She demonstrated solid values by working hard. She aligned with her own values demonstrating her internal orientation. She takes on and enjoys challenges to develop large community which demonstrates her confidence in herself.

**Other Focused:** She demonstrated early leadership, as she became captain of many sports teams she was part of in school. She also learned about teams and being other directed through these leadership experiences. Participant J has children and a supportive partner in her life, which advances her interpersonal skills. A mentor helped her early in her career and another mentor assisted her in making the transition to the role of president in her current organization. She

wants to make others successful, realize their potential, and assist in developing them. She demonstrated her reliability by doing what she said she was going to do. Mentors believed she could excel even when she did not think she could perform at very senior executive levels.

**Externally Open:** She is self reflective through learning, growth, awareness, and seeking help when she is stuck. She learned from challenges in both her career and personal life. Participant J learned from admired others, interesting people, bosses, and mentors. Her father was a good role model for learning, as he loved to read. Participant J is open to ideas and the skills of those around her; she said she did not have all the answers. She has a number of professional degrees. Participant J holds an MBA demonstrating her ability to learn and be externally open. She learned from positions of increasing responsibility.

**Purpose Driven:** Participant J volunteered throughout her working life. She felt she did not have a safety net so was determined to do very well at school and worked hard at achieving success. Her friends say that if she says something one can be sure she will accomplish it, which speaks of her determination. She has a positive attitude that attracts opportunities to her and opportunities to help others. She said yes to positions of increasing responsibility and received promotions to higher levels of responsibility. She worked hard to achieve. She had high aspirations and a strong achievement orientation.

### *5.5 Third Stage Analysis and Results*

I looked at themes other than those initially focused on in the study. The theme “learning” occurred 293 times and the theme “range of experience” occurred 139 times in the data. All the leaders had international or “diverse ranging experiences” within their work roles, which meant their range of experiences varied widely. The themes “learning” and “diverse range of experience” align with one of the aspects of transformational leadership, externally-open behaviour. The data suggests that participants in this study strongly demonstrate this quality, demonstrating externally-open behaviour. Secure individuals are open to learning and leaning into diverse experiences. Their positive self-schemas made it easier for the secure participants to lean into new experiences, be open to feedback, and learn (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2004). Being able to learn and have diverse experiences allows these individuals to become successful executives.

I continued to carry out narrative analysis by turning to the plots within the transcripts. One way of looking at plot is to determine whether the narrative: a) progresses or advances steadily, b) regresses through deterioration or decline, or c) remains stable where the plot is steady and does not progress or regress (Lieblich, et al., 1998). Although not outlined as plots, McAdams (2008) discusses similar themes of generativity or stagnation emerging in narratives. I utilized the method of looking at whether the plot was progressing, regressing, or stable within this research study (Refers to Appendix K, Questions that Guided Narrative Inquiry). The plots took three forms. Firstly, the plots of those with insecure beginnings or insecure surroundings had more regression in their plots. Secondly, the participants who experienced secure producing families and ongoing secure environments, had plots that progressed more consistently. One participant with an insecure beginning overcame this by becoming internally directed, following this his plot advanced steadily. Thirdly, the plots regressed when participants experienced loss of supportive others. Many participants talked about losing supportive people in their lives when supportive people died. Participants' plots demonstrated regression over these periods of loss in their lives.

Analyzing the narratives of participants revealed aspects of their roles and positions. The participants' contexts, the details of the social situations they live within, made the stories understandable (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). Within the realm of leadership, some elements of a leader's role, their training, the environment they are in, and expectations of them come through in the interviews. All the participants held privileged positions within their organizations. All had assistants, and some had large corner offices. However, as we talked I realized all of them held immense areas of responsibility and worked very hard to fulfill the expectations placed on them in their roles. The expectations placed on executives are very high.

### *5.5.1 Pathways to Secure Leadership Based on Gender*

Researchers using narrative inquiry can study taken-for-granted gender inequalities and other practices of power described in the literature (Reissman, 1993.) The substance of stories is the basis for noting similarities and differences between participants' social worlds (Gubrium & Holstein, 2009). I interviewed 8 female and 7 male participants. For the most part, I had different experiences depending on the participants' gender. Most of the male participants knocked me in some way. Examples of what they said follow. One of the male participants said he had a lot more experience doing projects than an academic would. Another male participant rolled his eyes before we did the interview, as though he was wasting of his time participating. Another two male participants stated things about how impractical academics are sitting in their ivory towers. I felt differently about the interviews with the female participants. I enjoyed the time we had together and felt as though we existed on an equal plain. I felt included by these female participants and motivated to be with them. The males made negative attributions about me and I was a complete stranger, a third party to them. The female participants have learned a coping mechanism to deal with negative attributions they face in the workplace.

#### *5.5.1.1 Female participants need to lead with their strengths.*

A pattern emerged within the data whereby a number of participants emphasized the strong beliefs they held about themselves. The following quote by Participant I demonstrated the typical meaning participants conveyed:

It was confidence, desire to make a difference, desire to test myself and believing that I could make a positive impact, if for no other reason because I care about people greatly.

Most but not all of participants that discussed self-efficacy were women. The male participant that emphasized self-efficacy faced negative attribution from a parent who was very critical.

Participants (B, C, and I) emphasized their effectiveness by discussing the importance of “playing to their strengths”. This strategy offered a way to extend their effectiveness. A typical example of this type of quote occurred in the transcript of Participant I as she gave advice to her new boss:

For me I do things like – I know what my strengths are. Play to those strengths and most importantly be who you are.

In a later section of the interview, Participant I described how to leverage her strengths and the strengths of the organization where she worked. Self-confidence is important to the role of leadership. Confidently extending oneself is pivotal to ensure one learns to extend one’s capabilities in the world (Deci & Ryan, 1985). This strategy becomes even more important when you experience negative attributions in the workplace.

Female participants discussed the need to counter negative attributions in the workplace. Hill (1992) agrees with these findings, when he says the dominant masculine orientation values hierarchy whereas the dominant feminine orientation values sitting equally in a circle together. Schmidt (2003) found that men in western cultures are more dismissing of others. Bartholomew (1990) found the avoidant form of insecure attachment associated with dismissing the need for interpersonal closeness and discomfort with emotional disclosure. Feingold (1994) found men were less nurturing, trusting, and gregarious than women.

If women who value inclusion are to sit at the table with men with avoidant-attachment proclivities who dismiss others, then they would feel forced to emphasize their strengths to hold onto their self-confidence and feel like equals at the table. This emphasis on self-efficacy enables females to hold their own with their male counterparts. Self-efficacy counters the male tendency to put others below them on the hierarchy. Feingold (1994) states that some gender differences may occur because

of how individuals are treated. Participant L said she has an affirmation that she repeats to herself. She says, “I deserve to be here” which counters the negative attribution she receives within her male- dominated field when she sits with her male colleagues at the leadership table.

#### *5.5.1.2 Male participants need to work on their interpersonal skills.*

Different patterns emerged with most of the male participants. I utilized narrative analysis to look for the theme of “self-efficacy” and found most male participants’ narratives conveyed theme of “confident action”. Mikulincer and Shaver (2005) found people with secure attachment had ready access to both positive and negative self-attributes and an integrated self-organization. The male participants may feel more secure in their leadership roles and within their organizations due to the predominance of males in senior roles within organizations.

Every male participant except Participant F, who is a very resilient and mature participant, knocked me down in some way during our interviews together. Having experienced the negative attributions of the male participants made me realize that many male leaders need to strengthen their interpersonal skills to motivate and engage others, and let go of their defences, their falsely positive views of themselves. The male participants’ hierarchical approach does not motivate or empower their female co-workers. Empowering and enabling ways of being are increasingly motivating for team members and prevalent in organizational contexts.

#### *5.5.2 Participants Demonstrate Ego-strength*

Requirements of leaders include positively motivating others, firing people in a timely manner, and taking responsibility for their department and their team. These three roles require ego-strength to do them well. Carrying out these forms of actions requires participants to be positive as they motivate and influence others. Two participants (D and L) mentioned that they would need to regroup before going out to face others after negative circumstances. Other participants seemed defensively positive,

not admitting any weaknesses (B and I). I realized that within these participants' leadership roles they needed to be positive, so positive that a few were reluctant to admit vulnerabilities or weaknesses.

I noticed as I went over transcripts repeatedly that participants' demonstrated ego-strength as they stepped up to opportunities and challenges, remained positive in the face of failure, and kept things progressing. Ego-strength gives participants' strength in the form of confidence to step up to opportunity, responsibility, and challenge. It also gives participants' positive outlooks enabling them to look at failure as an opportunity. Participants need ego-strength to keep things progressing in normal and challenging circumstances. Viewing the self in positive ways supports one's self-confidence. The ego-strength this gives participants is important to effective leadership.

#### *5.5.2.1 Stepping up to opportunity/responsibility/challenge.*

All of the participants talked about opportunities that came their way and the fact they stepped up to opportunities and challenges. The theme of "confidence" co-occurred with the theme of "stepping up to opportunity, responsibility, and challenge" 20 times in the data. Believing in themselves, these leaders said yes to requests, invitations, volunteer opportunities, and promotions. Self-confidence and self-efficacy were important to enabling participants to step into opportunities and responsibilities, enabling them to develop and increase their breadth of experience. This stepping up and into opportunities helped them succeed over time. Deci and Ryan (2000) found that the more autonomous and internally directed an individual is, the more responsible they are, and they avoid blaming others for their problems. Participant C talks about saying "yes" to a job opportunity in a different area and learning quickly what she had to, which enabled her to perform her duties:



I didn't know but what I did was go out and learn what I could overnight. There was a handbook on personnel that I photocopied that night, you couldn't take it out it was a reference book. So I stood there and photocopied it at [a Local College] and the next day showed up.

Confidence helps participants *keep their hand up* and say yes to opportunities.

Participant A talked about stepping up to responsibility, which strengthened his experience base and self-confidence. This quote from Participant B outlines the many ways he stepped up to opportunity and the positive impact this had on his career:

I had an opportunity to run the social club and be present in the hiring process. I kept my hand up. Make presentations, run a spreadsheet tracking system, from 100 candidates to the final 15. This opportunity came because I volunteered. I would go see professors and talk to them, take a task from an executive and do it well and watch them. This fellow was 3 layers above me. I did a spreadsheet for him and found out exactly what he was looking for when he was hiring, I could focus on developing those skills within myself. As president of the social club, the benefits included, weekly meetings to improve clients were held. I'd report on social club activity and stay longer in the meetings, gaining important knowledge.

