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Presence in Teaching: Awakening Body Wisdom

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Abstract

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Presence in Teaching: Awakening Body Wisdom

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The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers’ experiences of presence and examine whether the presence workshop could foster presence among teachers. There are very few studies on the topic of presence in educational setting, which can be of significant importance in developing holistic human beings. This study explored the overarching research question: “How can presence experience be fostered among teachers through awakening body awareness?” This qualitative research investigated the experiences of teachers before, during, and after the body awareness workshop in order to specifically explore a) How do teachers understand presence? b) How is body awareness defined in teachers’ life and praxis? c) How can body awareness be integrated in the teacher education program? d) How does presence change teachers’ different kinds of relationships? and e) What qualities can be observed as a result of enhanced presence?

Case study research design was utilized to collect data through interviewing, participants’ reflections and journals, and informal observations. The study included 5 teachers working in a small town in Ohio. The data from teachers were coded, thematically analyzed, and compared to respond the research questions. Other qualitative techniques such as triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking helped the researcher to establish the rigor and credibility of the study.
This study revealed that participants had no prior familiarity with presence but they formed their personalized understanding of the presence experience towards the end of the workshop. The findings indicated that, teachers’ presence emerged as relationship in three areas of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal; participants enhanced their presence and reported to have experienced more unity and harmony with their selves and their surroundings; they felt more energized, attuned to the class environment, and more creative in their teaching; body awareness was also experienced and fostered in all relationship domains; at the intrapersonal domain, participants recognized the body-mind-emotion cycle and could observe the integration in themselves; at the interpersonal domain, their relationships with the people around them became more flexible and open; at the transpersonal domain, they shared their experiences by sentences such as feeling their being or having more awareness; and finally, participants’ experiences of presence changed to a holistic and authentic relationship with self and others in harmony with the context. Consequently, participants’ perspective of teaching and learning became more authentic and flexible.

This study provided some input on how presence was recognized by the teachers and presented a model for an intervention that could foster presence among teachers. Outcomes of this study could be utilized as a springboard in designing more mindful programs for the teachers and augment the information on presence experience and holistic education. Moreover, the implications and recommendations of this study could guide the researchers in contemplative studies for the new venues of mindful investigation in education.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

The current education system mainly focuses on the cognitive aspects of development. Modern models of mass education have been critiqued constantly by both the recent education models and the progressive theories of education such as Piaget’s constructivism, Dewey’s experiential learning, or Friere’s critical pedagogy. They believed factory model of education that aims at transferring knowledge, promoting cognitive skills, has several disadvantages for everyone in the education system (Gidley, 2007). Some evidence to support this claim in the current education is the importance of results of standardized tests or fixed assessment checklists for teachers and students. Standardized tests have brought a tense atmosphere to the education environment that has led to major deficiencies in the emotional and physical aspects of education, both for students and for teachers (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006).

Education that merely focuses on the cognitive side of children might lead to some deficiencies in teaching to the whole child. From one perspective, students are expected to attend to their inner life outside the school door; their major concerns such as relationship to others, the purpose and meaning of life, and similar issues are not responded in school. In other words, they are asked to leave the thoughts, feelings, or questions that are important to them behind the doors of school; those issues constitute the life being experienced in the present that is asked to be avoided; therefore, they are not fully present in the classroom (Miller, 2009). Lack of attention to these needs might also result in losing the relationship to the surrounding world, personal values, and connection to meaning. “An education devoted entirely to the development of abstract
and technical mental facility, which lacks any vital connection with human meaning and substance, becomes itself a main agent of cultural impoverishment and the displacement of human concerns” (Sloan, 1983, as cited in Gidley, 2007, p. 119).

Furthermore, teachers are affected by this approach in various ways. For the sake of standardized tests, teachers feel the pressure to cover certain portions of the lesson to make the students ready for the test and this might not leave them with enough time to allot to emotional aspects of growth that can be even more important than just banking and transferring the information. Students bring their questions with themselves and the teacher has the opportunity to reach students at the time and place they live. Presence can offer the genuine curriculum (Miller, 2009).

In addition, teachers have to bear significant amount of pressure to fulfill the expectations of the authorities. They are left with little space to be themselves. They try to act and conform to what the school standards expect them to be; a teacher self based on the principles of the school. They might even experience anxiety or face a conflict when their personal and professional identities are too distanced from each other. They lose their trust in themselves; consequently, students lose their trust in their teachers. Teachers change their goals from being their genuine and rich self to acting in a way that satisfies others’ professional standards. Therefore, there will be a discontinuity between their professional and personal life and they are left with a divided self, as Dewey called it (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). These deficiencies have been considered in the new educational trends and several approaches have been introduced to fill these gaps.
In response to these concerns, many recent education models have advocated moving education to a more holistic, multidimensional, embodied approach (Gidley, 2007) that is aligned with the evolution in human being. The new approaches can be applied to both teachers and the students. Practices such as mindful learning, presence experience, or post-modern education are some of the instances. These practices share common goals: assisting teachers and students experience their holistic self and leading them toward bringing conscious awareness to their activities. They aim at fostering a real human being, accomplishing the final goal of education. Moreover, only a holistic flexible education plan might have the chance to touch students and not an education system with the fixed goal of achieving high test results.

Presence experience in education could be the path to teach to the whole child. Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) defined presence as an awareness state that the individual receives and connects to his/her mental, emotional, and physical workings of his/herself and the group. In other words, being fully present helps students and teachers feel their body, mind, and emotions as a whole. Presence experience practices distance themselves from developing one-dimensional human beings such as a person who has only promoted cognitive skills.

In order for these approaches, specifically presence experience, to be practiced in education, teachers need to be trained initially. If teachers are not ready for these practices, they cannot lead the class and students appropriately (Burke, 2009). In line with this trend, Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) presented a framework that involved self, relationship, subject matter, and praxis. However, it addressed presence only from
educational stance and did not include any special training to bring presence experience in the educational setting. There has been other studies on deep teaching, the pedagogy of \textit{self}, and respecting awareness and spirituality in educational setting but no one has focused on the role of body and how body-mind-emotion unity should be learned and taught. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to assist teachers become familiar with the presence experience and enhance their presence through awakening their body wisdom.

\textbf{Research Problem}

Currently, there is limited documentation on the presence experience. In addition, there is almost no literature on the role of body-mind-emotion unity for being fully present in the educational setting. Studying these areas in educational settings seems extremely significant for discovering the effects of presence on teaching to the whole child. Prescribing any approach for education without being investigated appropriately and efficiently might not generate the outcomes that has been presumed. It applies to presence experience, as well. Presence is assumed to assist the teachers in experiencing their whole \textit{self} and integrating it in their praxis and relationship with students (Rodgers-Raider-Roth, 2006); however, this claim is of little value unless supported by research. For presence experience to be applied in education, it has to be examined in various settings; its effects on the teaching and learning should be examined meticulously and then appropriate adaptions should be made.

Moreover, to understand presence, it has to be experienced. There is a need to have training sessions to assist people experience it directly. It cannot be defined or
described accurately because everyone experiences it differently. Thus, an accurate understanding of the teachers’ experiences regarding presence would be the first step in investigating this topic. Accordingly, this research, first, sought to understand presence among teachers and explore teachers’ presence in class. Furthermore, understanding of the presence experience could help in seeking the approaches that would lead to enhancement of presence. Consequently, the study aimed at investigating if workshop practices and tasks could make any changes in teachers’ experience of presence. Results of the study could provide input on one model of presenting and practicing presence among teachers. The current intervention with some modifications or changes could be implemented in other areas.

**Professional Perspectives of the Study**

The research was a quest to explore the experience of presence and body-awareness with respect to classroom relationships and praxis among teachers. I was influenced by Wilber’s vision-logic model and integral theory (2000), Noddings’ care and relational nature of presence (2003), Kolb’s Experiential Model (1984), and a recent trend in education called transmodern education. Equally significant, mind-body unity notion, discussed by various authors such as Reich (1948, 1950) and Dreher (2003), and authentic relationship of Martin Buber (1970) guided me in this study. These approaches will be reviewed in more detail in chapter 2 of this proposal.

**Research Rationale**

Given the novelty and incomplete knowledge of the presence experience in educational settings, it seemed worthwhile to explore teachers’ understanding of presence
experience and to study how presence is experienced via fostering body awareness. Investigating this topic can provide more input on the effects of presence experience in the education setting and among teachers, specifically.

Foremost, teaching is far beyond transferring the information, evaluating the students, and mastering the subject matters (Freire, 1968; Miller, 2009). Progressive educators such as Piaget (1957) surfaced the significance of ideal learning environment in which children construct the knowledge that is meaningful to them through experience and interaction. Correspondingly, teaching skills are entirely further than a checklist of behaviors that is structured by authorities. “It involves self-knowledge, trust, relationship, and compassion” (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 266). Holistic education concurs that fundamentals of classroom life entail the relationships- the affective and cognitive interactions between teachers and students- building a genuine learning experience, and a congenial school environment. Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) believed these criteria can be constructed via coordination of body, mind, and emotions that presence experience fosters.

Traditional teaching methodologies follow the banking or factory model of education focusing more on the high test results (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). The old belief that mind is the controller of the human being (Dreher, 2003) might have caused this atmosphere in education; therefore, traditional educators set the cognitive development as the major goal of education. It might be the time for teaching to step out of the enclosed loop of focusing on transferring information; instead, it could move toward responding to real needs of students about the meaning of life, relationships to
each other, their feelings, justice, and compassion for other people (Miller, 2009). Applying presence experience to education might be one of the appropriate approaches to fulfill students’ real needs because it covers all aspects of a whole child- physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual; however, it needs to be investigated empirically.

Finally, elevating the quality of teaching and learning would not be possible without displaying the significance of body awareness. Our body is our point of view of the world (Merleau-Ponty as cited in Carman, 2008); therefore, developing a human being with mind-body unity at transpersonal level (Rowan, 2005) can be a goal for education which should start with teachers. Teachers can be the best models for their students by enhancing their presence in the classroom via having regular body awakening practices for themselves.

**Significance**

Research that noticeably focuses on the presence experience in education is rare. There is even less information on the techniques or approaches through which presence could be employed in the curriculum. With the rising attention to mindful education, it becomes highly significant to practically get involved in exploring this area. Furthermore, because of the experiential nature of the topic, very little systematic search has been undertaken on presence experience. One of the reasons for few number of studies on presence is that mindful approaches can only be taught or researched by people who have experienced it to some extent (Burke, 2009); there might not be many scholars who have taken classes for mindful practices. Hence, to implement presence experience in the curriculum, a systematic and tangible approach for presenting it seems critical.
Accordingly, two key points make situating this research significant: first, the need for exploring, documenting, and systematizing presence experience for practice. Second, our current information suggests that presence experience could be the response to the existing problems of contemporary education that has ignored fostering holistic individuals. Investigating this area might provide solutions for both the problems that standardized tests have caused in the education system and the problems that teachers face regarding the pressures they bear; teachers live stressful lives in order to meet the standards, equip the students with needed skills for standardized tests, and satisfy the teacher professional look the school imposes on them (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). Based on some of the studies on mindfulness and presence, one solution could be teachers finding their authentic self and believing in what they should accomplish (Rodgers & Raither-Roth, 2006); however, this speculation needs to be investigated further. Therefore, this study attended to provide the teachers with a better understanding of themselves and their relationships with their students through enhancing presence.

**Research Questions**

The one overarching question that led the research was: How can presence experience be fostered in teaching through body awareness? There were other narrowed questions embedded in this main research question that were addressed by exploring the body awareness and presence. These questions include: a) How do teachers understand presence? b) How is body awareness defined in the teacher’s life and praxis? c) How can body awareness be integrated in the teacher education program? d) How do body awareness and presence change teachers’ intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal
relationships? e) Can body awareness and presence be enhanced through the implementation of the designed tasks?

**Limitations of the Study**

There seemed to be three limitations in the design of this study. First, participants of the study were teachers who worked in a school of a small town in Ohio. The atmosphere of the school, their teaching methodologies, their student population, and even their outlook of the education system belonged to the area they were teaching and could not be a representative of all teachers around the USA. Teachers in more populated areas or urban schools experience teaching and relationship in a different way.

Nonetheless, the purpose of this study was not to generalize the findings of this study to other teachers all around the USA or the world, but to develop an in-depth understanding of presence and how body awareness affects the experience of presence among teachers.

The second limitation could be the small number of five participants. The study followed a qualitative research design and the small number of the participants did not diminish the purpose of the study; however, a larger number from varied populations could enrich the results of the study.

Finally, the time frame could be a problem in this study because of the nature of the topic of presence. Spiritual practices or any other practice that include the psyche and soul take a long time to show results. The change starts in the person but it occurs gradually and the results commonly do not reveal themselves immediately or even in the anticipated format. Thus, results were based on researcher’s interpretation of participants’ journals, reflection prompts, and interviews. Longitudinal practices over years might
provide a more transparent view of what presence means and how it appears in the educational setting.

**Definition of Terms**

For more clarity, some of the terms that are frequently used in this dissertation will be defined: mind-body unity, presence experience, mindfulness, consciousness, and relationship.

*Mind-body Unity:* mind-body unity can be described from different perspectives, each defining it based on its application for them and from their own stance. Physiologists have found evidence that mind and body are integrative entities and cannot be separated from each other. The mind-body network is a whole-organism entity. Mind-body unity is as deep as psyche which entails a complete spectrum of our thoughts, memories, personality traits, and emotions (Dreher, 2003). From consciousness point of view, body is one of the consciousness levels. One of the ways to describe consciousness is in a five-level hierarchy of matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit. All these levels act as a whole in which every stage or level becomes part of the next stage like a holon. Mind-body unity is part of the wholeness and a critical element in every individual’s growth (Wilber, 2001). From the philosophical standpoint, mind cannot exist without a bodily perceptual orientation in the world; in other words, individuals perceive the world via *being* embodied. Body and world are like interwoven threads of a fabric which Merleau-Ponty called flesh.

*Presence Experience:* Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) defined presence as an awareness state that the individual receives and connects to his/her mental, emotional,
and physical workings of his/herself and the group. In some texts, it is merely referred to as the state of being here and now. There are other definitions for presence in other philosophical texts such as supreme being or as Buber (1970) believed “The present … the real filled present, exists only in so far as actual presentness, meeting, and relation exist. The present arises only in virtue of the fact that the Thou becomes present” (p. 12). However, in the current paper, Rodgers and Raider-Roth’s (2006) definition will be utilized because the research deals with the education setting and teaching, in particular.

**Mindfulness:** some of the common definitions of mindfulness include “paying attention” and “being in the present on purpose” (Kabat-Zinn, 1990); “a mode of ‘being’ which has the qualities of wholeness, intimacy, sensory richness, and dilation of time” (Childs, 2007, p. 4); being fully aware of each moment; opening to what our experiences are offering us; and being free of habitual automatic cognitive routines. It is a shift of mental functioning from doing to being (Tealsday, 1999). It is believed that mindfulness is an inherent capacity of human organism (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 2003) but its strength varies. In more basic forms it happens for a short time and is infrequent, but it becomes more frequent and continuous in people with more mindfulness practices.

**Consciousness:** there is no one agreed upon universal definition for consciousness yet (Corballis, 2007); however, it is described more clearly via its representations in different domains. Wilber (2001) called the Human Consciousness the shared experience of human beings. He referred to it as perennial philosophy in which the Great Chain of Being is central. Boss (1963) argued being or “Dasein,” is “to be there,” semantically; while phenomenologically, it denotes unveiling itself, appearing, or shining forth. Both
definitions are in line with the nature of human that has always fulfilled his/her existence in regard to somebody or something. Human being’s existence is originally a “being-in-the-world.”

**Relationship:** There are three kinds of relationship: interpersonal, intrapersonal, and transpersonal. Intrapersonal relationship refers to a person’s relationship with *self.* While interpersonal relationship refers to a person’s relationship with other people. In the transpersonal, the situations is different and relationship is triggered from a higher level of consciousness that involves mind-body unity; Wilber called it the third level of human consciousness.

**Summary**

Previous empirical research has identified the significance of presence experience in fostering a holistic individual that has authentic relationship with others and the world. Presence might provide the opportunity for the individual to grow according to the evolving nature of *self* and transform the relationships to a higher level quality. Optimizing the qualities of life and work through presence experience has been studied in some disciplines such as nursing, medicine, or psychotherapy in which care and relationship are huge pieces. However, there has not been specific research on the incorporation of body awareness and the presence experience among teachers. To provide some evidence on filling this gap, an intervention was designed for awakening body wisdom among teachers. The workshop presented ideas such as body awareness, senses awakening, *being,* relationship, and intercorporeal dialog; it related these ideas to the educational and classroom setting. Due to the experiential nature of the study, all the
topics were practiced through some tasks. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to understand how presence is perceived by teachers, explore if awakening body awareness can lead to enhanced experience of presence among teachers, investigate if teachers’ interpersonal/intrapersonal/transpersonal relationships changed after the presence workshop, and determine how teachers perceived their changes.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

In the present chapter, I review the literature relevant to the research question of “How can presence experience be fostered in teaching through body awareness?” This overarching research question has two parts: presence experience and body awareness. Regarding the presence, its obscure nature revealed that the literature on this topic is contextualized under various other topics; in many instances, it has not been directly addressed but rather it is embedded in that specific topic. Presence experience can be traced in infinite number of resources when its qualities or representations are discussed; however, exploring it under spirituality or mindful learning limits the search. The research question entailed body awareness, as well; therefore, part of the literature addresses mind-body unity and relevant issues of body awareness, too; direct literature on the combination of presence and body awareness in education is rare.

Consequently, the exploration moved from presence description to presence in education and presence for teachers. In this section, first, literature on presence is reviewed to provide the reader with an understanding of what presence experience might be, its manifestation as presence, and how presence experience might be helpful in fostering the whole child. Three areas of self, relationship, and consciousness were frequently used to describe presence. These areas will be discussed in detail and their relationship to education will be explicated. Also, body awareness constitutes a big part of self which is reviewed from different perspectives. Finally, the importance of practicing presence among teachers will be argued.
Presence

Presence experience has hardly been discussed with certainty in texts. First, the fuzzy nature of presence (Marcel, 1949) has made it complicated to offer a universal definition; the definitions are commonly context-dependent. Second, because of the thoroughly experiential nature of presence, describing or verbalizing it cannot be the exact representation of it; qualities of presence are more frequently discussed. Consequently, there are not sufficient resources that address presence directly. Herein, literature on terms or approaches that have closer nature to presence such as mindfulness, being, or consciousness have been sought to elaborate on presence in this study.

Presence and mindfulness. Mindfulness and presence have been introduced and defined in almost the same ways in texts. Some of the definitions of mindfulness include paying attention and being in the present on purpose (Kabat-Zinn, 1990); “a mode of ‘being’ which has the qualities of wholeness, intimacy, sensory richness, and dilation of time” (Childs, 2007, p. 4); being fully aware of each moment; opening to what our experiences are offering us; and being free of habitual automatic cognitive routines. It is a shift of mental functioning from doing to being (Tealsday, 1999). It is believed that mindfulness is an inherent capacity of human organism (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 2003) but its strength varies. In more basic forms, it happens for a short time and is infrequent but it becomes more frequent and continuous in people with more mindfulness practices. In these descriptions, three areas of self, relationship, and consciousness are emphasized. These three types recur in other texts, as well.
Correspondingly, Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) defined presence as an awareness state that the individual receives and connects to his/her mental, emotional, and physical workings of him/herself and the group. In some texts, it is merely referred to as the state of being here and now. Definitions of presence in education also emphasized on the same elements; for example, Siegel (2007) stated:

*Presence* is the state of mind that comes with all the dimensions of reflection; the quality of our availability to receive whatever the other brings to us, to sense our own participation in the interaction, and to be aware of our own awareness. We are open to bear witness, to connect, to attune to our students’ internal states. This is professional presence that entails us being personally present (p. 263).

Siegel’s definition highlighted the elements of *self*, relationship, and awareness as well. Also, Siegel (2007) introduced the reflection and the witnessing quality of presence; he concurred that professional presence promotes the personal presence.

Presence could originate from different sources. For some scholars, full presence is spotted in the spirituality realm, *being*, rather than social realm of doing, and it should not be compared to entities or concepts in the doing world (Boss, 1963). Origins of presence could pose a debate for scholars. It has been argued that presence might start from *self*, from social realm, or it could merely have transpersonal origins.

**Presence definition and qualities.** Three distinguishing characteristics or components of presence are *self*, relationship, and *being*. In brief, this section tries to portray a comprehensible picture of it and then elaborates on the elements of *self*,
relationship, and being. Each element is discussed in detail; later, the role and connection of these elements in education will be illustrated.

Presence has a philosophical or existential nature in the majority of the texts. It has an ontological definition in philosophical texts, too, which could denote its transpersonal aspect. Dacher (2006) defined presence or being experience as the state of being aware of the transpersonal world, beyond intra/interpersonal boundaries,” (p. 51) having two dimensions of physical and psychological. It seems that presence is more inclined toward being to the point that it can be even called absolute being. Silsbee defined presence in a simpler statement as “a state of awareness, in the moment, characterized by the felt experience of timelessness, connectedness, and a larger truth” (p.20). “Presence is an invitation to experience directly” (Schoeberlein and Sheth, 2009, p. 161). Osterman and Shwartz-Barcott (1996) cited from Harper (1991) that presence is actually spiritual presence of supreme being. Marcel (1949) and other authors that have worked on presence from spiritual standpoint believed it has a fuzzy nature and as Marcel described “Presence is mystery in the exact measure in which it is presence” (p. 22). It is being-in-itself.

In addition to absolute being, the other component of presence is self. Presence literature considers self the central component and has extensive discussions on self-awareness, self-knowledge, and holistic self. Furthermore, there is an extensive list of common psychological characteristics that have been pointed out to refer to the presence qualities such as attentiveness, body and sense awareness, connections, integration, focus, empathy and rapport, physical proximity, availability, authenticity, reciprocity, meaning
(MacDonald du Mont, 2002), compassion, no judgment, flexibility, openness, novelty, 
acceptance, and curiosity, to name a few (Childs, 2007; Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Langer, 
2005). Well-being, in general, was how this aspect of presence was signified in many 

studies.

The other distinguishing characteristic of presence is the relationship component. 
Siegel (2007) stated that presence is a being open to whatever the other offers us, being a 
participant in the interaction, and being aware of our awareness. He suggested three areas 
of witnessing, connection, and attunement to the internal states of the other. Carman 
(2008) also cited Meleau-Ponty in his book on how presence is the experience of being 
one with the world. There is no external/internal or subject/object; hence, relating to 
others is the same as relating to oneself when borders vanish in presence experience. 

Briefly, three components of self, relationship, and consciousness were common 
in all presence definitions that need to be elaborated herein. The first component that is 
described here is self. It is explicated from physiology and phenomenology perspectives. 
The section on self is more extensive than other parts because one of the primary parts of 
the research question, body awareness, is included in the self. It aims at introducing body-

mind-emotion integration, describing the role of brain hemispheres, and moving toward 
corporeal being.

Self

Self is one of the distinguishing components of presence. This section reviews the 
notion of mind-body unity, the common mistakes about mind-body connection, the 
physiological evidence for the existence of holistic self, mind-body unity from
consciousness perspective, ideas of phenomenologists on embodied mind, and importance of mind-body unity in promoting holistic self in presence experience for the education system.

**Mind-body unity.** Body awareness seems to be a neglected aspect in education. Very few articles or texts have ever attended to the role of body in education and, if they have, they have proposed ideas of mind-body connection reinforcing the dualistic ideas of mind and body which formally began with Descartes in the 17th century. Since then, mind has been regarded as a separate superior entity compared to body and many people look at body as the holder of human mind. In reality, body and mind are both parts of a whole human being with equal importance and value (Dreher, 2003) which have received very little attention. Consequently, fostering a holistic human being in education might require more attention to the ignored physical aspect of human being. The following sections review mind-body unity from physiology and phenomenology perspectives. This part is intended to reveal the importance of enhancing the physical aspects of human being for actualizing the holistic self- constituting of physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual selves. Body awareness is an important dimension of the whole child and physiology provides some evidence.

**Mind-body unity from physiological perspective.** One of the ways of elaborating on the mind-body concept is through the lens of physiology and science. For those people who only believe in a subject if it is scientifically proved, numerous texts have been written in which the integrated nature of body, mind, and emotion are
explicated. The common belief separates these elements in human being; however, they are of a holistic nature in individuals.

Dreher (2003), in the introduction of his book called *Mind-Body Unity*, stated that the mind-body connection conveys a form of dualism itself because connection is used for two separate entities that have been related via passageways. He believed that the term connection demonstrates a mechanism in the organism that is more flowing rather than integrated. He supported his ideas by the example of how mind cannot be defined fully by the brain or the body being defined by the bones and skin. With the recent discoveries that substantiated immune cells make the nerve cell products and the reverse in the 1980s and 1990s, the visionary mind-body scientists came to this understanding that connection is not an accurate word for the mind-body relationship anymore. They shifted to the idea of mind-body being unified.

The mind-body network is a whole-organism entity. In Dreher’s opinion, mind-body unity is as deep as psyche which entails a complete spectrum of thoughts, memories, personality traits, and emotions; it has an extremely complicated network similar to the molecular landscape of the body. Dreher later added that it is a belief in basic science that our emotions and selfhood are integrated with our bodily states. Furthermore, the recent mind-body studies suggested that the how and what of emotions and how we live are as important in our health as pathogens in a relational world. Dreher’s opinions clearly denoted the integration of body-mind-emotion in a human being from a scientific perspective that could be observed concretely (Dreher, 2003).
The attempt to clarify the body-mind-emotion integration is not a new discovery. People in the past have also investigated it; however, they addressed it from different angles. An example would be Reich (1948) who was also interested in the topic of elucidating mind-body relations through physiological and biological evidence. Similar to Dreher (2003), Reich, cited from Kraus and Zondeck, argued that the function of autonomic nervous system can be substituted by chemical substances; another indication that mind is not the ruler of human. He displayed a complete picture of the unitary functioning of the human organism, starting from a psychic function to the deepest biological reactions. Also, akin to Dreher, Reich believed that biological energy is the seat of emotions. In Reich’s idea, “every muscular rigidity contains the history and the meaning of its origin” (Reich, 1948, p. 235).

Wilber (1997) also commented on body-mind-emotion integration and provided some concrete instances. According to Wilber (1997), there is a direct connection between body, mind, and emotion status. Wilber (1997) believed repressing something in mind or emotion leads to repressions in the body. For example, he stated a person who ignores her/his interest or excitement must repress his breathing, or tense her/his chest muscles, make the diaphragm and stomach stiff, and clamp the jaws. Similarly, a person who represses the anger locks all the muscles that would strike or attack. In these cases a mental lock generates bodily knot. In other words, despite the general belief that assumes a split between mind and body, physical body and personality are one unit. Wilber (1997) cited from Rolf and stated an integrated individual is created through integrating what is within and the physical body; human being is the physical body or the mind is the body
and the body is the mind. Contemporary psychology that discusses ego discloses the concept of breaking up into many discrete egos; which is a method of division, alienation, dualism, or fragmentation. Instead autonomy should be practiced that goes beyond ego-id-superego and understanding being is the prime goal. Total being can be experienced by distancing from ego level and going back to bodies (Wilber, 1997).

Holistic body is a term introduced to emphasize the integral system of self. To explicate, Eiden (2009) argued that the energy or life force is the connecting force of body, emotion, mind, and spirit. She believed a stronger sense of self is attained by having a clearer sense of boundaries as a result of embodied self-awareness which is an exploration of the vegetative reactions, subtle movements, impulses, and inner sensations.

The totality of our life is reflected in the body, our experiences, and our relation to ourselves and the world. The term holistic body has been introduced to dissolve the dualistic split between mind and body or mechanism and vitalism. According to Carroll (2009), what is important in the body psychotherapy is the self-regulation or dynamic equilibrium, managed by the autonomic nervous system. Then, she connected this to change and presence arguing that we should feel and live the truth of our existence. Because life is dynamic in all its forms, deep and permanent changes start from inside, not from an external agenda. We should be fully present with what happens, experience it, and observe the change it brings. This presence is inside the belly and heart, in addition to the mind.

A large number of studies on mindfulness have been conducted in the physical aspect of individuals and investigated the effects of mindfulness on well-being; programs
such as MBSR (Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction) or MBCT (Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy). These programs focus more on reducing stress, anxiety, aggression, and bringing happiness, satisfaction or well-being in general (Burke, 2009; Burnett, 2009; Cohen & Miller, 2009). Burke (2009) pointed out attitudes such as focusing, attending, and accepting the feelings of the body without judgment and elaboration are commonly practiced in mindfulness programs. Meditation tasks with the emphasis on breath and senses are utilized in this regard. Studies have revealed that these attitudes lead to general well-being. These studies have scarcely delved further in the self; deeper investigations are missing in this regard.

A brief conclusion from the above descriptions might denote that discussing body-mind-emotion undermines the role of brain and mind. Nonetheless, the emphasis is not on denying the role of cognition; it rather highlights the importance of understanding the role of each element and finding the balance for the position of each. At this point, the function of the two hemispheres of the brain and their role in mind-body unity is discussed in the following section.

**Brain hemispheres and self.** There is a mutual relationship between the brain hemispheres and holistic self feeling. In other words, attempting to balance the right and left hemisphere is one of the prerequisites of holistic body. Devinsky (2000) explored the function of brain hemispheres and how each hemisphere works separately. He claimed that the chief hemisphere for corporeal being and sense of physical and emotional is the right hemisphere. The right hemisphere is dominant in a person’s awareness, his/her being in relation to the environment and affections, in addition to social self and behavior.
In contrast with the more experiential right hemisphere, the left hemisphere is more logical. Left hemisphere is dominant in verbal consciousness, linguistic and praxis self. In a normal brain, each hemisphere is performing its responsibilities, but their contributions differ from moment to moment and from person to person. Because right hemisphere contributes to the parallel processing of the brain, injuries or damages in the right brain can disorder the way unified self acts (Devinsky, 2000).

**Mind-body unity from phenomenology perspective.** From the phenomenological vantage point, Merleau-Ponty connected the idea of perception to body arguing that perception is not mental, but rather entirely a bodily relation to the environment. In phenomenology of perception, Merleau-Ponty viewed human being in an unconscious communication with the world; a world that is perceived by the body, concluding that perception is bodily. Perception acts like a vortex that constantly pushes individuals out toward the world and away from the center (themselves); this might be the reason they forget about themselves. “Perception is our most basic mode of being in the world, and the body is the ultimate and abiding subject of all perspectives available to us in principle” (Carman, 2008, p. 3). Carman cited Merleau-Ponty in his idea that our bodies are our anchors in the world and a general way that we own the world. Later, he added that a correct way of articulating this is to utter that “we are minds, selves, bodies” (p. 11).

Subjective and objective views are explicated from this phenomenological perspective, as well. Our perception and movements coexist in an integrated system together. That is why we have both a first-person point of view and objective
perspectives that are impersonal. According to Merleau-Ponty, there is no real external or internal world because self and the world are the interwoven threads of the unified whole; therefore, the subjective or objective views are only poles of attention. Richards (2009) expressed that if we consider life as a Mobius, life becomes a dance between inside-outside, subjective-objective; which reveal life and learning as a contingent realm.

Correspondingly, from a more transpersonal perspective, body is far more than flesh, skin, and bones and is not limited to subjectivity. It is exposed and shaped by the passage of being, the possibilities of being, and the other beings, thinking, dwelling, building, and …” The corporeal existence is also beyond the exterior existence in a place at a moment. Thinking about someone far in space or time can be an example of opening the bodily closure in certain states of mind. Corporeal being expands in belonging to a world and earth that display it as it is now. It is not correct to say that world is a horizon of body, though; it could rather be stated that “the body takes place by differentiating itself from and within the opening of a world” (p. 98). Through this description, one can observe its oneness with and openness to the other dessein, being (Vallega-Neu, 2005).

In conclusion, the separation of mind and body or having a dualistic view of mind and body is in question. The idea of holistic self has been supported in many ways. Many phenomenological texts also emphasize that all relationship types exist in unity and cannot be separated. These ideas are the focal component of some practices of which presence experience is the one. Presence is a holistic being that comes to existence in a relationship; which make it an appropriate choice for promoting growth in the education system, as well. Notwithstanding, the literature revealed that it has been addressed in
some ways and under different names previously. The following section reviews the literature related to self in education.

Self and education. Promoting holistic self has been debated under various topics in education for a long time. An example of this can be Plato and Socrates’s focus on self-actualization or self-transcendence. Plato claimed that any human being has an innate drive toward self-actualization. It seems that they believed the path to self is mind-body coordination because their curriculum entailed gymnasium and music in which students practiced body and mind coordination. They believed gymnasium practices can develop virtue, justice, and perseverance in students which leads to the soul development (Brumbaugh, 2009).

