Mindfulness into Action:
Applying Systemic Thinking and Exploring the Potential for Developing Reflective Leaders

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INTRODUCTION

We begin this chapter with the examination of this form of experience, we continue with a literature review about mindfulness that represents the characteristics participants apparently achieved after the intervention. Then, we describe the research methodology used in this study; continue with understanding the findings of this study, and theory development.

We were able to obtain a big picture understanding, which resulted in the organization of the themes into three phases:

1. Before the intervention,
2. During the intervention, and
3. After the intervention, with the description of the three phases of this apparent transformation that emerged from the data.

Beginning with the initial phase, which was categorized by an automatic response to life events (before the intervention).

Continuing the process the second phase was only accessible after participants began the reflecting exercise (while doing indigenous techniques) as preparation for the meeting (during the intervention). Participants portrayed this phase as the ability to 'observe' behavioral patterns in themselves and others. Though participants were able to observe the behavior, they were unable to change it.

Data suggest that phase three allowed participants' the ability to observe and *choose* their next step (after the intervention). Participants were consciously aware that their newly found awareness required constant "checking-in" as a way of preventing "snapping back" to their old ways.

This chapter develops in four dimensions: subjectivity (e.g., mental models), objectivity (e.g., behavior), inter-subjectivity (e.g., culture), and inter-objectivity (e.g. systems). We begin with intra subjectivity when participants perform the reflection exercises. When participants are meeting at their weekly meeting, they exercise inter subjectivity as they discuss what they found during the week while doing the reflection exercises and indigenous practices. The data begins to suggest a transformation of perception in participants when they move into intra objectivity, which this study calls *the third head* where participants are capable of observing themselves. Inter objectivity happens when participants practice and implement this intervention in a volunteer basis, while they facilitate the development of an exchanged, masters, doctoral, and postdoctoral programs in Adult Learning, Leadership and Sustainability between the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and the Universidad Tecnica del Norte in Ecuador to support the efforts of the Kichwa community to preserve the Amazon rainforest. We resume with the finalizing: the grounded theory that emerges from this research along with a conclusion.

EXAMINING THE FORM OF THE EXPERIENCE

Vergara (2016) describes that in her my work as a researcher, she learned that our biggest downfalls are our assumptions; thus we must approach all circumstances with neutrality, without opinions and preconceived concepts. This isn't a new approach and has been discussed by several scholarly fields to include cognitive psychology (Chapman, 1988), and in Husserlian phenomenology (1964). These are investigations whose answers are not given, but instead surge from the research itself. Hence, each participant researched within, making this a practice of the level into action. It is synonymous with "doing" and we are referring to pragmatism and praxis. Pragmatism is described as the implementation of techniques where one is more concerned on how well something adapts rather than how well one formulates a *priori* principles (Depraz, Varela & Vermersch, 2003, p 17). Making truth as the success, efficacy and functionality of the realized action (Depraz, Varela and Vermersch, 2003). Further more, Depraz, Varela and Vermersch state, "the plane of action is self-sufficient and does not need a prepared blueprint" (2003, p. 17). According to Freire, praxis is the action and reflection of individuals in order to transform their world (2000).

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