Saying yes to opportunities, learning from leaders, and the experience itself enabled this participant to succeed.

A number of themes co-occurred with participants "stepping up to responsibility, opportunity, and challenge" (Refer to Appendix Q, Co-occurrences with the Theme "Step up To Responsibility, Opportunity, and Challenge"). "Learning" co-occurred 34 times, "challenge" 20 times, "confidence" 20 times, "mentor" 16 times, "range of experience" 14 times, and "supportive person" 14 times. Appendix Q outlines a few more co-occurrences with the theme of "stepping up to responsibility" that were not covered in the previous discussion which include the themes of "community", "network", "other's belief in participant", "can do attitude", "diversity", "responsibility", and "learning from negative".

## **Participant G Demonstrated Strength in Stepping Up to Responsibility**

### **Development of Security**

This participant had a secure start as his nuclear family remains very close to this day. He was open to learning from a counselor in high school about his career choices for university, demonstrating his ability to gain the support of others. This participant was from a small town, which provided a secure environment for him to grow up in.

### **Development of Transformational Leadership Qualities:**

**Internally Directed:** This participant demonstrates strong autonomy and confidence levels. He is an honest and authentic person. He has an inner belief in himself and challenges himself to do an excellent job. He challenges himself and others to meet life and work situations with confidence.

**Other Focused:** Participant G worked for his father. Participant worked internationally in private business demonstrating his external openness. He readily engages others and has an open door policy. He is accessible to others. He realizes that giving is important for getting, and is a collaborative person. His close family life has provided opportunities to develop his interpersonal skills. He holds a technical degree and admits that his emotional intelligence could be stronger.

**Externally Open:** This participant has excelled in learning environments, as he has received honours and awards for academic achievement. He was open to learning from counselors in high school about the best career focus for him. He has a professional degree of a technical nature. He has participated in executive education. He likes to stay on top of industry trends. He worked in an internationally setting demonstrating his external openness and ability to adapt.

**Purpose Driven:** This participant said his parents instilled his work ethic in him. He worked hard at school and jobs and has excelled at both. He even worked at his school and his principal was his boss. The principle knew he could go to him to get something done and rely on this participant. His father had his own business, thus role modeling hard work in a business environment. This participant worked with and learned from his father as well. Both of these circumstances speak of his ability to get along with those in authority. He obtained leadership roles of increasing responsibility and varying roles. His mentors showed confidence in him. He felt it is important to spend time with his family building a broad and balanced life.

#### *5.5.2.2 Keep things progressing.*

Participants are leaders to whom forward movement and progress is important as demonstrated by these quotes on this topic:

I take responsibility when things fail. I say it is my fault and then I do something about it. You shouldn't blame others when things go wrong. Things need to continually get better or they are getting worse. (Participant A)

We'll finish the conversation later [talking about one of her direct reports] but I've just gotten tired of hearing the same thing and having no action happening. If it's a new problem I don't mind hearing it. I don't mind problem-solving but she's had all the tools to deal with it and I know what's preventing it. I know what's getting in the way. (Participant D)

And then I think about as a CEO I'll probably have ten years and so I look at them and say, so in my ten years, what is it that I can accomplish, as the leader and what can I mobilize my team to want to accomplish within the context of the community's expectations. (Participant E)

I think as part of our culture I've created an openness to change. I like change not just for the sake of change but I think it is important that a company keep evolving and getting better at what they do, and responding to different market influences and technology and all of those things. (Participant J)

Some leaders took responsibility, focused on solutions, evolution, and change to ensure they gained traction and moved ahead. Bennis and Nanus (1985) describe transformational leaders as those who commit others to action. Initiating behaviour is positive to the role of leadership because of leaders need to influence and change the organization's environment.

Many leader participants accessed supportive others when stuck to ensure they continually made progress. Participant I describes how she gathered diverse views when she was stuck and had a problem:

So there were days when I would hear something and I'd be like, "I can't believe they just said that about me." And then I'd call my sister and my mom and my dad and I'd say, "Here's what they're telling me." And my dad would be the logical guide. He'd be saying, "Here's the context within which they might be saying that." My mom would be saying, "They're nuts. Don't pay any attention to it." And my sister from a human side would ask questions like, "Well, do you think you could have done it better? And if you don't think you could have done it better, then ignore it." So I always had that kind of a support network.

Likewise Participant B did not realize he was utilizing this technique to ensure he was progressing, even though he did ask supportive others for feedback on an ongoing basis when he was stuck.

All of the participants had an action orientation. Some CEOs interviewed, specifically participant A, D, and E demonstrated even higher levels of action orientation. These three more senior executives wanted to keep the interview moving forward.

#### *5.5.2.3 Challenge.*

Nine of twelve participants (C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J and L) said they challenged or tested themselves regularly by putting themselves in circumstances that stretched their abilities. Their initial belief in themselves, self-efficacy, supported their ability to challenge themselves. Bandura (1977) states that when individuals initiate behaviour by exerting effort and persistence in the face of challenge, they act because they believe they will succeed at their efforts. Participant I said, “I test myself like crazy”. When participants challenged themselves and succeeded, they generated more belief in themselves, as follows:

Yup, tested myself, purposeful challenge, just trying to be sort of a life-long learner. I know that’s an overused term too, but it really does describe who I am. And I think with those test and challenges and what not, comes that development of self-confidence.  
(Participant L)

Testing oneself by stepping outside of one’s comfort zone requires some initial confidence. Then acting can lead to more confidence as the person gains experience and eventually succeeds in their efforts. Fredrickson (2009) discusses reinforcing cycles, which occur when individuals carry out positive behaviour. One can see how testing one-self helps individuals succeed and becomes a reinforcing cycle as the person increases their experience, skill, and confidence levels.

Refer to Appendix R, Co-occurrences with the Theme “Challenge”. Challenge may enable “confidence”, “learning”, increased abilities to “step up to responsibility”, and a greater “range of experience” to occur. “Other’s belief in participant” and “constructive feedback” co-occur with the theme “challenge”.

#### *5.5.2.4 Learning or benefiting from failure.*

When I interviewed participant leaders, all of them talked about the learning they gained from their failures and negative experiences. Fredrickson (2009) says that those who worry less are more resilient. Most participants did not worry about failure instead; they got on with moving forward with how they could advance in situations. Many of them talked about how they got comfortable with and eventually unafraid of failure. Here is a representative quote:

I think I look at that as lemonade out of lemons and silver linings in every cloth. So that’s kind of – if there is two mantras to describe how you deal with negative stuff those would be my approaches. (Participant E)

Some of them suggested that although everyone inevitably experiences failure, it was important to continue to take risks to ensure things kept moving forward.

Ten of the twelve participants (B, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, and L) talked about focusing on what they could learn from failure. Participant F outlines how he gains strength from his failures:

I thought about this and I think my first – unthinking response was that I just sort of go back to all the successes that I’ve been doing, and then I sort of tempered that a little bit with coming to a point of realization that if I made a practice through life, through a leadership life, of acknowledging the failure, that there is some way that I could draw from them even in just to acknowledge them as failures and taking ownership, that it gave me strength and self-confidence that I would be able to look it in the face but not feel diminished by it.

Many of the ten participants asked themselves what they could learn from the experience to avoid repeating it. Some turned the learning into opportunities. A few acknowledged that repeated failures were frustrating and not good for their own or others’ performance levels.

It was important in failing circumstances that participants' focus on positive aspects of situations such as the potential for movement, learning, and opportunities. In allowing themselves to focus on these aspects, participants were generative and could grow from the experience. Fredrickson (2009) labels this focusing on the generative aspects as "benefit finding". She suggests that looking for the good that emerges from the struggle helps us be generative.

Refer to Appendix S, Co-occurrences with the Theme "Learning from Negatives". Learning from negatives enables "positive impact", participants are able to "broaden their experience levels", "positive attitudes occur", and participants are able to "step up to responsibility".

## Chapter Six: Discussion and Implications

This chapter discusses the findings and implications that add to the literature and broader theories related to this subject. This study highlights new findings, which add to the field of leadership development. The findings point to the importance of self-efficacy, autonomy, and support-seeking behaviour for enabling transformational leadership.

### *6.1 Discussion*

This chapter discusses the specifics of becoming a positive force for self, others and one's organization. The impact of being a positive force is profound and supports the impact individual's have on others' engagement, productivity and development. Becoming a positive force is a vitally important and critical characteristic of successful leaders. This section discusses different pathways to security and transformational leadership. The secure and transformational participants also stressed three important psychological needs critical to their success. The support of others as prior research has highlighted, plus the importance of belief from others and autonomy-support from others. The following includes a discussion of the roots of these three behaviours and the order in which parents demonstrate these behaviours. Meeting these three psychological needs supports the potential in individuals and enables them to develop the ego-strength needed to carry out leadership roles. In addition, this section discusses the interrelated and reinforcing nature of the three psychological needs. Finally, this section concludes with a discussion of the generalizability of and limitation of the results.

#### *6.1.1 Pathways to Security*

When I mention the topic of my research study in social situations, people inevitably describe their "awful" boss. The frequently occurring nature of this experience points to the

pervasive insecurity and negative impact many leaders have on others and their organizations. At this point in the discussion, I ask them three questions:

How can a person support you if they have low self-esteem and do not support themselves?

How can a person believe in you if they do not believe in themselves?

How can a person respect you if they do not respect themselves?

The person listening to me usually responds as though they are having an “ah ha” moment. This response conveys the importance of a leader’s ability to hold security-enhancing self-schemas, which enables them to be positive with others. The support of themselves aids them to support others.

#### *6.1.1.1 Pathways to security through countering insecurities.*

This section outlines pathways to security from initial insecure-attachment patterns using the most resilient participants’ pathways to secure behaviour. These resilient participants did model secure behaviour, strong beliefs that they could accomplish their goals, and held positive self- and other-schemas.

If individuals have anxious-insecure attachment, the pathway to security occurs through developing a positive view of self. Specifically, heightening one’s ability to lead with their strengths, raising one’s levels of personal empowerment, and comfort with oneself are critical to raising individuals’ internally-directed behaviour. If individuals have avoidant-insecure attachment, they need to genuinely and realistically feel good about themselves and their strengths, enhance their level of humility, and develop interpersonal skills. Avoidant-insecure styles defensively and falsely position themselves as superior to others (Mikulincer, et al., 2008). The key for both these insecure styles is to readily discuss both their strengths and weaknesses



(Mikulincer, et al., 2009; Stein & Book, 2006), thus countering their tendency to stress one and neglect the other.

