# AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF BURNOUT AND SELF-CARE AS EXPERIENCED BY LONG-TERM ANTI-WAR ACTIVISTS

by

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF BURNOUT AND SELF-CARE AS EXPERIENCED BY LONG-TERM ANTI-WAR ACTIVISTS

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the phenomena of burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists. The current investigation of burnout and self-care was carried out using a qualitative transcendental phenomenological approach developed by Clark Moustakas. Interviews were conducted with eight adult men and women who had been active in the anti-war movement for at least ten years. The data collection consisted of in-depth interviews with open-ended questions regarding participants' experience of self-care and burnout in the process of anti-war activism.

Findings reveal that participants experienced burnout and self-care in much the same way as other professions. Participants experienced burnout within the following themes: stress, frustration and exhaustion; inner and outer pressure and responsibility; body shut-down; betrayal and isolation; and depression and grief. These activists experienced self-care within the following themes: enrichment of soul; satisfaction and celebration; great love and healing; awareness and keeping balance; deep understanding; and belief, enthusiasm and inspiration. In addition, the research uncovered the irony that while anti-war activism causes burnout at times, this same activism plays a critical role in self-care for the

activist. Furthermore, findings lend support to previous studies of the experience of anti-war activists. Future research on this topic is suggested in several areas.

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**DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to

Ophelia Solstice Chase
who is always with me

and

Dr. Richard Conant Chase
my role model

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## Background Context

In early 2003, some of the largest anti-war marches ever recorded in history took place across the globe. The New York Times reported: "The fracturing of the Western alliance over Iraq and the huge antiwar demonstrations around the world . . . are reminders that there may still be two superpowers on the planet: the United States and world public opinion." (P. Tyler, 2003, p. 1). However, after the U.S. invaded Iraq in March 2003, the number of anti-war demonstrators diminished considerably. The rallies and marches against the war continued, but with a much smaller number of activists.

This primary researcher became very interested in these hard-core anti-war activists who continued to struggle for peace even when the masses had given up. These activists seemed to have some special stamina and endurance, some level of optimism and ability to continue despite all odds. In a review of the psychology literature on activism, it was found that very little research has been done on long-term anti-war activists. Currently, the activist literature primarily focuses upon studies of why people become anti-war activists, rather than upon activists who remain and continue to work in the long-term. The experience of these long-term activists needs further examination. Similarly, the burnout and self-care literature consist mainly of people who are employed in the traditional helping professions. Activists, who are largely volunteers, are seldom studied in the psychology literature.

## Description of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists. The phenomenon of burnout and the phenomenon of self-care can mean different things to different people. Researchers have been investigating these topics for several decades. Job burnout is a real risk for those in the helping professions such as nurses (Westermann, Kozak, Harling, & Nienhaus, 2014), ministers (Innstrand, Langballe, & Falkum, 2011) and therapists (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011). Recently, there has been an increase in studies on burnout in the corporate setting (Parks, Lundberg-Love, Galusha, & Deitrick, 2013). Self-care as a method to avoid burnout continues to be researched across many disciplines (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011).

Most experts agree that burnout is a process that consists of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach, Leiter, & Jackson, 2012). There has been extensive research on coping, prevention, and cures for the state of burnout (Bährer-Kohler, 2013). Self-care methods have emerged as an antidote to stress and burnout (Hays, 2014). Self-care techniques can be found in a variety of research and theoretical literatures, including those on self-care, mindfulness, positive psychology, and well-being.

The current investigation of burnout and self-care was carried out through a qualitative phenomenological approach with eight adult men and women. The data collection consisted of in-depth interviews with open-ended questions regarding participants' experience of self-care and burnout in the process of anti-

war activism. The participants were at least 26 years of age, with at least 10 years of experience in the anti-war movement, either in consecutive or non-consecutive years. They were self-identified as long-term anti-war activists, with a maximum of 24 months of breaks from activism within a 10-year period. Participants had experiences with both self-care and burnout.

Qualitative methods were used for this research due to the exploratory and descriptive nature of the original research questions. Qualitative research is an excellent method when the researcher needs to extract detailed information (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014). Secondly, qualitative research was chosen because, rooted in the advocacy/ participatory worldview, qualitative methodology can challenge the traditional research model where the researcher is the "expert" who is qualified to judge the research participants (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Thirdly, qualitative research was selected due to its personal nature, which can produce results that are very useful in clinical practice (Goering, Boydell, & Pignatiello, 2008). Finally, transcendental phenomenology was specifically chosen because it is particularly suited for research in which potential variables worthy of study have not yet been identified (Creswell, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Moustakas, 1994). Because long-term activism is a relatively unexamined phenomenon, transcendental phenomenology offered the most effective research approach.

**Contributions and Relevance of This Study**

Although there is ample research about why people become anti-war activists, little is known about activists who remain and continue to struggle in the

long-term. Almost no literature exists on the use of self-care as a method to avoid burnout among political activists. Exploring burnout and self-care among long-term anti-war activists can contribute to increasing the depth of the literature on self-care as a method to avoid burnout. This study could prove to be a resource for activists and all people in society who would like to reduce stress and burnout.

It is significant for the psychological community to study activists who are struggling to create a healthy and peaceful society. *Division 48: Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict and Violence: Peace Psychology Division* (American Psychological Association, 2013) states that Division 48 "works to promote peace in the world at large and within nations, communities and families" (para. 1). More and more peace psychologists are acknowledging the necessity of social justice and activism in order to achieve a peaceful world (Christie & Montiel, 2013).