Correspondingly, other educators have extensive arguments on holistic self enhancement. An example of these educators is Dewey, who believed students attain their maximum growth in harmony with their fellows (Hook, 2009). He was well aware of the individual differences and emphasized that one person is assumed mature based on his/her knowledge of world, fellows, and himself/herself for dealing with the changing environment, understanding the new situations, and avoiding rigid or impulsive behavior. This issue has been demonstrated under several topics; it is called higher self (Wilber, 2001), self (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006), and holistic self (Carman, 2008; Hartley, 2009) and the like.

As all the mindfulness researchers have noted, mindfulness contains the physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of human making a whole or unity. A mindful person is expected to develop qualities such as acceptance, openness, non-
judgment, trust, compassion, empathy, and self-awareness. This person’s relationships could transform in nature because there are no subject-object relationships for this person. According to Merleau-Ponty (as cited in Carman, 2008), this person feels one with the world and the people; therefore, *I-Thou* relationship (Buber, 1970) is formed, too. Dewey (as cited in Hook, 2009), when discussing teaching as the art of improvisation, also pointed out that each class is an integrated experience. The teachers’ role is to weave his/her own *self* with what the students contribute as a whole. This cannot be possible without teachers’ owning knowledge of human being. Hook (2009) cited Dewey that freedom and fullness of human companionship is the final goal of education.

The other educator who investigated *self* enhancement was Kolb. Kolb’s Experiential learning theory (1984) is one of the older examples of attempting to trigger holistic *self* in education. His theory which was originated from the work of Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget suggested a holistic integrative learning. It combined experience, perception, cognition, and behavior, considering more aspects of human being, other than cognition. The three models that formed this theory were Lewinian Model of Action Research and Laboratory Training, Dewey’s Model of Learning, and Piaget’s Model of Learning and Cognitive Development. They all emphasized the experience of here and now, the concrete experience. Reflection and interaction with the people and environment were the other focal elements they assumed for learning. Their shared principles were: learning best occurs as a process, not an outcome; the process of learning is grounded in experience; there is a need for resolution to dialectical conflicts of adaptation to the
world; “learning is an holistic process of adaptation to the world” (p. 31); learning requires transaction between the individual and the world; learning process creates knowledge (Kolb, 1984). This theory can serve as an illustration of how the focus on holistic self, interaction, and here and now experience have been essential in learning.

Piaget and Vygotsky were also among the educators who focused on the other aspects of human being other than cognition. In presence experience, self is an evolving entity that is recreated continuously depending on the context, the environment, and the people around (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006); Piaget and Vygotsky’s opinions were relatively in line with this description. Vygotsky (1981), for instance, highlighted the social aspect of learning. He was of the opinion that individuals mental functions are derived from their interaction with others or social sources. People internalize and acquire a lot of world and cultural knowledge in joint activities, an emphasis on interpersonal relationships. In contrast to his temporary ideas that learning is external and development is internal, Vygotsky tended to believe they are one unit and interdependent; he might have pointed to the integration of intra/interpersonal relationships. When children learn general principles and rules, they can apply it to the new task and problem.

In line with developing a whole child, one of the recent models that advocated personal or self growth is the transmodern education (Gidley, 2007). It stressed that in the 21st century knowing should move toward a contemplative eye that discloses soul and spirit. Similarly, Wilber (2000) also elaborated on the circle of understanding as the introduction of integral theory. He added that human existence and learning is an integral being which consists of interior and exterior, subjective and objective, idealism and
materialism, and the like. All these are equally important and exist together. It can well pertain to the education and learning, as well.

Understanding the relation between inside/outside is an opening to the importance of interpersonal relationships, their integrated nature with intrapersonal relationships, and how awareness of both self and relationships plays a role in presence experience. The following section briefly reviews relationships from a more transpersonal outlook.

**Relationship**

Buber’s (1970) *I-Thou* and *I-It* relationships are the basis of discussing interpersonal relationships in this section. Significance of relationship can be well understood in Buber’s (1970) saying that “The present … the real filled present, exists only in so far as actual presentness, meeting, and relation exist. The present arises only in virtue of the fact that Thou becomes present” (p. 12). From corresponding vantage points, high level interpersonal relationship connects to the *being* and provides the opportunity for becoming. Schoeberlein and Sheth (2009) debated that feeling other’s presence is when the spaciousness of our *being* feeling is received and the reverse is true when others feel presence in each other; it is as if they enter their *being* world.

Presence has also been elucidated by Buber’s ideas. Mayhall and Mayhall (2004) interpreted Buber’s ideas on *I-Thou* relationship and believed relation within the world entails three spheres; the first sphere is called *our life with nature* that is basically instinctive and non-communicative. The second sphere is *our life with men* which is communicative and the more words between two people, the richer the relationship. At this sphere, another person is the *Thou*. Finally, the third sphere is our life with spiritual
being in which Thou exits in all its transcendence. Thou is the author of the speech; the speech is made with our primary being. Mayhall and Mayhall (2004) elaborated on this kind of I-Thou relationship with the example of a tree. They discussed that once looking at the tree, one could be bound up in the relation to it; consequently, it no longer exists and I grasps the exclusive tree as one whole soul, the tree itself. They believed the same relationship could exist among human beings based on Buber’s ideas. They added that only the time analyzing the other person is stopped, I becomes closer to Thou. Buber (1970) stated:

…he is not a thing among things and does not consist of things. Thus human being is not He or She, bound from every other He and She, a specific point in space and time within the net of world; nor is he a nature able to be experienced and described, a loose bundle of named qualities. But with no neighbor, and whole in himself, he is Thou and fills the heavens. This does not mean that nothing exists except himself. But all else lives in this light (p. 8).

I-Thou relationship is considered the ideal form of interpersonal relationship (Buber, 1970; MacDonald du Mont’s, 2002). MacDonald du Mont’s (2002) discussed this relationship under the name of I-Thou-It (teacher-student-subject matter). His focus was a way of connecting to the other as a whole, a mode of being open in a situation with wholeness, cited from Buber (1976). Contrary to this idea is the term I-It relationship in which the other is treated as an object that can be observed, measured, or categorized; the patient is assumed as an object that needs physical intervention without any entanglement relationship. He further cited Marsden (1990) who viewed presence “as
a giving as well as a receiving of the self” (p. 6) which has two dimensions of leading to empathy and improving well-being (MacDonald du Mont, 2002).

This kind of relationship that Buber (1970) described as I-Thou is the focus of presence experience. According to the literature on mindfulness and presence, I-Thou fosters flexibility and openness in individuals. Therefore, having more permeable boundaries in relationship with others is one of the goals of presence. I-Thou experience could enter transpersonal realm and lead people to have that higher self experience. The succeeding section, proceeds to the discussion of relationship in education.

**Relationship and education.** This section elaborates on the role of relationship in education which has been debated for a long time under various names. First, the importance of relationship for effective teaching and learning is explicated. Then, Noddings’ care model in education is presented to support relationship’s importance. Also, I-Thou relation which is the ultimate goal in interpersonal relationships will be discussed. Finally, a kind of relationship that could apply to Teachers-Students relationships is introduced and defined.

Relationship has taken multiple names in educational setting; each scholar has used his/her own terms. For instance, Noddings (2003 as cited in Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006) emphasized on “care” as a crucial factor in teaching and used the word presence for describing the teacher and student relationship. In this state, the attention is not only on the learners, but also on the group, environment, direction of the class, and even the subject matter (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). Also, Nias, (1996), Palmer (1998), Goldstein (1999), and Zembylas, (2003) believed that “integration, wholeness, reliability,
and groundedness in a person all speak to what is required for a teacher to be able to trust herself and the actions which are an extension of the self” (as cited in Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 272). Compassion, love, reliability, authenticity, and even presence are the other names that have been used frequently and emphasized on to introduce interpersonal relationship in education.

Older educational texts also highlighted the importance of presence; for example, Vygotsky, Dewey, and Piaget stressed on effective relationships in class. From a sociocultural perspective, Dewey observed learning and development as happening in cultural and social contexts; contexts that are changing themselves. Therefore, any development and learning is dependent on communities and their practices (Palinscar, 1998). On the other hand, Dewey believed that new horizons of knowledge are created through the integration of individual and group negotiations, which can be called social constructivism. Through negotiation, students share, explain, defend their ideas, and even try to convince other students. In this way, students come to the shared meaning or intersubjectivity. He also asserted that learning acts as a bridge from the known to unknown in a dialectical or transactional process and argued that the social verification acts as an encouragement or a yes to go ahead.

Piaget’s (1953, as cited in Palinscar, 1998) ideas are in accordance with Dewey and Vygotsky in which learning does not take place through the transfer of knowledge but it is constructed through many elements such as interpersonal relationship. He claimed sensory motor structures, corporeal conditions, and body capacities cause perception but human beings should not be given information; they should rather
construct the knowledge. This knowledge is created more effectively among peers with the same level of knowledge. If the learner is engaged in a process of problem solving experience with a peer with higher knowledge and ability, the learner is not stimulated to engage in the process. Older educational texts recognized and discussed the significance of interpersonal relationship in learning, but they did not elaborate on the details or did not present a model for it. Interpersonal relationship has been more systematically addressed in recent years.

In contemporary years, one of the other theories in Education that might fall under relationship is Noddings’ Care theory. Noddings (2005) cited from Heidegger who believed care is the very being of the human being, it seems in line with Buber ideas of interpersonal relationship. She built her ideas on this belief and stated a caring relationship is a connection or encounter between two people, at its very basic form. However, the critical ingredient that makes the relationship is that both parties, the carer and cared, need to contribute. The carer should be open and possess a nonselective receptivity to the cared; otherwise, the word care could be substituted by the word attention. She called this kind of attention the motivational displacement. In motivational displacement, the carer really hears, sees, and feels what the cared tries to convey. Reception, recognition, and response characterize the consciousness of the cared. Mature relationships’ hallmark is mutuality. The desire to be cared for, received, may be noted as a universal human being feature.

Furthermore, Nodding believed that teachers should not only create caring relationships, but also they should assist students develop this capacity in themselves.
The care relationship Noddings elaborated on is a comprehensive capacity that applies to self, world, people, and almost everything; to some extent, it assimilates to the *I-Thou* relationship that presence advocates. Having flexible boundaries, feeling one with the addressee, and understanding him/her are highlighted in both theories. This is the kind of teacher-student relationship education has long tried to advocate.

From another perspective, some scholars might agree that the relationship discussed in presence might belong to a higher level of relationship (Rogers, 1961; MacDonald du Mont’s, 2002; Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006; Siegel, 2007). A higher level of relationship is the one that connects to the *being* of the individuals and can be noticed in presence experience. Siegel (2007) used relationship in mindfulness and presence interchangeably for an educational setting:

> The attunement of the teacher with students creates the grounding for them to become mindful. We see ourselves in the eyes of the other, and when that reflection is attuned, we have an authentic sense of ourselves. When the other has presence, when his or her reflective skills permit mindful awareness, then in that moment we are seen with authenticity and directness (p. 263).

He used the term “relational sense,” which is the connectedness and relation with *being*. By attuning to another person, one can become aware of his/her state. He called this “feeling felt” and “*being* one with the world” the eighth sense. Being a teacher is a unique position for showing students what the essence of being a human is and making them more interested in the knowledge that is offered.
Higher level of relationship can be practiced in a therapy setting, as well. From therapy or emotion point of view, Gehart and McCollum (2008) tended to believe that therapeutic presence belongs to a state of being rather than doing which is mostly related to exploring and developing of the therapist’s self. It is hard to have a formal training for it. Self is considered in different aspects including compassion, empathy, spirituality, and openness. Openness is the experience of the client and an experience of self that involves the whole self (emotional, physical, cognitive, social, and spiritual). Self, relationship, and transpersonal relationship are strongly interconnected and feeling or experiencing one depends on the experience of the other.

The integration of self, relationship, and transpersonal relationship can be concretely illustrated through some qualities, too. In a mindful relationship, the person is able to accurately observe how the other person is feeling, thinking, and sensing without being absorbed by it; interpersonal relationship. It is also believed that mindfulness can enhance regulating the emotions and patterns of thinking, fighting emotional disorders, and reducing negative thoughts. Body functioning improves by healing immune system, reducing stress, and giving a general sense of well-being; intrapersonal relationship. The interpersonal relationships ameliorate due to the enhanced ability to notice nonverbal emotional clues, sensing the internal world of others, and increasing compassion and empathy (Schoeberlein & Sheth, 2009). Boosted self and relationship attunements promote love, empathy, and compassion; transpersonal type of relationship which could consequently lead to well-being.
In line with the integration of relationship types, one important aspect about relationship and presence is that presence can nurture teachers’ relationship with students only when they have a healthy relationship to themselves. Similar to other scholars who believed a quality intrapersonal relationship leads to quality interpersonal relationship, Roger (1961) also stressed the significance of being one with *self*; he believed one cannot be in a relationship and be helpful unless he has a self-knowledge of him/herself. If anyone intends to help other people or facilitate a relationship, he/she needs to grow first. Since *self* is an evolving entity, continuously changing, it depends a great deal on the context, experiences, and the people “*self*” is in contact with. As Kegan (1982, 1994) explained it, embeddedness to differentiation is the process that *self* has for evolvement and that is when a critical self-awareness is an essential element for growth, according to some scholars.

Having gained a good self-knowledge, presence “*with*” and “*to*” students can have several benefits for teachers. It might provide the teacher with the opportunity to see each response to a student’s question as a window to his/her self-knowledge; in other words, teacher’s effectiveness is embedded in the relationships with students, too. Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) asserted when a teacher maintains his/her connection to *self*, s/he can present his/her whole *self* to the learning process of the students and help them construct their meaning. Accordingly, trust is built resulting in creating the basis for his/her “authority as a teacher, learner, and human being committed to the development of compassionate hearts and critical minds in his [her] students” (p. 274).
The effects of relationship on learning is illustrated through bodily learning, as well. A good example to describe the essence of bodily learning is mother-infant relationship. “The function of attachment between mother and child is to enable and enhance regulation of biological and behavioral systems” (Schore 1994; 2003 as cited in Carroll, 2009, p. 95). Facial expressions, the coordination of sound and movements, touching and gazing all affect the nervous system of the child. Perceptions of the mother’s emotions in her face and in her voice can have influences on the child’s emotional state (Beebe & Lachmann 2002). The interactive resonance enables the infant to regulate her/his emotions meaningfully which can become internalized with multiple implications for the mind-body-brain. “This builds the intersubjective sense of self derived from mapping motor-sensory elements of the body-engaged-with-another (Trevarthen & Aitken 2001). These implicit early prototypes of relationship are structured into the infant’s body at every level – motor, autonomic, hormonal and sensory” (Carroll, 2009, p 95).

In neurobiology, Schore stated regularity intensity is important; the infant is sensitive to the quality of contact and it continues at different stages of child’s growing emotional and cognitive capacity. Self-regularity could develop in the child through responding to child’s sensitivity.

One reading of self-regularity in the relation is intersubjectivity which signifies a mutual recognition, to be recognized by and in others. Benjamin (1998) suggested that intersubjectivity is something much further than recognition:
It entails the ability to sustain an ongoing paradoxical tension between recognizing the other as possessing separate subjectivity, existing physically, emotionally and mentally outside one’s own omnipotence, and negating their separateness by the pull of our internal fantasy, transference and set of projections, which are created by our intrapsychic dynamics (p. 186).

Pizer (1998) also discussed the challenge of constructing otherness, bridging the essential separateness and relatedness. The challenge is to endure this paradoxical tension. The relationships of teachers and students might undergo the same tension. Intersubjectivity seems to be a topic that teacher could become aware of and develop it in their teaching. There is few studies on how intersubjectivity could enhance relationship and consequently learning in teaching.

Interpersonal relationships with transpersonal quality or intersubjectivity are the kinds of relationship education seeks. Schoonmaker (2009) argued that interpersonal mindfulness attunes the teachers professionally and they can feel they are being felt and a sense of stability is created; teachers feel good and loved. Teachers feel like their world is clearly seen by the other person, and they are resonating with each other’s worlds. Rogers’ (1961) beliefs concurred that a helping relationship is the one that develops growth in which the attitudes and emotions of the caregiver or teacher plays a more important role than the theoretical orientation; it seems in line with the relationship in presence. Caregivers’ words should be genuinely representative of their inner feelings. Empathetic relationship lasts longer. Caregivers should be ready to allow others be who they really are and free themselves from external evaluation to judge the person. When
the caregiver provides the ground for becoming, the empathetic interpersonal relationship is formed and not only the caregiver believes that the person can evolve, but also the person him/herself. This is a form of interpersonal relationship with transpersonal qualities (Rogers, 1961).

Despite the scarcity of literature on the models of relationship based on intersubjectivity in the learning environment, numerous medical texts offer various models for doctor-patient relationship that might be helpful in the teaching environment. Fritzsche, Abbo, Frahm, and Monsalve (2014) utilized Balint model and stated there are three kinds of doctor-patient relationships. They named those kinds as parentalistic model, service or consumer model, and partnership model.

In the paternalistic model, the doctor believes he has the authority to decide for the patient and act for their benefit. The speculation is that he knows best what is good for the patient and there might be a violation of patient’s autonomy. The doctor relies on and is guided by the scientific standards, and utilizes the medical expertise to treat the patient. It is postulated that the patient complies with medical instructions. This model resembles the traditional Teacher-Student relationship in which the teacher is the authority in the class and all decisions are made by him/her based on the content knowledge and pedagogic knowledge s/he owns.

In the service or customer model, the patient becomes the customer and the doctor is the service provider. The doctor remains the expert, but the patient is the authority who makes the decisions. Although the doctor is the facilitator, scientific and medical standardized are observed and not all the patient’s will be considered. Consultation
satisfaction, trust, friendliness, and expert advice are the key elements in this relationship. In other words “the doctor thus satisfies the needs of the patient for freedom, independence, being informed, and respectful attention. The patient has the right to make demands, the physician, however, should remain friendly even if the patient exaggerates” (p. 27). In the teaching environment, teacher as facilitator could have close similarity with this model. The teacher respects students’ needs, interests, and desires but makes the final decisions.

Finally, partnership model is a cooperative effort occurring between two equal partners. In this relationship, successful treatment is the outcome of co-operation and complementing each other. Although the doctor is still the expert, the patient is respected to have the autonomy, as well. The patient may/can/should contribute in the decision making and both parties are collectively responsible for it. Attentive listening and flexibility are essential in this relationship type. Finding a model close to this for the teaching environment is not simple because it is a matter of debate among many scholars. Transpersonal relationships, or consciousness element, will be discussed in the following section.

**Transpersonal Relationships**

Transpersonal realm is the distinguishing factor of presence experience. All the discussions of *self* and relationships in presence experience move towards transpersonal. In other words, transpersonal experience could originate from either *self* or relationships but have the awareness and *being* experience added and expanded. Defining and
observing transpersonal relationship to other types of relationship can be illuminating at this point.

Rowan (2005) denoted that transpersonal is very familiar and common for human beings. The exact word might not be utilized for it but some categories make it simpler to comprehend. These categories include inner voices, intuition, creativity, and peak experiences. Rowan (2005) stated those inner voices that open channels toward and beyond a higher self have a close meaning to transpersonal. Transpersonal experiences cannot be forgotten. When discussing presence, being is a frequently utilized term which needs to be explicated at this point.

**Being.** Shared experience of human beings can be discussed under what Wilber (2001) called the Human Consciousness. He referred to it as perennial philosophy in which the Great Chain of Being is central. Boss (1963) had extensive arguments on being or “Dasein,” the expression he used in his book. Semantically, dasein is “to be there”; while phenomenologically, it denotes unveiling itself, appearing, or shining forth. Both definitions are in line with the nature of human that has always fulfilled his/her existence in regards to somebody or something. Human being’s existence is originally a “being-in-the-world”:

Man is primarily aware of beingness, that he is in the world essentially and primarily seen as such. Man, then, is a light which illuminates whatever particular things and living being comes into the realm of its rays. It is of his essence to disclose things and living beings in their meaning and content (Boss, 1963, p. 37).
Self and relationship could have thoroughly transpersonal sides, as well. In this case, they are categorized as transpersonal experiences. Wilber’s (2001) hierarchy of consciousness is an instance of self in the transpersonal realm. According to Wilber (2001), reality or consciousness can be described in a five-level hierarchy of matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit. All these levels act as a whole in which every stage or level becomes part of the next stage like a holon. Wilber concluded that a better term for this can be holarchy. Higher levels might become dominant or overcontrol the lower levels and this leads to pathology or one-dimensional people. Some people believe that spirit is mental and have a dualistic view toward this holarchy; therefore, they might even form dualistic selves. Whereas, perennial philosophy avoids these beliefs and instead claims that “absolute spirit or reality is not hierarchical” (p. 40); it cannot be measured or defined in the form of mental forms; these are all spheres of being. At the interpersonal domain, I-Thou relationship is an example of relationship in the transpersonal realm.

All the above mentioned qualities make presence a suitable approach for promoting holistic growth in education. In brief, presence not only could improve self development, but also enriches the interpersonal relationships. The whole movement could be considered a transpersonal development that brings well-being as a byproduct. This section proceeds by presenting how presence can be introduced to the education system, how it can be promoted, and what tentative benefits it could have for the education system.

**Presence in Education**
Thus far, a large amount of literature in this text has been devoted to describing presence from different perspectives. The benefits of presence has been explicitly or implicitly stated in various situations; however, in the succeeding section, concrete advantages for education will be discussed through the studies that have been conducted on this topic; however, they are not extensive.

**Benefits for education.** Studies have revealed that mindfulness and presence can have numerous advantages for learning, teaching, and education field, in general. These benefits can emerge in physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual realms. Educators have discussed these benefits from different perspectives; For example, Langer (1989) suggested that mindful learning involves openness to novelty, multiple perspectives, flexibility, and orientation toward present. All these factors make learning profound and broad throughout lifelong learning. Through mindfulness practices, the self-regulation of attention is kept on the immediate experience which helps the mind increasing recognition at the present moment. Schoeberlein and Sheth (2009) also believed mindfulness activates metacognition. Some of the discussed qualities are categorized as follows:

*Top-down/bottom-up:* In mindfulness, top-down processing changes its place with bottom-up processing, or as Langer (1997) called it side-way stance, so that autopilot actions are replaced by fully aware activities allowing the learner to see all the possibilities around. Schoeberlein and Sheth (2009) elaborated on the top-down processes which enslave individuals many times in their lives and how mindfulness can liberate people from their effects. In top-down processes, people get stuck in the large-scale
dynamic of their prior experiences in the form of mental models of good/bad or right/wrong. Two examples of top-down processing could be intense emotional reaction or bodily responses to the events that have been experienced from past.

Breathing meditations might change the top-down processes and bring awareness for the individuals. Breathing practices of mindfulness, make individuals “aware of the in-breath, the turn of inhalation to exhalation, and then the out-breath. Within this rhythmic cycle of life, this ever-present interface of their bodies with the outside world, they bring awareness and create a resonance of connection between attention and corporeal self” (p. 138). Awareness helps people to directly sense, observe, create, and know. When the top-down enslaving is released, people can observe more clearly and find the interconnectedness to each other. Studies on this topic mainly focused on the breathing techniques and did not suggest a comprehensive plan. A more specific plan that has been investigated several times seem required at this point.

Attention/Option/Process: Langer (1989) believed awareness of having different categories and options makes the learner be engaged and have attention. Awareness is potentially liberating from rigidity because of offering options in decision making. The individual feels more control over the context to change it. With self-awareness, people feel they have the option of using all the possibilities and not be unconsciously dragged by one possibility that they saw traditionally; because of having a bottom-up processing system. Mindfulness bypasses old categories and relational thinking. Choice enhances creativity because having options makes people more responsible, in addition to trying harder and caring more for it. Moreover, they respect all the possibilities. In addition to
this, knowing that there are real choices along the way can make the guilt feeling vanish because the learning and consequences of choice have been clear; hence, it would be less hard. The point is to be aware that every product is preceded by a process.

Mindfulness and presence practices are process-oriented. Thinking about the outcome, product, can foster mindlessness. According to Langer (1989), creativity happens to people who can liberate themselves from fixed mindsets, open to new perspectives, play with those, and focus on the process. The other point is that mindfulness sharpens the judgment and makes people feel better about themselves because every project is divided to several steps and there are achievements at every step (Langer, 1989). Even Rogers (1961) who was not studying mindfulness, has written extensively on how having freedom to choose, becoming part of the process, and trusting in the bodily organism change the person to a full functioning person and can lead to happy life. The current emphasis on standardized tests may make using process-oriented approaches a challenge. But perhaps practicing process-oriented approaches in workshops could result in practical approaches that do not sacrifice the product.

**Novelty:** Mindfulness fosters the ability of seeing novelty in everything. Napoli, Krech, and Holley (2005) believed mindfulness develops the ability of looking at the world from others’ perspective, too. Since everything is novel, mindful children experience delight, and surprise in their learning process and enjoy it. Mindfulness approach requires to keep an open mind. Novelty is well observed in conditional learning. Conditional learning is one of the qualities of mindful learning which allows a good amount of uncertainty for the learners to be involved in their own learning process.
Also, every option could be a novel learning situation for students that is engaging, stimulating, and enjoyable. Beginner’s eye (mind) is the other quality mindful learners acquire due to seeing novelty in everything that is practiced (Schoeberlein & Sheth, 2009).

It is worth mentioning that the enlisted qualities were reported in different studies but there were not ample number of studies on these topics. There is a need to investigate each of these qualities through various studies and with designated plans to trace the results. Furthermore, the existing studies have been scattered among different age groups and not enough evidence supports the results at a certain age group. Discussing the effects of presence or mindfulness requires more specific practical plans at distinct ages.

Mindfulness and presence activities’ effects range from very practical ones, such as sleeping, to therapeutic, such as anger management, to spiritual. That is why there is an increasing interest in this topic in education. However, practicing them requires teachers who have practiced them. Significance of familiarity with presence experience and mindfulness, in addition to the importance of practicing them in the following part.

**Presence and Teachers**

The teacher’s role is critical in presence or mindfulness practices. The majority of studies on mindfulness or presence have investigated their effects on students or their learning. Few research studies have been conducted on teacher’s presence. This section reviews why teachers should practice presence so they can teach it to students. Then it examines why teachers need to be trained for getting prepared for the classes where presence and mindfulness are dominant.
Teachers are required to practice presence not only to be able to understand and notice it in their students, but also to possess the skill to teach it and respond to students’ questions. Gethin (1998) stated:

That the instructor should have a stable mindfulness practice of his or her own is stressed: the teacher’s personal practice is a crucial underpinning to the teaching process. The instructor plays an important role not only by being able to teach through an embodiment of the qualities of mindfulness, but because after each practice there is an enquiry session where participants are invited to comment on their experience (as cited in Burnett, 2009, p. 40).

Schoonmaker (2009) confirmed this idea that teachers should practice their own spirituality to understand it and look for it in the interactions of the students. In other words, they should be able to intuitively feel the moment. Honoring students’ spirituality requires learning to listen in ways teachers have not experienced, and being with them sometimes even in silence. He even believed spirituality practices should intentionally be part of the teacher education program.

There is a need to train teachers how to recognize the special moments and nurture the students to grow their wholeness and being. The meaning they bring to class matters. Miller (2009) had very similar opinions about teachers’ responsibility in nurturing students’ being. She believed it is a negative point for schools not to welcome students’ wholeness; their relationships with each other, the purpose and meaning of life, love, death, justice and many more basic concepts of life are ignored in schools. Presence is not practiced; classroom chairs are occupied with students who leave their spirit at the
school entrance. Teachers need to use their fullness, wisdom, and professional awareness to welcome students to their existence; she called this deep teaching. Miller (2009) asserted that contemplative knowing is a crucial aspect of learning and knowing. “Self-awareness serves as the bedrock for educational leaders to respond constructively to teachers, students, and new educational possibilities, in part by decentering from our own rigid perspective” (p. 2709). Decentering refers to loosening the rigidity of orbiting everything around one’s own experiences; in other words, individuals try to consider and look at others’ perspective, as well.

Training teachers on presence experience might improve their praxis, too. Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) believed that presence enables the teacher to reflect during action and attend to the learning process. A dialectical relationship exists when the teacher has mastery over the subject matter, children and learning, and pedagogical skills. The students’ comments and questions are the guidelines for the teacher on how to intervene. Consequently, the function of the teacher can be summarized as diagnosing the problem, responding to, and nurturing students’ learning according to it. The key point in a right diagnostic observation is to be free from the mental noise which can happen when body awareness exists. A relationally healthy teaching-learning environment helps the teachers to be present to the needs of the students (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006).

In the book *Presence-based Coaching*, Silsbee (2008) reiterated that three elements of mind, body, and heart are the self-generative practices that could engender presence. Self-observation in the mind section, somatic literacy and centering in the body section, and compassion for *self* and other were the primary practices emphasized for
generating presence in coaching. He emphasized on enhancing holistic self to foster presence which is the focus of this study.

Similar to other kinds of mindfulness and presence topics, there are few studies on the presence of teachers. The majority of available studies primarily focus on reducing stress and anxiety among teachers; other aspects of teachers’ self seem to be neglected. Moreover, not many specific programs exist in developing mindfulness/presence among teachers. There seems to be a significant gap in the research literature on mindful education.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the question: “How can presence experience be fostered in teaching through body awareness”? The scarcity of this topic led to utilizing resources on similar topics such as mindfulness. The literature review began with the definition of presence and its constituents: self, relationship, and transpersonal; each of these components were discussed separately. First, self section elaborated on body-mind-emotion unity and how important it is to teach to the whole child. Later, relationship illuminated the I-Thou relationship; and transpersonal section signified some of the transpersonal terms such as being. Furthermore, some of the education models have promoted aspects of presence. Those models were cited as the starting point and, then, components of presence, in addition to its benefits for education, were pointed out. Finally, the critical role of teachers was emphasized. Presence experience cannot be practiced in schools unless teachers have had the knowledge and
practice of it. Without practicing presence experience, teachers might not be able to notice it in students and respond to their needs.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction to Research Design

The purpose of this study was to explore the following overarching question: “How do teachers understand presence experience through body awareness?” This study investigated the following questions in detail:

a) How do teachers understand presence?

b) How is body awareness defined in teachers’ life and praxis?

c) How can body awareness be integrated in the teacher education program?

d) How does presence change teachers’ different kinds of relationships?

e) What qualities can be observed as a result of enhanced presence?

The whole research design was intended to understand a human experience within the context of organic and evolving qualitative research design. The researcher had based the planned design on the limited research literature in the educational setting; which left an opportunity for the emerging design with the researcher reacting and responding to the situation. The nature of the topic necessitated following the case study research design. The study applied several methods that respected the humanity of the participants in the study. Context was focal to the study and the whole process was fundamentally interpretive (Creswell, 2011). Moustakas (1995) believed in an insider’s perspective of the relationship in the qualitative researches. The methodology presented here is intended to explore the experiences of the participants in the context in a dynamic way to come to an understanding of the participants’ experiences.
Participants of this study were practicing teachers who had been recruited in different ways. For the sake of presence in teaching, the grade level of the teachers did not play a role. Teachers at any level could take part in this study as long as they were teaching at the time of the workshop. To recruit participants, I attended some of the Ohio University School Partnership Meetings in which I could directly talk to the teachers and explain the details of the workshop. Flyers of the workshop were distributed to retain five to ten in-service teachers (See Appendix A). Five teachers registered for the course. Pseudonyms were used for all participants for confidentiality issues. An application was sent to the Institutional Review Board and, after their approval, participants signed the consent form. The researcher served as the participant observer because she was both the researcher and the instructor of the workshop.

To address the research question, participants of the study attended a 14-session workshop on presence. Their experiences of presence were investigated before the beginning of the workshop, in the middle, and at the end through interviews. They were also required to write a reflection paper on the themes of the workshop. Moreover, both the participants and the researcher kept journals to reinforce the data. All the interviews, reflections papers, journals, and informal observations of the researcher served as the final data. The data went through three sets of analysis and coding. Several themes emerged and revealed that presence was perceived as relationship for the participants. Although participants did not have any familiarity with presence at the beginning, they fostered their presence at intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal relationships. Each relationship had some components; intrapersonal consisted of body, mind, and
emotion; interpersonal included other’s presence, role, and the context; finally, transpersonal relationship could originate at the intrapersonal or interpersonal domain. The outcomes seemed to have satisfied the research question.

Rationale for the Research Design

The purpose of this study was to explore the understanding of the teachers of the presence experience through awakening body awareness. Furthermore, it was intended to examine the effects of the presence workshop on enhancing teachers’ presence experience. The experiential nature of the study and also the novelty of the topic made case study the suitable research design for this research.

Case study. Case studies include exploring a case in the real-life context and might help to best understand a situation (Yin, 2012). They are inductive and rely on interpretation for investigating the complexities, interactions, and circumstances in a case. Case studies add to the richness, depth and meaning in qualitative studies (Patton, 2002). They can be exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory. Choosing one strategy over the others depends on the research questions, the extent of control the researcher has on the actual behavioral events, and degree of focus on the contemporary (Yin, 2002). Yin believed that a case study design should be utilized in situations where the boundaries between the phenomenon and context might not be evident, making case studies appropriate for the design of this research which has an obscure nature. Furthermore, it can deal with situations that many other interesting variables could result other than data points. The above mentioned definition aligned well with the experiential nature of the
study. There is no way to explain presence except for experiencing it or listening to people describing it.