One way to ensure that individuals with the anxious-insecure-attachment style align with a positive self-schema is to have them do the following exercise. Individuals ask themselves at the end of the day: *How did my strengths show up today?* Individuals with anxious-insecure tendencies may have to sit with this question a while before granting themselves permission to feel good about their competencies. The avoidant-insecure individuals would benefit from asking two questions: *How did my weaknesses show up today? How did others demonstrate their strengths today?* The avoidant-insecure style would benefit from reality testing the degree of their weaknesses to counter their defensive inflation of themselves and tendency to devalue others.

Leaders learn to attune positively to others by looking for strengths in others, or the positive effects others are having with their energy and time. Focusing on manifestations of positive outcomes helps others around the leader thrive (Fredrickson, 2009). Asking oneself the following questions can help leaders focus on the generative and positive outcomes of their team members.

*How did the employee's strengths show up in the performance of their tasks?*

*What positive impact does the employee demonstrate regarding their self-management, and their impact on others, and the organization?*

It also helps leaders support the potential in situations and be constructive with others. I strongly realized while carrying out the study that if individuals were not constructive they were demonstrating insecurity. If individuals were unable to be constructive, *they* had some sort of problem. When leaders challenge employees, they also need to convey their belief in others.

Then this support will enhance the potential in the situation and the challenge will be constructive. Supporting the autonomy of others is constructive and strengthens the individuals' potential in carrying out tasks in their unique ways.

Many researchers believe that leaders need to change themselves thereby overcoming their blocks to progress. When leaders develop themselves, they also model positive development for others (Avolio, 2004; Quinn, 2004; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kegan & Lahey, 2009). Changing one's internal self-schemas through developing inner security is a powerful way to change individuals' corresponding views of others. Individuals can benefit greatly from changing core negative self-schemas to positive self-schemas, leading to transforming oneself and subsequently transforming others and ultimately organizations.

#### *6.1.2 Pathways to Secure and Transformational Leadership*

Chapter Five outlined details and pathways to security as well as the four components of transformational leadership: 1) internally-directed, 2) other-focused, 3) externally-open, and 4) purpose-centered behaviour. All are critical to effective leadership. Those persons with insecure beginnings can follow these pathways and become effective and transformational leaders. A secure sense of self is necessary but not sufficient to be transformational. The secure-attachment style correlates with being internally-directed, other-focused, and externally-open behaviour. However, it does not correlate with purpose-centered behaviour (Popper, et al., 2000). The development of transformational leadership capacities requires all four behaviours.

Could the development of autonomy hold the key to developing the fourth quadrant, purpose-centered behaviour? Autonomy supports the potential to develop choice in negative circumstances, which would give leaders the opportunity to create visions and purposes that

transcend current conditions. These findings have implications for leaders, developmental professionals, and leaders who develop others.

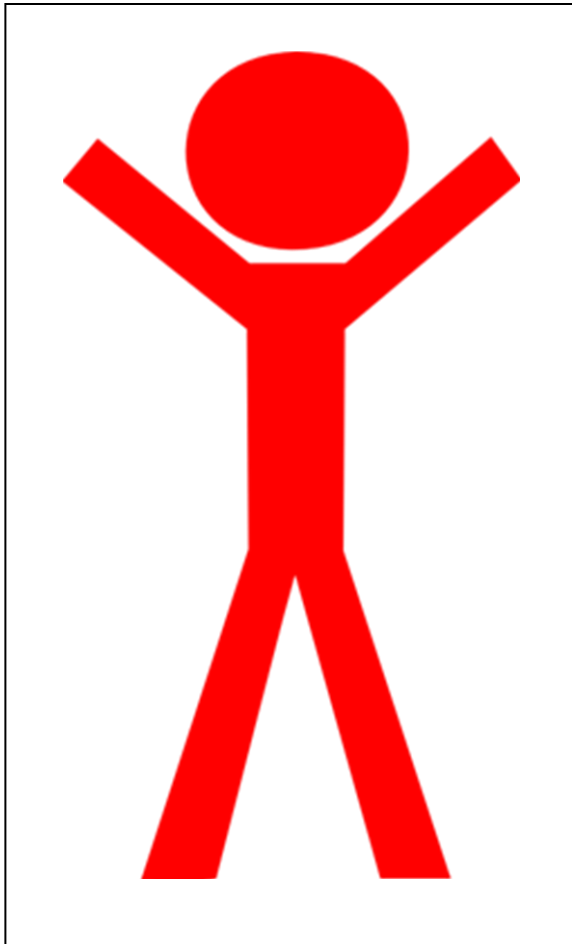
#### *6.1.3 Pathways to Security through Support Seeking, Self-Confidence and Autonomous Behaviour*

Based on the details of participants' lives the findings outline methods to develop support-seeking, autonomous, and self-confident behaviour within individuals (Refer to Chapter Five for details and specifics). This information is critical to leaders and developmental experts who support others in becoming leaders. Additionally, this information is especially important to aspiring leaders who come from insecure backgrounds. Acting on these detailed findings does not preclude insecure individuals from becoming secure individuals with considerable ego-strength. However, having insecure beginnings gives individuals' disadvantages that they need to overcome to get to the generative behaviour levels expected of leaders.

#### *6.1.4 Secure and Transformational Leadership Requires Autonomy Support and Belief*

Popper et al. (2000) found secure attachment correlated with transformational leadership. Secure individuals respond to others due to their strong interpersonal skills. This study details the *types of support* that lead to participants' ability to be secure and transformational leaders. Similarly, to Popper et al. (2000), this study found that one's *responsiveness to* others is critical, however *believing in* others is also important. When individuals believe in others, they pave the way for others to perform and empower team members with confidence. Also critical to secure and transformational leadership is the behaviour of supporting others' autonomy, that is being respectful of their ways of doing things. This study highlights the type of support, specifically the importance of believing in others and supporting others' autonomy that enable team members to develop leadership qualities.

Similar to the literature, this study found that support-seeking behaviour typical of the secure-attachment style correlates with transformational leadership. Two other qualities that emerged as critical to transformational leadership follow. First, self-efficacy, another important psychological need, refers to individuals' belief in self, knowing that they can accomplish tasks. Second, autonomous persons' exhibit freedom of choice, are internally directed, and like, respect, and trust themselves. When individuals demonstrate autonomy, they do not let others or negative experiences define them. The ability to seek support, demonstrate autonomy, and self-efficacy enables individuals to carry out the roles required of them as leaders and supports their ability to be transformational leaders. Deci and Ryan (2000) found that security correlates with self-determination. Individuals are comfortable being themselves when security-enhancing individuals and situations support them. Refer to Figure 6, Behaviours that Support the Potential in Others. This diagram outlines the three behaviours discussed in this section.



**Believe in others.** I believe in and challenge you. I have confidence you can reach your goals and meet your challenges.

**Support others.** I support you. I am there for you when you need me.

**Support others' autonomy.** I respect your ideas, feelings and ways. I know your ways are right for you in your context.

**Figure 6: Behaviours that Support the Potential in Others**

#### 6.1.4.1 *Belief supports transformational leadership quadrants.*

Participants discussed the importance of *having others believe in them*. They internalized this belief as self-confidence and were able to believe in others as well. Believing in others enables the recipients of this belief, to believe in themselves and then believe in others, demonstrating the generative nature of this initial behaviour. One quadrant of transformational leadership, idealized influence contains self-efficacy or self-belief. This internalized belief allows participants to demonstrate idealized influence. Another quadrant of transformational leadership is individualized consideration. Individuals need to demonstrate other-focused behaviour and support the self-esteem of others. Leaders' ability to believe in others builds other's self-esteem and empowerment levels. The ability to believe in themselves and others enables transformational leadership behaviour. Figure 7 demonstrates the impact believing in others creates in the individuals who receive this belief and they in turn demonstrate belief in others. The belief, if internalized, creates belief in others.

Supportive Others Believe in Person → Internalize as Confidence → Believe in Team Members →

**Figure 7: Positive Impact of the Belief of Others, Within Self, and Then to Others**

#### 6.1.4.2 *Believing in others correlates with secure and transformational leadership behaviour.*

The study's participants confirmed how important it was: 1) to have others believe in them and 2) the ability to believe in others, such as team members. In addition, individuals who did not score as secure and transformational were unable to believe in and trust in others as

discussed in Chapter Five. The ability to believe in others supports participants' secure and transformational leadership behaviour. The data supported this finding in two different ways.

First, the participants stressed emphatically the importance of having others believe in them. Second, three participants eliminated from the study, did not score as transformational and secure leaders. Upon further investigation, they also did not believe in or trust others. This is a very significant finding because the ability to believe in others holds a key to transformational leadership. One also needs to believe in oneself prior to believing in others. Charan, Drotter, and Noel (2001) state that getting work done through others is the most critical value shift that successful managers and leaders need to make. This study points out that belief in others enables transformational leadership behaviour.

#### *6.1.4.3 Others believing in participants overrode their fear of failure.*

Belief also countered and overrode participants' fear of failure. Three participants discussed their fear of failure in their interviews; however, they scored as secure and transformational leaders. When reflecting on their lives, I realized that one participant carried out support-seeking behaviour constantly to ensure he garnered support and kept things moving in his leadership role. The second participant had a mother-in-law who encouraged his strengths with unconditional positive regard, which "made all the difference to him". Finally, the third participant worked hard to attract the positive attention of friends, friends' parents, teachers and bosses who all believed in her. Even though these three participants spoke of fearing failure, apparently the supportive others in their lives helped them to confront their fears, move through their fears, and perform competently. The belief in the individuals overrode the blocks to achievement that fear of failure often produces. Believing in others is one way leaders can have a positive impact on those around them.

### 6.1.5 *The Importance of Autonomy*

Autonomy is very important to the development of transformational leadership qualities. Autonomous behaviour enabled participants to have the strength to create choices, be positive in negative circumstances, step up to responsibility, opportunity, and challenge, and learn from negative situations and failure. Demonstrating autonomous behaviour enabled participants to generate choice and action, rather than being victims of negative situations and life's circumstances. The presence of these forms of autonomy demonstrates the secure and transformational participants' resourcefulness and resilience. Additionally autonomy could help participants envision positive outcomes for their team members. Figure 8 outlines the benefits of autonomous behaviour.