October 7, 2013 marked the twelfth anniversary of the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, the longest war in U.S. history. In September 2013, the threat of a U.S. military attack against Syria was halted due to a wide and deep opposition to the war both in the U.S. and abroad. Anti-war activists are currently hard at work. These activists continue to battle against U.S. wars of aggression even when many people in the anti-war movement have abandoned the struggle. It is these long-term activists who lead the anti-war movement, who are laying the foundation to organize resistance even during times of peace. We need to learn more about the experiences of these community leaders.

## Key Concepts and Terms

For the purposes of this research study, the terms anti-war activist, peace activist and anti-nuclear activist will be used interchangeably. Some activists refer to themselves as peace activists. Other activists refer to themselves as anti-war activists. Many peace activists choose the term "peace activist" in order to embody peace with the language they use to describe themselves. Many peace activists advocate nonviolence and active nonviolent civil disobedience. Other peace activists support pacifism. Many anti-war activists choose the term "anti-war activist" because it advocates assertiveness. Some anti-war activists also consider themselves nonviolent or pacifist. Other anti-war activists believe that self-defense is a legitimate method to social justice and peace, even if self-defense may involve some forms of violence. These anti-war activists are often not pacifists and they seek to empower self-determination in oppressed communities who choose to resist wars of empire by means of violence. "Anti-nuclear activists," those who oppose the research and development of nuclear power, can refer to themselves as either as anti-war or peace activists, or both. For the following study, the terms anti-war activist, peace activist, and anti-nuclear activist will be used interchangeably.

For the purposes of this research study, several more terms shall be defined for clarity. Burnout (2013) is defined as "exhaustion of physical or emotional strength or motivation usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration" in definition 2a of the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Self-care is defined as "activities to maintain and promote . . . emotional, physical, mental,

and spiritual well-being" in the *ACA Code of Ethics* (American Counseling Association, 2005, p. 9). Spirituality is defined as "activities which renew, lift up, comfort, heal and inspire both ourselves and those with whom we interact" (Robinson, B., 2013, Spirituality section, bullet 2).

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Introduction

The review of the literature will begin with a summary of the burnout research, followed by an overview of the self-care literature in psychology. It is beyond the scope of this study to review the entire field of burnout, so the focus of this overview will concentrate on research that may be relevant to anti-war activist burnout. This chapter will include a definition of burnout, a brief history of the concept of burnout, a description of the dimensions of burnout, as well as some consequences of burnout. The three main theoretical models of burnout will be introduced as well as the most researched instruments to measure burnout. Individual and organizational factors that can cause or prevent burnout will be reviewed, as well as the construct of job engagement. Because there is no agreed upon definition of self-care within the psychological literature, and there is almost no research on the self-care of activists, the current study will present an overview of self-care for psychologists as it may relate to the self-care of anti-war activists. Recent literature reviews on the self-care of psychologists summarize the self-care techniques found in a variety of disciplines including self-care, mindfulness, positive psychology, and the well-being literature. Next, an outline of the activism literature outside the field of psychology will be presented, followed by a review of the psychology literature on anti-war activism. Finally, peace psychology literature will be briefly summarized as it relates to the current research.

## Burnout Literature

Burisch (2006) describes burnout as a process that begins with excessive energy, commitment, and motivation, and ends in hopelessness and feelings of futility. However, there is no universal definition of burnout (Korczak, Huber, & Kister, 2010). The word burnout was originally coined in the 1960s to describe a person who was a chronic drug user. In 1974, Freudenberger borrowed the term burnout in his paper titled, *Staff Burn-out*, describing clinicians who were working in a residential treatment center in New York City. The word burnout was defined as "to fail, to wear out, or become exhausted by making excessive demands on energy, strength or resources" (p. 73). This influential paper brought the concept of burnout to consciousness as a concept worthy of additional study (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). At the same time Maslach (1976), a researcher in Berkeley, began studying burnout in doctors, nurses, psychiatrists and hospice counselors (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Maslach defined burnout as a result of three major symptoms: "Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity" (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996, p. 4).

At first, burnout was researched as a problem common only to the helping professions like education, nursing and social work, leading to worker absenteeism, reduced productivity and negative morale (Shirom, 1989). For example, Pines and Maslach (1978) studied psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, and social workers in mental health settings. Findings indicated that the longer

staff members had worked in the mental health field, the more these workers experienced all three symptoms of burnout: exhaustion, inefficacy, and depersonalization (Pines & Maslach, 1978). Maslach (1978) researched the dehumanization symptom of burnout, as well as client factors that affect burnout in the staff, including client diagnosis, client prognosis, whether the staff could relate to the clients' problems, organizational rules, and clients' experiences of the staff members. More recent studies demonstrate that higher risk groups for burnout include pediatric oncologists (Poulsen, Poulsen, Khan, Poulsen, & Khan, 2011; Roth et al., 2011); psychiatrists (Kumar, 2011; Lasalvia, 2011); and nurses (Wlodarczyk & Lazarewicz, 2011); while teachers comprise the next highest risk group for burnout (Cheung, Tang, & Tang, 2011; Moya-Albiol, Serrano, & Salvador, 2010).

Early work in the field of burnout focused primarily on researchers' personal experiences (Freudenberger, 1974) or case studies (Pines & Maslach, 1980). There were many disagreements between researchers about the definition of burnout (Perlman & Hartman, 1982). More systematic and scientific studies on burnout began to emerge in the late 1970s (Iwanicki & Schwab, 1981). By the 1980s, the term burnout was popularized to describe long-term stress in a variety of professions (Skovholt, 2001). In fact, over the past forty years, the phenomenon of burnout has been studied in numerous occupations including nursing (Allen & Mellor, 2002; Altun, 2002; Van Bogaert, Clarke, Willems, & Mondelaers, 2013); law enforcement (Dowler, 2005; McCarty & Skogan, 2013); medicine (Curry, 2005; Roth et al., 2011); teaching (Cedoline, 1982; Hultell,

Melin, & Gustavsson, 2013); clergy (Rossetti & Rhoades, 2013); and human services (Cherniss, 1980; Fall, Wolf, Schiller, & Wilson, 2003). Burnout among activists will be reviewed later in this chapter.