In case studies, the researcher explores one or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, utilizing multiple in-depth and detailed data collection sources such as observations, interviews, documents, etc. (Creswell, 2013). In other words, case study is a research design that encompasses all methods (Yin, 2002). The fundamental point in carrying out case studies is to have a comprehensive description of the case. The researcher identifies the themes of the study and these themes comprise the findings of the study. Also, the intent of the study designates the variation of the case study: single instrumental case study, multiple case study, or intrinsic case study. This research was a multiple case study in which the perspectives of multiple participants (cases) of the study were explored.

According to Yin (2012), case study research is a systematic data collection and analysis, and its results can be applied in other situations through analytic generalization. Yin (2002) believed the analysis for case studies could be either holistic analysis of the case or the embedded analysis of one aspect. It is worth mentioning that the evidence in the case study should be presented with sufficient clarity to enable the reader to interpret the data independently (Yin, 2012). The present study, did not include a predicted pattern but was initiated with an open-ended research question which allowed the researcher to use an explanation-building technique (Yin, 2012). The research questions aimed at providing an in-depth and rich understanding of presence among bounded cases, which were the teachers in this study. Experiencing presence through awakening body.
awareness was an attempt to present the integrity and wholeness of the self. Intrinsic case study seemed to be pertinent to the study and the ideal research design.

**Challenges of conducting case studies.** Deciding on multiple choices for conducting the research might be one of the major challenges of the case studies. The researcher should decide about the case and the number of cases to study. If the researcher selects several cases, the number varies but it should not be more than four or five cases. Selection of the case requires a rationale for purposeful sampling and for gathering information about the case (Creswell, 2013). The rationale can explain the logic for researchers’ choices and diminish the critiques of lack of rigor in case studies.

Generalizability could be another challenge in case studies. It is of little significance in qualitative studies, but some researchers select four or five cases to limit this critique (Creswell, 2013). Generalizability has been substituted by transferability in qualitative studies which focuses the attention on the context to offer conclusions; these conclusions are more applicable rather than definitive (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Five cases were investigated in this study to help the transferability of the results.

In addition to generalizability, Creswell (2013) stated that in some cases having sufficient information to portray an in-depth picture of the case might limit its value. In other words, constraining the terms of time, events, or processes can become complicated. To address this issue, case studies must state the purpose of the study, research questions, methods, and data analysis strategies clearly. They need careful planning and data reporting. Following is my plan of for the case study research methods and how I intended to address the critiques.
Research Setting

The study was implemented in The Patton College of Education at Ohio University. As Patton (2002) believed, purposeful sampling refers to selecting individuals that are information-rich cases and studying them will clarify the questions the researcher investigates. Sampling was purposeful in the current study because it intended to examine presence experience among teachers and, therefore, only teachers who were at service were selected. However, because recruiting participants was volunteer-based, purposeful sampling was not either extreme or intense case sampling. It was more of a purposeful convenience sampling. In the present study, the researcher advertised the workshop for recruiting teachers by e-mailing the workshop flyer to schools at different levels, attending the schools and Ohio University partnership meetings and talking to the teacher liaisons, and also a form of snowball sampling by asking friends to spread the word among teachers. The volunteers were the participants. This convenience sampling which was done randomly augmented the credibility of the results. It allowed for more certainty about the results (Patton, 2002).

The course of Presence Experience was offered as a workshop at The Patton College of Education. This workshop had a format of Professional Development (PD) course and participation was free if volunteers did not intend to register. The only essential criteria was being committed to the workshop and agreeing to do the assignments. Research participants were supposed to be all in-service teacher with at least 3 years of teaching experience; however, 2 teaching fellows- master’s students majoring in teaching who worked part-time at a school for their coursework- had
registered for the course, too. Therefore, participants of the study entailed 5 people, 3 in-service teachers and 2 teaching fellows.

The Patton College of Education at Ohio University welcomes experiential practices. The college encourages students to experience new methods and approaches in education and is very open to new trends in education system. The college responds to the change and complexity in the contemporary education practices. Agreeing to have this course in the course offerings can be an indication of the college offering the opportunity for new approaches. Therefore, this research resonated with the goals of the college to experience novel trends.

**Intervention**

An intervention in the form of a workshop on presence through awakening body awareness was designed for teachers entitled “Presence: Awakening Body Wisdom.” The overarching goal of this intervention was to introduce the idea of presence to the teachers through promoting body awareness. The intervention, workshop or professional development, offered various physical tasks to the participants for becoming aware of the body and experiencing the body-mind-emotion cycle which could pave the way towards experiencing presence holistically. Part of the current study aimed at investigating if the intervention could elevate the quality of teaching and life, in general, for the teachers. Participants of the study, teachers, were expected to specifically develop the skill and knowledge of:

- Understanding how body awareness works in teaching
- Observing presence in their teaching
Having a sense of how body awareness and presence can improve different qualities of teaching
Promoting interpersonal relationships in class
Observing the effects of presence in all aspects of life
Experiencing more energy and motivation in teaching
Using the reflections and formal/informal tasks to gain new perspectives on how teaching should be
Developing spirituality
Moving toward wholeness

The workshop had several features to assist the participants move toward body awareness and presence. First, it consisted of 14 sessions; the first session focused on introducing the material and the tasks which lasted 2:15’ hours (135 minutes); it was followed by an hour-long session designed only for responding to the questions participants had since their previous session; their questions on the material and tasks. The other sessions followed the same order of presenting the material on odd sessions for 2:15’ hours and responding the questions for an hour during even sessions. Practicing the physical task and correcting the poses was frequently requested during the even session; hence, it was a routine part of the one-hour classes in this workshop. The intervention had 7 pairs of classes that moved gradually towards experiencing body awareness and presence consciously (see table 3.1.).
Table 3.1. General Schedule of the Workshop

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>135 minutes</td>
<td>Whole-body Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>135 minutes</td>
<td>Whole-body Perception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>135 minutes</td>
<td>Awakening Senses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>135 minutes</td>
<td>In/out Unity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>135 minutes</td>
<td>Awareness Expansion Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>135 minutes</td>
<td>Body Boundaries Awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>135 minutes</td>
<td>Intercorporeal Dialog</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>60 minutes</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. Q and A = Questions and Answer*

The 7-paired-class intervention concentrated on introducing and practicing 7 themes. Each pair of classes attempted to familiarize the participants with the basics of the presence experience and assist them in practicing it through body awareness. Themes followed the trend of starting from *self*, inside, then moving toward interpersonal
relationships, outside. They could be listed as whole-body experience, whole-body perception, awakening senses, in-out unity, awareness expansion experience, body boundaries’ awareness, and intercorporeal dialog. Each session was initiated by going through the participants’ questions, followed by the presentation of the new theme. Later, teachers were asked to discuss the topic and share their class experiences about the topic. The researcher only facilitated the class and allowed the topic to be discussed by the teachers and in their own words. The major goal of the workshop was to provide the ground for the teachers to discuss, practice, and share their experiences of body awareness in their own way and in their own setting.

One of the most critical sections of the intervention was the practice of physical tasks. The final half hour of every odd session was allotted to a meditative physical activity relevant to the theme; in other words, the final activity allowed the participants to practice the theme bodily. Furthermore, the activities enhanced body awareness and were considered the formal practice of the theme. During each activity, participants were given specific instructions on how to experience the theme through balancing their bodies, first, and then exploring their bodies, emotions, and thoughts through a guided meditation (see Appendix F). Teachers shared their experiences after the task and were assigned to practice it both formally and informally every day. Formal practice of the task merely included the replication of it at home once every day; however, the informal task had different instructions for each task which led the participants practice the tasks in their real life.
The content of the material for the workshop had a framework which was flexible and open, as well. Although each pair of sessions had a theme and the materials were planned and collected based on the objective of every session, the instructor- and the researcher- was cognizant that the workshop required ample flexibility, openness, and acceptance. Exploring the topic of presence in the educational setting is a novel experience and openness and receptivity would enable the researcher to genuinely investigate it from the teachers’ perspective, rather than suggesting what body awareness or presence should look like. Consequently, the researcher/instructor had a lesson plan but allowed time for the emerging discussions and prepared herself for the unexpected questions by extensive readings on the topic.

Finally, the assignments of the workshop were designed to boost the effects of the intervention, besides the main source of data for the study. First, class participation was emphasized as mandatory. Second, teachers were asked to keep their journals from the beginning to the end of the workshop. Also, teachers were expected to practice the tasks formally and informally all through the intervention. Last, there were seven sets of reflection prompts that participants were supposed to e-mail the instructor before the beginning of the new theme, one reflection paper every two sessions (see Appendix G).

In summary, the number of sessions and the hours of a session, the material presented, the practical tasks, the designed themes, and even the assignments of the intervention aimed at promoting body awareness among teachers and helping them experience presence in a conscious way in their classes and life. Information from the
participants of the study were the main source of data collection. A detailed description of participants serves as an introduction to the cases of the study in the next section.

**Research Participants**

In this study, the first step of fieldwork was participant recruitment. Qualified participants for the study included any practicing teacher. I advertised for the workshop to find the people who were interested in this topic. I asked the Ohio University School Partnership program and also my advisor to e-mail the workshop flyer to the schools inside and around Athens. I also attended two meetings with these schools’ liaisons, one with the middle school liaisons and one with the elementary school liaisons. I explained the workshop goals, its time line, registration, and then answered their questions. Furthermore, I asked other teacher friends to spread the word among teachers they knew.

Speaking at meetings acquainted me to what the reaction of the teachers would be or how they would perceive the goals of the workshop. It served as a good step in getting familiar with the setting. Their questions after my speech revealed that presence and mind-body unity were absolutely novel ideas for the teachers. However, it did not denote that their presence level was zero; it rather signified that it required hard and challenging work to present this topic to them. Nonetheless, the critical point was encouraging them to participate in a program that promoted their own well-being.

Participants were ultimately recruited through the e-mail sent to them by the Ohio University. They were offered a free participation or registering for 2 graduate level credit hours at a reduced fee. The researcher contacted all the participants, except one teacher, before the first session of the workshop and conducted the pre-interview. All
participants, except one of the teachers who appeared on the first session, stated they
were excited to know about presence, and that it was an intriguing topic for them.
Furthermore, the 2-credit-hour course had an incentive role in their registration, as well.

Participants of the study entailed five practicing teachers; three experienced in-
service teachers and two first-year fellow teachers, who were master’s students majoring
in teaching who worked part-time at a school for their coursework. Participants differed
in teaching experience. The two teaching fellows were experiencing their first year of
teaching but in-service teachers had varied years of experience, all exceeding 4 years. All
participants took part in the interviews, submitted their reflection papers, and wrote their
journals. They had signed consent forms to be part of the study, and all the procedures
were explained to them on the first session of the workshop. To protect confidentiality
pseudonyms were given to all the participants and each one served as one case in the
study. IRB approval was obtained and the number was 14X031.

The number of participants were five. In qualitative research, there is no set
designation for the number of participants. Rather, it is the rich thick data that designates
whether the data collected is sufficient for the purpose of the study. In other words, the
critical concepts in the literature review and the purpose of the study or research
questions determine the site and sample of the participants. Logical and systematic
sampling is critical for the soundness of the design. However, in some studies, they can
only be estimated because the site, people, and behaviors of the participants are not fully
known to the researcher. The design, in these cases, includes numerous “it depends” and
more room for flexibility needs to be considered. The researcher should be able to decide
on a logical and systematic schema when the study embarks (Patton, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In the current study, all the details and nuances for a systematic design was taken into consideration.

In general, the teachers were interviewed about their prior information regarding the presence experience or any other transpersonal practices they might have had. The initial information about the participants was gathered through the pre-interviews. This semi-structured interview protocol was intended to investigate the general individual information about the teachers, their teaching experience, the grade level they were teaching at, any prior transpersonal experiences they have had, and mainly their understanding of the presence experience at different levels. The interview was not utilized as a placement or for homogenizing the participants but served as the initial data which was the starting point of observing the process of body awareness path. The data at this point was compared to the data collected on the midway and final stages of the workshop. Interviews along with other forms of data collection were adept for triangulation of the data.

At first, the study aimed at including only in-service teachers in the study; however, the research could be extended to any teaching at any level, even higher education teaching. The defining characteristics of the participants were any in-service teacher with the minimum working experience of three years. The reason behind the three-year teaching was that the research attempted to study presence among teachers who mastered their job. Pre-service teachers or the beginners in teaching are usually at growing cognitive and emotional levels of establishing a skill and they cannot be
appropriate candidates for the study; it would be difficult and questionable to decide whether the occurring changes are the result of the workshop practices or the natural result of improving the teaching skills. The results of this study confirmed this idea that there were major differences between experienced in-service teachers and fellow teachers.

**Data Collection Procedures**

Data collection methods should be compatible with the nature of the study and the research questions. Some studies consider a model or theory and build their research design based on that model. Other studies are oriented towards action research and focus on making changes in the contemporary situations. Still other studies aim at adding to the literature of the topic; thus, the scant information in their research area made it open to choosing the best research design that could provide more information (Patton, 2002). Typically, these kinds of topics are investigated through case studies because the aim is to gain in-depth understanding of the research area. The abstract nature of presence makes it challenging to provide an exact and discrete floor or platform to understand its meaning and observe its effects. This difficult topic cannot be discovered unless people in this field disclose their experiences about different issues in class.

Moreover, there is very few studies performed on this topic in the education setting; hence, the purpose of the study was to understand how presence is grasped and felt by teachers and how they could be introduced to this topic. The outcomes of the study on the designed intervention could serve as a model for enhancing presence. In other words, findings from this study could add to the literature of education. In the
following section all the data collection methods are discussed based on their importance in the study.

**Interviews.** Interview was one of the primary methods of data collection in this study. Four of the five participants were interviewed before the workshop. One of the participants attended the first session without prior notice; therefore, her interview was conducted after the first session. The initial interviews or the pre-interviews provided the fundamental profound narratives about participants’ experiences of presence. The pre-interview questions responded to the first research question on teachers’ experiences of the presence. Interviews of participants were of different length. Two in-service teachers discussed their opinions for about 30 minutes while one in-service teachers and the two teaching fellows had really short interviews, approximately 10 minutes.

Participants’ interviews did not affect their form of participation in the workshop; it was not considered an assessment tool either. It merely served as a cornerstone on how teachers perceived presence at the beginning of the study, before the intervention. Two other interview sessions followed the primary interview; one interview occurred in the midway throughout the time the intervention was being carried out to illustrate the emerging patterns. The final interview was planned for two weeks after the completion of the workshop. The final interview attempted to discover if the intervention changed the participants in any way, in what ways, and how. The effects were essentially evident to the participants by that time. Every interview was recorded and transcribed. All interviews had a semi-structured format with an openness and flexibility to add or change
the stream of interview, in case participants liked to share information about something that they felt was missing in the questions.

The interviewer or the researcher is a significant instrument in the process of research. An in-depth interview inquiry consists of carefully designed steps by the researcher: thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analyzing, verifying, and reporting. The interview itself also consists of some phases such as setting the interview stage, scripting the interview, the questions, and probing (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Mastery over the literature, knowing the appropriate language, and knowing the culture are some of the key factors in mapping the interview design. On the other hand, the interviewers should be aware of their biases or preconceptions of the topic and then draft the questions (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011).

Questions should be tailored in a way to produce answers, be appropriately worded, minimize the imposition of predetermined responses, and most importantly be aligned with the purpose of the study. Another important technique in interviewing is probing. Probes are follow-up questions asked to produce more talk on the previous questions (Keats, 2000). All these qualities display the critical role of the researcher. The novelty and obscurity of this research added to the sensitivity of the role of the researcher and emphasized on the mastery of the researcher on the subject matter and the interview skills. I had extensive readings and attended several years of workshop on the presence experience; in addition to this, I took the qualitative interviewing course and utilized interviewing as the major data collection method in several studies.
The goal of interview was to understand the world from the interviewees’ eyes and narrate the meaning of their experiences. Similarly, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2011) saw qualitative interview as a meaning-making process. According to them, “qualitative interviews can be used to yield exploratory and descriptive data that may or may not generate theory” (p. 94). In the present study, participants’ experiences served as the only tool to understand what presence means to them or how they experienced it. One of the major ways they shared their meaning was in the interviews. Consequently, research questions were addressed via the analysis of the data that was collected in the interviews.

**Documents (journals and reflections).** Written documents were the other data collection method in this study. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) believed documents are all sorts of “materials such as photographs, videos, films, memos, letters, diaries, clinical records, and memorabilia” (p. 64); they can complement the information in qualitative researches and they are gaining more and more importance. Documents in this research, which included journals and reflections, were among the main sources of data collection. Documents differ from interviews and observations in that the researcher does not have a major role in producing them (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). This can pertain to collecting data which is the participants’ own thoughts and reflections without the researcher having any effect on their production.

In this study, participants were asked to journal at least three or four times a week. Reflection papers were the other form of document participants were expected to submit. Reflections differed from journals in that they were theme-based; reflection prompts directed the participants to contemplate and reflect on the materials that have been
presented in odd sessions. Therefore, teachers were asked to submit seven total reflection papers, one reflection prompt in every two weeks. Unlike the reflection papers, journals did not follow any direction. They reflected participants’ stream of thoughts and could be an indicator of how things might change not only in their teaching, but also in their daily lives. However, they did not provide a large amount of data at the end. Reflection papers and journals along with the interviews were the primary data in the present study.

Documents can be approached in four ways: focusing only on the content of the document, focusing on how it can be used as a resource for a purpose, concentrating on making the content alive, and finally paying attention to the function and effect of document on social schemes (Prior, 2008). The content of the participants’ journals and reflections were explored for reaching a profound understanding of how body awareness and presence experience practices presented through the intervention made teachers’ teaching and their lives, in general, different.

Researchers’ journals. Researcher is considered one of the instruments in qualitative research (Patton, 2002). I was both the researcher and the instructor in the current study; thus, my role became more critical in leading the workshop, collecting the data, and analyzing the data. In order to avoid bias and increase the rigor of the study, several steps were taken. Triangulation and bracketing were two steps to reduce the researcher’s bias. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) believed credibility in qualitative research means fidelity to the investigated phenomena. They suggested that judgment can be suspended by bracketing which is an attempt to separate the common sense and
scientific foreknowledge about the phenomena in the parenthesis. This technique might lead to the unprejudiced description of the phenomena.

Journaling of the researcher allowed for more precision in unbiased description or analysis of the phenomena. Journaling increases the awareness of not only the issues that might distort the analysis, but also reveals the virtuous capacity (Glesne, 2006). I, as the researcher, kept regular journals and tried to utilize bracketing at any point I noticed my pre-assumptions or positionality might intervene. I also benefited from experts in the topic for consultations which assisted in reducing the bias probability and increased credibility of the study.

In the current study, the journals of the researcher satisfied several purposes. First, they maintained a record of the problems, challenges, misconceptions, and different issues that arouse throughout the study. Second, I utilized journaling to organize my thoughts for the research from the beginning to the end. The initial idea that occurred to the researcher about the study was reflected in the journals and later it was discussed and investigated to be performed. More importantly, I kept an informal record of participants’ observations in my journal. It enabled me to keep track of the changes in the participants and add those observations to the data on each teacher. Journaling promotes reflexivity about the research process and the researcher’s observations, thoughts, reflections, perceptions, and even feelings. Similarly, my journals were accumulated and referred to throughout the study.
Observation. Observation was considered as the secondary source of data collection in the current study. The reason for it was that changes and effects of presence experience were not easily observable in normal situations. Changes occurred at a subtle level and might be only perceived in deep reflections or during the interviews. In the current study, informal observation entailed participants’ engagement in class discussions and the questions they posed throughout the intervention. Also, the purpose of observations was to give a detailed, accurate, and factual description of the setting, the people, and the meaning of what was observed in order to help the reader understand what happened and how they occurred (Patton, 2002). However, because the researcher was the instructor of the workshop, it was impossible to make field notes during the sessions. I had my journal on the workshop and my reflections or contemplation; it contained observations of the participants, as well, but they did not take place systematically.

An additional observation section was observing their reactions and behavior from the start to the end of the intervention. It triggered how participants’ reaction to this topic evolved throughout the study; they are reported in more detail in chapter 4. The researcher was the participant observer in this study.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted at Ohio University with three experienced teachers before the study. Participants had been teachers for a long time and it could be considered an equivalent group for exploring their presence. The pilot study tested teacher’s understanding of presence experience through a semi-structured interview. Participants
were then asked for their feedback on the interview questions. Questions were modified to some extent and the feedback was used to modify the other data collection methods for the study. This pilot study provided a base for the research to examine whether the research is studying what it is seeking to explore.

**Connection of Methods to Research Goals**

Qualitative research is dynamic and evolving. Qualitative research requires flexibility and openness, particularly because many of the research angles emerge throughout the study. This fact does not undermine the credibility of the research because the research can still be systematically designed to respond to the research questions. Research questions always serve as the guideline to define and signify the methods for accomplishing the work (Patton, 2002). All the methods that were implemented were in search of thick, rich, and in-depth data in order to gain an understanding of teachers’ experiences of body awareness and presence. Also, the aim was to explore if the intervention affected teachers’ praxis and relationship. In order to answer these questions, interviews and written reflection papers were considered the primary sources of data collection methods, in addition to informal observation as the secondary method. The basis for choosing these methods were:

1. The literature review which provided deep foundation for responding the questions.
2. Informal discussions with experts in transpersonal and psychotherapy sciences, professors of teacher education department, and also educational research professionals who assisted in framing the questions. Some of the coursework at
university and the transpersonal workshops I had attended provided insight and understanding of what research in this field should look like. Furthermore, peer debriefing was constantly used to further this research.

3. Dr. Goli’s (2005) workshop package approached presence experience and self-actualization for everybody in daily life. He has collected various techniques and practices from Buddhism and other consciousness schools, designed some tasks for specific purposes, and adjusted all of them for moving in the awareness or consciousness evolution path. The workshop focused on practical aspects of the consciousness and those practical tasks were fundamental to the workshop. Participants were required to practice them daily and reflect on them. Reflection on the topics and tasks, in addition to the informal practice of the tasks, were the prerequisite of the workshop. Nonexistence of assessment was reiterated to the participants to make them comfortable and diminish the stress or goal-orientation attitude among them. Correspondingly, a similar format was applied to the teachers’ workshop.

I attended Dr. Goli’s workshops for four years and practiced body awareness in yoga for more than seven years. My professional background as a language teacher for ten years, in addition to my educational background, provided the base for carrying out the workshop. Performing this workshop required mastery over the topics and tasks being presented. I have always tried to apply the workshop lessons in my professional and personal life. My experience and understanding of body awareness and presence experience served as an opportunity for enhanced sensitivity as a researcher which could
be considered a strength; however, to avoid the bias of positionality and increase rigor, the researcher applied triangulation, bracketing, and reflexivity.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

Data analysis is a complex procedure in qualitative research and can be a challenge at times. It entails organizing the data, reviewing the data base, coding, designating themes, representing the data, and interpreting the data. They are not linear activities but rather interconnected and spiral (Creswell, 2013). Some qualitative researchers believe data analysis starts from the time the researchers enters the field. The same applied to the current research. Data analysis was an ongoing process from the beginning- reflexive journaling, organizing data and open coding. Systematic and logical design required the researcher to read extensively and check the data regularly. Essential changes took place at any point the researcher felt the change could lead to collecting more in-depth and richer data.

Unlike the research that starts with a theory, this study did not follow a model or theory. It was more inclined towards understanding teachers’ experiences of presence and examining if the intervention workshop could enhance fostering presence through body awareness. Consequently, the researcher did not have a specified category to analyze the data based on that. The related literature, in addition to the body awareness component, highlighted the elements of *self*, relationship, and consciousness. The outline of the workshop also followed the same path but no definite category had been presumed. The researcher entered the field with an open mind and utilized reflexivity through journaling along the way. During the workshop, some of the concepts required more attention or
time, other than it had been specified in the lesson plan. The researcher flexibly attuned to those needs. However, self, relationship, and consciousness were the central concepts of the workshop.

The researcher implemented case study research designs. Although there was flexibility in the design, every step was well considered and planned. The data were collected from the very beginning stages of the research; the researcher kept journals, even about the participant recruitment stages. All the happenings were constantly observed carefully, checked to align with the research design, and essential changes were made to move toward responding to the research question. Because of the rapport created between the researcher and the participants, collecting data and interpreting what participants had shared could become more efficient. All the interviews were transcribed by the researcher. Later, the data collected were reviewed several times and memoing was performed at all stages. Data were coded both during the study and after the final interviews, heuristic coding (Saldana, 2009), and reflection papers were collected. Both coded data were organized and compared to create the themes of the study. Data were interpreted based on the themes. Member checking, peer debriefing, and consulting the literature were constantly implemented to add credibility to the research.

Coding of the data consisted of several steps in this study. It generally followed a heuristic process which indicated the exploratory problem-solving techniques; no specific formula or theory existed in the current study. Saldana (2009) believed that coding occurs in cycles. The first cycle of the coding might contain any phrase or statement. The second, third, or maybe other cycles move towards more manageable, filtered, and
focused salient codes to enable the researcher grasp the meaning of the data and determine the themes. He further stated that codifying assists the researcher locate the data in a systematic order and shape a classification or category based on the shared characteristics. Codes refine as further cycles of analysis are conducted. Unfortunately, some of data might have overlapping parts in the codes or categories and they do not necessarily belong to a specific group; however, the researcher should capture the essence of the concept and cluster the data based on that essential element (Saldana, 2009).

The same procedures were taken in the current study and I had at least three rounds of coding, in addition to several coding cycles all through the way for each round. The first round of coding aimed at breaking up the data, creating codes, and shaping the codes as an individual for each participant. The result was the descriptive path of change for each individual from the beginning to the end. The formed categories mainly consisted of beginning stage, middle stage, and final stage. Although the descriptions were illuminating, they did not portray a distinct scientific pattern.

The second and third rounds of data analysis consisted of similar categories. The second round of coding primarily focused on the recurring themes. Hence, self, relationship, and consciousness constituted the categories in presence experience. However, the assigned subcategories could not be practically applied to all the data and there were many overlaps among them. This led to the third round of data analysis that suggested presence was perceived as relationship by all the participants. Intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal relationships were the components of relationship and
other subsections emerged for each subcategory in this round. Data fit well in the categories and outcomes were scientifically explicable. One noteworthy point is that, because of the topic of the research, ideas and data had an utterly integrated nature which made categorization challenging. The essence of the concept was considered and themes were shaped. All the themes were discussed and agreed on with the experts of the field, as well.

**Triangulation**

Better results can be gained when multiple data collection methods are utilized to study a topic. The logic for triangulation is that no single method solves a problem adequately; because each method reveals just one angel of a reality. Studies that use one method are more prone to errors than studies that consider multiple methods. Four kinds of triangulation add to the credibility of qualitative analysis: methods triangulation, source triangulation, analyst triangulation, and theory triangulation. A misconception is to believe that different inquiry methods yield the same results. The fact is that different kinds of methods might lead to different results because their sensitivity is diverse. Finding inconsistencies can be illuminating; they ask for deeper insight into the relationship between approaches. Triangulation is one of the most powerful tools almost all qualitative researchers suggest for validation (Patton, 2002).

As mentioned before, different kinds of triangulation are methods triangulation, source triangulation, analyst triangulation, and theory triangulation. Methods triangulation includes comparing and integrating data collected via qualitative and quantitative methods which is called mixed methods. While areas of convergence raise
the confidence in results, the divergent areas illuminate the way for better understanding different aspects of a phenomenon. The next triangulation kind is about data sources. It is comparing and cross-case checking of consistency of the data collected at different times and by different means. An example could be comparing observation with documents, etc. Each kind of data might capture different things and the analyst tries to understand them. Having different analysts or researchers can also increase the credibility of the research which is the third kind of triangulation. It helps reduce the bias of a single person. There are other options, too, such as member checking or the audience read for credibility. Finally, various theories can add to the credibility of the research that examine the data from various theory perspectives (Patton, 2002).

In the current study, different analysts and multiple methods at different times were applied to increase the credibility. Two professors, one teacher educator specialist and one psychoanalyst, reviewed the data; the data analysis was an agreement between all their opinions and the researcher’s opinions. Furthermore, the data from interviews, reflections, journals, and observations were compared and contrasted at different stages to analyze each participant both separately and among others to observe the patterns.

Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) named credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transformability as the qualities of trustworthiness. Their suggested techniques to assure trustworthiness are triangulation, member checking, prolonged engagement, and peer debriefing. All these techniques were implemented in my research. The whole intervention was 9 weeks which gave me enough time to get to know the participants and
build rapport. Triangulation techniques and peer debriefing were applied. Participants’ feedback were taken into consideration in all steps of the research. Creswell and Miller (2000, as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 2011) added a few more items to the trustworthiness list such as reflexivity, collaboration, and searching for disconfirming evidence. Reflexivity was a big part of the research for me, especially because of the topic of the research, which was applied at each step of the research. To reiterate, I kept journals of my own at all levels and they were fully investigated while analyzing the data.

**Summary**

The purpose of this study was to explore how in-service teachers promote presence experience through body awareness. Case study design was implemented to answer this question. Convenience sampling was utilized to recruit the practicing teachers. Workshop was advertised through distributing the flyer in the schools, in addition to asking the friends and acquaintances to spread the word among teachers. Five practicing teachers in a small town in Ohio attended this intervention on being fully present by awakening body awareness. The study was carried out in Ohio University in the format of a workshop. Participants were interviewed once before the beginning of the intervention to provide the platform on the understanding of teachers about the presence experience, pre-interviews. Participants were observed informally during the workshop; their journals and reflection papers served as the primary source of data. In addition, the two sets of interviews in the middle and at the end of the workshop provided a comprehensive ground for understanding how the workshop was affecting the
participants. The final interview, specifically, revealed the effects of the workshop on the teachers’ perceptions of presence and if they had enhanced their presence or not.

Workshop consisted of fourteen sessions which was performed in nine weeks. The main concepts were presented in odd sessions that lasted two hours and fifteen minutes. Even sessions served as the contemplation and correction session, lasting one hour. The researcher was the workshop instructor, as well. Data collected from interviews, journals, reflection papers, and the informal observations were then analyzed. Coding and theme creating were the major data analysis techniques. The researcher went through 3 rounds of data coding to determine the themes of the study. The available literature on this topic, peer debriefing, triangulation, and member checking were utilized to add to the credibility of the research. The goal was to understand how teachers perceive presence experience and how their presence can be enhanced via developing body awareness. The results were used as a sample of how presence intervention might work for teachers.
Chapter 4: Data Analysis

Introduction

The findings indicate that participants of current study experienced presence as relationship. Three types of relationship were recognized which can be categorized under intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal. Inside each relationship, some major themes emerged that contributed to a better understanding of presence. To name briefly, intrapersonal relationship manifested itself in the areas of body, mind, and emotion; interpersonal relationship constituted of other’s presence, role, and context; finally, transpersonal relationship originated either at the intrapersonal relationship, being there, or the interpersonal relationship, being with.

The data was collected from five teachers whose ultimate definition of presence in the relationship categories entailed understanding their whole, understanding their students’ whole, and observing their integrity in a system. Although participants followed a general pattern in enhancing their presence, each participant had her own individual path of growth, too. Section 2 of this chapter provides a detailed description of how each case perceived and enhanced her presence. The number of examples or references that participants provided for each category was considered indicator of how deep they connected to understanding of that area. Furthermore, it should be noted that all the categories and subcategories were highly interconnected in the participants; it was not a simple task to separate one sentence distinctly and place it under one category. However, factors such as the theme of their comment or the number of times one element was emphasized in a comment led to determining their category.
This chapter explains teachers’ perspective of presence from two vantage points. First, the categories and subcategories of relationship types throughout the study will be defined, exemplified, and discussed; this section also describes the general pattern of change in teachers and compares them briefly. In the next section, all the data on each case will be displayed according to the emerged categories. The chapter culminates with an overview of presence to summarize how it was perceived as relationship by participants.

**Section 1**

This section will be a detailed explication of the presence as relationship based on what has been expressed by the participants; it contains definitions and examples from the participants of the study. In a broad overview, interpersonal relationship was the first category that emerged in the data. It was discussed as all the relationships that existed in an individual without connection to other people or outside world. This category included body, mind, and emotion subcategories, based on what participants had reported. The second category was interpersonal relationship that defined the relationship of the participants with other people and the outside world. Its subcategories included the awareness of other’s presence, role, and context. At times, both intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships were experienced at a higher level which was categorized as transpersonal relationships.