Autonomous Behaviour → Generate Choice and Action in Life's Circumstances versus Being a Victim of Life's Circumstances

Originator of Action → Create Positive Outcomes in Negative Circumstances versus Being a Victim of Negative Circumstances

**Figure 8: Benefits of Autonomy**

Because the findings revealed the importance of autonomy, I combed the literature for this topic. Cook-Grueter (2000) believes that as development unfolds individuals become more autonomous, free, tolerant, flexible, reflective, and skilled in interacting with their environment while decreasing their defences. Mikulincer and Shaver (2004) explain that security based self-representations aid in the development of an autonomous self. This study adds to the leadership development knowledge base by outlining pathways to autonomous behaviour that participants revealed through the details of their lives.



The findings concur with Torbert, et al. (2004) who believe that the stage, autonomous or strategist, of ego-development represents transformational leadership behaviour. Cook-Greuter (2004) indicates “only Strategists can take a fully developmental perspective of self, others, and organizations and comprehend the complex dynamics of interrelated systems” (p. 280). The most mature participants demonstrated an understanding of others because of their autonomy levels. Due to their levels of autonomy, these leaders could see differing perspectives without becoming unduly affected by other’s perspectives. This capacity served them well in their ability to be interdependent, and manage relationships through respecting others’ views and ways of being. Their autonomy and complex understanding supports their success levels and the richness of their behaviour.

*6.1.5.1 Autonomy supports secure and transformational leaders in being comfortable with negative emotions.*

The literature suggests that securely-attached individuals are comfortable with positive emotions. Participants in this study were also comfortable with negative circumstances such as failure, learning from failure, and ineffective bosses and peer leaders. Participants’ changing self-schema played out in how they dealt with these negative circumstances. They usually handled them positively, focusing on benefits within the negative situation, most likely due to strong autonomy levels. This finding was unique to this study. Autonomous behaviour enables the study participants to deal positively with negative situations, allowing for choice and internal direction in adverse circumstances. The theory of positive psychology is advanced by this information.

### *6.1.6 Roots and Order of Support Seeking, Self-Efficacy, and Autonomy*

The study's findings point to secure attachment resulting from having one supportive and responsive parent or grandparent available and responsive to the child. Children naturally carry out security-seeking behaviour when their parents or grandparents support their security by being responsive, and providing comfort and relief to them. Authority figures support self-efficacy and competence in children when they convey belief in the child and hold the child in esteem. They support autonomy in children by allowing freedom of choice, attending to their needs, encouraging exploration, and providing an environment where the child can discover their true self. Figure 2 (p. 35) outlines parental behaviour that supports these three important behaviours. Finding all three of these behaviours were important to participants, also supports the correlation of these three needs found within self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) to participants' ability to carry out transformational leadership behaviour.

Here is a hypothesis for the order that authority figures support the three psychological needs within their children. First, authority figures respond to and support their children, second they believe in their children, and third they support the autonomy of their children. More specifically, parents demonstrate support by first responding to their child's needs, then they convey belief in their children and the youngsters internalize confidence leading them to become more competent. Then parents continue to support their child by supporting their child's autonomy and unique ways of acting and making choices.

### *6.1.7 Ego-Strength Based on the Three Components of Self-Determination: Support-Seeking, Self-Confidence, and Autonomy Enables Leaders to Carry out Their Roles*

Toward the end of the study, I began to notice the ego-strength that participants demonstrated in their behaviour and what they were able to accomplish. Participants have inner

strength through belief in self, a secure sense of self, and the ability to regulate their emotions in negative situations through demonstrating autonomous behaviour or choice. This inner strength gives these leaders the ego-strength to lean into the behaviour required of them. The secure and transformational leaders are able with this inner strength to lean into feedback, and failure, and step up to opportunity, challenge, and responsibility. They can also be positive in adversity, be strong when they need to be, challenge employees constructively, and even fire people in a timely manner as required of them in their role. Leaders need to lead change, hold positive visions, be other focused, and strategic in changing circumstances. All of these behaviours require ego-strength.

Autonomy, self-confidence, and seeking-support behaviour, the three components of self-determination theory, give individuals the ego-strength they need to lead. The strength that accompanies these traits and tendencies also helps participants learn from failure and continually challenge themselves. It became clear the participants had internal or ego-strength because they said yes to opportunities, challenged themselves, and learned from failure.

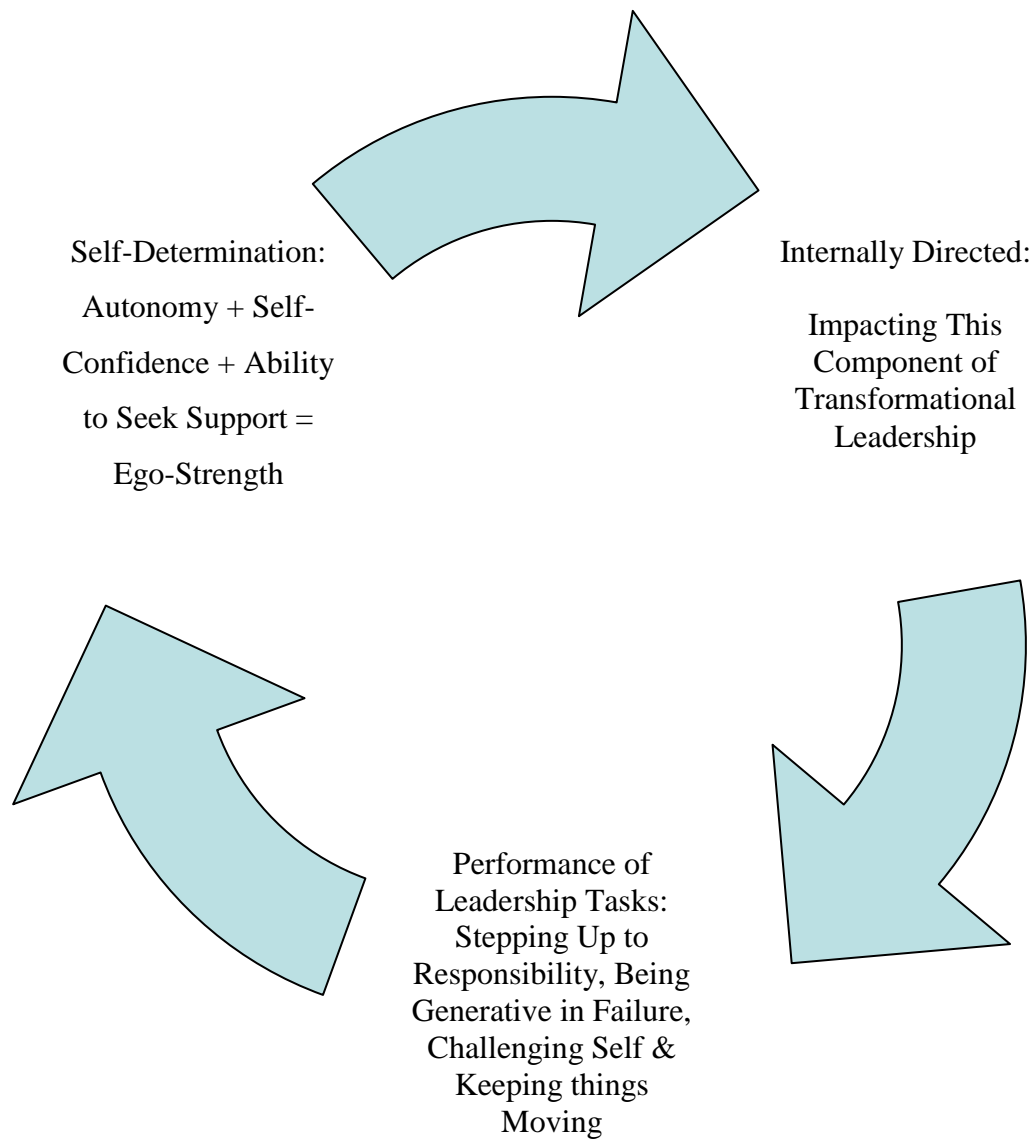
Literature indicated that ego-resilience occurs when individuals demonstrate secure attachment, higher self-efficacy, and autonomy. Researchers have discussed each psychological need that individually builds ego-strength, but I have not seen any researcher discuss the combination of all three psychological needs in building ego-strength. Fraley and Shaver (2008) state that those persons with secure attachment have considerable ego-strength and are able to seek the support of others. A number of studies report behaviour that supports autonomy aligning with the development of ego-resilience (Ryan, et al., 1995). White (1963) points out that people with higher self-efficacy demonstrate greater ego-strength. Higher levels of ego-strength are associated with leadership tendencies and effective intellectual abilities. Higher levels of

competence and confidence support one's ego-strength, which increases individuals' ability to deal with their environment because of their ability to receive feedback (White, 1963). In contrast, individuals with lower self-esteem and self-efficacy levels exhibit anxiety and dependence. Strengthening individuals' levels of competence and confidence through responsiveness, autonomy-support, and believing in them, is vital within organizations to ensure empowerment and productivity. The development of these behaviours produces ego-strength in individuals, which has ramifications for leadership training programs.

#### *6.1.8 Interconnectedness of Support Seeking Behaviour, Self-Confidence, and Autonomy*

The support of others, belief from others, and respect and autonomy support from others are central to the findings in this study. Figure 1 in Chapter Two outlined how these three psychological needs are interrelated and reinforcing. Thomas and Velthouse (1990) speak of creating self-initiating cycles. The interconnected concepts reinforce each other as enhancing one of the needs increases the others as well.

Increasing one of the three areas can result in increasing the other two areas. Participants talked about taking on responsibility, which is an autonomous-self-initiating behaviour, and the resulting positive impact this action had on their confidence levels due to enhanced experience and success. Stepping up to increased responsibility created a self-initiating positive cycle which increased confidence and success levels. Figure 1 in Chapter Two outlines the interrelated and reinforcing nature of these three constructs and Figure 9 outlines the influence of the positive impact that these three components of self-determination theory have on the performance of leadership tasks. Specifically the ability to be other oriented, internally directed, and ethical in one's actions are enhanced when one raises one's ability to be self-determining.



**Figure 9: Outlining Importance of Self-Determination to Performance of Leadership Tasks**

### *6.1.9 Generalizable Nature and Limitations of the Research*

The findings are well triangulated and confirmed throughout the study lending to their generalizability. Analyzing the data manually and then using software helps advance the rigour within the findings. Many of the findings were confirmed in a number of ways within the data. For example, the participants' transformational leadership qualities were confirmed through their interview content and the results of their self-assessments. The participant leaders also came from private and public organizations, which lends to the findings being generalizable.