In 1981, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was created in order to measure burnout on a standardized scale (Maslach et al., 1996). Some researchers have argued for a model of burnout that considers exhaustion as the only hallmark symptom (Kristensen, Borritz, Villadsen, & Christensen, 2005; Shirom & Melamed, 2005). The most widely accepted definition of burnout consists of the three fundamental elements used in the MBI: emotional fatigue, depersonalization, and diminished efficacy (Houkes, Winants, Twellaar, & Verdonk, 2011; Melamed, Shirom, Toker, & Shapira, 2006). Speaking of the first component of burnout, emotional exhaustion, Cordes and Dougherty (1993) state:

> [It] is characterized by a lack of energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources are used up. This "compassion fatigue" may coexist with feelings of frustration and tension as workers realize they cannot continue to give of themselves or be as responsible for clients as they have been in the past. (p. 623)

The second component of burnout, cynicism, is a feeling of depersonalization or dehumanization, where clients are seen as objects (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). A worker can become cold, indifferent and detached (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001), or become completely inflexible with the rules (Daley, 1979). Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) argue that reacting to exhaustion with emotional distancing is a consistent phenomenon in burnout research. The third component of burnout is inefficacy, a feeling of "reduced personal accomplishment" (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 4).

> The exhaustion component represents the basic individual strain dimension of burnout. It refers to feelings of being overextended and depleted of one's emotional and physical resources. The cynicism (or depersonalization) component represents the interpersonal context dimension of burnout and refers to a negative, callous, or excessively detached response to various aspects of the job. The component of inefficacy (or reduced accomplishment) represents the self-evaluation dimension of burnout and refers to feelings of incompetence and a lack of achievement and productivity in work. (Maslach & Leiter, 2008, p. 498)

Because the concept of burnout was found in many kinds of vocations, not just human services, Maslach redefined burnout as: "a state of exhaustion in which one is cynical about the value of one's occupation and doubtful of one's capacity to perform" (Maslach et al., 1996, p. 20). Schaufeli, Leiter, and Kalimo (1995) developed the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS) to measure burnout in occupations outside the human services industry. The Maslach Burnout Inventory- Educators Survey (MBI-ES) was also created to measure burnout in the education sector (Schaufeli & Van Dierendonck, 2000).

More researchers began to expand burnout concepts beyond the human services industry. Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, and Schaufeli (2001) applied the concept of burnout to the corporate environment. When job demands outweigh resources available, burnout develops (Demerouti et al., 2001). Similar to the job demands and resources model created by Demerouti and her colleagues, Hobfall and Shirom (2001) suggest that burnout occurs when individuals experience ongoing stress and a lack of resources. Variations of instruments for measuring burnout in and outside human services include the Shirom Melamed Burnout measure (Shirom & Melamed, 2006), the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (Kristensen et al., 2005), the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (Demerouti & Bakker,

2008), and the Spanish Burnout Inventory (Gil-Monte & Olivares Faúndez, 2011).

Burnout is researched internationally (Bährer-Kohler, 2013), and cultural differences in burnout scores vary between countries (Shin, Yuen, Lee, & Lee, 2013). For example, North Americans are rated with higher levels of burnout than Europeans (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998). Furthermore, burnout has been established as a medical diagnosis in some countries, such as Sweden and the Netherlands (Friberg, 2009; Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009), and instruments to measure burnout are being developed for cultures outside the American and European context (Qiao & Schaufeli, 2011; Wheeler, Vassar, Worley, & Barnes, 2011).

Although the causes of burnout remain unclear (Korczak et al., 2010), three main theoretical models have emerged to explain the phenomenon of burnout (Bährer-Kohler, 2013). The first model is described by Leiter and Maslach (1988), in which burnout begins with the development of emotional exhaustion, leading to depersonalization, and eventually causing reduced personal accomplishment. Golembiewski, Munzenrider, and Stevenson (1986) argue that burnout begins with depersonalization. Finally, Lee and Ashforth (1996) demonstrate that both depersonalization and inefficacy stem from emotional exhaustion. Taris, Le Blanc, Schaufeli, and Schreurs (2005) and Houkes et al. (2011) both critique these three popular models. Taris et al. (2005) found evidence supporting the Leiter and Maslach and the Lee and Ashforth models, but not the Golembiewski model. Taris et al. (2005) conclude that high levels of

emotional exhaustion cause depersonalization, and depersonalization in turn reduces feelings of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment were shown not to be related, and depersonalization was found to be a coping strategy for emotional exhaustion (Taris et al., 2005). Houkes et al. (2011) conclude that the etiology of burnout differs between men and women, with women developing burnout by first experiencing emotional exhaustion, while burnout in men originates in depersonalization.

Individual and personality traits are widely studied as factors that can contribute to burnout (McCrae & Costa, 1987; Shapiro, Brown, & Biegel, 2007). Although there is no stereotypical burnout personality, certain individual characteristics can put a person at risk for developing burnout (Burisch, 2006). For example, neuroticism can make a person susceptible to burnout (McCrae & Costa, 1987: Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998), and studies show that competitive and achievement oriented workers can also be more at risk for burnout (Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998).