The categories in this chapter refer to participants’ relationships that were used to describe their presence. None of the categories preceded the others; however, intrapersonal relationships are discussed first because of the workshop’s emphasis on
body awareness and body-mind-emotion awareness. It should be noted that transpersonal relationships were more organized and evident after the intrapersonal and interpersonal awareness. The following figure is an overview of the first section of this chapter describing presence as relationship based on the data of this study:

**Figure 4.1.** Pattern of Presence as Relationship. Holistic pattern of relationship as it emerged in the data to describe presence. The data could be summarized under three categories of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal relationships. This category is not based on a specific theory and merely based on how the participants of the study, teachers, perceived and described presence.

**Intrapersonal.** An in-depth analysis of the participants revealed that a large part of data belonged to how participants understood their relationship with their *self* which can be called the intrapersonal relationship. Their ideas seemed to be more personal and concentrated around body, mind, and emotion which turned to the subcategories of this section. Each subcategory had a dominant theme. In the body subcategory, participants discussed how their bodies; how much they knew about their body balance, feelings, or
tension; and how their body awareness developed throughout the workshop. In the mind subcategory, their discussions basically concentrated on how they thought in certain situations or what happened in their minds. Finally, in the emotion subcategory, they commented on how they felt at various situations and it constituted their emotion section. Furthermore, the major effects of the intervention in this category included participants’ perceiving their body-mind-emotion interconnectedness and observing their wholeness.

**Body.** In the intrapersonal relationship, the first category which emerged in the data was the body. Body awareness was the participants’ ability to observe their bodies and senses, to evaluate their balance and groundedness, to correct their postures, and to recognize the effects of this awareness in their present moment. Body is the first section in the intrapersonal category because a large portion of data pertained to body domain. To explicate, the major focus of the workshop was to lead participants towards presence through awakening of their body awareness; therefore, the material and the tasks of the workshop were designed in a way to direct participants’ attention towards their bodies, raise their knowledge of the importance of body in life, and boost their awareness through the activities. One brief example for body awareness would be:

I’ve worked on balance actually. I’ve switched the purse that I put over my shoulder instead of just like on a shoulder… I notice if I start to get tense I can clue into that a little better like I’ve had these headaches and I’m like so is it from stress? Is it the weather change? Am I just not taking time out for myself? … I think I found myself doing the shoulder adjustment that you taught us a lot and I think, in general, I try to square my body with the ground or with the chair just as
straight. I’m not now but sitting straight or stand on both feet in just kind of just balanced… I could feel all the tension and I just kept thinking “relax.” And by the end of the day I really felt fine and I felt good.

The general trend concerning body was relatively alike among all the participants; it moved from an almost non-existent awareness to a growing body awareness which ended in body-mind-emotion awareness. At the beginning of the study, all but one of the participants mentioned body in their pre-interview. They used their cognitive and emotional understanding to describe absent or present moments. The concept of body and body awareness started to emerge only after beginning the intervention. All the participants reported to have experienced sitting up straight, shoulder rolling, or balancing the body weight and uttered they had more awareness over the senses. Towards the end, they experienced body-mind-emotion cycle and observed positive results in their life and teaching.

**Mind.** The second subcategory of intrapersonal relationship was mind. Participants portrayed mind awareness as understanding the role of thoughts, pre-determined assumptions, and judgments- distinguishing when pre-assumptions are their only driving force- and deemphasizing the cognition element to have a balanced role along with body and emotion. In the pre-interview, mind was one of the dominant elements of interviewees’ opinions on presence; it changed to have an equal role as the other subcategories by the end of the study. All participants in their pre-interviews defined or described presence cognitively. In other words, they illustrated presence by the way they grasped it in their mind; despite their cognitive perception of presence at the
beginning, their opinions altered instantaneously after the beginning of the intervention. Some instances of mind awareness could be as follows:

I have noticed that when I am doing, things are more fast-paced, I have goals/targets in mind, and I follow a prescribed path or plan... When doing, my body is more tense, my mind is racing and planning what to do next or how much time the current activity will take, and my emotions consist of me being on edge, sensitive, and quick to react... I let my thoughts control my body, tell it what to do: get up, go to work, and tell me how I feel: you are happy or sad, and that was it. Now, when I feel tension or stress in my body, I stop and think, why am I feeling tension or what is causing this. I take a look at all parts my thoughts, emotion, and body and see if one is out of balance. I adjust my thoughts and see where the pain is and try to adjust.

In the above excerpt, all the sentences referred to mind, thinking, and cognition; nonetheless, a small trace of body-mind-emotion was also observed which could denote the awareness of developing intrapersonal interconnectedness. Moreover, one of the critical points about mind was that all participants mentioned mind-wandering or mind pre-occupation as the major challenge to their presence.

Emotion. The third subcategory of intrapersonal relationship that contributed to presence was emotion. Emotion section covered all the feelings and emotional states that participants had experienced, in addition to the gained awareness of those states at the end of the workshop. Reviewing the pattern of growth in this section, the researcher observed a developing awareness over the emotions. Before the workshop,
all the participants used their feelings as a scale in perceiving their presence. These emotions were consistent among participants both for present and absent moments. Data showed that emotions at present moments were happy and good, “my emotions are calm and relaxed… content and satisfied… I have been finding myself enjoying these moments more… I’m pleased with it…light-hearted and fun.” Absent moments shared the same quality, “bored or wasting time and annoyed…I’m irritable…I’m anxious…I’m not patient…feelings are frustrated or overwhelmed…not at ease…it’s very stressful…not as fun not as enjoyable. Just over all not satisfying.” At the end of the workshop, similar phrases and expressions were utilized in the emotion section but participants had grown awareness over their emotions compared to the beginning.

In summary, the integration of body, mind, and emotion became more apparent towards the end of the workshop in the intrapersonal domain; in other words, participants developed an interconnectedness of these subcategories. In their discussions they referred to these elements together and it was difficult to separate one phrase and place it under one element specifically. Participants also reported how surprised they were by noticing this cycle.

**Interpersonal.** Relationship with other, interpersonal relationship, was the second category that emerged in the data on presence. A more explicit definition of interpersonal relationships would be what participants’ presence resembled to when they were either communicating or working with other people. Interpersonal relationship differed from intrapersonal relationship in the system that was involved. The intrapersonal relationship mainly discussed the individual system that was about the participants’ personal qualities
such as body, mind, or emotion. In contrast, the interpersonal relationship involved the system existing between or among individuals. In other words, interpersonal relationship dealt with two-person or more people systems and the characteristics of the system.

Interpersonal relationships were categorized under awareness of other’s presence, role, and context in the data. The selection of these subcategories was because of what participants predominantly discussed; other’s presence represented how they perceived people around them; role manifested the way they observed themselves in that relationship with others; and context was how they elaborated on the atmosphere of the relationship. Similar to the intrapersonal domain, these elements were all substantially integrated, each including different aspects. However, the data has been categorized under these specific subcategories to make it more comprehensible. Participants’ perspectives regarding their interpersonal relationship went through some changes from the beginning to the end of the study which could be summarized as perceiving the wholeness of others, becoming aware of their own roles, perceiving the context, and understanding that all the subcategories work together as a system. A more detailed description of each section is as follows:

**Other’s presence.** Perceiving another person’s presence was one of the major subcategories in the interpersonal relationship; it entailed two parts of cognitive and metacognitive awareness. Cognitive awareness of other’s presence could be defined as the verbal and non-verbal communication cues that signify understanding the cognitive *being* of someone. On the other hand, metacognitive awareness of other’s presence involved the recognition of another individual’s *being*. 
Throughout the workshop, understanding other’s presence altered from a purely cognitive awareness to both cognitive and metacognitive awareness in participants. Pre-interviews of participants denoted that they perceived the cognitive presence of their students or other people in their environment before the beginning of the workshop; there was practically no mention of understanding the being of the people around them. They primarily discussed the concerns such as stressing over students’ success, not hearing what students were asking, being reluctant to give an answer, not being patient enough, not dismissing students’ feelings, and the like which could be assumed as instances of relating to someone cognitively; nevertheless, based on the data, this trend changed to both the cognitive and metacognitive awareness since the beginning of the workshop. Several examples would be:

I’m making a better connection… At times this week I felt very happy and open to others, talking to them and listening to their ideas and just being very receptive to what they had to say and share… I am frustrated at the student but I am frustrated at not getting the point across them trying to be more um I don’t know not empathetic but maybe empathetic…I was really listening to what they said.

Participants also experienced boundary awareness for which some experienced the most changes; for example, case 2 and 3 reported to have become more open to the people around them. They could feel this change vividly in themselves and stated that having more openness towards people brought a better feeling in their lives.

A short overview of the category can be illustrated as:
Figure 4.2. Interpersonal Relationship: Overview of Other’s Presence. Pattern of the Other’s Presence subcategory in interpersonal realm. In the study, each category had some subcategories. For the interpersonal realm, the subcategories could each be divided to additional subsections. This pattern emerged in the data for the current study in which other’s presence consisted of cognitive awareness and metacognitive awareness of the other.

Role. In the interpersonal domain, role was the most conspicuous subcategory in the data. Based on the data, role awareness could be demarcated by the way teachers presented their lesson, themselves, and their assistance to the students or other people in their lives. The data in the role subcategory could be divided to three subsections: awareness of authority, facilitator, and synergist roles. The following paragraphs will define and exemplify the roles in detail as they appeared in the data.

The first role participants were unanimously cognizant of was teacher as authority. Role of the teacher as authority was when the teacher believed her plan for the class should be implemented by her with as little change as possible and students are the recipients of the information who are expected to achieve a certain result at the end. There were more instances of teacher as authority in the pre-interview, compared to the
reflections and other interviews. This role continued to exist but at a more moderated frequency compared to the beginning of the study. Case 2’s attempts to change the students’ lives based on her own standards and feeling frustrated because they were not changing exemplified this attitude in the pre-interview. Another example to clarify this role would be case 3’s saying that she was reluctant to give students more instructions because she thought they were not paying attention. In the authoritative role, teachers had a fixed idea about the plan of the class in mind that needed to be employed.

Facilitator was the second role that data revealed. The facilitator role could be well characterized among teachers by their explicitly attending to students’ feelings, needs, and expectations. Teachers had students as their reference to devise and act accordingly. Facilitator role existed before the intervention but it became more observable in participants since the beginning of the workshop. Towards the end, participants reported more instances of being a facilitator in class rather than an authority. An obvious example portraying this shift was case 1. The only thing she referred to in her pre-interview was her concern not dismissing students’ feelings. She developed her facilitator role and said:

Sometimes I throw it back at them and say “what do you think”? You know, have them discuss it rather than me giving them the information or telling them the answers. Sometimes the further they think it through, sometimes they come up with better ideas than I do…

Finally, awareness of the synergist role only emerged in the data after the
participants were participating the workshop. Synergist role was defined as the teacher’s becoming the partners in learning, when bearing distinct roles faded away; participants did not consider themselves the knowledge bearers or knowledge transferors but rather considered the class a system where the dynamic relationship of the student-teacher led to reciprocal learning. Case 4 commented on this as:

I see that as an interchange like I see that all doing the same thing like we are not like me leading them, they leading me. It’s kind of like that meditation task when you know you just kind of feel it and that’s that’s what it exactly feels like. We’re one big system. We’re one big team or community or we’re just working together and we’re feeding off of each other and you know we are all just I don’t know. We’re flowing with each other.

At the end of the intervention, the unawareness of the roles that participants had in their classes changed to conscious switching of the roles based on the circumstances of the class. An instance of role awareness in teaching is the following excerpt which illustrated an awareness of the shift from the authority to synergist role:

Now I have a different view of teacher student relationship/system. I am still finding the right balance; actually I think the balance will continually shift back and forth from controlled to controller without feeling the boundaries of either. Right now I still feel the boundaries. I now know that it is possible to keep your boundaries permeable.

Participants declared that, because they could recognize their students’ presence and their own presence in the class, they allowed students to take a more active role in
their learning. All the participants shifted towards assuming teaching and learning a reciprocal process and provided more opportunities for everyone to have an interactive role in this partnership learning. Case 2 and 3 shared stories in which they directly showed how they could consciously control their relationships in class by switching roles. Fewer examples were observed in participants 4 and 5, though.

A brief overview of this part:

![Diagram of Interpersonal Relationship: Overview of Role](image)

**Figure 4.3.** Interpersonal Relationship: Overview of Role. Pattern of the Role subcategory in interpersonal realm. In the study, each category had some subcategories. For the interpersonal realm, the subcategories could each be divided to additional subsections. This pattern emerged in the data for the current study in which role consisted of the roles of teacher as authority, teacher as facilitator, and teacher as synergist.

**Context.** The other salient category in the interpersonal relationship was the context which was either analytic or synthetic. Context was characterized as the time, place, and theme of the situation working together as one system. In other words, context was the general atmosphere or sense of the class which was noticed analytically or synthetically.
Scanning of the data revealed that, in the analytic awareness of the context, participants evaluated all the factors of the time, place, and theme to come to a conclusion about the situations and make appropriate decisions. The following excerpt from case 3’s reflections can be an example of analytic awareness of the context:

There are times when I use self/other as a positive tool to help a relationship. By understanding that I am different from someone else, I can more readily accept his or her behavior. For example, if someone is doing something in their life that I do not agree with or believe in, I can “smooth over” my emotions and judgments because I can accept that they are a different person than me, and what I think is right for me might not be right for them.

On the other hand, synthetic awareness of the context was described as times when participants could not reason about how or why they made a decision but pointed it out as successful teaching and student-teacher relationship experience. At these moments, participants could decide about a situation or a relationship with a student without even analyzing it. Case 4, for example, seemed to have related to this concept well and the stories she shared about two students in her class vividly portrayed how she had experienced synthetic awareness of the context. In contrast, case 5 and case 1 had barely mentioned ideas that could relate to it. What is stated in the following can be an instance of synthetic awareness of the context:

In some circumstances, I can let go of the end goal and actually make the goal the process. I see that now, whereas before I would never have seen it that way.

Now, I am able to actually SEE what is happening in my room and with my
students and make better choices and observations about the students, the lesson, and my teaching.

Participants of the current study moved from having a more analytic awareness to possessing both the analytic and synthetic awareness throughout the study.

A simple outline for this section:

Figure 4.4. Interpersonal Relationship: Overview of Context. Pattern of the context subcategory in interpersonal realm. In the study, each category had some subcategories. For the interpersonal realm, the subcategories could each be divided to additional subsections. This pattern emerged in the data for the current study in which role consisted of the roles of teacher as authority, teacher as facilitator, and teacher as synergist.

Transpersonal. Transpersonal relationships emerged in the data only after the beginning of the workshop in two areas of intrapersonal and interpersonal called being there and being with. Based on the data, transpersonal relationship could be delineated by the experience of relating to being. Participants could understand and experience concepts such as wholeness, unity, or awareness at this level. Sentences like “I see being as synonymous with authentic. Experiencing one’s authentic self is an example of a being experience” or “I’m really engaged and lose track of time” were some of instances of
transpersonal experience. However, not many instances existed in the participants’ interviews or reflections because it was a mere experience of being and voicing it through words seemed difficult.

Transpersonal relationship was categorized under being there and being with based on the source the participants experienced their transpersonal awareness through. Participants discussed transpersonal concepts in their bodies, minds, and emotion at the being there section; they also illustrated their transpersonal experiences from other’s presence, role, and context ground at the being with section. Their experiences were occasionally followed by an actual in class or family stories. In the following sections, transpersonal experiences are reported with their consequences in the participants’ lives because participants’ transpersonal experiences were pointed out in one or two short sentences but how it affected their present situation was described in more detail immediately after that.

**Being there.** Transpersonal relationship at the intrapersonal domain, being there, was experienced by all the participants but they had their own descriptions; their experiences originated from body, mind, and emotion realms. Case 1 illustrated her transpersonal experiences as the wholeness, recognizing moments, and being. Correspondingly, case 2 said it was an awakening or awareness; she stated to have become an observer of herself. Case 3, portrayed it as being connected with her intuition and psychic abilities, on one hand, and experiencing authentic self, on the other hand. Case 4’s illustration was basically in the form of a mental picture as “a sigh of relief that washes over me” besides the awareness she felt she has gained. In contrast to other
participants, case 5 scarcely mentioned anything about being there and only referred to the wholeness experience. Some instance of entering the transpersonal world from the being there section were:

I noticed my whole body and mind relax and become present and aware of my surroundings…These feelings [tension in the back and shoulders] did affect my feelings of wholeness…the presence just washes over me, like a sigh of relief…I’m more aware of the moments when I’m making this change or making this adjustment; so it definitely brings my awareness to myself.

**Being with.** Presence with the interpersonal origins emerged from other’s presence, role, or context awareness but the feeling of connectedness was common among all the participants. Case 1 said “we are not ourselves without others.” Case 2 referred to the boundary awareness and how it was changing her towards feeling one with all people. Case 3’s experience focused on more acceptance towards people when she saw their whole self; she felt the connection with people more strongly. Finally, case 4 and 5 hardly shared more than the connection feeling; case 4 expressed to have gained self-witnessing in relation with people, as well. Several interpersonal relationship examples as the springboard to transpersonal realm would be:

Now, I am able to actually SEE what is happening in my room and with my students and make better choices and observations about the students, the lesson, and my teaching…it’s just more flowing the interaction…I get the chance to see the whole student…I notice that I’m really present and I’m really listening to them.
Section 2

This section entails an in-depth case analysis of the participants of the current study. It describes the experiences of the participants regarding each relationship category and the changes participants seemed to have as a result of the intervention. Each case is analyzed based on the emerged categories and subcategories in the data that were defined in section 1. A general pattern can be recognized by analyzing the whole data. Regardless of the personal differences, all participants’ developments converged into one trend in all three relationship types.

At the beginning of the study, presence was described utilizing mind and emotion elements at the beginning of the study. Body was the missing part which entered participants’ data only after the beginning of the workshop; thereupon, participants’ descriptions of presence entailed an awareness of body, mind, emotion, and their interconnectedness at intrapersonal subcategories. This process can be well observed in figure 4.5. Before the beginning of the study, intrapersonal realm only consisted of mind and emotion. After the intervention, body element was added to the mind and emotion; therefore, intrapersonal relationship encompassed body, mind, and emotion after the intervention.

Interpersonal relationship unfolded through other’s presence, role, and context. However, their constituents were different before and after the intervention. Before the intervention, participants identified other’s presence cognitively, while, after the intervention, participants noticed both the cognitive and metacognitive presence of others. Regarding the roles, participants were familiar with authority and facilitator roles
but they were not fully aware of playing these roles in the class. By the end of the intervention, synergist role was also added and participants referred to their roles as authority, facilitator, and synergist with the ability and awareness to switch at different circumstances. Finally, context awareness was predominantly analytic before the intervention which changed to both analytic and synthetic awareness at the end. Figure 4.5., interpersonal relationship which is marked as number 2, explains this pattern clearly.

Based on the data, it seems the idea of transpersonal was vague for the participants at the beginning; in other words, it was an unfamiliar concept which was thoroughly unstructured. After the intervention, transpersonal ideas could be observed at both intrapersonal and interpersonal domains with more awareness. Figure 4.5. portrays this change at the third block in the transpersonal section.

The whole change pattern that might have been induced by the intervention can be summarized in the following diagrams:
Figure 4.5. Overview of Changes in Relationship Patterns. Schematic overview of the effects of presence intervention on participants. Comparing the data of the participants before the beginning of the intervention with their data during and after the study revealed the effects the intervention had on the experiences of the teacher. The pattern was portrayed in this figure as a holistic experience with relationship categories inside. These categories underwent some changes because of the intervention.
It should be noted that, except for the body subcategory, other subcategories describe participants’ data in stages; from pre-interview to mid-interview and reflections to post-interview. The body subcategory in the following section involves body awareness, sense awareness, and body-mind-emotion integration of the participants’ descriptions.

**Case 1**

Case 1 was a kindergarten teacher who had 4 years of teaching experience. Having no prior familiarity with the topic, she aimed at doing some meditations and gaining the two-credit hours of the course. As she stated, she was determined to make some changes in her life and thought this workshop might assist her.

Corresponding to all the other participants, case 1 seemed to have experienced some changes during the study but her specific major change was slowing down. It was evidence of a growing awareness in her relationships; at the intrapersonal field, because of her body awareness, she intended to have more balance and was more grounded; in the mind section, she was more present at the moment and did not plan the next session in her head all the time; at the interpersonal field, she recognized the metacognitive presence of the students and paused more to relate to that. She allotted more time for the students to contribute to their own learning by not being the authority teachers. She also respected the context of the class more and was open to change her teaching strategies based on the context. At the transpersonal field, she slowed down to connect to her *being* and her students’ *being*. In other words, awareness in all these areas led to her slowing down. It is noteworthy to denote that time was a big issue for case 1. She believed that
time is her biggest challenge in being present and, at the same time, when she was talking about her present moments she uttered she lost track of time.

The following categories are an in-depth illustration of how case 1 experienced presence as different kinds of relationship:

**Intrapersonal.** Case 1 experienced the most changes at the intrapersonal domain. At the body field, she became cognizant of her balance, groundedness, and body postures. She also differentiated between sense awareness and sensitivity which brought her more joy. She experienced more body-mind-emotion integrity, as well. Moreover, mind was her dominant aspect at the beginning of the study which was gradually moderated towards the end of the study; she reported less time travelling and thinking ahead. Regarding the emotion, her descriptions revealed a growing awareness.

**Body.** Case 1 illustrated how she perceived her body awareness, sense awareness, and body-mind-emotion cycle and its development throughout the study. Although body was a missing element in case 1’s pre-interview at the beginning of the study, acknowledging body, its experiences, and its feelings surfaced in case 1 from the first reflection paper and developed all through the workshop. Her major change at the body field occurred in recognizing her body balance and practicing it.

Based on the data, case 1 described her body awareness in various ways; correcting the sitting and standing postures, noticing body tensions and releasing them, and taking deep breaths were some of the major bodily changes case 1 stated to have developed in the workshop; for instance, in her mid-interview she said:
I’ve worked on balance actually. I’ve switched the purse that I put over my shoulder instead of just like on a shoulder… I switch more than I could and I often switch sides… I’ve been trying to be aware of my work bag also switching not putting all on one side … I do Shoulder adjustment movement throughout the day pretty regularly and it does feel good.

Regarding the senses and sense awareness, she uttered her understanding of the senses has changed. An example to illustrate her sense awareness was her description on being bothered by some smells or excessive physical contacts of her students such as poking her or touching her all at the same time which did not annoy her anymore. Later, in her reflections, she explicated the effects of sense awareness as:

I haven’t been bothered by my senses in my teaching recently like not, I haven’t been bothered by noise level or I haven’t been bothered by poking or like Mrs. … Mrs. ….Mrs. ….Mrs. …. like today we came in and suddenly I think 12 out of my 18 students said my name you know within the first 2 minutes that we were in class they had something to ask or tell me and it didn’t bother me. I noticed it you know and I said at the end I said wow I guess there were 12 of them you know. I verbalized it but I it didn’t bother me; whereas in the past, I’m like “slow down. One at a time” so I don’t know maybe it’s me maybe I’m more patient.

As case 1 progressed in body awareness, the integration of mind-body-emotion became more evident for her and voicing her body awareness was a combination of how she felt, thought, and physically sensed. It became harder to dissect these three elements from each other and she observed their effects on her presence in teaching more:
I’m more aware of my body and how I’m feeling you know when I’m stressed or aware of feelings and those kinds of things… I’m trying to be aware of how I’m sitting and different circumstances I find myself using the shoulder adjustment technique the most because I carry a lot of stress in my shoulders so it helps me when I start feeling that.

Finally, her descriptions of body awareness indicated that she experienced presence more than before. One example she provided for how her body awareness that contributed to more presence in class was as follows:

The fact that how sitting and thinking about doing that movement I was more aware and present of what I was in the classroom too. I think the biggest piece that I most remember being aware… when I was doing whole group which I don’t do… so I was kind of in front leading them. I was kind of more aware of how my body was. I was more into what I was doing with the children that I probably wasn’t quite so aware of but…

In brief, case 1 grew body awareness and was more cognizant of her senses. She uttered that correcting her sitting, standing, body balance, shoulder postures, in addition to other physical modifications, made her more present in her teaching. This presence was accompanied with slower pace of doing the activities.

Mind. Based on the data, mind was the second element in the intrapersonal relationship for case 1. Mind awareness in case 1 followed the same pattern as other participants: it was the dominant aspect in her discussing presence in the pre-interview but was eventually balanced throughout the study.
In the pre-interview, case 1 used mental cues to describe her presence and absence. In other words, she pre-dominantly related to presence or non-presence through her mind. An example would be when she named her mind wandering or mental preoccupation as one of the reasons for absence. She said:

You know when my mind is preoccupied with other things. I would say that probably my feelings are stressed or overwhelmed by things that I know I need to get done or that aren’t being accomplished… It’s been moments that I tried to multi task but didn’t work out well and then I realized ok I just have to focus on one thing and then the next thing.

Presence was also defined for her through her cognition or mentality. In the pre-interview, in response to the question about the times she has been fully present, she only referred to her mind and emotions, “I’m happier so I’m probably more present mentally than I would be if I was feeling frustrated and trying to think of other ways, too.”

However, beginning of the workshop seemed to bring a new perspective for case 1 through which she started to place mind besides emotion and body; needless to say that her cognitive perspectives seemed to go through some alterations, as well. She uttered “I feel like I’m more understanding in certain circumstances.” She could also observe the relation between her body and mind; she felt her mind was at ease and resting because of her body awareness. Later, in her reflections, she directly pointed to her new perspective in teaching as a result of her mind awareness and supported it with an instance from the class:
For instance, since spring has arrived, many of my students have been bringing in items from nature to share with the class. I have always welcomed these treasures, but I usually am in a hurry to have them share so that we can move on to what I have planned. However, recently, I have been finding myself enjoying these moments more; taking the time to allow them to happen and using these shares as teachable moments. I feel that this is due to my presence, as well as my awareness of body, mind, and emotion in that it’s not worth getting stressed about.

One point that should be noted about case 1 was her constant use of the word “positive” in her final interview. It seemed that she viewed presence at the mind field as something positive by stating that present moments are positive moments in the classroom or “I think it [workshop] gives me a more positive outlook which in turn may give a positive outlook on the things that I’ve been doing in the classroom too.” Her final thoughts on the workshop reaffirmed this:

It gave me time to think about being positive and not getting wrapped up so much in the negative things... I think it had a positive effect on my classroom and I think it helps me be a more positive person.

In summary, case 1 deemphasized her mind dominance and her mind moved towards having a more balanced position in which more body-mind-emotion integration was observed. She grew her mind awareness and could be more cognizant of her thoughts and reflections, too.
**Emotion.** At the intrapersonal domain, the other element case 1 utilized to express presence was her emotions; her way of sharing emotions evolved during the workshop, from non-existing awareness to emotion awareness. In the pre-interview, she described her feelings of absent times as “stressed” and “overwhelmed” in contrast to “happy” and “good” feelings at present moments. There was no mention of awareness or observing the connectedness of body-mind-emotion.

Case 1’s emotions elevated by the beginning of the intervention. In her reflections and mid-interview, she reported to be more patient, relaxed, content, satisfied, and calm while she stated to enjoy the moments more during the workshop. It is needless to reiterate that, at many points, participants showed their opinion at mind or body field through their feelings. An instance would be when case 1 uttered “My understanding of openness and unity is when my body, mind and emotions are all working together to make me feel whole. My mind is at ease and resting, my emotions are calm and relaxed, and my body releases tension and begins to be. This excerpt could be considered both a transpersonal experience and an experience at all body, mind, and emotion aspects.

By the end of the study, the data entailed more instances of body-mind-emotion integration; therefore, pointing to part of the data that represented merely emotion became challenging. Case 1 stated “I still think that I’m more aware of my body and how I’m feeling you know when I’m stressed or aware of feelings and those kinds of things.” She later added that being aware of emotions and body can help to be more present and the effects on her teaching were implicitly observable:
I would say that there was a time that was a change but sometimes I was doing I was more aware; therefore, I was trying to be more present in the moment as well, rather than just going through the motions so obviously I was there. The fact that how sitting and thinking about doing that movement I was more aware and present of what I was in the classroom too… I feel that my awareness of body, mind and emotion, as well as, presence and my boundaries has helped me to have a new perspective on teaching. I feel as though I am more aware and present in my classroom since taking this course. I find myself noticing moments in which I stop, observe, and take in what is happening in the moment.

In summary, case 1 developed an awareness over her emotions throughout the study but still used the word “positive” to refer to her pleasant feelings without change.

**Interpersonal.** In the interpersonal relationship, Case 1 experienced changes in all categories. Other’s presence entailed both cognitive and metacognitive awareness for her. She could connect to her students’ *being* and became more receptive and accepting. Her role as a teacher changed from an authority to authority, facilitator, and synergist. She became more attentive to students’ needs and provided more opportunity to explore the lesson with her students. Finally, she could notice the context both analytically and synthetically; thereupon, she managed her class based on what emerged in the class more easily.

**Other’s presence.** At the interpersonal domain, recognizing other’s presence emerged in the data and went through some changes in case 1. She experienced other’s presence at both cognitive and metacognitive fields. Before the workshop, she merely
discussed her students’ feelings and cognitive abilities, with almost no mention of recognizing students’ presence, metacognitive awareness. In her pre-interview, she was mainly concerned about handling the situation better, how to be special with students’ feelings or ideas, and not to dismiss their feelings. All these ideas seemed to refer to case 1’s considering only the cognitive aspect of her students; the idea of students’ presence or metacognitive aspect might was an unknown concept to her before the intervention.

Case 1’s experiences of the other’s presence went through a slight alteration after the intervention and entailed both metacognitive and cognitive aspects. The mid-interview, reflection papers, and final interview included ideas on both aspects. Some examples would be “I am frustrated at the student, but I am frustrated at not getting the point across them trying to be more, um, I don’t know, not empathetic, but maybe empathetic.” Another instance would be when she was describing her being more aware of the students who struggled; she understood their feelings better. Her specific example in teaching was:

I had a new student during my classroom just about three weeks ago and she has a pretty rough background and you know at the beginning you know she would immediately dig her heels in and not wanting to do anything so I struggled with it… I give her the time to adjust but at the same time some of those children are kind of looking for you to provide that structure for them because they don’t have anything else. And some of them do better when you provide them with you know what I mean? Not that I have to be harsh or rigid or strict with her but if I set up those expectations and the consequences she doesn’t need a lot of time. These
children won’t excel because they don’t have them in other aspects of their life so I was struggling trying to figure out you know the right balance for her and lately I haven’t felt like I have even think about finding balance for her... I’ve sensed it that she feels more comfortable and more part of the group and so she is now more willing to do what’s being asked or hasn’t been asked.

The above quotation referred to how she observed and considered both the cognitive and metacognitive aspects of her students’ presence. She understood that her student needed more time and she did not force her to do the activities; rather, she slowed down to provide her with the needed time.

Case 1’s perspective of relationship also included a balance of perceiving other’s presence cognitively and metacognitively. By the end of the study, she stated:

I do believe that we are not ourselves without others. Others and our relationships with others help define us. To my daughters, I am a mother, loving, giving, nurturing, providing, helpful, etc. To my husband, I am a wife, supporting, loving, a companion, a workout partner, etc. To my parents, I am an only daughter, the youngest child, loving, nurturing, and helpful. To my brothers, I am a sister, spoiled, giving, loving, dependable, etc. To the children in my classroom, I am a teacher, knowledgeable, caring, nurturing, giving, accepting, etc. To my classroom aide, I am busy, organized, a planner, a hard worker. To myself, I am all of these things and more. I may see them differently than others do, but I am made up of all of these things.
Some traces of transpersonal realms could be seen in the above sentences, as well. The sentence “to myself, I am all of these things and more” could indicate a kind of transpersonal understanding and the other sentences could be assumed the consequences of this perspective change in her relationships.

The other element that brought a new perception of other’s presence for case 1 was boundary awareness. She became cognizant of how close she was to her students or to her colleagues. These boundaries differed between the colleagues and the students:

I do notice how my boundaries change with various colleagues. When I am interacting with a colleague that I feel close to and know well, my boundaries seem to be less present and more open. When I am interacting with a colleague that I do not have the personal connection with, I notice my boundaries being more present and larger…I continue to feel as though I do not have boundaries with my students. Being that they are so young, I feel very connected with them. I believe this to be important in an Early Childhood classroom. I hope to continue this connection with my students.

In compliance with the knowledge that she felt no boundaries with her students, she stated she became more understanding of her students:

I do notice that and so then I would try to remember that when there is something really frustrating not to be frustrated with that and to remember that they’re only 5 and 6 and we are all human and we all make mistakes and you maybe there is an underlying reason that’s why it’s happening. So I think it was a good thing for my students in my class… I think I’m more aware of their thoughts and you know
what they’re thinking in the moment, they’re more able to communicate with me and without disruption and the same for me. I’m able to communicate the information to them without being interrupted.