Limitations of the research occur in the use of assessment tools. I needed to modify the Adult Attachment Scale to make a professional version. A professional way of assessing leaders attachment style would benefit leaders and those in the field of leadership development. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and Adult Attachment Scale are self-assessments. A leader's assessment ideally calls for those reporting to the leader to assess them as well. This did not occur within the study.

## *6.2 Implications*

This section explores the implications of this study's findings. The implications deal with leaders as individuals, in their role, and their development. Other implications speak to the assessment of leaders. Finally, the implications discuss the studies impact on theory and future research.

### *6.2.1 Implications for Leaders as Individuals and in their Roles*

An important finding is the importance of having supportive, respectful people who believe in you and are available in one's networks. Previous literature emphasized the importance of having supportive people available to children, however it does not detail the importance of having the supportive belief of others and autonomy support. This study describes

how having these people who demonstrate these behaviours close by helps individuals develop the ego-strength required for their leadership roles. The implications of these findings affect leaders': 1) self-management, 2) their network, and 3) their treatment of employees.

First, leaders need to ensure they work on eliminating their own unsupportive, lack of belief and disrespectful thinking. Individuals can accomplish this development through activities such as raising their awareness levels. Ensuring that individuals hold positive self-schemas is critical to the success of this development work. If they hold negative self-schemas, they need to strengthen their self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-respect. Once an individual has a genuinely positive self-schema, similar to the perspective of the securely-attached individuals, then their other-schemas can also transform and become positive.

It would behove leaders to ensure they have supportive, responsive, respectful people who believe in them at work and in their personal and professional networks outside of work. In this way, leaders can dispel insecure low points. When leaders turn to supportive others they can become more complex both cognitively and behaviourally and monitor their personal progress and the progress within their teams. Supportive others in one's network heightens the ego-strength and security levels of the leader participants. Seeking support, which demonstrates security, counters insecure-defence mechanisms. Positive support helps counter avoidant-attached individuals' feeling that they are wiser than others and anxious-insecure individuals' feelings of unworthiness.

If leaders do not have access to supportive others in their network, they could revert backwards. If leaders do not have others who support them within easy access, they could stall when handling change. They could also neglect to take on responsibility and carry out other behaviours required of leaders. Even the most resilient participants who attained autonomous

levels of behaviour found it critically important to access supportive others. These supportive others enabled them to keep things moving forward in their role as change agents and in times of distress.

Support, belief, and respect from others helps individuals internalize these behaviours providing ego-strength and security for others. When leaders have sufficient ego-strength, they can treat employees in supportive, responsive, respectful, and enabling ways. When they challenge and ask employees to stretch they can also emphasize their belief in and support of the others' abilities. This emphasis helps demonstrate constructive behaviour that supports the self-efficacy of others. Leaders who act supportively help strengthen the self-concept, motivation, security, performance, productivity, and ego-strength of the people around them. This supportive stance also enhances their employees' leadership potential and development.

#### *6.2.2 Implications for Leadership Development*

The findings within this study outline different pathways to development depending on individuals' family background, and attachment style. This section highlights the implications of these two factors for leadership development. These implications suggest developmental possibilities utilizing the pathways to security and transformational leadership to develop those with insecure beginnings.

Often leadership development programs offer the same training to all leaders. However, depending on the insecure-attachment proclivities of the person in the training program pathways to effective development differ. Individuals with either type of insecure attachment would benefit from working on having a positive self-schema based in reality rather than the false positive concept of self held by avoidant-insecure attached individuals.



The development of ways to enhance leaders' self- and other-schemas would have far-reaching impact. Leaders who are not constructively positive with others would benefit from becoming increasingly more secure through development exercises. As insecure leaders become secure, their impact on others and their organizations is positive. The development of methods to enhance their support-seeking behaviour, self-efficacy, and autonomy levels are critical to becoming transformational leaders.

In addition to developing a positive self-schema, the paths to security are diametrically opposite depending on the type of insecure proclivities demonstrated by the person. Anxious-insecure individuals need to become very comfortable with their strengths and themselves, and act courageously. However, avoidant-insecure individuals need to work on their humility, interpersonal skills, and emotional intelligence. Individuals with differing insecure proclivities need different development training to ensure they become secure and transformational leaders.

Males dominate the workplace culture and tend to display avoidant-insecure attachment. These factors within organizations lend to the critical nature of resolving avoidant-insecure attachment issues, developing more secure leaders and organizations. Developing secure leaders and workplaces depends on resolving avoidant-attachment issues effectively within leadership development initiatives and training programs for leaders. Many female leaders need to emphasize their strengths and self-confidence due to the impact of the dominant culture within organizations.

This study's findings suggest transformational leadership occurs in stages. Once individuals reach autonomous levels of behaviour, the ego-resilience offered by this behaviour combined with individuals' self-efficacy and support-seeking behaviour, leads to ongoing

transformational leadership behaviour. The assessment of the autonomy levels of executives would point to the attainment of transformational qualities or the need to develop these qualities.

The findings also point to critical methods of developing autonomy in individuals as outlined in Chapter Five. Seeking support, believing in oneself, and acting autonomously due to their interrelated nature help individuals maintain the ego-strength necessary to carry out their leadership roles. These behaviours combined, support individuals' development and act as spirals of generative behaviour.

### *6.2.3 Implications for Assessing Leaders*

Developing a leader assessment tool for anxious, avoidant, and secure tendencies would extend the research. In insecure producing environments, even secure individuals can temporarily demonstrate insecure behaviour. When leaders become insecure, which type of insecure behaviours do they demonstrate? Are they able to seek support? Are leaders readily able to summon both their strengths and weaknesses? If they are unable to summon weaknesses, this points to avoidant-insecure attachment. If they are unable to summon strengths, it points to the anxious-insecure form of attachment.

A second assessment tool would assess the ego-strength and security of leaders by measuring autonomy, self-efficacy levels, and support-seeking abilities. This research tool could also assess leaders' ability to create a safety net for their employees. Details of the assessment could result from the evidence of autonomy, self-efficacy, and abilities to seek support in this study's research data. This tool could assess leaders' ability to believe in others, support others or be responsive to others, and demonstrate respect for autonomous behaviour.

A third assessment would measure leaders' autonomy levels pointing to their ability to be transformational. This assessment could determine individuals' readiness to step up to

responsibility/opportunity/challenge, be other oriented, lean into feedback, keep things progressing, demonstrate choice in negative circumstances, adapt, and take the best from negative situations and failures.

#### *6.2.4 Implications for Theory*

These findings illustrate ways leaders have developed secure attachment and transformational leadership behaviour. It fills in the need suggested by Popper, et al., (2000) that the developmental precursors and behavioural details of effective leaders in everyday life are missing in the psychological literature. It also extends the findings of Popper, et al., (2000) by elaborating the type and kind of support required to develop self-determining and secure leaders.

The findings confirm the findings of Hetland, et al., (2011) who found that transformational leaders created self-determining environments around them. The findings in this study differ in outlining how to develop self-determining, secure and transformational leadership behaviour.

The findings extend knowledge on the development of leaders secure attachment by illustrating four different pathways to security 1) the pathway to security from anxious insecure attachment, 2) the pathway to security from avoidant insecure attachment, 3) detailing how leaders gain the support of others in normal and difficult circumstances, and 4) extending the nature of support, specifically belief and autonomy support which enhances security.

The interrelated and reinforcing nature of support, belief and autonomy are outlined clearly in diagrams in Chapter 2 and 6. This information adds to self-determination theory by clearly illustrating the nature of these three behaviours that strengthen leaders. Finally, the development of ego-strength through all three, support, belief, and autonomy support is new to

theory on ego-strength. This ego strength enables leaders to support others, challenge peers, and act ethically.

The findings explain the underpinnings of self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills required of leaders and help to inform those who assess these in leaders. The underlying reasons why individuals can and cannot lead with self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and interpersonal skills are due to their insecure leanings.

#### *6.2.5 Implications for Future Research*

First, this section outlines the importance of resolving avoidant-insecure attachment issues. Second, it outlines the implications of bias, my background, and countering these in the future by inquiries into the resolution of avoidant-insecure attachment tendencies. The research topic that correlates avoidant-insecure attachment with the recent studies that score men lower in leadership abilities is also discussed. Last, this section discusses the implications of the importance of autonomy, self-confidence, and relational abilities for further research.

Males dominate the workplace culture and tend to display avoidant-insecure attachment. The resolution of this style of insecure attachment occurs through emphasizing humility, emotional intelligence and the development of strong interpersonal skills. The emphasis of these factors within leadership training due to the dominance of males at senior levels would benefit most organizations with cultures that display avoidant-insecure proclivities. Having said that, ensuring individuals are clear about the style of insecurity they demonstrate enables those with differing styles of insecurity to get the training that benefits their individual needs.

Due to my desire to learn about and resolve my own anxious-insecure attachment proclivities within the study, a researcher with avoidant-insecure attachment tendencies who replicates the study may further round out the findings. This researcher could thoroughly assess

the steps to solving individuals' avoidant-insecure attachment in ways that are attentive to this style's unique needs and development preferences. In addition, an avoidant-insecurely attached researcher could carry out this research noting what assists them in their development based on what they learn from secure and transformational participants. Another way to learn more about moving from avoidant-insecurity to security would be to study individuals who have lived this experience. A literature review of assisting avoidant-insecure individuals in becoming secure could also reveal pathways to security for this style of insecure attachment.

Many studies have scored women higher in leadership behaviour than men (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Chandler, 2011; Hunt, 2005; Pew Research Center, 2008; Zenger & Folkman, 2012). Bass (1999) says transformational leaders go beyond their self-interests, thereby engendering trust in those they lead. It would advance the practice of leadership to learn if the existing research that correlates avoidant-attachment style with men in romantic relationships (Schmidt, 2003), can be extended across genders in the workplace. This research may help explain the reasons why these studies have often found men lacking in leadership abilities. Due to their gender socialization, usually most men are less emotional, nurturing, and willing to connect (Schmidt, 2003). As part of avoidant-attached individuals' deactivating strategy, they exhibit a falsely-high-self schema and negative other-schemas. These factors make it less likely that the avoidant person will reach out to seek the support of others and be responsive to others (Mikulincer, et al., 2008). These avoidant-defence strategies decrease individuals' other-focused behaviour levels, a critical component of transformational leadership.