Organizational, occupational and societal factors can also contribute to burnout (Cooper, Dewe, & O'Driscoll, 2001). Bährer-Kohler (2013) summarizes the following organizational factors that can result in worker burnout: increased workload or increased complexity of work tasks (Leiter, Frank, & Matheson, 2009; ten Brummelhuis, ter Hoeven, Bakker, and Peper, 2011); time pressure (Kaschka, Korczak, and Broich, 2011); uncertainty at work (Msaouel et al., 2010); conflicts at work (Kaschka et al., 2011); bullying (Kaschka et al., 2011); lack of control (Cerimele, 2011); problems with employee or management

flexibility (Weber & Jaekel-Reinhard, 2000); limitations on worker autonomy (Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Hofmann, 2011); lack of resources (ten Brummelhuis et al., 2011); lack of teamwork (Kaschka et al., 2011); disorganization at work (Cerimele, 2011); and work dissatisfaction (De Oliveira et al., 2011). Maslach and Leiter (2008) summarize six main organizational factors that can lead to worker burnout: workload, lack of control, little reward, lack of community at work, unfairness, and value conflicts. Another factor that contributes to burnout is whether a person is well-suited to his or her position at work (Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

> A consistent theme throughout the research literature on organizational risk factors is the problematic relationship between the person and the environment, which is often described in terms of imbalance or misalignment or misfit. For example, the demands of the job exceed the capacity of the individual to cope effectively, or the person's efforts are not reciprocated with equitable rewards. (Maslach & Leiter, 2008, p. 501)

In addition to work, societal factors can also contribute to burnout (Weber & Jaekel Reinhard, 2000).

The consequences of burnout are far-reaching. "In many studies, burnout has been associated with various forms of negative responses to the job, including job dissatisfaction, low organizational commitment, absenteeism, intention to leave the job, and turnover" (Maslach & Leiter, 2008, p. 499). Burnout can affect one's physical health (Leiter & Maslach, 2001), and researchers have established a link between burnout and mental health, especially depression (Bakker et al., 2000). Symptoms of burnout can include insomnia, fatigue, depression, negative attitudes, and anxiety (Ekstedt, Söderström, & Åkerstedt, 2009). Furthermore, burnout can affect relationships with family (Burke & Greenglass, 2001).

> In terms of personal functioning, burnout can cause such physical problems as headaches, gastrointestinal illness, high blood pressure, muscle tension, and chronic fatigue. Burnout may lead to mental distress in the form of anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances. To try to cope with the stress, some people increase use of alcohol and drugs. If they bring burnout home, their exhaustion and negative feelings begin to affect relationships with family and friends. (Maslach & Leiter, 1997, p. 19)

Recent research redefines burnout as an erosion of positive engagement at work, lacking energy, personal involvement and efficacy (Maslach, Leiter, & Jackson, 2012). Workers can find themselves on a continuum at all times; on one end of the continuum is work engagement and the other end is work burnout, depending on circumstances in the work environment (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Kahn (1990) first introduced the concept of work engagement as, "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (p. 694).

Maslach, Leiter, and Jackson (2012) describe worker engagement as the solution to worker burnout, characterized by energy, personal involvement and efficacy. Studies on workplace environment include investigations on the psychology of work engagement (Garczynski, Waldrop, Rupprecht, & Grawitch, 2013), versus workaholism (van Wijhe, Peeters, & Schaufeli, 2014). Research suggests that both the individual and management can play a role leading to work engagement (Maslach & Leiter, 2005). Schaufeli and Salanova (2007) present ideas for human resources management to improve satisfaction, fulfillment and the engagement of employees. For example, recent studies show how dysfunctional management styles can contribute to employee burnout (Leary et

al., 2013), while friendships at work can reduce burnout (Milam, 2013). Today burnout is applied across many industries and researchers systematically study burnout on the individual, managerial and organizational level (Maslach, Leiter, and Jackson, 2012).

Research indicates that burnout is a multi-layered problem, in which organizational and management interventions, as well as individual factors can increase worker engagement and reduce burnout (Awa, Plaumann, & Walter, 2010). Bährer-Kohler (2013) summarizes the burnout literature on individual techniques that can alleviate burnout. For example, Kravits, McAllister-Black, Grant, and Kirk (2010) created a psycho-educational program for nurses to use relaxation techniques and art therapy to reduce stress. Jonsdottir, Rödjer, Hadzibajramovic, Börjesson, and Ahlborg (2010) studied healthcare workers and found that physical activity was linked to reduced stress, burnout, depression and anxiety. Gray-Stanley and Muramatsu (2011) researched direct care workers and found that increased social support and stress management resources helped workers cope with burnout more effectively. Ohue, Moriyama, and Nakaya (2011) examined nurses and found that burnout might be prevented or decreased by changing nurses' automatic negative thoughts and facilitating automatic positive thoughts. Ten Brummelhuis, ter Hoeven, Bakker, and Peper (2011) studied the burnout process and found that intrinsic job motivation can protect a person from developing burnout. Similarly, Hakanen, Bakker and Jokisaari (2011) found that burnout prevention strategies that have been accumulated over a lifetime can protect workers from job burnout.

Bährer-Kohler (2013) also summarizes organizational solutions for worker burnout. Maslach and Leiter (2008) studied organizations and found that identifying early signs of burnout in the employee and implementing targeted preventive interventions can reduce burnout in the worker. Noor & Zainuddin (2011) examined married female teachers and found that the integration of family and work life was important in reducing burnout. Shimazu, Shimazu, and Odara (2005) researched an electrical company and found that coworker support can reduce burnout whereas supervisor support cannot. Nahrgang, Morgeson, and Hofmann (2011) studied work engagement and found that job resources such as knowledge, autonomy and a supportive environment increased employee engagement. Similarly, Schuster (2010) examined job satisfaction and burnout of bank workers and determined that employee appreciation is essential to reduce worker burnout.