In brief, the data revealed that she experienced more pleasant relationships with her students and others becoming familiar with the concepts of cognitive and metacognitive awareness of other’s presence.

**Role.** At the interpersonal relationship, all the roles of teacher as authority, facilitator, and synergist emerged in the data on case 1. Teacher as authority and teacher as facilitator were the two concepts the majority of teachers were familiar with which applied to case 1, as well. Although the authority figure was more dominant compared to the facilitator, both roles existed for case 1 at the beginning of the study. The role of synergist was gradually added to other roles that case 1 had in her class. It is worth pointing out that the circumstances seemed to be different in kindergarten classes compared to other grades; therefore, the dominance of a specific role could be different for teachers in kindergarten compared to other grade teachers.

At the beginning, she mainly discussed her role as the authority; for instance, she said she tried to pay attention to students’ feelings but at the same time accomplish the plan, too. Similarly, the sentence “students all fell into group plan during present moments” could be an indication of how important planning and following a plan was for her. In turn, it revealed her role as the planner who transfers the information and decides how everything proceeds in the classroom.
Facilitator and synergist roles appeared more evidently after the beginning of the intervention. In her mid-interview, she emphasized on the facilitator role and said the goal is not only to get the point across to students but rather to be more empathetic with them. Furthermore, in her final interview, she concentrated on the reciprocity of the teacher-student relationship, a kind of synergist role:

I would say that it’s [relationship] reciprocal. They’re more engaged with what’s there. I’m more engaged with what’s happening there in the classroom. You know they’re attentive and interested in what’s happening so I keep feeding that… Sometimes I throw it back at them and say what you think. You know have them discuss it rather than me giving them the information or telling them the answers. Sometimes the further they think it through sometimes they come up with better ideas than I do so… it’s usually us learning about it together. You know exploring it together and talking about our explorations.

The data on case 1 showed that she gained an awareness of all the roles and could switch them with awareness by the end of the study.

**Context.** Reviewing the entire study, case 1’s data revealed both synthetic and analytic awareness of the context at the interpersonal relationship. In the pre-interview, there was hardly a specific and direct trace of analytic or synthetic awareness of the context in case 1’s relationship; the pre-interview could vaguely imply that case 1’s relationships were mainly analytical, though. In contrast, during the mid-interview, case 1 denoted some points that were both an indication of transpersonal relationship and an evidence to support that her relationship consisted of both synthetic and analytic
awareness. An instance would be “I am more aware and more understanding of the moment for that child rather than feeling so flustered.” By the end of the study, she could simply refer to how synthetic awareness worked in her class. She said:

I was struggling trying to figure out you know the right balance for her and lately I haven’t felt like I have even thought about finding balance for her. It’s just been working. I’ve sensed it that she feels more comfortable and more part of the group and so she is now more willing to do what’s being asked or hasn’t been asked. Hasn’t been struggling my mind trying to figure out how to deal with her.

Some other comments could also refer to the synthetic context of the relationship but they could also serve as examples of metacognitive presence of students or synergic role of the teacher; in other words, these qualities were deeply integrated and it was hard to separate them.

In summary, case 1 developed a synthetic awareness of the context, in addition to analytic awareness she possessed from the beginning. She worried less about the time and was more prone to changes based on the context of the class.

Transpersonal. Transpersonal relationship was the third type of relationship that constituted case 1’s presence. In the transpersonal relationship, Case 1’s awareness enabled her to establish and organize her plans to be more positive and enjoy life more. At times, she could pause in class, observe her whole, notice her students’ whole, and connect to them at the transpersonal domain.

Understanding the transpersonal relationship emerged in case 1’s data after the beginning of the study. She had commenced making some changes in her life before; the
workshop seemed to accelerate the effects and introduced her to transpersonal. An instance of this opinion would be when case 1 said:

I think I mean I think I was becoming different before taking the workshop because I decided I was going to be different. I was really bitter in the fall and then in my own mind and in my own life. I was bitter in the fall with things happening and I made the decision in December that I couldn’t do it again. The things had to be changing and things were changing prior to taking the workshop but I think the workshop helped. It gave me time to reflect and time to think about you know the meditation task gave me time to think about being positive and not getting wrapped up so much in the negative things.

Transpersonal experiences of case 1 appeared in both intrapersonal and interpersonal realms and were frequently followed by examples from her teaching.

Being there. Case 1 showed several experiences that denoted transpersonal relationship with intrapersonal origins; these experiences appeared after the beginning of the intervention. Recognizing the interwoven quality of body-mind-emotion was one of the instances of developing transpersonal relationship in case 1. She stated:

My understanding of openness and unity is when my body, mind, and emotions are all working together to make me feel whole. My mind is at ease and resting, my emotions are calm and relaxed, and my body releases tension and begins to be… I recognize these moments more often; big and small. I have observed moments of presence in my teaching including moments such as engaging in activity with my students and watching as they problem solve to complete an
activity. I have also noticed presence in having conversations and discussions with my students about various topics, concepts, and/or ideas.

Case 1’s other transpersonal experiences were wholeness and presence; she observed the consequences in her teaching as the engagement with the students in different activities and situations. She further added that via sense awareness she understood the activities in her life better and consequently acknowledged the moment more.

Case 1 also described her understanding of doing and being realms. She expressed them as:

I have noticed that when I am doing, things are more fast-paced, I have goals/targets in mind, and I follow a prescribed path or plan. However, when I am being, I take the time to slow down, be with it, and see where it takes me. When doing, my body is more tense, my mind is racing and planning what to do next or how much time the current activity will take, and my emotions consist of me being on edge, sensitive, and quick to react. When being, my body is physically more relaxed, my mind focuses on the moment at hand, and my emotions are content and satisfied.

The result of these transpersonal experiences was a new perspective in teaching for her as she phrased it this way:

I feel as though I am more aware and present in my classroom since taking this course. I find myself noticing moments in which I stop, observe, and take in what is happening in the moment… I feel that this is due to my presence, as well, as my
awareness of body, mind and emotion in that it’s not worth getting stressed about. This has allowed me to be more relaxed which in turn affects my body and emotion.

It seemed that case 1 developed a deep understanding of the transpersonal experiences because she referred to them frequently in the final interview after the end of the workshop. Even her definition of absent moments was more transpersonal-like. She said:

I’m more focused on what I am doing than that I can say I’m present in the moment so and I feel distracted in my class. I feel pretty in tune with what is happening in the classroom. But I would say I feel my presence changes. You know sometimes. There are times that I’m more present in the classroom than others you know if it’s a busy day and there is lots of things happening back to back that I’m kind of thinking ahead of what’s coming, what I have to plan for them, it has a moment of being there.

*Being with.* Transpersonal experiences of case 1 had interpersonal origins, as well. Case 1 stated that, as a result of her awareness, she was more cognizant of the students who were struggling and she cared for their feelings more. Later, she expressed her opinion of relationship from a different perspective saying “I do believe that we are not ourselves without others. Others and our relationships with others help define us. To myself, I am all of these things and more.” She stated that she felt very connected to her students and could observe the changes in her boundaries; furthermore, she was aware of her students’ presence in the moment.
Case 2

Case 2 was a middle school teacher who was serving her 30th year of teaching. She was teaching science but had experienced teaching of other courses, as well. Her primary incentive in registering for the course was the credit hours offered; also, she humorously stated she had liked the colors of the poster advertising the workshop. Case 2 had picked up yoga exercises recently but did not have any prior knowledge of presence or body awareness.

Case 2 believed her perspective in life and teaching changed throughout the study. Her major change occurred in the interpersonal domain. She reported to be more open to the people around her compared to her past which explained her change at different categories; in the intrapersonal relationship, she grew awareness of body-mind-emotion integration. She experienced their connectedness in herself and recognized that she needs more openness towards people in her life. In the interpersonal relationship, she developed a metacognitive awareness of other’s presence; she practiced and experienced boundary awareness as well as extending her boundaries. She communicated with other people and found more value in this relationship. Consequently, in the role section, she became more flexible and altered her teaching strategies to a learning interaction. She was cognizant of the context and made appropriate decisions based on the theme of the class. Finally, at the transpersonal domain, she respected her being, her students’ being, and their connection because of openness to observing it.

It should be noted that case 2 changed significantly from the beginning to the end overall. Her pre-interview clearly showed that she was not only a stranger to the ideas of
the workshop, but also seemed uninterested in the workshop. At the beginning of the study, she was different from other participants in that she seemed reluctant towards the course; she showed up in the first session of the class when she had not been interviewed before and did not share or discuss much in the first session that made the researcher think she might not continue the workshop. Her first interview took place after the second session because the researcher did not have her contact information. She became one of the active participants of the study who sincerely got involved and practiced the tasks; her attitude altered drastically and her changes from the beginning to the end of the workshop were significant. Following is how she reported her changes at three types of relationship: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal.

**Intrapersonal.** Intrapsersonal relationship for case 2 can be illustrated well in the three aspects of body, mind, and emotion, akin to other participants. At the intrapersonal domain, she observed her changes in all sections of body, mind, and emotion. She described feeling more energized and refreshed in the body section. In the mind section, she stated that she was less driven by her thoughts and became more present with a positive perspective. Emotionally, she gained an awareness that created novelty and excitement in her work.

**Body.** At the intrapersonal domain, body awareness started to emerge in case 2 data after getting familiar with the idea in the workshop. Although case 2 was interviewed in the second session, she did not refer to body in her pre-interview; her reflections were the first place she pointed to the body. One of the best instances of physical or bodily effects on her would be when she talked about her fatigue:
I would say a lot of days I am tired at the end but it’s a good tired you know you feel like you got your work done and you feel satisfied… [Comparing her fatigue in the past with present] because before I would be tired, I would be discouraged, I’d be rung out, I’d be you know I’d just wanna get out of the exhaustion of the emotional battle of to keep them focused and get them moving. It was just real wearing out of yourself. But now I don’t really feel that so much…I do feel more alive in my class and I do feel more energetic.

Except for the sensation awareness which was briefly discussed, case 2 acknowledged the effects of the workshop on her body. In her opinion, she was more comfortable, refreshed, and more active. She could also be in control of her whole body experience and energy; as she stated, she was sometimes able to redirect her energy and be happier. Her major body changes were reported by her in the final interview. She described her bodily changes and their effects on her teaching: “I just feel refreshed; I guess would be the word like a new perspective.” She further discussed her becoming cognizant of body-mind-emotion cycle:

What I am surprised about is how often my emotions- anxiety, frustration, tiredness- affect my body position and how much that changes the way I present myself to my students and others… Now, when I feel tension or stress in my body, I stop and think, why am I feeling tension or what is causing this?… I also noticed that if I have had an emotional day/ or bad news, that I carry the emotional pain in my body and I have a hard time getting rid of it.
Towards the end of the workshop and after it, she seemed to have developed an understanding of body awareness and gained the ability to apply it in her life and teaching. However, she did not report major changes in this subcategory.

**Mind.** The other subcategory that emerged in case 2’s intrapersonal relationship was mind. Case 2’s focus was primarily on mind in the pre-interview, but mind’s weight became more balanced throughout the workshop. An instance would be when, in her pre-interview, she described absence as the times she did not intend to give up despite of not seeing the point in continuing. Similarly, the data showed that she was absent or partially present when she felt to be useless such as during meetings that her presence did not benefit other people. She said she would be in her body but her mind was somewhere else. Also, worries such as her mother’s sickness would make her distracted.

This mindset started to change by the beginning of the workshop. In her mid-interview, the sentence “You don’t wanna give up but it’s kind of think what’s the point? I’m done with teaching” was substituted by:

I’m gonna retire and it’s going to be a good end. You know instead of oh God that’s over and blah blah blah and you feel like wow it’s gonna be something that I’m ending and I wanna keep going… I’m projecting better and I’m enjoying it more or getting my point across better sometimes not all the times.

Overall, the data on case 2 revealed that she recognized how much she dwelled in her head and how her thoughts controlled her body and emotions. Similarly, in her teaching, she did not stress out about forcing the students to learn the information and it
made her happier. All these changes could be summarized in her sentence during the final interview that she said she gained a new perspective in life.

*Emotion.* At the intrapersonal relationship, emotional representations were the other means, along with cognitive aspects, case 2 utilized to describe her experiences of the presence at the beginning; it continued towards the end in a more balanced proportion with body and mind. In the pre-interview, instead of talking about presence, she mainly discussed how frustrated and tired of teaching she was as in “Sometimes I feel like I don’t wanna be there. Sometimes I feel like uh like it’s a useless meaningless task like why am I doing this? Sometimes I just feel like I’m done.” She described herself as being bored or annoyed. Furthermore, she shared something about her feelings which can be an evidence of the source of her emotional obstacles. She said “I guess I wasn’t really noticing how protective of my feelings, my emotions, sharing, giving, and receiving I am. I’ve kind of put myself in this box.” She refused to have people in her box during absent moments. Nonetheless, it was one of the key points for the researcher to observe throughout the study because the data revealed that her major change occurred in her opening to other people; it extended to her relationship with her students, colleagues, and family.

After the beginning of the intervention, she became more aware of her emotions. She said she was surprised at how often her emotions influenced other aspects of herself such as the times she went through motions and it made her detached from what she was doing. This newly gained awareness, in turn, filled her with excitement and she described it as:
It works within me so I guess I feel some you know a little bit of excitement and um it kind of makes you feel, um, rejuvenated a little bit, you know, like some life being breathed into this whole path and it just feels. It feels I’m considering very strongly retiring at the end of this year, and I think oh so I’m gonna retire and it’s going to be a good end.

The excitement extended to her teaching and she reported being pleased with teaching; she was more animated in her teaching and it felt better. Also, case 2’s awareness represented itself in the form of becoming an observer of herself which made her happier. This change was to the extent that her absent times had a different quality; she said “Sometimes I am just going through the motions so to speak and other times I feel like it is very fluid and I’m talking or asking questions or sharing things.”

In general, emotion awareness, having fun, enjoying the activity, feeling satisfied, and feeling happier and better were among some of the emotional changes case 2 expressed as a result of participating in the workshop and enhancing body awareness and presence.

**Interpersonal.** Based on the data, interpersonal realm was the part that case 2 revealed the most conspicuous difference from the beginning to the end. At this domain, she became more open to people. She also changed to a more attentive listener and could perceive students’ whole better. As a result, her teaching strategies changed, affecting her awareness of role too. In the role section, she altered her perspective of being the authority figure. She did not believe that she has to transfer the knowledge and change her students’ lives herself alone any more. Rather, she became cognizant of her facilitator
and synergist roles. Her classes became more interactive and she could consciously switch roles. In the context section, she gained both analytic and synthetic awareness and changed to a more flexible teaching strategy because of her awareness at this section.

**Other’s presence.** Awareness of other’s presence was the first subsection in the interpersonal relationship for case 2, as well. Case 2 developed an understanding of metacognitive awareness of other’s presence, in addition to the cognitive awareness, throughout the study. At the beginning of the study, case 2 mainly perceived her students’ cognitive presence. All her worries about her students were about their lives’ circumstances or the quality of their lives and she did not touch on the presence of her students. Describing students at the times of presence, she stated students were active and understood the lesson; her own thoughts were how to make it happen more often which could indicate her cognitive views of other’s presence and unfamiliarity with the metacognitive sides.

However, this view went under immediate change after the beginning of the workshop. The change was commenced by more openness and receptivity towards students; she listened and talked to her students more attentively, implying that their presence was perceived more than before. This openness was to the point that she said “I genuinely enjoy it! I don’t feel isolated and closed as I have for the last several years.”

Her openness extended to the body boundaries awareness and she not only became cognizant of her own space, but also reported to have become an observer of other people’s spaces. She said “I see how I approach people; if I am open and willing to let them enter my space or if I am closed and do not want to let them enter my space.” In
her final interview, she reiterated that “I just feel you know more of a willingness myself
to be open and let other people you know into my world and me into their world so
willing to go to their I guess space or world.”

Her understanding of other’s presence went on further change and she had a better
understanding of metacognitive awareness of other’s presence. As she stated in the final
interview, “I want to physically be there, be present in the lesson. I guess rather than just
I’m here, they’re there doing a lesson. I wanna be in it, be part of it.” Perceiving students’
metacognitive presence was something she developed throughout the workshop and
explicitly enunciated that she was aware of it not 100% of the times but more than other
times. Consequently, she described herself as “kind of helped to open up the whole way
that I approached the kids and presenting things.” Another instance for the improved
metacognitive understanding of other’s presence for case 1 would be her saying:

I had a very positive day. It is hard to explain but my interactions with the
students were positive but I was not concerned with their response. Maybe I was
not accepting the responsibility for how they responded or whether they accepted
the information or how they accepted it.

Contradictory to her first interview in which she showed serious concerns about
the outcomes of her students’ learning, she veered to accepting students and the
interactions as they existed, a sign of metacognitive understanding. She later added that
“I’m looking at them differently because I think I’m seeing myself and my behavior a
little different and I’m not really sure what exactly that difference is.” An example in
which she supported this idea in her teaching was:
I just feel I’m interacting differently with them and it feels better to me. Like I’m making a better connection and uh you know I have a little girl who has a definite processing. She knows the word but she can’t know where she’s filed it away so she comes out with “a well no it’s aaa” you know so she is like it’s on the tip of my tongue and she just can’t figure out where it is in her head so I say ok just give yourself a minute. Go through. Where is the word? Find it, hook it up with a clue. You know some kind of thing that you can remember. Ok. Now what’s the word and boom! She gets it. It’s really good to see that working for her.

Based on the data, a combination of both cognitive and metacognitive awareness of other’s presence seem to have occurred in case 2. It was one of her significant changes that made her more open to people. She accepted her students for who they were and only did her job holistically, regardless of what the outcome might be.

**Role.** At the interpersonal relationship, data indicated that case 2 developed role awareness, as well. Case 2 revealed a gradual awareness of teacher as the authority or facilitator to a teacher who flexibly switched roles from authority to facilitator or synergist with awareness.

At the beginning of the study, case 2’s authority role was more evident. A notable piece about case 2 from the beginning of the study was her extreme worries for her students. She complained constantly about her students’ repeating the same annoying behavior such as forgetting their pencil or just turning out to live a duplicate life of their parents and grandparents; some of her students belonged to the third generation of a family she had been teaching to. She believed they showed no change or improvement in
their life styles and status. She was seriously concerned about her students’ future and not being able to make that change in their lives. It could be interpreted as an authority role for case 2 in which she believed she is the person responsible to transfer all the knowledge she has to them and make them different people based on her own criteria. An example to support this idea is:

Education is meaningless if it’s not improving their life so you feel like how is this? How is my teaching going to help them when they get out of the school to get a job and to assimilate into society? Are they gonna be positive? Are they gonna find a job? Are they gonna get out and be an alcoholic like their dad? You know so you battle with those distraction I guess.

In addition, facilitator was the other role she had experienced and talked about in the pre-interview; she had experienced it in her present moments in class. She uttered “We had fun. We enjoyed it. We did experiment and everybody was active. Well, somewhat active and engaged and it just it seemed to go well and I think they understood it.”

Synergist role or its awareness emerged in case 2 only after the workshop started. She uttered “I realized that I was trying to gain something, or force something instead of just doing my lesson and letting it be my dance. Today I am still trying to just let things be and remember to just do my dance.” Later, she gave an example of how she made it work in her classroom:

I decided to let them teach themselves and I would be just an observer, a facilitator of sorts and just let the lesson happen. So I handed out the worksheets
and then I handed out magnets and let them experiment with the magnets. They learned by doing and discovering and talking to each other and asking questions and trying different things. I learned by watching and not controlling or being controlled just letting them learn. I felt so good at the end of the day and even said “this is why I became a teacher”! I don’t fully know if this is a two-person relationship or if it is controller-controlling or what. But I know that it felt really good to connect in this way with my students and that they really enjoyed the class.

Consequently, she revisited her views of student-teacher relationship and stated “Now I have a different view of teacher-student relationship/system. I am still finding the right balance; actually I think the balance will continually shift back and forth from controlled to controller without feeling the boundaries of either.” The change in her relationships was a result of change in herself and the gained openness, based on what she said in her mid-interview: “That was just a personal goal I had this year and I think another personal goal I had was to try and interact more with my own kids and that’s ongoing obviously but, as far as teaching, I see a difference in myself. I feel different in the classroom and I feel like I am enjoying it more.”

Another manifestation of synergist role in her teaching was:

I have been trying to interact more I guess either way. Not just put things on the board, talk about it, go sit down. So I’ve been trying to give them more examples, give them time to write, give them time to talk about it, give them time to interact
with each other. You know so you can work with your friend, come up with an answer, present it back to the class.

Awareness of multiple roles was evident in her final interview by saying:
I see them more as, um, not just me trying to present information to them but more of an interaction you know what can I learn from them, what are they learning from me and we are just kind of doing it together rather than I’m the teacher, I’m here. You are the students, you are there. My job is this. Your job is that. It’s more like we are all here together. Let’s all accomplish this task learning this so… Not feeling like I have to control the class so much. Not feeling like like it’s my work just to present everything to them. It’s not just me working. Both of us are working…

Awareness of facilitator and synergist roles, specifically, became more lucid when she stated her interactions with the students were more of learner-learner type instead of teacher-learner type. She admitted that she does not recognize students as people who should be disciplined or controlled all the time; she seemed to be more open to them which seemed to be a substantially different view from the first interview. She explained:

…it’s kind of nice to just let them be the guider so to speak because even at times that I would be saying ok let’s try this. To some of them I would even say could you guys be quiet so that we can hear. So I’m like yes! And then at different times they discover something and I say ok how did you do that? Show everybody else. Tell everybody else… We were all there and everybody was just looking and
sharing and it wasn’t like I was teaching them things and they were you know they were learning. They were engaged themselves and they were learning what a magnet can do by itself….So you don’t become so much the teacher as the facilitator. You are just up there spewing facts saying that this is the situation. You’ve brought this up. Let’s look at this. What does that mean? What do you think that means? How can you solve that? And you tell me what it is. Now that you’ve looked at it and played with it what do you think the answer is?

She was trying to have more balance between her roles at the end of the workshop and showed more willingness to make students the center of learning and teaching:

I have looked for more ways to let the kids be the leaders to interact differently with them rather than and it was actually one of my goals at the start of the year, was not to do so many paper and pencil task to put more things on the board and I was doing that but still wasn’t working as well as I wanted it to and then with this using more, discovering more am I really there? Am I really engaged?

Another example that showed how she had mastered switching roles with awareness was:

A lot of times they get way off the topic and pretty soon they’re talking about you know uncle Buck who went out and did this crazy thing over here and they’re just telling stories that has nothing to do with so …I don’t know you just kind of approach it differently. You just help them solve the problem instead of making it your problem all the time or a problem that is necessarily against you.

In summary, case 2 gained the awareness of all the roles throughout the study and mastered how to switch roles.
**Context.** Context awareness was the other interpersonal subcategory in case 2’s data, consisting of analytic and synthetic awareness. Case 2’s mainly analytic view changed to both analytic and synthetic awareness of the context during the study. Based on the data from her pre-interview, case 2 analyzed the situation based on her pre-assumptions and judged the situation the way she intended. This was clearly observable in her opinion on how her students were living the same life as their parents and she believed she had not accomplished anything in her teaching. She followed similar teaching strategies as before and was pestered by the students’ repeating behaviors such as not having a pencil with them.

Becoming aware of the context was revealed in case 2’s reflections since the time she started talking about openness. Openness in her relationships and interactions with students led to some alterations in the context awareness:

I have an openness toward people again. At work, during class change, I would never leave my classroom to talk to other teachers unless I needed to. Now, I try to go out during every class change to talk, visit and joke around. I genuinely enjoy it! I don’t feel isolated and closed as I have for the last several years. Listening and talking more to the students and being receptive and open to what students shared could be another evidence for this speculation.

Awareness of the synthetic context, alongside the analytic, could also be observed in the changes she made in her teaching strategy. Fixed lesson plans, pre-assigned attitudes, and judgmental pre-assumptions which were based on the analysis of the situation were replaced by flexible lesson plans, unbiased attitudes, and openness to
the context. Thereupon, her teaching became more pleasing for her. An example, which was also used as awareness of other’s presence, would be the girl in the special education who had difficulty retrieving the information she filed in her brain. Case 2, in her teaching time with the student, was more patient and more encouraging:

…she is like it’s on the tip of my tongue and she just can’t figure out where it is in her head so I say ok just give yourself a minute. Go through. Where is the word? Find it, hook it up with a clue. You know some kind of thing that you can remember. Ok. Now what’s the word and boom! She gets it. It’s really good to see that working for her.

Furthermore, an instance of applying flexible lesson plan which was the combination of both analytic and synthetic context was:

We were getting ready for the OAA test, standardized tests, and I had covered one or two topics that I really felt like they needed to know before and that was the time I understood how can I give them this information and knowledge so that they remember so that they’ll be able to use it on the test and so then I thought well I’m just gonna get everything out. I’m gonna get the magnets out, get the information out and just let them work with it and just experience it. I felt like several of them even called this is the best fun we’ve ever had throughout the year.

In summary, fostering context awareness at both cognitive and metacognitive aspects made case 2 more open and flexible in her teaching. She recognized the theme of
the class and decided which action to take, compared to the past that she had fixed pre-
defined goals in mind. Everyone enjoyed the activities more in class.

**Transpersonal.** Corresponding to other participants, case 2’s transpersonal
representations emerged in the data after the beginning of the workshop, both in
intrapersonal and interpersonal realms. In the transpersonal relationship- being *there*, she
enhanced her presence and connection to her *being*. She commenced her *self* knowledge
journey and was determined to proceed at the intrapersonal domain. At the interpersonal
section- being *with*, she enjoyed her interactions with people because of her being more
open. She could also perceive the class as one system working together.

**Being there.** Case 2’s data showed that part of her transpersonal experiences had
intrapersonal origins. Case 2 made clear statements on the things she became cognizant
of about herself that she had not even noticed before. The following sentences are a
number of transpersonal comments she made:

I am very surprised at how much of myself I did not know how to tap into… I was
not connected to what I was doing…My view of presence has changed from not
knowing anything, to being aware of myself, how I interact with others and my
environment. I do not have a full or even a partial understanding of presence. I
think it is a life long journey of discovering what presence is and what it means
and how you use that knowledge to interact with others and your environment. I
think it is constantly changing as your experience and understanding of presence
changes. The best example I can think of happened after I had a particularly
challenging day and I was not present. I was distracted. As I reflected on the day,
I realized that I had not been present. I was able to understand better what being present meant and how I had experienced presence and compare it to the non-presence day. I was able to be present the next day with my whole body, being aware of my body, my mind and emotion.

Transpersonal understanding at being *there* section brought some changes for case 2 in the understanding of her body, thinking, and emotions. She voiced it this way:

It’s more of an awareness of wakening of myself, my thinking, instead of just going, doing the task. Well, I guess I’m using my whole body… I think my feeling is well definitely awareness you know that I’m doing it again or I’m able to view myself and say wow I’m going down the same path and then I myself it’s like I wanna say an excitement. You know an awakening, an awareness that um this doesn’t have to be this rot any more.

Needless to say that she became a keen observer of herself and her relationships with others because of her newly gained openness and awareness. She said “I would say I observe how I interact with others; I observe my body position; I observe how I approach students, how I approach the class.” Similar ideas and beliefs were reported by her repeatedly in class, as well.

**Being with.** Case 2 had some transpersonal experiences at the interpersonal field, too. As stated earlier, case 2’s major change could be observed in the openness in her interpersonal relationships. With the same token, case 2’s transpersonal awareness primarily appeared in the interpersonal area:
Something is changing in my relationship with my students. Although I know some of the change is because I am working on my spiritual relationship through prayer, bible reading and meditation, I think I can attribute some of the change to my new found body awareness… I have an openness toward people again…I genuinely enjoy it.

Openness was accompanied with awareness of her boundaries for case 2:

Right now I still feel the boundaries. I now know that it is possible to keep your boundaries permeable. I was very closed before and really did not let my boundaries be open at all, or I only allowed them to be open with great caution. I did not even realize I was doing this, now that I am aware, I can make a more informed decision about where my boundaries lie. I can become aware if my boundaries are closed or open and try to let them be more open. I can let the world in and me out so to speak, to flow back and forth, mobius… I think just being more aware of how others are perceiving you and being able to look at how you know kind of step back and look at yourself.

Boundaries faded away at some point for case 2; she said “I felt at that point at that particular lesson I felt like it was just all one.”

In conclusion, she seemed to have developed a witnessing attitude as she uttered:

...looking like when you’re observing yourself and aware of yourself in the classroom and you’re able to kind of see your behavior as you approach that child or that situation occurs again. You’re able to kind of stop yourself from going down the same path that doesn’t correct the situation. You are able to take a
different route I think. It’s something for me that has been really helpful. It’s enabled me to kind of um either just not ignore it but step outside of it. Here’s the problem and kind of find a different approach to it or a different resolution, kind of.

**Case 3**

Case 3 was a middle school art teacher who taught 7th and 8th grade. She had 9 years of teaching experience cumulatively at different states of USA. She was different from other participants because she was familiar with the idea of mindfulness, did yoga 2 or 3 times a week, and her incentives for attending the workshop thoroughly conformed to the goals of the workshop. Her desire was to acquire the ability of getting grounded and she believed the workshop was happening to her at the right time. She had started to make some changes in her life because she was not happy and was stressing over present or past constantly. Considering presence the solution to her problems, she had been doing some activities such as bird watching, listening to mindfulness CD, and doing yoga to connect to the presence experience or awareness more.

Case 3 experienced change equally in an integrated manner in all areas; however, her experiences made her distinct from other participants in some aspects. One of her major difference of case 3 from other participants was her slight familiarity with the topic; she had some knowledge of mindfulness and had yoga practices before which made her a more prepared participant. The other eminent difference of case 3 was her high motivation. She earnestly intended to make changes in her life and seemed to internalize any concept in the intervention. Her reflections and interviews indicated the
strongest connection to the intervention. Also, she seemed to be the only person to refer
to body and transpersonal relationship before the workshop which might reveal her deep
interest in the intervention. Moreover, it is notable to state that although she was
primarily concerned about her *self* growth, she had extensive interpersonal experiences;
in other words, her *self* knowledge led to more openness in her interpersonal relationships
which is an indication of her integrative growth in all domains. The following sections
describe case 3’s journey in intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal domains in
detail:

**Intrapersonal.** Case 3 believed her changes mostly landed at intrapersonal
relationship. In this relationship type, in the body section, she developed body awareness,
sense awareness, and body-mind-emotion connectedness. She modified her bodily
postures and could see how all body-mind-emotion sections were affecting each other. As
a result, she could prevent her tensions in the body, mind travelling in her mind, and
being on the motion at the emotion section. She reported to have experienced less stress,
physical tension, and frustration.

**Body.** At the intrapersonal field, body awareness vastly emerged in case 3’s data.
She developed her body awareness and moved towards having some level of body-mind-
emotion awareness by the end of the workshop. Unlike all the other participants, some
clues of body awareness existed in the pre-interview of case 3 which was enhanced
throughout the intervention. One of those clues could be her bird-watching; she had some
sense awareness practices with bird watching. She said:
We have a lot of birds in our house and a lot of bird feeders. So when we’re watching birds, I really try to take in the details of them; you know the feathers, the colors and how they move… so that’s … when I think about the practices that it is one thing that I am conscious of.

Except for the aforementioned example, practicing and paying attention to body awareness for case 3 commenced by the beginning of the workshop.

Case 3’s body awareness not only made her feel better physically, but also positively affected her teaching. Case 3 utilized the practical tasks of the workshop to free her muscular tensions and this was one of the substantial changes for her because it assisted her to avoid the consequent effects of bodily tensions in her teaching as well. She elaborated:

In regards to teaching I feel that I was more aware of my body in the classroom than I have ever been before. I found myself “correcting” my posture, such as adjusting my shoulders or back, and balancing my weight between my feet. I sometimes found myself with more weight on one foot, and a hip forced outward. When I noticed this, I would adjust my weight into my feet evenly. These adjustments were very gratifying for me because, for a moment, I was able to connect to my body and then feel more confident and comfortable with my students. Also, the relaxing of my muscles actually relaxed my emotions and mind. Therefore, I could address my students and my class in a more relaxed and comfortable way.
Another notable effect of body awareness in case 3 was her sense awareness. She could connect to the sense awareness activities well, named them as her favorite task, and discussed some results in her life. She said:

I noticed that my senses were extra keen… My understanding of the senses has not changed, but I have gained awareness and appreciation of my senses. By awakening my awareness, I am now able to isolate each sense and concentrate on it, or focus on 2 or 3 at a time. This new awareness has allowed me to appreciate and enjoy my senses. My sense awareness has changed my perception of activities in my daily life. I have found myself slowing down my actions a bit when I am being aware of a sense.