Due to the importance of autonomy, self-confidence, and relational competencies to implementing effective secure leadership behaviour, a need exists to ask specific questions of secure and transformational leaders. That is, asking open-ended questions about the development

of autonomy, self-confidence, and relational abilities would help to elaborate and extend the knowledge about leaders' development of these qualities. The general questions used within this study were because of the study's exploratory nature. A literature review on the knowledge, research, and development of autonomy, self-confidence, and relational abilities would also strengthen an understanding of the developmental aspects of these qualities.

Confirmation of the importance of the three areas – support seeking, autonomy, and self-efficacy to effective functioning of transformational leaders quantitatively – would confirm the findings of this study. Researchers have correlated transformational leadership with the provision of the three psychological needs by leaders to their direct reports (Hetland, Hetland, Andreassen, Pallesen, & Notelaers, 2011). Assessing leaders' levels of self-determination – their ability to respond to their team members, be autonomy supporting, and levels of belief in others – and transformational leadership qualities would determine correlations of these behaviours. Additionally, testing the impact of the interconnected and reinforcing nature of the three areas would add to the body of leadership research. Testing the implications of support in the form of belief in others overriding their fear of failure would add to the body of knowledge regarding leaders' abilities to achieve their goals.

### *6.3 Conclusion*

By internalizing the positive beliefs others have in us, individuals who work on self-efficacy and self-confidence levels become a positive force for themselves, and others, within their workplaces. When one truly believes in self by exhibiting reality based self-efficacy and self-confidence, then one is readily able to believe in others and enable team members to realize their full potential. This shift is the most critical one that new managers need to make to support employees' performance on the job. The leaders who are not constructive with others diminish

other's self-esteem, potential, and performance levels. Organizations that do not assess and correctly address the attachment styles of their leaders through training would be contributing to the lack of productivity within their organizations. Due to the dominance of avoidant-insecure attachment within the cultures of most organizations, pathways out of this style of insecurity would have profound implications to the success of leaders and organizations in general.

Pathways to self-confidence and empowerment are equally important for women.

This study contributes to the knowledge of how leaders can enhance the productivity of those around them. Not only do they need to respond to employees as other researchers have pointed out, leaders also need to believe in and support others' autonomous actions, by respecting their ideas and ways of doing things. Refer to Figure 6, Behaviours that Support the Potential in Others. When leaders do these things, they enhance the ego-strength of those around them and in turn enhance others' leadership abilities. Positive, self-initiating cycles occur when individuals enhance one of these three areas: enlisting the support of others, believing in self and others, and supporting autonomy in self and others. Developing one area supports the development of the other two areas; developing all three represents the best-case scenario.

Regardless of background, individuals can choose to undertake tasks that increase their security and transformational leadership levels in different ways. Changing one's initial insecure-attachment style can occur in a number of ways. Details of how one can develop secure attachment and transformational leadership are contained in the pathways section of the findings within Chapter Five.

Outlined in this chapter are implications for leaders, developmental professions, for the development of assessment tools, and further research. One important implication is to use these findings to develop an assessment of leaders' attachment style within organizations. An

assessment used within professional settings combined with training would spur further leadership development programs to increase the numbers of secure leaders in organizations. After organizations become more aware of their leaders' attachment styles, they can more competently advise those with differing insecure-attachment styles on the paths to secure leadership. Advising any individual with insecure attachment to maintain and interact with a network of supportive others would enable them to become more secure. Enhancing insecure scoring individuals' ego-strength by tapping into behaviours that support paths out of their insecure-attachment style, and/or heightening levels of support seeking, self-efficacy, and autonomous behaviour would lead to enhanced security levels.



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## Appendix A: Contents of Initial Telephone Conversation with Potential Participants

My name is Mary-Ann Owens. I am conducting a research study as part of a PhD program. I received your name because a contact believes you are a good leadership role model to others. I was wondering if you would consider being a participant in my research study. The information you provide would benefit others in helping them become effective leaders through teaching, consulting, and the research findings. I would be asking your views on leadership and how you became the leader you are today. It would take about 5 hours of your time and entail you participating in two interviews and filling out two assessment tools

Would you be interested in participating in this study? If the potential participants answer is yes or potentially. I will send them further detailed information about the study in an e-mail.

## Appendix B: Contents of E-Mail to Potential Participants

Hello (leader's name),

This e-mail follows up our conversation of (date of telephone conversation). You had asked about further details of the research study I am conducting as part of my PhD requirements. The research study is with participants who are leadership role models for others. Participants provide information on their views of leadership and about how they became the leaders they are today. The total time it would take you to be involved is 5 hours.

The format is for leaders to be involved in two interviews with me as part of the study. The first interview encompasses answering questions that will be provided to you before the interview. The questions would ask you your views on leadership topics. Participants would fill out a life history page before the second interview with the researcher. The researcher provides questions that help participants create the history page. Prior to the second interview participants complete two short assessments. I will create transcripts based on the interviews and will send these back to participants for verification. All information provided by participants is confidential. I assign a non-identifying number strictly used on any information provided by participants.

I hope you seriously consider becoming a participant. The information you provide would benefit others in becoming effective leaders. With the environmental, technological, and international pressures, the need for leaders to be effective in dealing with these issues is important. Please provide your interest in participating to me at [maryann.owens@shaw.ca](mailto:maryann.owens@shaw.ca) or (403) 220-1240. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Mary-Ann Owens, PhD Candidate

## Appendix C: Letter of Consent



**University of Calgary**

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Mary-Ann Owens, PhD Candidate, Department of Interdisciplinary Studies

(403) 220-1240 or [maryann.owens@shaw.ca](mailto:maryann.owens@shaw.ca)

### **Supervisor:**

Dr. Sloane Dugan, Haskayne School of Business – Human Resources & Organizational Dynamics (403) 220-7582 or [sloane.dugan@haskayne.ucalgary.ca](mailto:sloane.dugan@haskayne.ucalgary.ca)

### **Title of the Project:**

The process of becoming the leader you are today: An exploratory study

This consent form a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. If you want more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask.

The University of Calgary Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board has approved this research study.

### **Purpose of the Study:**

This research study explores the developmental details of effective leadership. It focuses on the life/work experiences of effective individuals in order to gain a better understanding of how to help people develop. The study highlights the details of the processes of effective individuals. It also hopes to inform and assist other persons who want to become more effective. I asked my contacts to identify who were effective role models of leadership behaviour and they identified you as a person exemplifying these qualities.

### **What Will I Be Asked To Do?**

I wish to interview you because you are or have been seen as an effective individual in the workplace. Your participation involves two interviews, which would require at least two to at most three hours of your time. You would also draw and write a representation of your history including the impactful events over your lifetime that aided in making who you are today. Describing your history will inform the researcher and prepare you for the second interview. The time this will take will depend on the attention to detail you give to this portion of the exercise; typically it will take one hour. You will also fill out two assessment tools prior to the second

interview, The Adult Attachment Scale, which will take 10 minutes of your time and The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, which will take 15 minutes of your time. If you choose to participate, you may still withdraw from the study at any time. I will collect data to the point of withdrawal. I will retain and use the data for analysis as per the consent guidelines.

With your permission, I will make digital recordings of the interviews to improve the accuracy of the work. From the recording, I will create a transcript of the interviews. If you choose not to have the interviews recorded, we will still proceed with the interviews and I will write the answers to the questions and comments during our discussion.

I will transfer the transcript into a series of narrations regarding your perspective of your development over your lifetime. I will give you the final narration for endorsement and ask that you respond with any changes within three weeks. If you do not respond after three weeks, I will assume that no changes are required. I will call you to verify that no changes are required. I will erase the digital recordings once you verify the narratives. I will use the narrations in aggregate, combined with other narratives, to demonstrate themes in the interviews.

I will use a non-identifying numerical code to protect participants' confidentiality and anonymity, for all quotes or narrations, on your history page and on your assessment tools.

### ***What Type of Personal Information Will Be Collected?***

*There are several options for you to consider if you decide to take part in this research. You can choose all, some or none of them. Please put a check mark on the corresponding line(s) that grants me your permission to:*

*I grant you permission to make digital audio tapes of the interviews:* Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

*I grant you permission to use non-identifying quotations from the interviews in the body of your report:*

Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

*I grant you permission to record my age in the initial interview:* Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

### **Are there Risks or Benefits if I participate?**

The conversations will discuss developmental experiences in your life. Negative events that ultimately had a positive effect on you may be part of the interview discussions. This may cause feelings of minor distress. I will treat the information with the utmost respect and confidentiality.

Benefits to participants include discussing topics that lead to enhanced awareness of their developmental experiences, focusing on topics that lead to increased leadership abilities, and the knowledge that you have contributed to others' effective development.

I will use a non-identifying number to identify notes and transcripts from the interview with you. I will destroy the digital audio tapes after you verify the content of the narrative from the



interviews. During the interim period, I will store the digital recordings without identifying information. In addition, I will keep the raw data and drafts in a locked cabinet in my home office. Only I will have access to the raw material. My research committee members will only see or hear about some of the non-identifying comments or non-identifying draft documents. The data collected will provide the basis for a research thesis and potentially research papers.

Thank you again for helping me in this research. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact my academic supervisor or me. Our contact details are on the next page.

Signatures (written consent)

Your signature on this form indicates that you: 1) understand to your satisfaction the information provided to you about your participation in this research project, and 2) agree to participate as a research subject.

In no way does signing this consent form waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from this research project at any time. You should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Participant's Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Name: (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Questions/Concerns**

If you have any further questions or want clarification regarding this research and/or your participation, please contact:

Ms. Mary-Ann Owens

(403) 220-1240 or [mary-ann@mary-annowens.com](mailto:mary-ann@mary-annowens.com)

Or

Dr. Sloane Dugan

(403) 220-7582 or [sloane.dugan@haskayne.ucalgary.ca](mailto:sloane.dugan@haskayne.ucalgary.ca)

Haskayne School of Business – Human Resources & Organizational Dynamics

If you have any concerns about the way you've been treated as a participant, please contact Senior Ethics Resource Officer, Research Services Office, University of Calgary at (403) 220-3782; email [rburrows@UCALGARY.CA](mailto:rburrows@UCALGARY.CA)

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and references. The investigator has keep a copy of the consent form.