This section presented a brief history of the clinical and theoretical background of the concept of burnout as it is relevant to the study of anti-war activists. Burnout first emerged as a clinical problem and later became a focus of measurements, models, theories and systematic research. Burnout was defined and the dimensions, consequences and theoretical models of burnout were explored. The most popular instruments to measure burnout were introduced, as well as the expansion of burnout onto the international stage. Individual, organizational, and occupational factors that affect burnout were discussed to provide rationale for the present study.

## Self-Care Literature

There has been extensive research on coping, prevention, and cures for the state of burnout (Bährer-Kohler, 2013). Self-care methods have emerged as an antidote to stress and burnout (Hays, 2014). Self-care is also a concept used in the medical literature to describe the self-care practices of medical patients (Chaboyer, Ringdal, Aitken, & Kendall, 2013). The largest problem with reviewing the self-care literature is that healthcare professionals in different disciplines explore self-care concepts within their own academic domain, but no universal definition of self-care exists (Godfrey et al., 2011). Furthermore, research on the self-care of anti-war activists is sparse. For the purposes of this study, the current section will present an overview of self-care for psychologists as it may relate to the self-care of anti-war activists. Recent overviews on the self-care of psychologists summarize the self-care techniques found in a variety of disciplines including the psychological literature on self-care, mindfulness, positive psychology, and well-being (Wise, Hersh, & Gibson, 2012). Self-care as a method for the prevention and treatment of burnout among activists will be reviewed later in this chapter.

Historically, self-care strategies have been studied in the workplace (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Many articles have reviewed self-care as a prevention and cure for burnout in the field of teaching (Causton-Theoharis, 2009); nursing (Richards, 2013); and psychotherapy (Wise et al., 2012), among other professions (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011). Studies show that self-care strategies are

necessary for the health and well-being of many demanding professions (Shaw, Reme, & Boot, 2012).

Self-care for counselors, therapists and psychologists has long been an area of practice and research. For example, Hamberger and Stone (1983) developed a burnout prevention program for counselors, doctors and teachers that involves self-care techniques, including group support, exercise and good nutrition, time management, conflict-resolution and cognitive changes. Similarly, Larson (1986) developed a program of staff support groups for hospice workers that proved to be effective for burnout prevention. Sapin (1985) created support groups with hospice workers and helped them face their personal grief issues as a means to prevent burnout. Britt (1997) suggests psychotherapists practice self-care through professional and peer supervision, networking and mentoring. Some other self-care techniques reviewed in the literature include breaking isolation by obtaining social and emotional support (Jetten, Haslam, Haslam & Branscombe, 2009); balance and self-nurturing practices (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011); behavioral changes including physical exercise (Sidhu, Vandana, & Balon, 2009); relaxation exercises (Manzoni, Pagnini, Castelnuovo, & Molinari, 2008); healthy diet (Gomez-Pinilla, 2008); play time (Faunce, 1990); or developing a spiritual practice (Walsh & Shapiro, 2006).

Research in the field of psychotherapy indicates that many clinicians do not practice enough self-care (Fuselier, 2003; Wise et al., 2012). Experts agree that pro-active self-care is necessary in order for psychologists to avoid burnout (Barnett, Baker, Elman, & Schoener, 2007; Brucato & Neimeyer, 2009).

Norcross & Guy (2007) summarize the review of the literature for psychotherapist self-care and have identified 12 behaviors that enhance self-care.

> These include valuing the person of the psychotherapist, refocusing the rewards of the practice of psychology, recognizing occupational hazards, minding the body, cultivating and nurturing supportive relationships, setting boundaries, cognitive restructuring, sustaining healthy escapes, creating a flourishing environment, personal psychotherapy, cultivating spirituality and mission, and fostering creativity and growth. (Goncher, Sherman, Barnett, & Haskins, 2013, p. 57)

Penzer (1984) notes the irony that psychotherapists encourage their clients to take care of themselves, but these same psychotherapists do not take their own advice. Furthermore, due to lack of self-care, some psychotherapists develop inappropriate relationships with their clients (Porter, 1995).

In fact, the American Psychological Association (APA) has formulated the *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct: Including 2010 Amendments* (2010), which mandate that psychologists seek professional help when necessary:

> When psychologists become aware of personal problems that may interfere with their performing work-related duties adequately, they take appropriate measures, such as obtaining professional consultation or assistance, and determine whether they should limit, suspend, or terminate their work-related duties. (APA, 2010, p. 5)

In addition, the APA deems a self-care action plan for psychologists as "crucial for effectively managing occupational and personal stressors and for maintaining optimal wellness" (APA, 2009, p. 16).

Walsh (2011) argues that psychologists do not pay enough attention to therapeutic lifestyle changes (TLCs) as a means of combating mental health problems for both the psychologist and the client. He discusses how the field of

medicine has made a shift toward prevention and patients' self-management of disease through lifestyle changes. Walsh (2011) suggests that the field of psychology needs to follow suit. Clients can save time and money by paying attention to prevention before treatment is necessary. Changing lifestyle in four areas: diet, exercise, quitting smoking and limiting alcohol intake can make major improvements in a person's health (Khaw et al., 2008).