Body-mind-emotion awareness was the other experience case 3 gained at the body section. She persisted in doing her physical practices and referred to them as extremely helpful throughout the study, specifically because she was cognizant of body-mind-cycle and had experienced it. Becoming aware of the integration of body-mind-emotion cycle was an incentive for her to attend to her physical body; thereupon, she had multiple narrations of how her body was feeling or affecting her life. The following example would be illuminating:

I think just being aware of my physical body helps to be relaxed and that changes the emotion… I teach on quarters so today was the first day of the last quarter and they have all these new kids for this quarter so usually this day is very stressful and I put up this rigid wall in front to show you know to be real powerful you know? And just to lay the law down a little and show them how I am which is
pretty reserved when I teach and normally I tense up all day and have headache and feel terrible by the night time. At about 11, I felt it coming. I could feel all the tension and I just kept thinking “relax. It’s just the first day. You’ve done this a million times. It’s ok. It’s ok. Relax. Relax. Breathe. Drink water.” And by the end of the day I really felt fine and I felt good. I didn’t feel like I normally would feel and I made a big dinner and I packed it all up and brought it to my family so it was A GOOD DAYYY!

In brief, case 3 fostered her body awareness extensively and favored body awareness tasks more than other tasks.

**Mind.** At the intrapersonal relationship, the data on mind also existed for case 3 but case 3’s focus on mind was little compared to other participants. Some of the instances of her discussing mind could be found in her pre-interview; she stated she did not think during the present moments, while she reflected on her class when she had been absent in class and things had not worked for her. Her major problem regarding mind was mind travelling before the beginning of the workshop. It remained a challenge even after the end of the course, with some differences. One of those differences was the awareness element. At the end of the workshop, she knew mind travelling was her main challenge for being present and she could make adjustments if she intended to. Furthermore, she occasionally used self-talk in her mind as a technique to engage herself again and become present. She stated:

Sometimes I definitely definitely talk to myself or think you know just basically kind of narrate what is happening. Oh … you are thinking of next class period
when it’s still this class period. It doesn’t happen every time but it does sometime
and that can help bring me either back to where I wanna be if it’s the classroom
that you know the class that I am right in or but when I don’t wanna be there I’d
say oh ok I’m gonna think ahead right now (laughing).

Other than the few aforementioned points, case 3 did not overemphasize cognition and
had a balance of body-mind-emotion.

*Emotion.* Emotion was the third element at the intrapersonal relationship.
Throughout the workshop, she developed emotional awareness by understanding and
practicing body-mind-emotion integration; she reported to have excessive stress at the
beginning of the study which was modified towards the end. It should also be added that
case 3 had an abundance of emotional experiences and shared many of them in the class;
however, during her interviews and in her reflections, she primarily addressed her bodily,
interpersonal, and transpersonal experiences. This might be the reason why there is little
on the mind and emotion section here.

Since the beginning of the study, case 3 stated that she stressed out easily and it
bothered her because she could observe it as a vicious cycle that affected all aspects of
her life. She uttered:

I tend to be anxious about things in life and when I’m anxious I’m looking
forward into the future and worrying about what will happen then, what will
happen, what if I do this what will happen then, and by being anxious like that, I
just realize I wasn’t present, and I wasn’t able to enjoy the things that were
happening.
Changes in case 3’s emotional domain embarked after the beginning of the workshop which was basically due to the awareness of body-mind-emotion cycle; case 3 could recognize the source (body, mind, or emotion) of the problem and corrected it by paying attention to it. In her first reflection, she reported:

One day, I was feeling very stressed about a student and for about 30 minutes I was very agitated. I complained to a coworker, wrote e-mails about it, and thought constantly about the student and the situation. After about 30 minutes, I noticed the tension in my back. I let it go. That is, I let the muscles relax, and that also allowed my mind to go away from the stress. Throughout that day, I was still mad at the student, but I was able to relax physically and emotionally, and mindfully from it. This is the first time I ever remember doing this consciously in my life.

In compliance with the changes in her emotions due to body-mind-emotion awareness, she stated “If I’m upset about something, I just can relax physically and then the emotional part of it usually fades also.”

In summary, she experienced more pleasant emotions as the workshop proceeded and she expressed to have more light-heartedness, playfulness, excitement, and easy-goingness as a result of emotion awareness. Her stresses and worries had lessened and she had more pleasant physical and mental experiences.

**Interpersonal.** Interpersonal relationship entailed a large segment of the data on case 3. An extensive amount of case 3’s experiences regarding presence occurred in her interpersonal relationships with her students, colleagues, and family. Elevation of her
interpersonal relationships brought her immense joy and excitement which was partly due
to her intrapersonal awareness. At this category, she grew an extensive openness towards
people in the other’s presence section. Her openness affected all the other areas such as
her role and context awareness. She was more accepting of people and could see her
boundaries with people. She gained a lot of self knowledge about herself and her
relationships with other people. These changes made her cognizant of facilitator and
synergist roles, in addition to authority which she mastered at the beginning. She could
also switch among roles. At the context section, she became aware of both synthetic and
analytic awareness; hence, her teaching strategies turned to being more process-oriented
based on the circumstances of the class.

**Other’s presence.** At the interpersonal realms, the data on case 3 indicated she
experienced both the cognitive and metacognitive awareness of other’s presence.
Reviewing the data on case 3 revealed that her focus of other’s presence was basically
cognitive at the beginning of the workshop moving towards both cognitive and
metacognitive gradually. She developed openness and boundary awareness at this field.
More importantly, she was able to see her students’ whole and have a more flowing
interaction.

At the beginning of the study, case 3 seemed to own a more cognitive perspective
of her students. While responding to the questions about absence or partial presence, case
3 stated she was not happy when students were not paying attention or could not meet her
expectations which could be an indication of considering students’ cognitive abilities
merely.
After the beginning of the workshop, she reported more openness with people. The data indicated that this openness led to awareness of metacognitive aspect of other’s presence. She discussed self/other distinction and oneness:

By understanding that I am different from someone else, I can more readily accept his or her behavior. For example, if someone is doing something in their life that I do not agree with or believe in, I can “smooth over” my emotions and judgments because I can accept that they are a different person than me, and what I think is right for me might not be right for them.

Furthermore, learning about boundary awareness altered case 3’s experiences of other’s presence to a more metacognitive state. Her following story indicated the emergence of metacognitive understanding of other’s presence as:

My parents came to visit last weekend and I spent a lot of time observing my mom’s anxiety. She is often anxious about life and events and things. Usually, the things that she is anxious about are not very serious to me. They are not about life and death, or money, or health, or relationships. Her anxiety is about other people’s lives. So, she was talking and talking and talking about people that I know nothing about. She was getting anxious and I was annoyed because none of it meant anything to me. In the midst of this conversation, I asked her if I could braid her hair. It was very spontaneous for me. My mom and I rarely touch, except for hugs. I don’t know why I asked her that… it was nice to bring her into my space. While braiding, I could still feel her anxiety and she kept talking really, really fast, but it was still nice.
Perceiving both aspects of other’s presence seemed to extend to her teaching environment as well and made her more playful and open; she could interact with her students more smoothly because she could see them as a whole person. An example would be:

I’m being aware of if they are at all paying attention or not… I think I’m a bit more playful and for me that comes from being more open. If I’m more open I’m more playful and there is not just like a wall between my students and I. It’s just kind of more flowing the interaction… I think I see them as who they are in my class with me and, occasionally, I’ll start to see them as a whole person so, for example, I have a student right now who’s had anger issues all year with another boy in my classroom and so I feel that one of the boys is more open and he talks about it so I think that he and I have kind of gone beyond the classroom.

She discussed that part of gaining more awareness in her relationships with other people was because of her body awareness and being grounded. It can be concluded that case 3 grew in understanding the wholeness of her students and having a flowing interaction with them which was an evidence of developing metacognitive awareness at this section.

**Role.** Awareness of all roles- authority, facilitator, and synergist- emerged in case 3’s data at interpersonal relationship. At the beginning, case 3 stated to have a distinct role of teacher-student in mind which became more flexible throughout the study and led to the emergence of facilitator and synergist roles.

Before the intervention, case 3 mainly discussed the authority role in her class. It seems that she believed the teacher was the information transferor and the students are
the receivers. Her only concern was either to spend more time one-on-one, or not to get frustrated when students were not listening. Also, she said she was reluctant to give more instructions because her students were not paying attention. These could be considered evidence of case 3’s observing the teacher as authority in the class.

The teacher as the facilitator and synergist gradually emerged in case 3’s interviews and reflection as she started to voice more openness in her relationships. She stated:

I do feel that I was open to new ideas, and I was not set in my habits. For example, I was able to remove myself emotionally at times and observe what was happening in my classroom… I was really listening to what they said… I was thinking more and once they finished, I kind of paused and let everybody pause 5 or maybe 3 or 4 seconds and then I moved on; so that’s one thing that I wouldn’t have done before without this workshop.

Another example of the emergence of facilitator role and the change in her teaching from authority to becoming more student-centered would be:

Before spring break, I was teaching … to my advanced art students and normally I would say this is how you do it and I showed them and instead I said “this is how I do it. Does anyone else know how to do it? What do you do”? And then another student taught us what she does and another student tells how she does it and I don’t think I would have done that before.

Awareness of synergist role and the ability to switch roles in case 3 became more apparent when she started to reflect on her role and questioned the roles she played:
I have noticed that I am a different version of myself in every relationship system I have. I fulfill a role that I have given myself, or was assigned to me. I have been wondering: Can I change my role? Who assigned my role? Why am I this role? What is the other person’s role? What are we together?

Questioning the habitual roles she had before made her rethink her teaching strategies and she reflected on the changes she made in her teaching strategies as follows:

Today I was grading a written assignment and saw that one student just wrote gibberish down. I could tell that he could barely read and write. So, I had enough time to call him to my desk and do the assignment together. I read it to him and he told me the answers and I wrote them down for him. It felt really good because that is the type of education that this student needs. He is a special education student and I had the opportunity to actually give him his required accommodations. I don’t always have the time to do that.

Case 3’s more direct way of uttering these changes in her could be observed in these sentences:

My perspective in my teaching, in regards to presence, has changed because I feel that before I was functioning like a robot or a machine. This was not an example of teaching in the present. I had my goal in mind and I set out every day to reach it. If the goal was for everyone to finish their drawing, I would urge the students to finish without taking anything else into consideration… Now I see that the goal is not always the purpose of something… Shouldn’t I be happy that the student enjoyed the process, but did not happen meet the goal? In some circumstances, I
can let go of the end goal and actually make the goal the process. I see that now, whereas before I would never have seen it that way. Now, I am able to actually SEE what is happening in my room and with my students and make better choices and observations about the students, the lesson, and my teaching. This realization is freeing and I feel that it will change my perspective on some of the lessons and activities in my classroom.

Competence of switching roles has been accompanied with transpersonal experiences in the above sentences, specifically when she referred to her process-oriented experiences in teaching; she could observe everything in her students and act in partnership with them. She felt the connection better in her class, despite expressing that she put up a wall between herself and her students. The following story from her class could also refer to her growing mastery over switching roles between authority and synergist in which she both recognized the essence of a serious talk with the student and, simultaneously, feeling the connection and partnership:

She was turning her projects late or wasn’t turning in and, at that time, I felt like the adult in her life who is making sure she is doing what she should be doing as a 14-year-old student. That’s what it felt like. It felt like I was kind of her parent and I don’t know. Feelings were strong and I think I touched on something that she could relate to or she understood or she realized. I don’t know if she she is probably realized before that she is not turning her work in. She is smarter than that but it was a big deal.
In conclusion, she seemed to have made the biggest changes in her teaching by gaining mastery over role awareness and switching roles. She could consciously play the role that was appropriate in that moment and feel her connection to the students, as well.

Context. Context awareness in the interpersonal relationship had both forms of analytic and synthetic for case 3. Case 3 showed more examples of analytical context in her teaching before the intervention compared to the balanced synthetic and analytic context awareness after the beginning of the workshop. She felt she was more accepting, less judging, and less frustrated in her relations with the students. Thereupon, her teaching changed from goal-oriented to a more process-oriented style.

Case 3’s context awareness was basically analytic before the workshop. In her pre-interview, she was more concerned about why students were not listening which made her less patient. Also, she would describe her presence as a happy and joyful moment when everything in class lined up; these could be some examples to indicate the analytical form of context for case 3. Substantial analytical context promptly altered to both a combination of analytical and synthetic experience:

I think I’m more open with students and what I mean by open I mean it is less judging… The way in which I see my presence in teaching is by my new ability to stop before judging and acting. Before I would have reacted to what I thought I saw/heard. Now, I realized that if I suspend judgment, I sometimes find out that what I thought I saw/heard is not true. In that time of suspension, I have learned more information about what I think I saw/heard and by doing that, I can actually see/hear the situation. This helps me to react more appropriately to the situation.
Case 3 stated that her new experience, synthetic awareness of the context, had changed her goals in class, as well; she had become more process-oriented in her teaching:

I think that it has slowed me down a little bit in my teaching, in my lessons, and in my and in the way that I interact with them because there is not a rush. Because I can still get everything done. And I don’t have to feel the rush to get things done. They will get done because they have to (laughing).

She also believed the new experience has even changed her reaction to the situations which were frustrating before; she developed a sense of more humor in those situations:

I think mostly when I’m getting frustrated with the students because I just you know I’ve said to them 5 times what to do and then they still don’t know what to do. I just it kind of makes me laugh now instead of getting frustrated and say yeah right. This person doesn’t listen or I need to say it to them individually like an invitation for them to do this thing and I think I’ve just got I don’t know humor or light-heartedness in that interaction instead of being annoyed or frustrated.

An explicit example that she used in her pre-interview and then changed, regarding the context, was her one-on-one interactions. She described her context awareness during lesson demonstration as:

Usually, well, first of all, we are very physically close you know people are sometimes touching the person next to them because we are so close to each other and it makes it really easy to laugh or to make a joke or just kind of all be as one
for a minute. It’s good. It’s nice. I think around this one a couple of conversations I went one-on-one with some students I could feel that.

She also expressed that feeling more connected to the students had changed her context awareness.

In summary, context awareness made her more open and less judging. She did not get frustrated in class easily and, instead, she had grown light-heartedness, in addition to a feeling of connectedness. Furthermore, she became more process-oriented in her teaching which was a significant change in her teaching.

Transpersonal. Transpersonal experiences of case 3 took place both at interpersonal, being *there* and intrapersonal, being *with*, domain. She was the only participant who shared transpersonal ideas in her pre-interview, before the intervention, stating that she does not think during present moments; however, the majority of her transpersonal experiences were shared after the intervention. In the transpersonal relationship, she could observe her wholeness and connection to *being* at the being *there* field. Interpersonally, she could observe herself in relation with others and perceiving other’s whole was easier for her.

**Being there.** Transpersonal experiences at the being *there* field were shared promptly after the beginning of the intervention. Some of her transpersonal experiences at this field were connection to her intuition and psychic abilities, understanding *being* and presence, and noticing her authentic *self*. She stated “I have been able to notice this cycle [body-mind-emotion] in the moment in which it is happening.” Her definition of
presence was “a form of being in unity with what is around you.” She stated that she had experiences of presence and *being* in her personal life, in addition to her teaching:

I am more aware of my presence or lack of presence. In general, I KNOW about presence now… Now I find myself watching things unfold before me as they are happening. …I also think that we are *being* at times in our lives that are traumatic, significant, surprising, or life changing. We are there at those times, “being” in the moment and acting truly like ourselves with no preconceived thoughts or judgments. I see *being* as synonymous with authentic. Experiencing her authentic *self* is an example of her *being* experience.

Awareness of transpersonal realm had even affected the absent moments in case 3. She developed a sense of self-witnessing at those moments. Her opinion about absence was as follows:

I’m more aware of the moment when I’m making this change or making this adjustment so it definitely brings my awareness to myself. Right there in that moment and that will sustain for a bit…I think now I can now I know what I’m doing. I know when it is happening or when it has happened you know in the past hour or earlier in the day so I can think about it. I can reflect on it but also even in the moment if I am aware that I’m just being quick and to the point trying to end the interaction I don’t know sometimes I just choose to do it (laughing).

*Being with.* Case 3 experienced transpersonal relationship at interpersonal domain, as well. Perceiving the wholeness of others in a relationship was the major transpersonal experience case 3 had, in addition to being more accepting and connected
with the people. She further explained that perceiving students’ whole mostly happened about the students she knew better and not all the students in her class. She said “I get the chance to see whole of the students that are struggling or having issue or have a bad home life.”

The other transpersonal experience she shared was becoming more accepting to people. She shared how she became a more attentive listener to people, “I was really listening to what they said …paused after that…and then moved on.” Correspondingly, she believed that she could experience self/other in life and use it as a positive tool to help a relationship. A brief explanation of how she changed would be “I am a different version of myself in every relationship system I have.” This change also expanded to her teaching strategies and, as stated before, she illustrated it as:

In some circumstances, I can let go of the end goal and actually make the goal the process. I see that now, whereas before I would never have seen it that way. Now, I am able to actually SEE what is happening in my room and with my students and make better choices and observations about the students, the lesson, and my teaching. This realization is freeing and I feel that it will change my perspective on some of the lessons and activities in my classroom.

Connection to people was the other transpersonal quality that grew in her interpersonal relationship, “it also felt like we had this connection because I was showing that I cared and she hopefully saw that.” She talked about this invisible moment of connection between people which was a form of transpersonal relationship. She connected to the other person and her being. In brief, the transpersonal experiences of
case 3 at the interpersonal field entailed more connectedness and acceptance towards people and perceiving their wholeness.

**Case 4**

Case 4 was a master’s student in the teaching program who was doing her internship as a teacher in a kindergarten class. It was her first year of actual teaching and she taught math, science, and social science in the afternoons. She had neither prior familiarity with the topic of presence, nor any yoga practices. Her only incentives for enrolling for the course entailed the graduate credit hours offered and her interest to do something with her roommate who was one of the participants of the study, as well. She stated she would like to know about the topic, though.

Case 4 fostered some presence and showed development in all three areas of relationship throughout the workshop; however, she did not reveal astounding changes in one specific area. Compared to in-service teachers, case 4’s changes were not significant. She showed traces of growing awareness and enhanced presence in all fields but those changes were difficult to be pinpointed exactly. In other words, case 4 revealed some instances of body, mind, emotion awareness but the number of examples she reported were few compared to in-service teachers. Nonetheless, she revealed a deep experience in the metacognitive understanding of other’s presence when she described the presence of her two students in class.

Case 4’s growth had a slight upward slope throughout the intervention. At the beginning, she did not seem to relate to the topic; during her pre-interview, her responses to the questions were irrelevant at times; she was bewildered by some questions and did
not have a response. Gradually, concepts became meaningful for her and she shared her experiences easily. Although she the number of examples she provided for each question were few, her interviews and reflections indicated that she grew at both intrapersonal and interpersonal realms along with the emergence of transpersonal awareness by the end of the study. The only point is that changes seemed less profound compared to in-service teachers because she could not provide enough evidence for her responses.

**Intrapersonal.** Case 4 seemed to have developed an understanding of intrapersonal relationship in all areas of body, mind, and emotion. In the intrapersonal relationship, she grew body awareness, mind awareness, emotion awareness, and became aware of their interconnectedness. She observed her bodily placement and was able to prevent her mental pre-occupation with or emotional frustration. To reiterate, this part is shorter because she shared few examples compared to in-service teachers.

**Body.** At the intrapersonal relationship, case 4’s data indicated that she developed body awareness, sense awareness, and awareness of body-mind-emotion integration in the workshop. She was more cognizant of her body postures, movements, and sensations. She could observe body-mind-emotion and wholeness better by the end of the study.

Body awareness commenced to grow in case 4 after the beginning of the intervention. During her pre-interview, there was almost no mention of the body when she was talking about presence, but she shared body awareness traces in her first reflection paper and afterwards. The examples she had for the body awareness were to a great extent practical, revealing that she used body awareness in her professional and personal life:
I do realize like today was a really kind of a more kind of stressful hectic day and I did a couple of times I did like I rolled my shoulders back and it kind of helped me relax and just kind of take that second for myself.

The practical side of the body awareness grew even more towards the end of the workshop and was somehow accompanied with a transpersonal understanding of the body, as well. In her final interview, she shared:

I can definitely tell I am more conscious of like my placement of my body, how I am standing… today during our read aloud I was sitting really up straight, my shoulders were really pushed back but I wasn’t tense. It was a relaxed kind of let myself you know not hold all of that stress across my chest and right yeah I am more aware of it. I just realized that I am more observant and just I feel I am more in tune with what my body is telling me so I just think I can like feel it interacting with me at the right times.

She even used body movements to become present again when she was absent. She said:

Normally I stand up or move around or if I’m tired I’m not gonna sit there and let myself be tired. I’m gonna you know get up and move because getting my blood pumping would help. Um normally I just I feel like it’s normally when I have a second to really calm down. I change my position or I move around the room or I start walking around instead of being stationary.

Furthermore, in her reflections, she expressed that body awareness including sense awareness assisted her to experience calmness and wholeness:
I’m also thinking realizing that my whole body can hear has affected me. I think it has made me more sensitive to stimuli in the environment and the stimuli that surround me. I realized that my sight is very powerful and my smell. They kind of control the other senses and pull more weight than touch, hear, or taste. Currently I am working on making them more balanced in my body and for all of them to be equal... I feel like a sense of calm and just being happen in my body... I am at one in my body and I feel so relaxed.

She had some stories of how she observed body-mind-emotion integration in herself such as her uncle’s accident and how she felt after that. However, she had few and somehow superficial examples of body awareness. In summary, she seemed to have developed an understanding of body awareness, specifically compared to the pre-interview when she had no familiarity with the concept.

**Mind.** Mind was the other subcategory that emerged in case 3’s data at intrapersonal relationship. Examining the data, revealed that case 4 related to the presence primarily through the mind aspect; nonetheless, she was able to balance the role of mind in her life towards the end of the study. In the pre-interview, a great part of the instances she provided for presence or absence belonged to mind; following are some of the examples for the absence:

I wasn’t paying any attention... I realize I didn’t get anything from it or just that I’m missing a piece so that I really feel bad. I try to like I don’t know google something. I try to figure out something I missed. Trying to fill it out... you know you’re watching them as you’re talking and giving directions but you are
distracted by that because you know you are not fully paying attention to what you are doing but yeah I definitely do. It’s all mental.

This pure sense of mental relation to presence became more balanced and moderate after the beginning of the intervention and getting acquainted with the concept of body-mind-emotion. Also, her awareness of body-mind-emotion cycle changed the way she was describing events in her teaching and life. She said “I have noticed that I don’t think about myself when I am teaching. My mind is in forty different directions.”

Similarly, she described her mind pre-occupation as a challenge to presence:

I feel like I am in the doing mindset because I am always on the go and moving. I have very little extra time. I am constantly thinking of all the things I have to get done or accomplished by the end of the day. I don’t give myself enough being time because I am constantly on the go.

Despite she expressed her being busy and mentally pre-occupied were the major distractions from being present, she illustrated presence as “it washes over me and I have no thoughts of anything in my head” at the mental field. In brief, knowledge and practice of body-mind-emotion integration balanced mind’s role in case 4 throughout the study.

**Emotion.** Emotion was the other aspect of intrapersonal relationship case 4 talked about all through the study. The emotional aspect emerged in case 4’s intrapersonal relationship, but it had a small part and was mostly referred to in an integrative way along with body and mind. At the beginning, case 4 used the words “feel bad” or “stressed” for the absence and words such as “happy” and rewarding” for the presence in the pre-interview. Later, the majority of the stories she shared during and after the intervention
had an emotional tone which discussed body-mind-emotion in a more integrative way; however, the instances that could directly point to the emotional aspect were small. Some of these examples would be: “I guess I realize that I just feel kind of calm… I think I’m more patient… I just think I’m more aware. I think more peaceful.”

**Interpersonal.** Similar to the other participants, case 4 portrayed her interpersonal relationships at three aspects of other’s presence, role, and context; however, she shared fewer examples compared to the experienced in-service teachers. It is noteworthy to state that, despite her little information at this field, her metacognitive experiences of other’s presence was significant. She could connect to her students’ being and presence well.

**Other’s presence.** At the interpersonal domain, other’s presence was one of the themes that existed in case 4’s data. Both cognitive and metacognitive experiences of other’s presence revealed themselves in case 4’s stories just after the intervention started. Before the intervention, she discussed interpersonal relationship in tasks that went well in her class and she felt her students were happy. She reflected on her openness and how she felt towards students as “This week I feel like I was a lot more open. I was open to not only others’ ideas and opinions but also I felt like I was more open-minded to my students.”

One noteworthy example she shared about her students indicated how she felt the presence of two of her students. The way she was describing them was not just how they acted or how she observed their cognitive abilities but rather a metacognitive experience that she did not recognize before. She stated:
… he has a very big presence in our room. Like you can feel him in the room and it’s not because he might not be because he is loud or whatever he is doing is off task. He’s just, he’s not a big kid … but I feel like he just occupies like all the space in our room and he just and he just I don’t know anything he does is so big and dramatic… he is always there… It’s not his whole body. It’s just everything about him is so big and just and actually one of my little kids, he is very tiny and I think he has just an equally, um, big presence because he I call him little alien because everything that he does is just he’s like he’s dropped from the other planet and everything he does is new to him and he is like excited about everything… He just loves his life. And I think just that happy presence is really important in the classroom because we do have a lot of negative with our one child who is who has a lot of struggles and with this little guy he is just so sweet and innocent that really makes a good presence in our room too and I see him as a whole as just I think he just affects the other kids. The kids feed off of him…

She vividly pointed to the metacognitive experiences of these children and showed how their whole affected her class and teaching. This experience did not exist before the intervention.

Role. In the interpersonal realm, there were few instances of referring to roles by case 4, although it seemed that she gained an awareness of all roles of teacher as an authority, teacher as a facilitator, and teacher as a synergist or a partner. Some of the stories she shared could indirectly refer to the role in case 4. In her first interview, she merely discussed how she transferred the knowledge to the students, authority, but in the
final interview she uttered that she genuinely listened to the students while she was not searching for a response; it was rather trying to build up on the students questions and interacting with them as a partner, or a synergist. In response to another question, she confirmed this idea stating “I see that as an interchange like I see that all doing the same thing like we are not like me leading them, they leading me.” Based on the data, case 4 developed an understanding of different roles but they were not directly and explicitly discussed in her data.

**Context.** Similar to other interpersonal aspects, case 4 shared little on the context awareness; although, traces of both analytic and synthetic awareness could be observed in her data. The initial interview contained an example that could refer to analytic context at her present moments:

Well today we were talking about the weather and all of the kids were really connecting with just being able to tell me what it was like outside and they were giving me examples of what they were doing and different seasons and everything and every single one of them were able to relate to something. Like whether it be in the winter they were able to build a snowman or in the summer they would go to the pool but just everyone and didn’t matter what level or anything they were able to participate and it just went really well so I was happy with that.

In comparison to the mere analytical context awareness, she seemed to have developed synthetic awareness, as well, by denoting the following example from her class:
…we were doing boom-shake a-boom song. We were all singing and we were all
dancing and all the kids were involved. I was involved in it too. It was just like
we all were just enjoying the moment and all having fun and it was so positive
and it was so exciting and they loved it and I loved it because they loved it. You
know so it was just I was really present there because I was like oh look at them
doing this. Look at them we’re doing this and it was just a really good moment so
I could tell that I was really in the moment with them.

Finding more direct references to the context could be tricky at this point.

**Transpersonal.** Transpersonal relationship also existed in the data collected from
case 4 at both intrapersonal, being *there*, and interpersonal domains, being *with*; however,
similar to the interpersonal relationship, there was not ample evidence for each section
separately. At this field, case 4 became familiar with the transpersonal concept and grew
a basic understanding at both sections of intrapersonal and interpersonal.

**Being there.** At the intrapersonal domain, two traces of transpersonal relationship
could be named for case 4. First, she reported a new awareness that made her more
peaceful and she believed it was the result of the body awareness. She described this new
awareness in her classroom as:

> It’s just kind of I’m going with it and I don’t think I’m really mean or I’m nicer or
> something you know I’m still me and but I think my interactions with the kids can
> be effective sometimes. It can be richer and you know if I’m not as present I
> won’t be so as I said just awareness …
Second, the pictures she portrayed about her presence and absence changed after the intervention and had a more transpersonal tone. “The presence just washes over me, like a sigh of relief” was her illustration of presence and then she expressed her awareness even over absent moments:

I think it’s a struggle sometimes to be fully present. I might not be for a little bit but it comes to those and I’m aware of it but that I was absent and now I am present and I can tell but I don’t know. Sometimes I don’t know if I am or not because I’m not aware of that time but I think it will keep improving.

Being with. Case 4, in her interpersonal relationships, had few experiences that could indicate a transpersonal relationship. First, she developed self-observation or witnessing in her relationships; in her own words, she developed an “outsider perspective” through which she observed her body experiences and all her actions while working with children. Furthermore, she stated to have become more present in her teaching and reminded it to herself as “Don’t think about your response, don’t think about you know what kind of question you could use to extend them and just be there.” In those moments of presence, she said “I could tell that I was really in the moment with them.” She also reported to have experienced fluidity and being with students in present moments.

Case 5

Case 5 was another teaching fellow in the teacher education program doing her first year of actual teaching in kindergarten. She was teaching math, science, and social studies in the afternoon to kindergartners. She said she had some yoga practices before
but had not done yoga regularly. Her acquaintance with mindfulness went back to a book called *Mind-up* she had read before. Case 5 was eager to practice meditation and learn ways to implement mindfulness in her teaching. The *Mind-up* book and knowing more about mindfulness were her motivations in registering for the course.

Similar to case 4, case 5 did not grow significantly in one specific area but she had a slight upward movement in all the relationship types. She did not share many examples for each category and it was difficult to provide exact instances to refer to one concept at a time. Moreover, her responses to some questions seemed just a recitation of what she had heard in the workshop which revealed another reason for stating she developed superficially compared to in-service teachers.

However, case 5 revealed some changes in her perspective from the beginning to the end of the study. Based on her responses in the pre-interview, it seemed that she did not relate to the topic at the beginning; she had difficulty responding to some questions and either gave short answers to questions or almost veered off from the question. At the end, she could relate to the questions and tried to respond them utilizing her experiences; although her changes seemed less profound compared to the in-service teachers. Moreover, it should be noted that she was absolutely committed to the course and not only attended all the sessions, but also reported practicing the tasks regularly.

**Intrapersonal.** Case 5’s data indicated some change at the intrapersonal domain. At this field and in the body section, she connected to body awareness, sense awareness, and body-mind-emotion cycle well. She became cognizant of her body postures in sitting and standing and had unique sensation practices. At the mind section, she could manage
her mind wandering more effectively. Finally, at the emotion section, she developed emotion awareness. However, her final interview revealed that mind was still a dominant part of her intrapersonal relationships.

**Body.** Body awareness was the first section appearing in case 4’s data at intrapersonal relationship. Similar to other participants, she discussed body awareness, sense awareness, and awareness of body-mind-emotion integration in her data.

Body awareness surfaced in case 5’s data only after the beginning of the intervention. There was no mention of the body in the pre-interview; adversely, body became a large part of case 5’s reflections and other interviews’ data. She shared several practical experiences of body in her life and teaching such as shoulder rolling, sitting straight, and sense awareness. She also commented on how much sharper her senses became:

> When I was aware and paying attention to my senses, I felt as if they were heightened or stronger. Things were clearer, I felt I had a sharper sense of hearing, and I picked up on smells that I wouldn’t have done if I was not aware. At this moment, I am aware of my senses; however, I do not know how mindful I am of all three senses that we had been focusing on at the same time. I feel as if eyesight is the most dominant sense right now.

She enhanced her informal body practices and stated she could notice how her body feels inside the classroom:

> This past week I feel like I have been more irritable, so I noticed my body tensing even for small things that were not on the right track. Before this workshop, I
don’t think I would have noticed this tension… During some misbehaviors, I’ve noticed that before that my body gets really tense and I notice that when it happens now and like what we’ve talked about I roll my shoulders back or pay attention to my breathing and so I’ve noticed that during misbehaviors…. Usually it’s not different I’m still tense up but I’m aware of it. But I think at the beginning of the year when I started teaching kindergarten I didn’t notice that at all. I would really just get worked up and I wasn’t aware of it.

Her mid-interview clearly indicated that she had learned how to be aware of the body and release the tension that might disturb her:

Usually when I get home I tend to sit a lot and do work and my apartment has really uncomfortable chairs and I don’t know if it has to do with this but I would sit for really long time and I think just recently I’ve been getting up and taking breaks and walking around more so I’m noticing how my body is feeling more after sitting for really long periods of time and doing work… Instead of getting really worked up when I get tense and I get to keep tense and tense I kind of take a moment to think about like why I’m feeling tense. Take a moment to breathe and take my shoulders back to tuck about; then it doesn’t really escalate as much as it did before.