#### Appendix D: Interview One Protocol

1. Tell me about you as a leader.
2. How do you cope with negative events or reactions?
3. Tell me about a time you were your best self.
4. How do you go about making difficult decisions?
5. What do you do in your self-management that enables you to lean into feedback and adversity?
6. How have you built on your self-confidence over time?
7. How did you develop yourself as a leader?
8. What in your self-management enables you to take risks in relationships and at work?
9. What experiences have enabled you to have a positive impact on others? Give to others? Make positive contributions to others? Even in the midst of uncertainty?
10. What developmental experiences had the most impact on your leadership capabilities?
11. What works well for you in your role as a leader?
12. Tell me about a challenging situation where you were highly effective.
13. Tell me about a time you were not effective.
14. What factors are important when working with others?

15. What have your mentors/coaches done to affect you?
16. What do you consider the most important influences and events in your background that have made you into the person you are?
17. In your work, what events further developed your leadership capabilities?
18. What would you say your leadership style at work is like and is it like your style at home? Explain
19. How do you develop the knowledge to create a vision and future direction for your organization?
20. How do you find the bigger picture, purpose or meaning for a direction you want to pursue?
21. How do you handle and lead change?
22. What helps you be effective in crisis and change?

## Appendix E: Life History Questions

On the large piece of paper please depict in words and symbols the experiences that most affected you over your lifetime, thus making you the person you are today.

Answering these questions may help you with this exercise:

1. Who have been the most influential people in your life and in what ways have they been influential?
2. What were the major interests in your early life?
3. What were the most important high points and low points in your life?
4. What have been the significant work experiences you have had?
5. What have been the significant decisions of your life?
6. What other things occur to you to put on your history page?

### Appendix F: Modified Adult Attachment Scale

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Rate the extent to which each of the following statements describe your experience in or feelings about close relationships.

Not at all Like Me 1   Not too much like Me 2   Maybe Like Me 3   Somewhat Like Me 4   Like Me 5   Very Much Like Me 6

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. I find it pretty easy to get close to others.                                      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 2. I am not very comfortable having to depend on other people.                        | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 3. I often worry about being abandoned by others.                                     | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 4. I am comfortable having others depend on me.                                       | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 5. I do not like people getting too close to me.                                      | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 6. I am somewhat uncomfortable being too close to others.                             | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 7. I find it difficult to trust others completely.                                    | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 8. I am nervous whenever anyone gets too close to me.                                 | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 9. Others often want me to be closer and more personal than I feel comfortable being. | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 10. Others often hesitate to get as close as I would like.                            | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 11. I often worry that even the people closest to me do not really love me.           | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| 12. I often worry about being abandoned.  | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

13. I want to merge completely with another person. 1 2 3 4 5 6
14. My desire to merge sometimes scares people away. 1 2 3 4 5 6
15. I find it hard to let myself depend on others. 1 2 3 4 5 6
16. It is hard for me to get close to anyone. 1 2 3 4 5 6
17. I yearn to be completely “at one” with another person. 1 2 3 4 5 6
18. Often I worry that my loved ones will not want to stay with me. 1 2 3 4 5 6

**INSTRUCTIONS: Please indicate your gender by checking one of the following:**

Female\_\_ Male\_\_

### Appendix G: The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

5 examples are listed below of questions within this copyrighted assessment tool. This assessment tool has 45 questions within it. This tool measures 4 aspects of transformational leadership and respondents' propensity for transactional or transformational leadership. The four components are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration.

8. I seek differing perspectives when solving problems.....0 1 2 3 4

13. I talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished.....0 1 2 3 4

20. I demonstrate that problems must become chronic before I take action.....0 1 2 3 4

25. I display a sense of power and confidence.....0 1 2 3 4

45. I lead a group that is effective.....0 1 2 3 4



## Appendix H: Emerging Themes from Interviews

Theme	Behavioural Detail
Learning	Learning and Reading
Learning	Training workshops courses
Learning	Executive Development such as the Banff Centre, Queens Executive Development, MBA, Harvard Executive Development
Learning	Watching and synthesizing the behaviours of senior leaders they admire
Learning	Watching what poor leaders do and ensuring they do not repeat this type of behaviour
Learning	Listening to others
Learning	Opening oneself to feedback from others
Learning	Coaching
Learning	Mentoring
Learning	On the job experiences
Learning	Experience
Learning	Knowledge gathering
Learning	Collaborating with others
Learning	Learning from failure
Positive activities	Having fun with colleagues
Positive activities	Celebrating successes
Positive activities	Work life balance activities
Positive activities	Exercise
Positive activities	Having a broad life
Positive support	Surrounding themselves with people who support them
Positive support	People that believed in them
Positive support	Having support within themselves through confidence: remembering what they do well, saying yes to opportunities that come along, believing they themselves could do it, knowing their strengths
Humility	Being humble knowing what they do not do well
Humility	Servant leadership
Humility	Practical work
Humility	Being aligned with their and others humanity
Internally Directed	Being able to be self-sufficient
Internally Directed	Knowing that they had choice
Internally Directed	Trusting themselves
Other Focused	Being supportive
Other Focused	Being team oriented

Other Focused	Empathy/compassion toward others
Other Focused	Understanding the importance of the human resources piece
Other Focused	Developing others
Strong When They Needed to Be	Being open to challenge from others
Strong When They Needed to Be	Being open to feedback from others
Strong When They Needed to Be	Managing own and others performance
Strong When They Needed to Be	Being candid when need be
Strong When They Needed to Be	Setting limits and boundaries with others
Strong When They Needed to Be	Firing others when needed in a timely way
Strong When They Needed to Be	Being courageous
Strong When They Needed to Be	Taking accountability to keep things progressing
Being Positive	Being positive about negative situations
Being Positive	Learning from failure
Being Positive	Making a positive impact
Being Positive	Being solution oriented
Being Positive	Being constructive
Being Positive	Communicating with others well
Being Positive	Being accountable/responsible
Being Positive	Having a strong work ethic
Being Positive	Being honest, having integrity
Keep Things Moving	Deciding and acting quickly
Keep Things Moving	Keeping things moving
Keep Things Moving	Iterative changes
Open	Liking change
Open	Seeking the input of others with diverse views
Open	Being open
Open	Being accessible
Open	Being creative
Think About Things	Stepping back gaining perspective
Think About Things	Prioritizing
Think About Things	Being calm and level headed
Think About Things	Compartmentalizing in a crisis
Think About Things	Not listening to the noise in a crisis
Think About Things	Using their intelligence
Think About Things	Being intellectually fast
Awareness	Knowing themselves
Awareness	Being themselves, authentic
Awareness	Using assessments to know themselves better
Purposeful	Aspiring toward goals
Purposeful	being determined to attain goals
Purposeful	Having purpose

Purposeful	Meaningful goals and meaningful work
Purposeful	Having vision
Purposeful	Being strategic
Trusting Others	Being able to delegate to others

## Appendix I: Themes 40 or More Occurrences in the Data

Learn	293
Supportive Other	160
Range of Experience	139
Team	123
Step Up to Opportunity	120
Diversity	112
Vision	110
Challenges	107
Mentors	107
Interpersonal Skills	97
Internally Directed	96
Hard Work	93
Feedback	87
Confidence	83
Adversity	81
Life Work Balance	79
Positive Impact	78
Learn from Negative	75
Others Believe in Me	74
Listen to Others	72
Opportunity	71
Awareness	70
Engage People	64
Choice in a Good Place	59
Community	59
Influence	57
Demonstrate Perspective	56
Internal Motivation	56
Responsible	56
Ethics	54
Add Value	53
Network	52
Have Fun	50
Humanity	49
Humble	48
Positive Attitude	47
Respect	46
Role Model	46
Drive	44
Accomplishment	43
Meaningful	43
Traveled	43
Communicate	42
Create Other Focused	42

## Appendix J: Highest # of Co-Occurrences

<b>Theme 1</b>	<b>Theme 2</b>	<b># of Co-occurrences</b>
Others Believe in Participant	Supportive Other	60
Mentor	Supportive Other	44
Diversity	Learn	35
Learn	Step up to resp/opp/challenge	34
Engage People	Vision	31
Learn	Range of Experience	30
Learn	Supportive Other	29
Engage People	Team	28
Influence	Supportive Other	27
Mentor	Others Believe in Participant	26
Learn	Learn from Negative	25
Learn	Vision	25
Feedback	Supportive Other	24
Challenge	Learn	23
Feedback	Mentor	23
Mentor	Network	23
Awareness	Learn	23
Diversity	Travel	21
Team	Vision	21
Challenge	Step up to resp/opp/challenge	20
Confidence	Step up to resp/opp/challenge	20
Mentor	Role Model	20
Role Model	Supportive Other	20
Success	Team	20
Challenge	Confidence	19
Interpersonal Skills	Supportive Other	19
Interpersonal Skills	Team	19
Positive Can do Attitude	Positive Impact	19
Strategic	Vision	19
Ask Questions	Learn	18
Feedback	Learn	18
Humble	Learn	18
Challenge	Others Believe in Participant	17
Confidence	Others Believe in Participant	17
Confidence	Range of Experience	17
Engage People	Interpersonal Skills	17
Leadership Role	Learn	17
Learn	Mentor	17
Network	Supportive Other	17
Positive Attitude	Positive Can do Attitude	17

### Appendix K: Questions that Guided Narrative Inquiry

Components of form that can be analyzed using narrative inquiry include identity, development, coherence, plot, and sequence of events. Asking the following questions helped to determine the identity of participants:

*How does the participant come across?*

*How do they want to be known?*

*Who are they through their stories?*

Asking the following questions about the participant's development helped analyze this component of form:

*Are they being generative, or not?*

Asking questions about the plots participants depict within their Life History Page inquired about the plot of the participants' story:

*Are the participants' plots progressing?*

*Are they declining?*

*Are they stable over time?*

Asking questions about the coherence of the transcripts included:

*Are the interviews coherent?*

*Is the information consistent throughout the interview?*

Participants' agency and performance are also important to narrative inquiry. Asking the following questions helped to analyze the transcripts for participants' sense of agency:

*At what level are participants able to share?*

*Are they able to share the details of their stories and finish their stories?*

Asking questions about the performance of stories would revealed information about participants for analysis:

*How do participants perform their stories?*

*Do they emphasize certain details or aspects of stories?*

These components helped me analyze the transcripts of participants and helped me understand the content of the transcripts more accurately.