> Considerable research and clinical evidence support the following eight TLCs: exercise, nutrition and diet, time in nature, relationships, recreation, relaxation and stress management, religious and spiritual involvement, and contribution and service to others. (Walsh, 2011, p. 579)

Wise, Hersh, and Gibson (2012) suggest four principles on which to base self-care for psychologists: (a) Psychologists must flourish, not just survive (Keyes, 2002); (b) A self-care plan must be chosen with intention; (c) There must be a relationship of reciprocity between psychologist and client; and (d) Self-care practices must be integrated into a psychologist's schedule. Wise et. al. (2012) recommend that psychologists use Mindfulness-Based Positive Principles and Practices (MPPPs), which are a combination of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR; Kabat-Zinn, 1990), acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT; Hayes, Strosahl, & Wilson, 1999), and positive psychology (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

Mindfulness is described as follows:

> Simply put, mindfulness is moment-to-moment awareness. It is cultivated by purposefully paying attention to things we never ordinarily give a moment's thought to. It is a systematic approach to developing new kinds of control and wisdom in our lives, based on our inner capacities for relaxation, paying attention, awareness and insight. (Kabat-Zinn, 1990, p. 2)

MBSR is an eight week training program that was developed because mindful awareness and regular practice create new and healthier behaviors (Bishop et al., 2004), psychological benefits (Hofmann, Sawyer, Witt, & Oh, 2010), neurobiological improvements (Hölzel et al., 2010), and interpersonal rewards (Carson, Carson, Gil, & Baucom, 2006). Findings in the research on MBSR for psychologists' stress and well-being have shown decreased perceived stress and increased empathy and self-care (Jain et al., 2007; Shapiro, Astin, Bishop, & Cordova, 2005; Shapiro, Brown, & Biegel, 2007; Shapiro, Oman, Thoresen, Plante, & Flinders, 2008; Shapiro, Schwartz, & Bonner, 1998).

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) is also related to mindfulness, emphasizing acceptance, mindful observation, and awareness of the present, with the goal of psychological flexibility (Hayes et al., 1999).

> ACT is known for its purposeful cultivation of 'letting go of the control agenda' in the service of living a more vital and fulfilling life. When individuals can intentionally act in accordance with their life values, despite thoughts, emotions, and overt stressors that populate the mental or physical landscape, psychological flexibility is strengthened, and life satisfaction increases. (Wise et al., 2012, p. 490)

Studies show that ACT is effective for clients with chronic pain or stress, substance dependence, depression, anxiety and psychosis (Hayes, Luoma, Bond, Masuda, & Lillis, 2006). ACT can promote mental health and lessen burnout for workplace employees (Bond & Bunce, 2000, 2003; Dahl, Wilson, & Nilsson, 2004; Flaxman & Bond, 2010a, 2010b; Lloyd, Bond, & Flaxman, 2013) and for substance abuse counselors (Hayes et al., 2004).

Positive psychology was first introduced in 1998 at the 106th annual meeting of the American Psychological Association and established as a scientific

movement in 2000 (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Sheldon & King, 2001). In the past, humanistic psychology emphasized a holistic approach to human existence, highlighting the positive aspects of human potential (Allport, 1961; Jahoda, 1958; Maslow, 1971; Rogers, 1961). Seligman writes, "We do not see positive psychology as a replacement for what has gone before, but just as a supplement and extension of it" (Seligman, 2002b, p. 267). Seligman goes on to explain that positive psychology underscores many of the same concepts as humanistic psychology: will, responsibility, hope and positive emotion (2002a). Peterson and Seligman (2004) suggest that positive psychology is the scientific method behind humanistic psychology.

> What distinguishes positive psychology from the humanistic psychology of the 1960s [*sic*] and 1970s [*sic*] and from the positive thinking movement is its reliance on empirical research to understand people and the lives they lead. Humanists were often skeptical about the scientific method and what it could yield yet were unable to offer an alternative other than the insight that people were good. (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 4)

Peterson & Seligman (2004) created a signature strengths (SS) classification system that focuses on positive qualities and attitudes, as opposed to a focus on deficits and pathologies that is the basis of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th ed.; *DSM-5*; American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The signature strengths of a person weave together to build six universal virtues that resonate in all cultures: wisdom, temperance, courage, humanity, justice, and transcendence (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). Rather than focusing on mental illness, positive psychology seeks to increase

personal strengths and virtues, in the pursuit of sustained happiness (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

> Psychologists interested in promoting human potential need to pose different questions from their predecessors who assumed a disease model of human nature. We disavow the disease model as we approach character, and we are adamant that human strengths are . . . the bedrock of the human condition and that strength-congruent activity represents an important route to the psychological good life. (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 4)

For example, Peterson, Stephens, Park, Lee, and Seligman (2010) pursued a study on the relationship between strengths of character and work satisfaction. Through an internet sample of 7,348 people, the authors discovered that the character strengths of curiosity, zest, hope, gratitude, and spirituality were associated with work satisfaction (Peterson et al., 2010).

Researchers have linked the ability to be happy with positive mental health (Grinde, 2012), better coping strategies (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002), better resistance to diseases (Levin, 2007), altruism (Williams & Shiaw, 1999), and longevity (Danner, Snowden, & Friesen, 2001; Ostir, Markides, Black, & Goodwin, 2000). Studies show that happy people are connected to a wide social network (Harker & Keltner, 2001), fare better on the job (Warr, 2013), and possess more energy (Gailliot, 2012). Positive psychology seeks to find how humans attain long-term sustained happiness (Seligman, 2002a).

> Happiness, the goal of Positive Psychology, is not just about obtaining momentary subjective states. Happiness also includes the idea that one's life has been authentic. This judgment is not merely subjective, and *authenticity* describes the act of deriving gratification and positive emotion from the exercise of one's signature strengths. (Seligman, 2002a, p. 262)

For example, Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) propose that sustained happiness is based on a happiness set point, life circumstances, and purposeful practices in the pursuit of happiness. Previous research indicates that people maintain a consistent level of happiness over time (Lykken & Tellegen, 1996). Studies also show that positive life circumstances may increase happiness temporarily, but not in the long-term (Lucas, Clark, Georgellis, & Diener, 2003). Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) suggest that intentional activity is the most promising indicator of happiness maintained in the long-term. Intentional activity is defined:

> We mean discrete actions or practices in which people can choose to engage. . . . We also assume that intentional activities require some degree of *effort* to enact. That is, the person has to try to do the activity; it does not happen by itself. Indeed, this point touches on one of the critical distinctions between the category of activity and the category of life circumstances; that is, circumstances *happen* to people, and activities are ways that people *act* on their circumstances. (p. 118)

The authors propose that cognitive, behavioral, and volitional activity are the most promising indicators of long-term happiness. Furthermore, Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) introduce the importance of the activity being well-matched to the person, the importance of initiating activity, and the importance of varying activities in order to maintain sustained happiness.