She also became cognizant of body-mind-emotion cycle and shared some examples in which her body awareness led to presence. She utilized it as a technique to engage her students and herself again when there was a distraction:
I have all the students in my class take a break and taking a break for myself too and then we kind of rewind and trying to begin again or might have them take an energizer to be able to refocus and that’s helped. So just taking a break for a moment. Move around or sometimes I just turn off the lights and have them down for a moment like without talking and then we try to start again. In summary, she developed a great deal of body awareness throughout the intervention and could extend it to her teaching, as well.

**Mind.** Mind was the other section in case 5’s data at the intrapersonal category. Case 5 seemed to grow a balance in the use of mind, despite mind’s dominance in discussing presence during the pre-interview. She named mind wandering as one of her major problems and the reason for absence. She said “You don’t get as much out of it when your mind is wandering.” Similarly, she stated “when I have a lot going on. It’s hard to focus my mind on the present and not think about the things that I have to do later in the day.” Discussing mind reduced drastically during the intervention for case 5 and there was practically no direct reference to mind in reflection papers and mid-interview.

Challenges of case 5 for being present remained the same at the end of the study but there was one primary difference: she was aware of the challenges and had the ability to become present again. An illustration would be:

Sometimes I tend to think about like a lesson that I just did or a behavior problem that I just dealt with right before or I’m thinking about what step I’m going to think next about the student or what lesson I have planned next but I feel like for the most part as the year progressed I am more just in the present moment…I
think this workshop like I said before has made me think of things differently and become aware but I feel like I’m not always present all the time and I know that no one can be. I think I said this before I think I’m more present in class.

In conclusion, introduction of body awareness balanced the mind’s role in case 5. She also grew an awareness of her mind state.

*Emotion.* At the intrapersonal domain, emotion was the third element that emerged in case 5’s data. The major change she reported about her emotions was becoming aware of her emotions. Unlike the importance of emotion, case 5’s data entailed limited references to the emotion. In the pre-interview, she only utilized anxiety and frustration for the absent times. This small number increased slightly in the other interviews, but not in her reflections. Being conscious of her emotions assisted her to understand why she got angry or frustrated; consequently, both anger and frustration could be prevented. Feeling good or positive were also repeatedly used by her describing the present moments.

*Interpersonal.* In the interpersonal relationship, she had few changes at perceiving other’s presence, role, and context. She became a more attentive listener and understood her students better at the other’s presence section. At the role section, she briefly discussed becoming more engaged in her students’ learning and being able to switch roles. Nonetheless, authority was the dominant role for her. At the context section, she reported to have a better understanding of class environment.
**Other’s presence.** In interpersonal relationship, awareness of other’s presence emerged in two sections of cognitive and metacognitive for case 5. She became a more attentive listener and more accepting. At the beginning, the only sentence that could indicate awareness of other’s presence in the pre-interview was “I feel like everyone’s on task” which could be assumed as cognitive awareness of students’ presence. Cognitive awareness of others existed throughout the intervention but metacognitive awareness was added after the beginning of the workshop. She believed that the openness developed during the workshop made her listen to students more carefully; she had a willingness to accept suggestions which could indicate cognitive awareness of other’s presence. She further added that “I think I’m maybe more understanding of why students are acting the way they’re acting and before I wasn’t really thinking about that. I was just focusing on myself and wondering why they are not following my directions.” This can be an indication of both metacognitive and cognitive awareness of other’s presence. Other than the aforementioned examples, she hardly stated anything that could directly refer to other’s presence.

**Role.** Case 5 discussed role in her interpersonal relationships, as well. Reviewing case 5’s interviews and reflections showed that she moved from assuming teacher as the authority of the class to the awareness that teacher might have various roles. This trend can be well portrayed as follows: in her pre-interview, she stated “I feel things don’t go as well when I’m not thinking in the moment exactly right there when they don’t go as I had intentionally wanted them to go,” which showed how she expected everything to work as she planned to, teacher as authority. During the workshop, she characterized a
more flexible teacher-student relationship as “one that is fair, consistent, genuine, and kind. In this relationship the student and teacher should work as a team and should be able to trust one another. Also, both the teacher and students should learn from one another.” Her ideas pointed to the awareness of teacher as authority and as facilitator.

Finally, the post-interview contained several examples of switching roles. This awareness is well illustrated in the following examples:

I feel like instead of getting worked up about things that are not going well kind of like what we said before doing your teaching dance and I’m still figuring that out but I feel like I’m better at that now. Just kind of going with the flow and whatever happens happens. Just go with how the students are feeling that day rather than forcing my plans the way that I planned them… I think that when students are engaged, I’m engaged too and those are the times when I feel like I’m just present and then at the moment when I’m not worrying about anything else just what my students are doing and what I’m doing at that time… It was a teacher-directed and student-centered so I was like the lead and they would share.

She seemed to have been aware of all the roles and implemented them based on the context of the class.

*Context.* In interpersonal relationship, context awareness emerged in case 5’s data only in the post-interview. Her interviews and reflections showed that she probably became more aware of the time, place, and theme working together towards the end of the intervention. In her final interview, she uttered that she had a better understanding of
class orientation: “I catch it early on now.” Another example would be when she
described the general environment of the class:

…towards the end of the school year, I feel like my students are distracted so
when they are distracted I feel distracted because I’m thinking about they should
be doing so that’s kind of distracting. I feel like it might be making me less calm
because I know that like they are ready for the school year to be over and it’s hard
for them to focus while I’m talking and teaching so when they’re not focused I
feel like what I’m saying is not getting through to them so I’m just thinking about
that and not focused on my teaching.

The above examples might reveal both synthetic and analytic awareness of the
context; perceiving the orientation of the context without thinking about it such as “being
happy when students are happy” was an instance of synthetic context awareness in
primary levels. What she shared about her classroom could be another illustration of
synthetic awareness:

I think in the classroom, um, if someone does something it reflects everyone else.
So if one student is acting silly, other students will feed off of that and it’s just all
connected. Um, I guess I would be the self-witness watching that happen.

Transpersonal. Transpersonal relationship for case 5, although small, could be
categorized in two parts of intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships. At this field,
case 5 only referred to understanding her whole at the being there domain and feeling
connected to her students’ being at the interpersonal section which were few in number.
The detailed descriptions of these changes are as follows:
**Being there.** At transpersonal realm, the intrapersonal experiences of case 5 were limited. Primarily, she referred to experiencing wholeness. At one point, in her reflections, she said “I noticed my whole body and mind relax and become present and aware of my surroundings.” On the other hand, she explained how absence affected her wholeness:

I felt tension in my back and shoulders. I also felt that my mind was racing and my thoughts were jumbled. These feelings affected the way my body felt for the rest of the day and it continued to feel this way after I got home. These feelings did affect my feelings of wholeness.

**Being with.** Corresponding to the being there section, case 5 had few transpersonal experiences at the interpersonal realm. Those few examples primarily referred to the feeling of unity with the students. She said:

It feels like one unit during that time…Just when they’re engaged, into the activity that we are doing like the like when I’m doing something that I’m really engaged and I lose track of time and when they’re doing that I have the same feelings…So it was kind of connected during that time. I wasn’t necessarily thinking that I was separate from them.

**Summary**

Participants of this study experienced presence as relationship in three categories of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal. Participants’ experiences in each category were primarily concentrated around two or three themes which became the subcategories of the relationship type. In the intrapersonal relationship, themes of body,
mind, and emotion emerged. In the interpersonal relationship—other’s presence, role, and context revealed themselves as subcategories. Transpersonal relationship had its two subcategories originating from either intrapersonal, being *there*, or interpersonal relationships, being *with*.

At the intrapersonal relationship, the data showed that body awareness and awareness of body-mind-emotion cycle were experienced by all the participants. They could all observe how connected body-mind-emotion were and how making changes in one of the areas could affect the other two. By understanding this cycle, they expressed they could easily recognize when, for example, a misbehavior made them tense in the back or shoulder; they found their mind racing, and got frustrated after that. They reported that releasing the tension in their body in a situation like this engaged their mind again and made them feel better. By becoming familiar with the body-mind-emotion cycle, their descriptions were so integrated that it was hard to pinpoint single element. Furthermore, mind domination was modified and participants stated to have felt emotionally more refreshed in their classes. In general, all the participants found body awareness and awareness of body-mind-emotion cycle totally beneficial in their classrooms.

The interpersonal relationship, participants’ relationship with others, revealed itself in three areas of other’s presence awareness, role awareness, and context awareness. In contrast with the intrapersonal relationship that only dealt with participants as one system, interpersonal relationships entailed the dominant system over the participants’ relationship with the people around them. Because the system involved more than one
person, the subcategories were more complex and other subsections emerged in the subcategories. For example, regarding the other’s presence, the observable pattern in all the participants was moving from a cognitive awareness of other’s presence to a state of having both cognitive and metacognitive awareness. In the teaching environment, in compliance with this understanding, participants had made strategic changes in their teaching and expressed positive effects in themselves and their teaching. In the role awareness subcategory, participants of the study seemed to have developed an awareness of authority, facilitator, and synergist; in addition to the ability to switch from one role to the other consciously. At the end, all participants reported to have observed learning a reciprocal relationship between themselves and their students in the teaching environment. Finally, in the context subcategory, participants’ data showed both analytical and synthetic awareness; synthetic awareness emerged in participants gradually and only after the beginning of the intervention.

Transpersonal relationship was the third type of relationship participants experienced presence through. Moving to the transpersonal domain originated from both the intrapersonal, being there, and interpersonal relationships, being with. In this study, when participants expressed their opinions about different topics, they explicitly referred to their transpersonal experience sporadically; all those transpersonal moments were illustrated by an example from their lives or teaching that immediately followed that transpersonal experience; it applied to all the participants. To reiterate, transpersonal experiences started to emerge during the workshop and were evident in the participants’ reflection papers. Scanning of the data confirmed that transpersonal experiences
originated either from the intrapersonal category, being *there*, or the interpersonal relationship, being *with*.

The findings indicated that participants communicated at all of these relationship domains. It could be communication with the body at the intrapersonal field, communications with the presence of a student at the interpersonal relationship, or a higher level of relationship at either the intrapersonal or interpersonal fields. There were plenty of similarities and differences among the participants. Similarities included developing body awareness, sense awareness, boundary awareness, and awareness of interpersonal or transpersonal relationships. But differences were only in the way participants experienced their presence. In other words, each of the participants followed its own path of change; their paths were individualized.

In conclusion, participants articulated to have experienced a change in their perspective regarding their *self*, intrapersonal relationship, and their relationship with people, interpersonal relationship; in addition to an emergence of a new level of relationship called transpersonal. They expressed the intervention was beneficial in their teaching and life. Formal and informal tasks of the intervention helped the participants to explore their *selves* with awareness. They consciously experienced their bodies, minds, and emotions. They stated to have gained a *self*knowledge that made their lives and teaching more enjoyable. On the other hand, they improved their interpersonal relationships extensively by developing openness, acceptance, and flexibility in various areas. Their teaching strategies seemed to be different from the past and had become more student-centered; at the end of the study, they considered teaching a reciprocal
learning process. Moreover, by becoming cognizant of their own being and their students’ being, participants grew a sense of respect and flexibility in their teaching.
Chapter 5: Discussions

This chapter is organized based on the emerged themes of the data in alignment with the research questions of the study. The overarching research question was “How can presence experience be fostered among teachers through awakening body awareness?” accompanied with several subordinate questions to make the research line more accurate. The subordinate questions were a) How do teachers understand presence? b) How is body awareness defined in teachers’ life and praxis? c) How can body awareness be integrated in the teacher education program? d) How does presence change teachers’ different kinds of relationships? and e) What qualities can be observed as a result of enhanced presence? This research utilized case study design to collect data. The data were later extensively coded; thereupon, some categories and subcategories were shaped. Findings of the study largely satisfied the research questions.

Findings indicated that although presence was an unfamiliar topic for the teachers, they developed an extensive understanding of it and defined presence as the experience of wholeness in which they had harmony with their surroundings. Their presence manifested in three themes as three areas of relationship: intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal. Themes were compared and contrasted among the cases and in relation with the primary questions of the study. Thereupon, this chapter will initially provide a summary of the findings in a more holistic and speculative format. Later, the findings will be interpreted in response to the research questions, their implications to the real world of teaching will be discussed, and finally the domains for future research on this topic will be introduced.
Summary of Findings

Findings of the study are organized in two sections: a) a general summary of teachers’ experiences of presence and its changes b) summary of cases separately on enhancing presence. The first section provides an outlook of how presence was perceived by the teachers at the beginning and at the end of the study. The results will be interpreted in a speculative design to narrate how the participants changed throughout the study in the designated relationship types. In other words, the general pattern of growth in three relationship areas are summarized. The second section intends to summarize the findings of the study on each case separately. It serves as a brief narrative of each case in the journey of enhancing presence experience. Following paragraphs encompass these two sections:

General summary. Presence was the focus of the current study which unfolded as relationship. It was studied in two areas: experiences of the teachers and the effects of the presence intervention on teachers. In the first area, experiences of the teachers revealed that presence could be categorized under intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal relationships. Participants described their presence in their relationship with themselves- intrapersonal relationship, their relationships at workplace and at home with other people- interpersonal relationship, and an abstract higher level of relationship- transpersonal relationship. In the second area, the process of change in teachers disclosed a general pattern of enhancing presence in them; in other words, despite the individualized path for each of the participants, a holistic overview would denote a converging pattern of fostering presence in all of them. Following paragraphs will
provide a summary of each of the emerged categories and their path of change throughout the intervention.

**Intrapersonal relationships.** In the intrapersonal relationship, participants perceived presence through their bodies, minds, and emotions. At this domain, they defined presence as feeling and understanding their wholeness. Participants gained awareness of their bodies, minds, and emotions; more importantly, they experienced how these elements work in an integrated manner. In a more detailed description of this category, it should be noted that body was the missing element before the intervention; mind was the dominant element in all the participants at the beginning; and participants used their emotions to describe themselves in all stages. The intervention bred some changes for the cases; they experienced body awareness; mind was deemphasized and had a more balanced role in this category; and emotion awareness led to more positive feelings in participants. Towards the end of the study, these subcategories merged further into an integrated whole; because they were becoming interconnected.

Participants’ changes at the intrapersonal domain had concrete and practical representations in their life and teaching, as well. Formal and informal tasks of the intervention enabled the cases to be more cognizant of their body postures, recognize their bodily tensions and release them, and develop sense awareness at the body section. The body awareness effects in their teaching entailed induced energy and reduced burn out. In the mind section, participants could lessen their mind travelling and attend more to the present moment. As a result, they were more grounded in their bodies and could manage their negative thoughts or judgments. In regards to emotion, their gained
awareness led to understanding their own emotions and being able to manage them. As all the intrapersonal subcategories were getting more interconnected, participants became more skillful to notice when something was disturbing them as soon as it occurred and traced its results in their bodies, minds, and emotions; hence, they gained the ability of fixing the problem in the whole cycle with awareness.

**Interpersonal relationship.** The emerging subcategories in the interpersonal relationship included other’s presence, role, and context. Participants described interpersonal relationships as understanding the wholeness of other people and connecting to them with awareness. They obtained the ability of observing themselves in relation with other people. Furthermore, interpersonal relationships had a complex nature, and each section could be divided to some parts itself; other’s presence subcategory included cognitive and metacognitive awareness; role was comprised of the awareness of the teacher as authority, teacher as facilitator, and teacher as synergist; and context was divided to analytic and synthetic awareness. Substantially, all these subcategories had an interconnected nature and they became even more integrated as the intervention proceeded.

During the study, cases manifested their enhanced interpersonal awareness in various ways. At the other’s presence section, participants developed metacognitive understanding of their students, in addition to cognitive understanding, and were able to connect to their students’ being; therefore, they turned to more attentive listeners and valued all the students as human beings not only as students who should accomplish certain chores. At the role section, participants recognized all the authority, facilitator,
and synergist roles in class. They distanced themselves from being the only transferor of knowledge and perceived teaching more a reciprocal learning process. At the context subcategory, participants experienced both the analytic and synthetic awareness of the class context. It assisted the cases to perceive the actual theme of the class and their teaching became more process-oriented.

**Transpersonal relationships.** Transpersonal relationships emerged in the participants’ data as the third type of relationship only after the introduction of the presence experience; it originated from either the intrapersonal relationship or interpersonal relationship. Participants perceived it through their being and connecting to the being of other people; although, it developed differently among participants. At the intrapersonal section, cases’ transpersonal experiences predominantly entailed the experiences of wholeness, unity with the body, and experiencing presence as wholeness. They described presence experience as the times they could feel their whole self, their body-mind-emotion integration, working in harmony with the environment. They related to their being and became self-observers. On the other hand, transpersonal experiences with interpersonal origins entailed feeling the wholeness of students, comprehending the fluidity of the interactions, and observing the class-students-teacher as one system. Some of the participants did not consider a distinction between themselves and their students when they were present; in other words, they developed more permeable boundaries. It was a novel perspective of relationship for them.

**Summary of cases.** Despite the general pattern of enhancing presence, participants of this study had their distinct experiences of presence and ways of fostering
it. Each participant had her unique way of connecting to the ideas; in the same token, their development in relationship areas manifested differently in their teaching. It seemed that each participant had her own story of enhancing presence. Descriptions of each participants’ path will be briefly explained in the following paragraphs:

**Case 1.** Case 1’s experiences of presence went through some changes and she seemed more present at the end of the study. At the beginning of the study, case 1 did not comprehend what presence was; however, at the end of the study, she not only related to the presence experience, but also had her unique way of defining presence. For her, presence was the “positive” time of *being* in the moment and having complete awareness over her body, mind, and emotion. During the intervention, she developed in all three relationship areas and this development was reflected in her as having a more balanced body, managing her mind racing, being more understanding of her students, being more accepting with changes, growing a more student-centered teaching strategy, and more importantly taking the time to slow down. Because of her presence, she slowed down at times to modify her body postures, to stop thinking ahead, to enjoy activities more, to genuinely connect to her students, and to allow students explore their own learning methods. She found the workshop beneficial and believed it helped her to organize herself and move more systematically towards elevating the quality of her life.

**Case 2.** Case 2 was one of the participants with drastic changes from the beginning to the end of the study. Presence was an unknown concept for her and she could not define it except for stating that presence might have been the times when everyone was happy in her class. At the end, she signified that her presence consisted of
the times she felt really alive and open to the students. This definition refers to her prominent change throughout the study: developing openness. Case 2 grew body-mind-emotion awareness and she also commented on how she experienced awareness in all relationship areas.

One substantial change that affected all case 2’s growth was openness. At the intrapersonal field, she noticed being closed as her biggest obstacle in enjoying the activities and being present. She stared to be more open by exploring her body boundaries, her emotions, and her thoughts. All the feelings of fatigue, frustration, and uselessness casted her and she felt energized and hopeful. At the interpersonal field, she was willing to communicate with people; she found immense joy from openness to people and connecting to their being. She became more patient in her teaching and allowed students to be more in charge of their learning. At the transpersonal field, she recognized presence as an ever-present and developing journey of self knowledge. She was very thankful for the workshop and believed it changed her perspective in life.

**Case 3.** Case 3 experienced her presence and changes in an integrated way in the study. Case 3 was the only participants who was slightly informed of the presence experience. At the beginning of the study, she defined presence as being physically grounded and living in the moment. This definition enhanced towards the end of the study and she believed presence is the feeling of wholeness and harmony with the surrounding environment. She explicitly referred to improvements at all three relationship types and her development in them seemed equally important. It seemed that her changes were extremely interconnected; to explicate, she commented extensively on
her intrapersonal relationships, specifically body awareness, in her reflections and interviews; simultaneously, she reported major changes in her interpersonal relationships, too. She had parallel improvements in both areas.

Case 3’s changes in three fields of relationship engendered concrete changes in her life and teaching. At the intrapersonal field, she recognized the body-mind-emotion cycle in her life and could prevent not only her bodily issues such as back and shoulder pains, but also became mentally more present and her stress was reduced at the emotion section. As a result, she felt more relaxed and enjoyed activities better. At the interpersonal field, she developed boundary awareness which made her considerably more open towards people. She enhanced her acceptance towards people and became more flexible in teaching. She also established such a good rapport with some of her students that she had not experienced before. At the transpersonal field, she experienced wholeness, observed her students’ wholeness, and could feel the unity of class as one system at times. She expressed the workshop had been really beneficial in her life path and had occurred to her at the right time.

**Case 4.** Case 4 seemed to have developed her presence at all three relationship areas but in a lower degree compared to in-service teachers; she had few examples to support her ideas on presence in the reflections and interviews. Throughout the study, her unfamiliarity with the presence changed to an understanding of presence which she described as a feeling that “washes over me.” Presence developed equally in all relationship domains for her but less profoundly compared to in-service teachers. At the intrapersonal domain, she experienced body-mind-emotion; consequently, she was able
to avoid unpleasant physical feelings such as shoulder tensions or unpleasant emotional feelings of frustration in her class. At the interpersonal domain, she could relate to her students’ presence metacognitively and developed the idea of teaching as reciprocal learning experience. At the transpersonal domain, she reported minor examples.

**Case 5.** Similar to case 4, case 5 also revealed signs of enhancing presence in three relationship domains but her experiences were not as deep as in-service teachers. Although she had read about mindfulness and meditations, she could not relate to the presence idea at the beginning of the study except for describing the times that everything went well in her class and everyone was involved. After the intervention, her definition had a more transcendental format and she defined it as the fluid system of the class when she is in the moment and there is no thought. This definition could be well illustrated in her relationships. At the intrapersonal domain, she was cognizant of body-mind-emotion cycle; thereupon, she could take care of her body, feelings, and thoughts better and was more patient in class. At the interpersonal domain, she became a more attentive listener, in addition to becoming more flexible in her teaching. Case 5’s transpersonal experiences were minor compared to in-service teachers. Her transpersonal experiences seemed to be the recitations of the class discussions at times. Corresponding to case 4, she had few examples to support her ideas in response to questions which could denote her understanding of presence was not as profound as in-service teachers.

**Response to Research Questions**

This section specifically deals with the responses to the proposed questions in the first chapter. Relevant literature will be sought to support the findings of the study while
answering the questions. The overarching question was “How can presence experience be fostered among teachers through awakening body awareness?” which will be covered by answering its subordinate questions. Following is how these questions can be explicated:

1. **How do teachers understand presence?** Participants’ experiences of presence evolved throughout the study. Before the beginning of the intervention, cases did not relate to the presence experience and their best definition entailed when everything worked in their class and everyone was engaged. After the intervention, teachers’ experiences of presence could best be summarized as the feeling of wholeness and being in harmony with the surrounding. A detailed description of teachers’ evolving their understanding is as follows:

At the beginning of the study, before introducing the topic of presence to teachers, cases did not precisely comprehend presence experience. They related to it by the phrase “when everything clicked.” At that point, cases defined presence as times that everything went well in their class, everyone was engaged, and they felt happy. Awareness was not articulated at any point and their explication pertained to their cognitive and emotional understanding of the situation, rephrased as a pleasant situation. The researcher cannot claim with certainty that participants of the study had not experienced presence at the transpersonal realm before their exposure to the intervention; however, it can be speculated that, because cases did not refer to presence with awareness in their pre-interview, they just had a vague idea of what presence might denote. Furthermore, it was discussed that intrapersonal relationship is one of the ways presence is understood. Thereupon, lack of familiarity with body-mind-emotion integrity in the participants
before the study could be another evidence to propose that teachers were unfamiliar with the presence experience.

However, it was observed that teachers’ perspectives changed from the beginning of the intervention. Cases included awareness in all their descriptions and definitions, although they had their individualized form of presentation. One of the participants described presence as oneness, unity of body-mind-emotion, while being in the moment. One other participant referred to the understanding of her wholeness. Still another case illustrated it in an image that presence washes over her. Also, they used phrases such as “being in harmony with self,” “a system flowing together,” and “self-witnessing.” It can be concluded that teachers perceived presence as understanding both their wholeness and their students’ wholeness working with harmony as one system.

It is worth acknowledging that in-service teachers and teaching fellows experienced presence with different qualities. It seemed that in-service teachers could genuinely feel and practice presence in their classes; while teaching fellows did not relate to the ideas as profoundly as the in-service teachers. While in-service teachers described passionately how they could perceive their wholeness and their student’s wholeness, besides observing the class as one flowing system; the teaching fellows mainly recited what they had heard in the workshop about being one with the students. These differences were taken into consideration while reporting teachers’ experiences of the presence in the current study.

2. How is body awareness defined in teachers’ life and praxis? Teachers described their body awareness in various ways in their life and in their teaching. In their
lives, they revealed they felt more energized and refreshed; they also recognized body-
mind-emotion integration and could handle situations better. On the other hand, body
awareness led to more patience, less annoyance, and better classroom management in
cases’ teaching.

Practicing and experiencing body awareness influenced participants’ lives in
several domains. They could balance their bodies and remove their tensions at the
moments they noticed the tension. They experienced less burn out and more energy.
Moreover, because they were cognizant of body-mind-emotion cycle, they could avoid
negative thoughts and emotions by modifying their body postures. Body awareness also
assisted the participants to become present again when they were distracted. Cases
authentically recognized and experienced their bodies and seemed to enhance a good
knowledge and practice of body-mind-emotion integration.

Participants experienced more patience, avoided frequent discomforts, and
developed their classroom management in teaching through body awareness. Participants
could maintain their energy and not be absorbed in the trivial discomforts in the class.
They stated that at the end of the day they were tired but it was a positive feeling of
tiredness which was filled with satisfaction because they had not drained their energy
ignorantly in incorrect postures or being dragged emotionally in an unimportant
misbehavior in the class. Furthermore, because participants were aware of body-mind-
emotion cycle, they did not lose their temper easily over something that disturbed them.
They would rather correct their postures and the negative feelings or thoughts
disappeared; this not only made them more patient in class, but also enabled them to observe issues more holistically and manage their classroom more effectively.

3. How can body awareness be integrated in the teacher education program?

Findings of the current study demonstrated that body awareness was enhanced in teachers through practice which supported the idea that body awareness is acquired experientially (Boss, 1963). Body awareness was practiced via the formal and informal tasks of the intervention. Results of the study showed that formal tasks enabled the participants to utilize them informally in their daily activities, as well. Participants successfully implemented the concepts in their teaching and reported the positive changes in either their perspectives or the environment. Although some of the cases stated that practice of the informal task was not simple for them, they generally expressed satisfaction of outcomes in their teaching and life.

Based on the outcomes of this study, it seems that the format of the intervention can serve as a springboard for designing similar courses in the teacher education programs. Educators could plan to include presence in both the curriculum of teacher preparation programs for teaching students or pre-service teachers and the programs of professional development (PD) for in-service teachers. The nature of the topic not only involves an abundance of discussions and reflections, but also necessitates the existence of practical tasks and reminders.

Presence grows in time (Wilber, 2001); thereupon, a series of courses could be devised to introduce and practice presence in stages. The series could entail an introductory course in which the basic concepts and tasks are presented to the
teachers/teaching students; two or three complementary courses in the later semesters could follow the introductory course. Concepts, ideas, and tasks would be expanded to make presence imposed for teachers/teaching students, as if they automatically become their way of life. The syllabus of the courses could have a certain plan, but the discussions are advised to be flexible and open depending on the needs of the teachers/teaching students and the context. It is essential for the instructors of the presence courses to have mastery over consciousness evolution topics and the teaching environment; also, it is desirable for the instructors to set a network of their trainees for keeping their contact, assisting them if they have concerns, and updating their own syllabus based on the trainees’ feedback.

4. How does presence change teachers’ different kinds of relationships?

According to the data, teachers experienced higher quality relationships both at intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal fields. To reiterate, presence experience was represented in these three kinds of relationships in the teaching environment of the current study. Relationship in this form confirmed Buber’s (1970) opinion regarding presence. In other words, relationship and presence are not distinct and presence primarily encompasses all types of an individual’s relationships. Based on the outcomes of the study the following changes might occur in teachers’ intrapersonal, interpersonal, and transpersonal relationships:

In intrapersonal relationship, teachers can develop body awareness and awareness over their mind and emotions. At the body section, they could understand body-mind-emotion integration and apply it to their teaching and life. They would attend to their
sitting and standing postures and learn not to dissipate their energy over trivial matters. At the mind section, they could manage their mind travelling problems more efficiently and be focused on the present moment in the class. Furthermore, presence could enable the teachers to address their emotions with more awareness. In brief, they are expected to feel refreshed and more at peace.

At the interpersonal field, teachers would foster an understanding of other’s presence, role, and the context. Teachers might be able to perceive both cognitive and metacognitive presence of their students and, consequently, become more accepting of their students as a whole; this way, students will be respected for who they are and not their grades or behavior. Also, teachers would gain an awareness of all their roles as authority, facilitator, and synergist in the class. They will be cognizant of the role that they should have at any moment and be able to switch their role based on the context. Their gained awareness would make them flexible and creative in their teaching. Finally, understanding both the analytic and synthetic context of the classroom environment could equip the teachers with required skills in decision making. They will not only master analyzing the situations with awareness, but also perceive how to handle unexpected situations. They will gain a holistic understanding of the class, students, and themselves as one system working together in a flow.

Transpersonal understanding of the aforementioned relationships will be gained by practicing presence. Teachers could understand and relate to their being, wholeness, and their students’ being. They will not see the classroom as only a physical place where they do their jobs as teachers and students learn the lessons; rather they perceive it as a
unified system where everyone grows, learns, and is appreciated for who they are. The classroom is perceived as a place for fostering holistic individuals.

5. **What qualities can be observed as a result of enhanced presence?** As stated before, presence was perceived and enhanced in three areas of relationship. Enhanced presence elevated the quality of participants’ relationships. The effects did not assimilate in all the cases; for instance, a teacher might experience a deeper connections with students during lesson demonstration, while another teacher perceived her students’ wholeness in one-on-one activities. However, a general trend could be observed among teachers at different relationship fields. It should be noted that listing these qualities does not signify that, for instance, liveliness is not part of teachers’ lives; it rather indicates that teachers will be able to manage their relationships in a more efficient way because of the enhanced presence.

At the intrapersonal field, teachers are expected to experience more energy, liveliness, light-heartedness, happiness, and positive feelings both in teaching and life; it is also assumed that because of enhances awareness in intrapersonal relationship, the teacher might experience less frustration, exhaustion, mind-wandering, or stress in their classes. Furthermore, presence experience could assist the teachers in overcoming burn out. Burn outs are frequently due to improper management of body, mind, or emotion resources; they could be handled well through body awareness techniques.

At the interpersonal field, teacher would improve their openness, acceptance, empathy, flexibility, compassion, and mutual understanding. The presence interventions can enable the teachers to be less judgmental, less authoritative, and less individualistic.
Teachers will become familiar with boundary awareness, proximity, and reciprocal learning; hence, they will have more successful relationship with their students. Learning could become a partnership process in which both the teachers and the students actively get involved. It seems that presence provides the ground for the teachers to play all their potentials which could, in turn, lead to fostering holistic students. These qualities are experienced by any person in their own way and at varied degrees.

Experiencing awareness, being, and wholeness are the most prominent results of enhanced presence at the transpersonal field for the teachers. These transpersonal qualities could occur both at the intrapersonal field and interpersonal field; therefore, teachers would be able to perceive their students’ wholeness, connect to their students’ being, and develop more permeable boundaries. The true nature of human being is valued and appreciated in this case.

**Discussion**

Findings of this study could respond to the overarching question of “How can presence experience be fostered among teachers through awakening body awareness?” Teachers’ experiences of presence were sought throughout the study. Comparing their opinions from the beginning to the end revealed a meaningful difference in their experiences that could refer to the success and benefits of the workshop. In this section, the researcher focuses on the implications of presence experience for the contemporary education system and whether the current study could provide some remedial techniques to deal with the main problem of the education system, teaching to the whole child.
Outcomes of the current study showed that presence experience can be a solution to the problem of educating one-dimensional individuals. Teaching to the whole child was considered the goal of education (Gidley, 2007; Miller, 2009; Richards, 2009; Rodgers and Raider-Roth, 2006); however, the current education system concentrates more on the cognitive side of human beings that leads to educating one-dimensional children (Miller, 2009). Data from the pre-interviews of the current study supported this idea that teachers are heavily derived by their thoughts. This pattern, however, started to change instantaneously from the first session of the intervention. Introducing the other aspects of human beings and assisting teachers to experience the interconnectedness of body-mind-emotion bred a new perspective in teachers; in turn, they valued this perspective and practiced to internalize it. For them, life and teaching had become more meaningful. It was also discussed that teachers have the most substantial and prominent role in the education process and change should be embarked with them (Burke, 2009). Outcomes of this study dispensed a practical and beneficial way to move towards accomplishing the goal of holistic education.

In line with moving towards holistic education, the split between school and life in the education system should also be addressed. According to Miller (2009), students are asked to leave their life at the gate of school. Dewey (1897) has well said that education is life; to consolidate these two areas, all physical-emotional-social-mental-spiritual aspects of human beings need to be attended to. The current study’s intervention concentrated and addressed all the dimensions. Participants could not only experience all dimensions, but could also observe and practice the integrity of them. It can be implied
that presence experience would provide a platform for the teachers to experience teaching and life as one unit in which they learn the wholeness and harmony.