## Appendix L: Co-Occurrences with the Theme “Supportive Other”

Theme 1	Theme 2	# Co-occurrences
Supportive Other	Others Believe in Participant	60
Supportive Other	Mentor	44
Supportive Other	Learn	29
Supportive Other	Influence	27
Supportive Other	Feedback	24
Supportive Other	Role Model	20
Supportive Other	Interpersonal Skills	19
Supportive Other	Network	17
Supportive Other	Range of Experience	16
Supportive Other	Challenges	15
Supportive Other	Internally Directed	15
Supportive Other	Step up to resp/opp/challenge	14
Supportive Other	Confidence	13
Supportive Other	Adversity	12
Supportive Other	Creating Security	12
Supportive Other	Huge	12
Supportive Other	Internal Motivation	11
Supportive Other	Creating Other Focused	10
Supportive Other	Hard Work	10
Supportive Other	Learn from Negative	10
Supportive Other	Team	10



## Appendix M: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Others’ Belief in Participant”

Theme 1	Theme 2	# Co-occurrences
Others Believe in Participant	Supportive Other	60
Others Believe in Participant	Mentor	26
Others Believe in Participant	Challenge	17
Others Believe in Participant	Confidence	17
Others Believe in Participant	Feedback	17

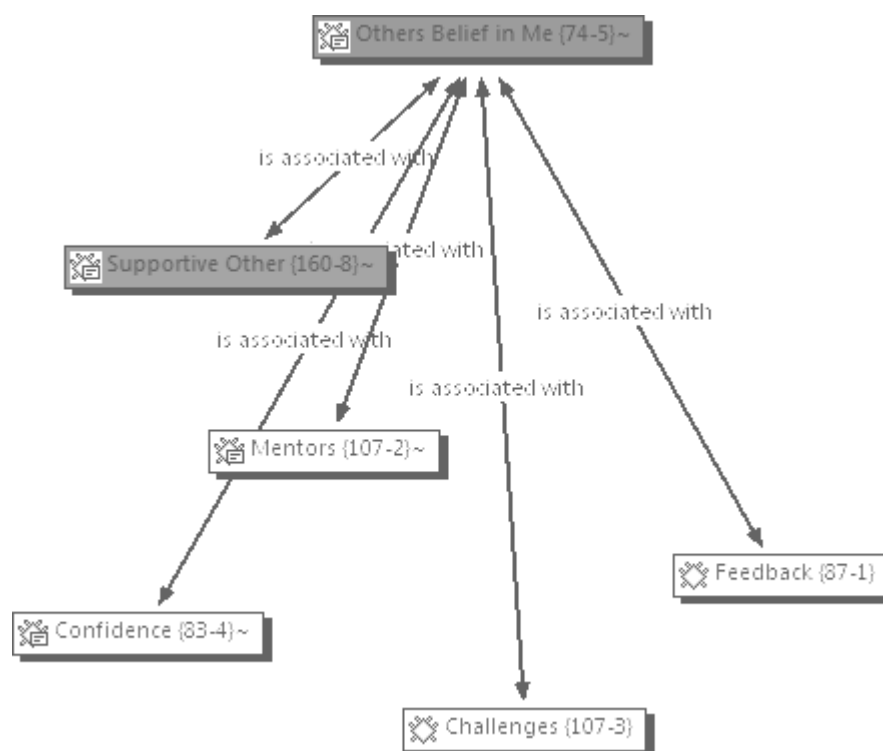
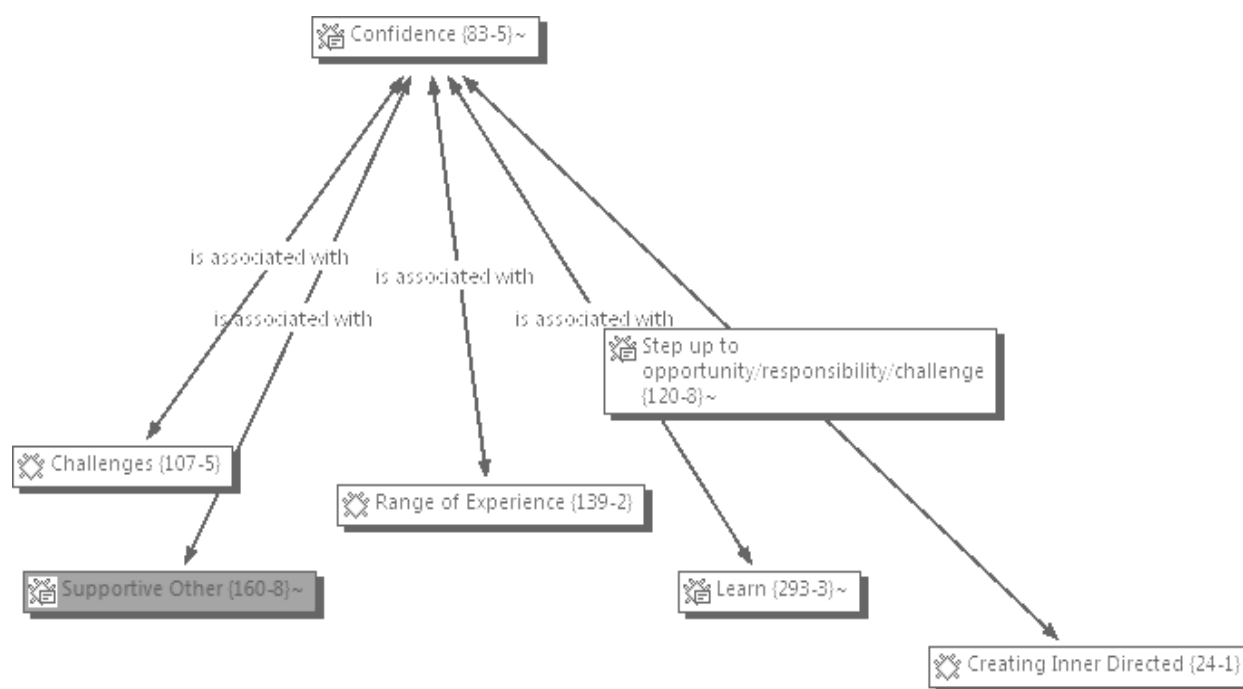


Figure 10: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Others’ Belief in Participant”

Closest to Theme Higher # of Co-occurrences

## Appendix N: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Confidence”

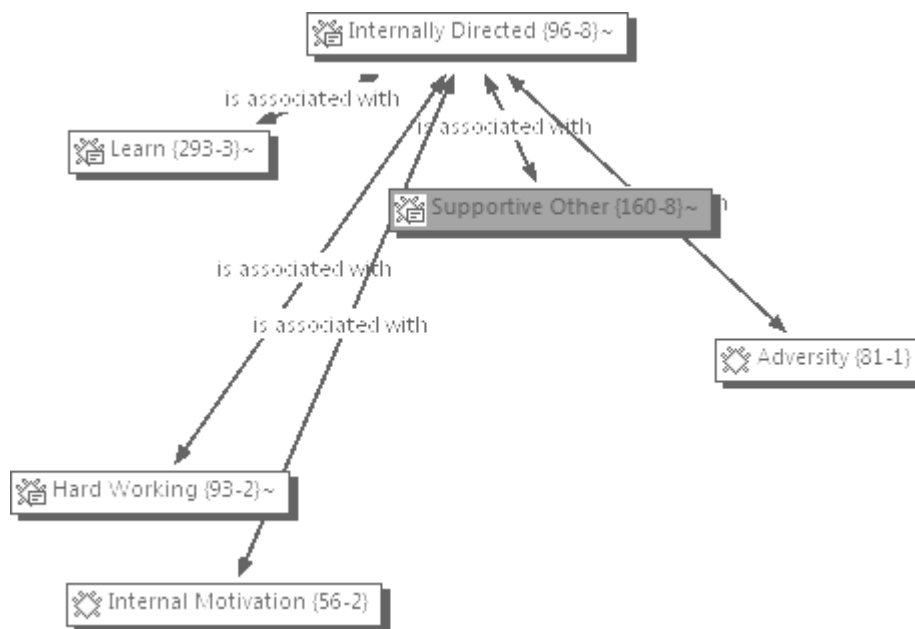
Theme 1	Theme 2	# Co-occurrences
Confidence	Step up to resp/opp/challenge	20
Confidence	Challenge	19
Confidence	Others Believe in Participant	17
Confidence	Range of Experience	17
Confidence	Learn	13
Confidence	Supportive Others	13
Confidence	Create Internally-Directed Behaviour	11

**Figure 11: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Confidence”**

Closest to Theme Represents Higher # of Co-occurrences

Appendix O: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Autonomy/Internally Directed”

Theme 1	Theme 2	# Co-occurrences
Internally Directed	Learn	16
Internally Directed	Supportive People	15
Internally Directed	Adversity	12
Internally Directed	Hard Work	11
Internally Directed	Internal Motivation	10



**Figure 12: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Internally Directed”**

Closest to Theme Represents Higher # of Co-occurrences

Appendix P: Occurrences of Factors that Impact Individual's Purpose-Centered Behaviour

Theme	# of Occurrences
Hard Work	93
Meaningful Activity	43
Success	33
Aspiration	31
Rich Background	19
First Born	13

Appendix Q: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Step Up to Responsibility, Opportunity, and Challenge”

Theme 1	Theme 2	# of Co-occurrences
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Learn	34
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Challenge	20
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Confidence	20
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Mentor	16
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Range of Experience	14
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Supportive Person	14
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Community	12
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Network	12
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Others Belief in Participant	12
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Can Do Attitude	11
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Diversity	11
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Responsibility	11
Step up to resp/opp/challenge	Learn from Negative	10

## Appendix R: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Challenge”

Theme 1	Theme 2	# of Co-occurrences
Challenge	Learn	23
Challenge	Step up to resp/opp/challenge	20
Challenge	Confidence	19
Challenge	Others Believe in Participant	17
Challenge	Supportive Others	15
Challenge	Range of Experience	13
Challenge	Constructive	10
Challenge	Feedback	10
Challenge	Team	10

## Appendix S: Co-occurrences with the Theme “Learning from Negatives”

Theme 1	Theme 2	# of Co-occurrences
Learn from Negative	Learn	25
Learn from Negative	Adversity	13
Learn from Negative	Feedback	11
Learn from Negative	Interpersonal Skills	11
Learn from Negative	Positive Impact	11
Learn from Negative	Range of Experience	11
Learn from Negative	Level Head	10
Learn from Negative	Mistakes Part of Process	10
Learn from Negative	Positive Can Do Attitude	10
Learn from Negative	Step up to resp/opp/challenge	10
Learn from Negative	Supportive Other	10