Positive psychology investigates happiness through two broad approaches, the hedonic and the eudaimonic (Moran & Nemec, 2013). The hedonic approach to happiness is one in which the person seeks pleasure and avoids pain. In contrast, the eudaimonic approach to happiness is one in which the person seeks meaning and fulfillment. More simply, positive psychology distinguishes between two types of happiness, short-term and sustained happiness (Peterson &

Seligman, 2004). Research indicates that activities that invoke short-term happiness are not related to long-term sustained happiness (Myers, 2000; Ryan, Curren, & Deci, 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Short-term happiness can be attributed to experiences that bring pleasure. Sustained happiness, however, arises from an engagement in life, which is described as flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Flow is a state achieved after hard work and discipline, harmony between a person's talents and life work (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Seligman, Linley, Joseph, & Boniwell (2003) break down the goal of positive psychology into three areas of investigation: (a) how people optimally experience "the pleasant life," a life full of positive emotion, (b) how people optimally participate in their primary activities and experience "the engaged life," and flow, and (c) how people bring purpose to their lives in "the meaningful life," through healthy relationships and satisfying accomplishments (pp. 126-127).

In his later writings, Seligman (2011) makes a surprising shift in the goal of positive psychology, from authentic happiness theory to well-being theory. Seligman writes:

> I used to think that the topic of Positive Psychology was happiness, that the gold standard for measuring happiness was life satisfaction, and that the goal of positive psychology was to increase life satisfaction. I now think that the topic of positive psychology is well-being, that the gold standard for measuring well-being is flourishing, and that the goal of positive psychology is to increase flourishing. (p. 13)

Subjective well-being (SWB) has long been a subject of study in the psychological literature and predates positive psychology by about 20 years (Angner 2011; Diener, 1984). Studies on well-being suggest that change in behavior can lead to enhanced well-being (Keltner & Bonanno, 1997); change in

thinking can improve well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; King, 2001); and decision making activities are associated with well-being (Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001; Snyder & Omoto, 2001). Furthermore, cognitive and behavioral techniques have been shown to enhance well-being in the long-term (Gloaguen, Cottraux, Cucherat, & Blackburn, 1998; Jacobson et al., 1996). Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, and Schkade (2005) review the well-being literature and summarize that consciously pursuing gratitude (Emmons & McCullough, 2003), forgiveness (McCullough, Pargament, & Thoresen, 2000), and self-reflection (King, 2001) can increase well-being.

It is beyond the scope of this study to explore all the theories of well-being in the psychological literature. However, it may be relevant to note that positive psychology theory and the well-being theory have recently merged, according to Jayawickreme, Forgeard, and Seligman (2012). Jayawickreme et al. (2012) distill a huge amount of well-being research into three categories of well-being theory: (a) Wanting, (b) Liking, and (c) Needing. The wanting theory of well-being proposes that well-being is achieved when a person achieves his or her desires (Moore & Crisp, 1996). The liking theory of well-being suggests that well-being stems from positive emotions and life satisfaction, hedonic experiences often called subjective well-being (Kahneman, 1999; Diener, 2000). Subjective well-being (SWB) is used to describe how we think and feel about the quality of our own lives (Diener, Suh, Lucas, & Smith, 1999). "SWB includes diverse concepts ranging from momentary moods to global judgments of life satisfaction, and from depression to euphoria" (Diener, Scollon, & Lucas, 2003, p. 188). Finally, unlike

the wanting theory (what people choose) or the liking theory (how people feel), the third theory of well-being, the needing theory, suggests that well-being is achieved from getting needs met. The needing theory is a eudemonic approach to well-being, based on concepts like meaning, purpose, and autonomy (Ryff & Singer, 2013).

With historical roots in Aristotle's account of well-being, many eudemonic psychological theories to wellness have evolved.

> Aristotle proposed a perfectionist version of well-being in which the well-being of an individual is judged by considering how close they are to reaching the potential of humankind. Aristotle's term for this, *eudaimonia*, has been translated variously as flourishing, happiness, or well-being. (Jayawickreme, Forgeard, & Seligman, 2012)

According to Jayawickreme et al. (2012), theories of well-being based on eudemonic principles of flourishing (the needing theory) include Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1971), the social sciences model to wellness called the capabilities approach (Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 1999), positive psychology's search for meaning (King & Hicks, 2007), Ryff's psychological well-being approach (Ryff & Singer, 2002), Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), and Seligman's well-being theory (Seligman, 2011). Thus, positive psychology and well-being theory have reached the same conclusion: the pursuit of Aristotle's *eudaimonia*.

For the purposes of the current study, this section presented a brief overview of the psychological literature related to self-care. Because there is no agreed upon definition of self-care within the psychological literature, and there is almost no research on the self-care of activists, the self-care for psychologists was

explored as it may relate to anti-war activists. The psychological literature on self-care, mindfulness, positive psychology, and well-being was briefly examined and summarized as it may further the inquiries of the present research.

## Activism Literature Outside of Psychology

Over the last five decades, many academic disciplines have studied political activists. The majority of academic literature on the topic of activism is published within the field of political science and sociology (Ogley-Oliver, 2012). In fact, a large segment of the literature regarding activism is published outside the field of academia altogether (Ogley-Oliver, 2012).