In addition to the holistic education, presence experience could assist the teachers observe education a more reciprocal process between the students and themselves. The holistic understanding of interpersonal relationships, along with the emergence of transpersonal relationships, could change the teachers’ role; consequently, teachers’ perspective of learning and teaching transforms. Student-centered education is advised to be practiced by all teachers and educators; however, studies showed that teachers still have the belief that they are the knowledge bearers and their duty is to transfer their knowledge to the students (Freire, 1968). Outcomes of this study revealed that teachers could practice their boundary awareness to have more permeable boundaries. They could observe the class as one unified system in which they observe students as partner in learning. Suggesting teachers to have non-judgmental, empathetic, compassionate, and flexible attitudes in class would be unnecessary because they are the bi-products of enhanced presence in teachers. It seemed that the intervention was a rebirth in their teaching.

Questions to Consider

Findings of the study responded to many questions and cleared some of the ways presence could be enhanced in teachers; however, due to the nature of qualitative study, some other questions were raised along the way that were left unanswered. The dynamic design of qualitative research enabled the research to observe some angles of the topic that had not been taken into consideration before the study. The data from the study did
not fulfill those questions, but they cannot be ignored, either. Therefore, the researcher
discusses two of the most important concerns here and believes they could be
investigated in further studies.

One of those unanswered emerging questions was “Why did some participants
enhance their presence more efficiently compared to other participants?” To respond this
questions, several factors should be considered. First of all, cases had their own
personalities. Each of them showed more interest in a specific concept and connected to it
based on their personality. Moreover, their motivations for attending the workshop were
different. Some of them seemed more determined or genuinely driven to make changes in
their lives; some were simply interested to know it with no intrinsic motivation to drive
them. The other point to consider was the practice level participants had. Some
participants spent more time practicing the formal and informal tasks regularly; while
others might have practiced the tasks irregularly once or twice. Furthermore, the teaching
experience of the participants seemed to affect the experiences of the teachers in their
classes. In-service teachers could connect to the ideas more profoundly and had an ample
number of examples to share. All the aforementioned factors might have contributed to
the stronger experience of presence in some participants but the researcher did not
investigate this question at this point and it might be another research topic.

The other question that emerged throughout the study was the difference between
in-service teachers and teaching fellows in enhancing presence. In-service teachers and
teaching fellows differed in the quality of associating with presence experience. It
seemed presence experience was enhanced more deeply in in-service teachers. Teaching
fellows had less to share regarding the concepts of the workshop and referred to fewer examples in comparison. The strategic reasons behind this difference can be examined. Results of such a study would be illuminating in both modifying the workshop for in-service teachers and understanding the appropriate ground for teaching presence.

**Implications**

An overall conclusion of the findings of the study revealed that presence could be largely beneficial in the education system, specifically in filling the gap between education and life in the current system. This study can be helpful in presenting a model for the teacher education or Professional Development programs. Therefore, based on the outcomes, the researcher renders several implications for educators and curriculum developers.

**Educators.** Educators at any level, teachers specifically, should:

1. Become familiar with physical, emotional, mental, social, and spiritual aspects of human beings; they should get practically involved in developing their holistic self. In other words, they should know that these aspects are all equally important and need to be fostered to become a holistic individual.

2. Practice understanding and discovering where their interpersonal boundaries are. They should develop having awareness on proximity and practice to have permeable boundaries. Their awareness could result in more acceptance, openness, and empathy. Also, they should practice to perceive and respect their students’ wholeness. This might help them to be more flexible in their teaching.
3. Practice understanding students’ holistic self. I can assist to observe teaching as an interaction in which they could make the best decision based on their students’ needs, interests, and abilities.

4. Allow students to attend as a whole in the class and grow in all domains. They should show their students that all their needs, desires, and accomplishments are equally significant, welcomed, and honored in class. In other words, they should assist students to understand their life and education are one and there is no separation between them.

Curriculum developers. Curriculum developers have a key role in assisting the educators implement presence experience in the education system. They should:

1. Include presence experience as one of the core courses in the teacher education programs. Because of the experiential nature of presence experience that needs to be developed through practice; a core course and two or three mini courses as the follow-up of the plan seem appropriate for the teacher education programs.

2. Devise the curriculum at the school level in a way to include all domains of human beings. Curriculum should hold a balance of body, cognition, and emotion; correspondingly, course objectives should be defined to help teachers and students move towards fostering holistic human beings with less focus on grades, cognition.

3. Plan professional development courses for in-service teachers in which teachers would have the opportunity to not only practice presence, awareness, and mindful issues, but also discuss their opinions. Teachers’ discussing their classes regarding
this topic would be one of the best ways to enhance presence among teachers and, in turn, for their students.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Despite the issue that experiential nature of presence makes it complicated to be researched, the novelty of it renders a prosperous ground for research. Furthermore, presence is a comprehensive experience that could be employed in any field. It is about being a human being. Therefore, presence could be studied in basically all educational fields. A few of the recommended domains could be:

1. In this study, the outcomes are based on the reflections and reports of the teachers themselves. More study could be done to review and investigate students’ learning, as well, and examine if teachers’ presence could affect students’ learning.

2. Teachers assessed their own changes in this study. A study could be designed to investigate if teachers’ presence has any effects on their school and state evaluation.

3. Another option for study would be examining the teaching strategies teachers utilized before the presence intervention and comparing them with their teaching strategies during and after the intervention. It would be a proper way to see the effects of presence on the teaching strategies.

4. There are plenty of studies on job satisfaction among teachers. Examining and comparing job satisfaction results before and after the presence intervention could provide a more solid ground on the areas presence is helping the teachers.
5. Investigating the relationship between presence experience and becoming a leader in education could be another area of research. It can specifically expand our knowledge and understanding of presence on interpersonal relationships.

6. The effects of body awareness on teachers’ interpersonal relationship is an unstudied aspect that could provide more knowledge on the importance of body awareness and how it could be implemented in teaching.

7. Methods and approaches of including presence in the teaching preparation programs is a significant topic to be studied. Approaches of implementing presence in schools can actualize the goal of fostering holistic individuals.

8. Another idea for further research is investigating ways of fostering presence in students and researching its effects on their learning.

9. Effects of body awareness on students’ learning could be another prosperous area for further research. Students primarily relate to their bodies through physical education courses which do not present awareness. Investigating if body awareness could be instilled in the curriculum would lead to observing its influences on their learning as well.

10. Another holistic research area would be examining the best circumstances for introducing presence to the school curriculum.

Presence studies could be numerous and exhaustive; the aforementioned suggestions are only a brief start on this topic. However, the results of this study were heartening in several ways. First of all, teachers’ attitude towards the workshop and its tasks were totally positive. They showed considerable interest in the intervention and
found it an eye-opening phase of their lives. One of the teachers stated it is what the
teacher education program genuinely needs. In her opinion, they forget all the theoretical
professional development course but it is something that is applicable and beneficial in
their lives. Second, teachers’ changing their teaching strategies, as they reported, to a
more student-centered style is line with the goals of education. Teachers elevated their
perspective of teaching to a learning partnership; consequently, they invested more
passion, energy, and value in their job. Finally, the developed transpersonal
understanding made teachers more flexible, open, and empathetic in their teaching. They
respected every student for who they were and could feel more connected to their
students. Students can feel this connection and the researcher believes it can be a
reciprocal love that is experienced and learned deeply in the education system.
References


Appendix A: Workshop Flyer

Presence in Teaching: Awakening Your Body Wisdom in Teaching

This workshop will introduce:

- the concept of body awareness and presence
- how body awareness and presence work in your teaching
- practical experiences for elevating your quality of teaching and your life in general
- how to reach a higher level of relationship with your students and a higher quality in praxis

The workshop meets 14 times in consecutive weeks. Classes are 2:15 hours on odd sessions and 1 hour on even sessions. This workshop is part of a doctoral research study on understanding and fostering presence through body awareness. Participating is free but with a tuition option to enroll for two semester hours.

Times
Thursdays/ Mondays
Odd Sessions 5:15 – 7:30
Even Sessions 5:15 – 6:15

Duration: 9 weeks
(Feb. 27 – May 1)
2014

Place:
Thursdays: 240
Mondays: 104
McCracken Hall
Ohio University

Instructors:
Sara Ahangar Ahmadi
Dr. John Henning

For more information, email Sara at sa177611@ohio.edu
Appendix B: Pre-interview Questions

1. How do you feel the times you notice you are distracted from the class and you are in your own thoughts, in other words, the times your mind wanders and you live inside your mind? How does distraction affect your interactions? What are your feelings? What are your reflections?

2. Do you remember the times when you responded intentionally to the student's reactions while you were narrating your perceptions, inferences, decisions and behaviors in your mind? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

3. Has there been times when you were present somewhere and you were aware of your surrounding and other people, too, but due to different reasons, you felt you were not wholly there? How did it affect your interactions (praxis)? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

4. Have you ever been in a situation in class when you felt everything seemed to fall into place or “clicking”? Have you ever experienced your presence this way? How was the class and how did it affect your interactions? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

The following questions are for follow-up, in case the participants were responding well to all questions.

5. Listen to this situation: you are aware of your body and/or you can hear your voice and/or you can observe your stream of thoughts, and you are simultaneously conscious of your surroundings. Have you ever experienced your presence this
way? How was the class and how did it affect your interactions? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

6. Has it ever happened to you to be an observer of your presence and your students’ presence at the same time? Not seeing yourself and students as transmitter and receivers or in an interactive way but as if you are all with each other as constituents of the class system? How has this affected your interactions? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

7. Do you ever have this feeling that you are a self-witness while you speak and act automatically with fluidity, as if you are part of the stream of teaching and the class system? What do you think of these times? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?
Appendix C: Mid-interview Questions

1. How do you feel about the workshop tasks? What is your experience of the tasks?

2. Have you noticed any changes in your teaching? What are some of the examples?

3. Do you think the workshop has affected your life? What are you feeling, thoughts, and reflections about it? Support your answer with some relevant examples.

4. Have you observed any changes in your bodily habits? What are they? Do you think these changes have affected your teaching habits? Specify with some examples.

5. Have you noticed any changes in your senses? Do they impact your teaching? Can you specify with examples?

6. Has the workshop affected your relationships with your students? Do you think you are a different person in class? What factors or qualities make you think so?

7. What do you think is the biggest challenge to your presence in class?

8. What is your feedback of the workshop?
Appendix D: Post-interview Questions

1. Have you observed any changes in your bodily habits? What are they? Do you think these changes have affected your teaching habits? Specify with some examples.

2. Has the workshop affected your relationships with your students? Do you think you are a different person in class? What factors or qualities make you think so?

3. How often do you feel distracted from the class and you are in your own thoughts? How has it affected your interactions? What were your feelings? What were your reflections? (Do you remember talking to yourself at that moment?) What do you do to become engaged again?

4. Have you ever experienced times when, in addition to your students’ behavior, you were aware of their presence in class too? I mean while you perceive the students as a whole. How did it affect your interactions? How about your praxis?? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

5. Can you describe the times you felt you are thoroughly present in class? How was the class and how did it affect your interactions? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

6. Has it ever happened to you to be an observer of your presence and your students’ presence at the same time? How do you describe your roles in this situation? How has this affected your interactions? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?
7. Do you ever have this feeling that you are a self-witness while you speak and act automatically with fluidity, as if you are part of the stream of teaching and the class system? What do you think of these times? What were your feelings? What were your reflections?

8. Do you still have the challenges of the presence you mentioned in the previous interview?
Appendix E: Workshop Syllabus

AWAKENING YOUR BODY WISDOM

*When:* Spring Semester 2013-14  
*Where:* McCracken Hall  
*Credit hours:* 2

**Instructors:**
Sara Ahangar Ahmadi  
PhD student  
Department of Teacher Education  
314E McCracken Hall  
**E-mail:** sa177611@ohio.edu
Dr. John Henning, Ph.D.  
Professor and Associate Dean  
Academic Engagement and Outreach  
133 McCracken Hall  
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Fax: 740.593.0569  
**E-mail:** henni@ohio.edu

**Workshop purpose and Descriptions:**
This workshop is intended to introduce the concept of body and presence to in-service teachers and provide some practical experiences for them in order to serve as a checkpoint for elevating the quality of teaching and life in general. You will have the opportunity to be part of the experience of knowing your own body, awareness on body, and presence at different situations better. As an in-service teacher you will gain general knowledge on how your body awareness and presence work in your teaching. You will attend the classes which include lecturing on the introductions of body awareness and a practical task at the end of each session. Informal and formal practice format is provided for each week.

**Workshop Objectives:**
Through the completion of this workshop you will demonstrate the following knowledge and skills:

- Understanding how your body awareness works in your teaching
- Observing your presence in your teaching
- Having a sense of how having body awareness and presence can improve different qualities of teaching
- Promoting interpersonal relationships in class
- Observing the effects of presence in all life aspects
- Experiencing more energy and motivation in teaching
- Using the reflections and formal/informal tasks to gain new perspectives on how teaching should be
- Developing spirituality
- Moving toward wholeness
Evaluation, Grading, and Attendance Policy:

1. 40%: Attendance
   Attending all the sessions is essential for participation and getting a better understanding of this new topic. You must attend each meeting and be ready to participate in class discussions and practical tasks at the end.

2. 60%: Reflection papers
   You will have 7 reflection papers all due one week after the class. They must be submitted on time and complete.

Reflection Papers:
Purpose:
Reflection papers have been devised to assist you reflect and synthesize what you have learned in the workshop and relate them with your own teaching in your class. The best practice field for what you learn in this workshop is your class and reflecting on how body awareness and presence deepens your perception of the concept.

Due Dates:
Your papers are expected to be turned in every two week and the instructions will be provided by your instructor(s).

Tentative Course Outline
Session 1 (Thursday, February 27th)
Objectives:
- Understanding the importance of body’s role as embodied mind
- Perceiving the conditions and some technical terms of body psychology
- Becoming familiar with body awareness
- Experiencing body wholeness
- Discussing the role of body in teaching

Discussion:
- The cycle of emotion-mind-body
- Defining body
- Defining body awareness
  - Habitual body
  - Body schema
  - Conditioned body
  - Body equilibrium
  - Awareness of body
  - Wholeness
- Formal meditation vs. informal meditation

Meditation task of “whole-body experience”
Session 2 (Monday, March 10th)
Objective: Contemplation and questions
Discussion:
- Answering and discussing the questions
- Practicing the meditation task

Session 3 (Thursday, March 13th)
Objectives:
- Introducing openness and laying the ground for introducing openness in interpersonal relationships
- Enhancing the feeling of unity
Discussion:
- Perceived body
- Awakening hearing through body
- Feeling the unity and harmony

Meditation task of “Whole-body Perception”

Session 4 (Monday, March 17th)
Objective: Contemplation and questions
Discussion:
- Answering and discussing the questions
- Practicing the meditation task

Session 5 (Thursday, March 20th)
Objectives:
- Experiencing the exposure to perceptional field
- Experiencing openness to perceived environment
- Awakening the hearing, seeing, and smelling senses
- Experiencing senses in relation to awareness
Discussion:
- Analytic and synthetic perception
- Perceived environment
- Body wisdom

Meditation task of “Awakening Senses”

Session 6 (Monday, March 24th)
Objective: Contemplation and questions
Discussion:
- Answering and discussing the questions
- Practicing the meditation task
Session 7 (Thursday, March 27th)
Objectives:
- Understanding a higher level of interpersonal relationship
- Perceiving the idea of non-duality
- Practicing self and other in order to enhance the sense of unity with the world
- Promoting interpersonal relationships in class

Discussion:
- Self and other
- I-It relationship
- I-Thou relationship
- In/out unity

Meditation task of “In/out Unity”

Session 8 (Monday, March 31st)
Objective: Contemplation and questions
Discussion:
- Answering and discussing the questions
- Practicing the meditation task

Session 9 (Thursday, April 3rd)
Objectives:
- Perceiving the idea of being and presence
- Becoming familiar with the idea of integral vision
- Understanding the relationship between presence and teaching/praxis
- Practicing void

Discussion:
- Being
- Void
- Presence

Meditation task of “Awareness Expansion Experience”

Session 10 (Thursday, April 10th)
Objective: Contemplation and questions
Discussion:
- Answering and discussing the questions
- Practicing the meditation task

Session 11 (Thursday, April 17th)
Objectives:
- Getting familiar with three kinds of relationship
- Moving towards spirituality
- Gaining a new perspective on the concept of different kinds of relationship in teaching
- Being able to move fluidly between being and doing fields
Discussion:
- Intrapersonal relationship
- Interpersonal relationship
- Transpersonal
- Kinaesthetic senses
- Becoming familiar with the other’s field
- We-space
- Non-duality
- Proxemics

Meditation task of “Body Boundaries’ Awareness”

Session 12 (Monday, April 21st)
Objective: Contemplation and questions
Discussion:
- Answering and discussing the questions
- Practicing the meditation task

Session 13 (Thursday, April 24th)
Objectives:
- Understanding the idea of controller and controlled
- Understanding and practicing two-person system
- Moving from control to harmony in a centaur way
- Getting prepared for having a two-person perspective in relationships in teaching
Discussion:
- Intercorporeal dialog
- Control and harmony
- Body awareness and presence

Meditation task of “Intercorporeal Dialog”

Session 14 (Thursday, May 1st)
Objective: Contemplation and questions
Discussion:
- Answering and discussing the questions
- Practicing the meditation task
Appendix F: Meditation Tasks

Task 1: Whole-body Experience

Phase 1. With closed eyes align your spine on its natural position in a way that all tensions would be neutralized by each other just like a bridge or a boat. In this pose, the pressures would be nearly vanished and you should feel that with the minimum use of energy you are staying in the pose and even you feel like being light and relaxed. To begin, we have some shoulder adjustment movements; first, pull your shoulder blades up towards your ears, press them into your back, then widen them across and release them down your back in a way that you won’t feel any tension for setting them in this pose. In fact, we are deliberately making tension in our body to bring it back to its straight position and then we will gradually let the tensions go. The chest and scapula are wide open and your shoulders are relaxed in this pose. Next is the neck elevation. The head’s crown moves upward and the neck is pulled out of the body. The neck should be elevated and relaxed. Let the tension release. For the next movement, firm your hips’ muscles a little bit; the tailbone spontaneously comes forward and the lumbosacral curve is lessened. Let the hips’ muscles release little by little but do not let the tailbone go back to its previous position; it should stay a bit forward. (Pause for a minute)

Phase 2. Let’s pay attention to the feeling of the feet now. It is usually unbalanced or asymmetric and causes pressure or makes the feelings to be accumulated in some points which make the mind asymmetric accordingly. Start with the soles. Imagine a plumb line from the tip of your nose to your naval; if it is not completely balanced, your body is not in its exact correct pose. While you are imagining the plumb line, let the
weight of left side offload on the right side in a way that the right foot feels more and more weight and your body spontaneously goes to the right side. Now, the plumb line is swaying toward right. Do the counter balance movement and let the right foot be lighter and the left one heavier; gradually the weight of body will be transferred to the left side. Pay attention to the plumb line throughout the process. Let the added weight come back to the right and the body be balanced. Now the plumb line is standing straight, right in front of the naval. The soles of the feet have a sense of symmetry and balance. Let the tension release. (Pause 1 minute)

*Phase 3.* Pay attention to your tailbone and elevating the spine. Imagine a line of energy all the way up along your inner thighs to your groins, and from there through the core of your torso, neck, and head, and out through the crown of your head. Just feel the energy; it will balance your body. Along with awareness that is moving from the bottom of the spine upward, this energy is helping the muscles to be relaxed, elevated, and effortless- from the bottom of the spine to the top of the neck and the bottom of the skull. All the muscles are in harmony and spine is thoroughly elevated and symmetric. All the vertebrae are in their correct place and body is in an elevated and balanced pose effortlessly. (2 minutes)

*Phase 4.* Spread your awareness in the whole body. Let the body be aware of its inner harmony, of its harmony with the Earth and with the sky. Let your awareness spread in the whole body as a drop of ink in the fluid. It dissolves in the fluid. Awareness spreads in the whole body. The whole body is aware and receptive. The body is open and receptive to the outside environment. (Pause 5 minutes)
Without leaving the pose, open your eyes and observe the wholeness with open eyes for 2 minutes. Whenever you would like to leave the posture, bend your knees a little bit and come out of the pose but try to keep the sense of harmony for a longer time.

It is a technique for making the body all ears, making the whole body alert. Teachers’ questions are responded immediately after the task is practiced. Teachers leave the class with this task to be practiced formally once a day and informally in their entire standing poses during the week as their homework. They are also asked to journal their feelings and thoughts in the week every day.

**Task 2: Whole-body Perception**

Sit on a chair with the soles of your feet completely spread on the earth; eyes closed or half-closed. Check the alignment of your spine with the back of the chair, in a way that body stays aligned and is at ease without further pressure. Pull your shoulder blades up, press them into your back, then widen them across and release them down your back. The crown of the head moves upward and the neck is pulled out of the body. Let the tension release. The neck should be elevated and relaxed. Let the arms relax and leave your hands on your lap. All the weight is on the hips and thighs. Move the lumbosacral to the back and increase its curve. Body is in the tensegrity position. Spread the awareness in your whole body and let the body be receptive, open, and alert. Be with your balanced and aware body and listen to the music. Let your whole body be all ears.

Participants listen to the music for a while and then are guided to leave their posture. Their homework for the week after is to practice this task formally once a day.
and informally in all their sitting positions during the week. Journaling their feelings and reflections is emphasized.

**Task 3: Awakening Senses**

Sit in your grounded pose. Let your body be fully grounded. Let awareness spread in your whole body. (2 minutes) Now direct your attention to your hearing field and search this field. Pay attention to every single sound, low or loud, that exists in your hearing field. Move your attention from one sound to another sound. Move your attention with it. (2 minutes) Now let your attention be attracted to a sound that is more pleasant for you. Let your attention and awareness be absorbed by that sound. (3 minutes) Now, let your awareness spread (expand) all over your hearing field. Let awareness homogeneously and uniformly spread all over your hearing field. Any time a sound attracts your attention, smoothly let the awareness come back and expand it again on the hearing field. (3 minutes) Stay in this pose as long as you like. Now draw your attention to your smelling field. Expose yourself to the scent and let it be perceived. (2 minutes) Observe your smelling field and see if it is changing your feelings. (3 minutes) Observe how it is affecting the whole body’s feeling. (2 minutes) Expose yourself to both the hearing and smelling field. Let your awareness be expanded in these fields. Let all the scents and all the sounds be perceived with awareness. (3 minutes) Now we are moving to the seeing field. While keeping your awareness on smelling and hearing fields, open your eyes gently with a gazed and disseminated forward look. Continue feeling your awareness on your whole hearing and smelling field for a while with eyes open. (3 minutes) You are now exposed to scents, sounds, and lights. Let your awareness be
exposed to them. Let them pass your awareness. Keep your awareness on all three fields of hearing, seeing, and smelling for a while. (3 minutes) Leave your pose anytime you feel like leaving it.

**Task 4: IN/OUT Unity (Integrity)**

*Phase 1.* If you already have a regular meditation routine, do a minute or two of it to get grounded and comfortable, and maintain your usual posture; the choice of posture is yours. Let the backbone be more or less straight and fixed. Take no Mudras. After being grounded, be aware of your inhalation and exhalation; be aware of the air flow in your nostrils. Just be a witness of natural breathing, do not change the natural and ordinary breath. (Pause 3 minutes)

*Phase 2.* In the second phase, let the awareness accompany the air, get into the depth of your lungs and come back with the air from the depth to the surface, the nostrils, and to the outside area. Have this awareness for a while, from WITHOUT TO WITHIN AND FROM WITHIN TO WITHOUT . . . Now the cycle of breathing is the same as the cycle of awareness. Let the awareness spread all over this process and cycle. Observe that it is beyond (in/out). Observe this truth that the breathing is under the dominion of awareness. You are aware of “in and out” spontaneously. And while the cycle of breathing goes on, the awareness is in complete harmony and wholeness. You don’t feel the inside or the outside anymore; it is a whole space of Awareness. Little by little all borders will vanish and your concept of (I) will be changed. There is no border and no thing. There is just an aware VOID. Stay in this phase as long as you like. (Pause 3 minutes)
Phase 3. Gradually, open your eyes aimlessly and be aware of the “in and out.” Witness your breath awareness with open eyes for a while (Pause 10 minutes but remind them again of the in/out unity and borderlessness after 5 minutes) Let the awareness spread in your whole body (pause 2 minutes), then leave the pose.

Teachers can ask their questions about the meditative task at this time. Their assignment for the week would be the formal practice of this task once a day and an informal breath witnessing any time they become aware of it. They journal about in/out issues and intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships throughout the week.

Task 5: Awareness Expansion Experience

If you already have a regular meditation routine, do a minute or two of it to get grounded and comfortable, and maintain your usual posture. Let the awareness spread all over the body. Now let the awareness sit on the air flow from the nostrils; observe how the cool air gets in and warm air gets out; do not change the rhythm of breath, but observe how it is going to be more relaxed; as you hear the voice of the speaker, see how you just exist with no need to act. You are as you are. The Presence makes BEING easy and pleasing.

(The task can be accompanied with music.) Now let your awareness be on the boundaries of your body, your skin; let awareness be in contact with your clothes and your senses. (Pause 3 minutes) Now, your awareness likes to go beyond the body boundaries. Let it expand as far as you feel secure. Let it expand as far as you feel comfortable. Let your imagination be free. There is no need to imagine from where your awareness started or think about where you are now. Just be in your body and expand from there. There is no
boundary and no thing. There is just an aware VOID. Let this aware void be One and in Harmony with the music. Do not be distressed with the ups and downs of music. Trust the void and just be one with the music. After the music stops, stay in the posture as long as you like; then, open your eyes and continue having your awareness expanded. Eyes’ looks are fixed on the ground. (Pause for 5 minutes) Now, bring back the awareness in the whole body. Stay in the same posture for a little while.

Teachers’ home assignment for the next week would be the practice of the task, contemplating on the concept of “I-Thou” relationship, and journaling their feelings and reflections.

**Task 6: Body Boundaries’ Awareness**

Stand in your grounding pose and stay in the pose for a few minutes for the awareness to be spread in the whole body (10 minutes). Now, pair up and stand in front of each other in a 3-meter distance (10 feet). You should know that there is no talking in this meditation and all instructions are given through body movements. Bring your awareness to this position and your corporeal senses. One of you become the active partner and use your hand to invite your partner to get closer. Passive partner move until the active partner uses his/her hand to stop you. The distance at which the stop sign is shown depends on the feelings and senses of the active partner. When the stop order is shown, both partners stop and witness your body reactions and each other’s presence. Active partner, if you feel that the distance is too close and more space is needed, use your hands to show it to the other partner and when you feel that it is the comfortable distance for you, ask your partner to stop. Continues for about 5 minutes. Then stay in
your pose and witness your awareness for 5 minutes, feeling each other’s presence.
Switch roles after 5 minutes. The critical and important point here is that you should only
listen to your body’s feelings. There should not be any symmetry for the participants; in
other words, it should not be this way that if the other partner moves closer, you get
closer too; ignoring your body’s feeling of comfortable distance. Also, being physically
close is not equal to being close or intimate. Don’t judge yourself to act based on social
values. This is just trusting the body, believing that body knows the healthiest and the
most realistic distance for itself. Let the body be in its most comfortable distance.

The task is finalized by the participants sitting and sharing their experiences. The
task is formally practiced with a partner, and informally practiced by the participants
having their awareness on their relationships during the week. Journaling is an
inseparable element of the practice.

**Task 7: Intercorporeal Dialog**

Pair up and stand in a 1-meter (3.28' feet or arm’s length) distance across from
each other. Stand in a fully grounded position and be aware of your bodies. (5 minutes)
Then, stretch your arms straight forward parallel to the ground and put your palms of
hands together. Feel each other for 2-5 minutes. Be aware of your contact with your
partner. Keep your awareness on this contact. Now, one of you become the active partner
and move your hands in any direction and at any pace you feels like. Palms of your hands
are attached and both of you only focus on sensing each other. Then, split your palms.
Scan your body. (Pause). Observe your feelings, (pause). Be a witness to your reflections.
(5 minutes) In the next round, the other partner becomes active and the previously active
partner become passive. Practice the same activity for another 5 minutes. Split your palms and get grounded. Scan your body. (Pause) Observe your feelings, (pause). Be a witness to your reflections. (5 minutes)

Again, put your palms together for the activity but there is no specific instruction on who leads the movements. Let your bodies lead you; it might be done alternatively or only one becomes active. Your bodies are the only leaders in this round for 5 minutes. Split now and feel your corporeal senses for another 5 minutes. Scan your body. (Pause) Observe your feelings, (pause). Be a witness to your reflections. (5 minutes) The task is culminated by participants sharing their experiences.
Appendix G: Reflection Prompts

AWAKENING YOUR BODY WISDOM

Spring 2013-14

MISSION
This workshop seeks to prepare you for the ever changing landscape of teaching and education system as well as help you develop a deeper understanding of awareness, your body awareness, and presence in your teaching and relationship with your students. In addition, the workshop seeks to help you make the ideas tangible and helpful by the practical meditation practices presented in every session.
WORKSHOP PAPERS

You are required to complete seven papers. Submit each assignment to your instructor as instructed. You can contact the instructors if question(s) emerge regarding the prompt. Each paper should be submitted in Microsoft Word and double-spaced. At the left top of each assignment list your name and the reflection number.

Paper One

*Instruction:* Complete the reflection prompt based on what you heard in the class and your experiences in the past two weeks.

1. Did it happen to you to observe emotion-thought-body cycle in yourself? What was it? What did you notice? How did you become aware of it? What about the teaching environment? Provide some examples.

2. Did you notice any body armors or body polarizations in your body? What was your feeling at that time? Did it affect your feeling of wholeness? How about in your teaching environment?

3. How aware of your body were you? What did you notice about it in general? Did this awareness affect your teaching or relationship with your students?

4. What were some of factors, if any, that made body awareness difficult? Did you do anything about that/them?

Paper Two

*Instruction:* Complete the reflection prompt based on what you heard in the class and your experiences in the past two weeks or from the beginning of the workshop.
1. How did you observe openness in your teaching? How open were you to people? In what areas were you more open?

2. Has your hearing ability changed? In what ways? How has hearing in the new way affected your awareness of the body?

3. Did you experience any unity in the way it was explained in the class? What were some of the obstacles in experiencing unity? In what situations could you feel it more easily?

4. Define your own understanding of openness and unity. Think of some examples from the class.

**Paper Three**

*Instruction*: Complete the reflection prompt based on what you heard in the class and your experiences in the past two weeks or from the beginning of the workshop.

1. Has your understanding of the senses changed? If yes, in what ways? If not, how do you define your senses at the moment?

2. Describe how you felt during the meditation task, after the meditation task during the past two weeks.

3. Has knowing and practicing the sense awareness changed your perception of the activities you do in life? Do you find it any relevant to your teaching practice?

**Paper Four**

*Instruction*: Complete the reflection prompt based on what you heard in the class and your experiences in the past two weeks or from the beginning of the workshop.
1. Describe your understanding of the relationship after knowing about I-It/I-Thou relationships. Did you see its instances in your daily life? Or your teaching?

2. Describe some of your experiences with the idea of self/other.

3. How do you describe your life knowing about the concept of Mobius? How do you describe it in the teaching environment?

4. What do you think can be the ideal teacher-student relationship?

Paper Five

Instruction: Complete the reflection prompt based on what you heard in the class and your experiences in the past two weeks or from the beginning of the workshop.

1. What was your understanding and experience of presence before this workshop? How present were you in your life? How present were you in your teaching?

2. How do describe your presence in life now? How do you describe it in your teaching? Can you think of some examples that you thought “this is presence”?

3. How does the idea of beginner’s mind fit in the “being” concept? How often are you in the being? What activities are mere “doing”?

4. How relevant you do find “void” idea in your life? In your teaching?

Paper Six

Instruction: Complete the reflection prompt based on what you heard in the class and your experiences in the past two weeks or from the beginning of the workshop.
1. Does awareness of the three zones of relationship along with the idea of presence make any changes in your perspective in teaching? What are your thoughts and feelings about them?

2. How do you observe your movement from doing to being and vice versa?

3. How do you observe your body in all the practices? How do you observe your body in daily interactions? Has your awareness of your body changed in those interactions or in your “being”?

4. What are some of problems you found practicing the informal meditations in your daily life? In your teaching?

**Paper Seven**

*Instruction: Complete the reflection prompt based on what you heard in the class and your experiences in the past two weeks or from the beginning of the workshop.*

1. What is your understanding of two-person system after practicing the tasks formally and informally? Can you provide some examples?

2. How do feel and describe intercorporeal dialog? How did your body feel in that dialog? How sensitive were you to your body needs and feelings? Were you more dragged by social etiquette or your body needs and feelings?

3. How do you define your boundaries now?
Appendix H: Practice Log

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