In the field of political science, peace and conflict research investigates the theory and practice of peace building, international relations, human rights, civil conflict, immigration, and comparative politics. Peace science addresses important issues such as human rights, economic development, public health, improving international relationships, and explores the causes of war and peace. Nevertheless, peace journals tend to only expound on scholarly research regarding the subject of peace, rather that the study of the activists themselves (Schwebel, 2008).

Over the years, the field of sociology has published numerous studies on activists, portraying activists in the context of broad social movements. Macro-sociology researchers analyze very broad social, economic, and political roots to collective action, a macro-level analysis (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1988). Micro-sociology, on the other hand, reviews individual characteristics that may

influence a person to participate in broad social movements, a micro-level analysis of activists (McAdam et.al., 1988).

A full review of the sociology literature on activism is outside of the scope of the current research. However, a few studies are worthy of mention. McAdam et al. (1988) studied 1960s civil rights activists who were still committed activists twenty years later. He determined that activism that was initiated at a high personal cost can sustain a person's activism over the long-term. Campbell (1984) researched political organizers and how they sustain themselves as activists and avoid burnout. Eighteen community organizers were interviewed and participants reported the critical need for support from family, friends and faith in order to overcome burnout. Using developmental psychology, Campbell (1984) suggests three categories of activist commitment: budding, tried, and sustained. Kleidman (1992) studied factors that facilitated or inhibited volunteer peace activism during three major peace movements – the emergency peace campaign (1936-1937), the atomic test ban campaign (1957-1963), and the nuclear weapons freeze campaign (1979-1986).

Other sociologists turn to Social Identity Theory (SIT; Brown, 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) to explain the social bonding in activist groups that facilitates long-term activism. SIT explains how people can form their identities as part of a group and what they have in common with the group. Because a person's identity is tied with the group, an activist who identifies with a certain organization can be more likely to maintain sustained activism. Jasper (1997) describes the 'collective rites' of activists as powerful and emotional tools to

invoke a sense of solidarity within a group. These rituals can increase social bonding and commitment of the group members (Jasper, 1997). In a more recent study, sociologist Corrigal-Brown (2012) traces the trajectories of four different political organizations and their members' participation. In addition to studying the common themes of how people become activists or how people quit activism, she also adds two new categories, committed activists and intermittent activists. Of particular interest is her focus on the activist identity, as well as her examination of how the activist organizations shape the participation of the members. Finally, Van Dyke and Dixon (2013) highlight organizational skills acquisition and social ties as motivating factors for long-term activist commitment.

**Anti-War Activism Literature Within Psychology**

The 1960s was marked by civil rights activism and activism against the war in Viet Nam. Although the term "burnout" had not been coined yet, Cole (1964) was one of the first psychologists to discuss evidence of "weariness" in civil rights activists and some of the ways that the symptoms might be clinically treated. Frank and Nash (1965) studied the motivations and characteristics of the sustained peace activist and is still one of the most comprehensive studies on peace activists (Oskamp, Bordin, & Edwards, 1992). Frank and Nash (1965) suggest that most peace activists become involved in activism due to personal contact from other activists and that often a catalyst event or circumstance causes fear or anger and propels an individual into peace activism. Furthermore, it was found that commitment to activism and support from other activists relieves the

stress of these emotions and builds self-esteem (Frank & Nash, 1965). Studies also determined that peace demonstrators have a low degree of hostility and a high need for group affiliation (Keniston, 1968; Soloman & Fishman, 1964).

During the Cold War and the nuclear arms race, studies emerged on the prevention of nuclear war, in addition to examining the personality traits of anti-nuclear activists. Several studies target the images and emotions that nuclear war inspires, including the likelihood of surviving a nuclear attack (Fiske, Pratto, & Pavelchak, 1983; Lifton, 1983; T. Tyler & McGraw, 1983). Other studies focused on the psychological impact of the nuclear danger on children, adolescents and beyond (Goodman, Mack, Beardslee, & Snow, 1983; Mack & Snow, 1986; McConnell, Duncan, & Merrifield, 1993; Schwebel, 1982); the beliefs about the Soviet Union (Bronfenbrenner, 1961; Kennan, 1982; Silverstein, 1989; White, 1986;); conflict resolution strategies (Holsti, 1986; Janis, 1986; Lebow, 1986; Smoke, 1986); and peace education (Feshback, Kandel, & Haist, 1985; Kimmel, 1985).

Fiske (1987) summarizes the studies regarding the attributes of antinuclear activists. Antinuclear activists are portrayed as feeling high levels of nuclear threat (Fiske et al., 1983; Hamilton, Chavez, & Keilin, 1986), feeling high likelihood of nuclear war (Wolf, Gregory, & Stephan, 1986), and feeling effective as activists (T. Tyler & McGraw, 1983; Watanabe & Milburn, 1988). Gilbert (1988) examines the reasons why some people do not become anti-nuclear activists. Allan (1989) found that anti-nuclear activists who had had previous

spiritual experiences were less likely to view the Soviet Union as threatening, thus suggesting evidence of an anti-nuclear spiritual value system.

Over the years, articles were published in psychology to help social justice and peace activists sustain long-term activism. Bell (1984) summarizes that one of major obstacles in peace activism is the intense emotions associated with peace activist work. Bell suggests that emotional support is critical to sustain activists. Watkins (1988) outlines the inner dynamics recommended to facilitate group support for peace activists. Weick (1984) argues that activists need to scale down the measure of successes in social activism and celebrate "small wins" (p. 40). The psychology of "small wins" creates manageable goals and promotes activist success in the long-term (Weick, 1984). Wollman and Wexler (1992) designed workshops all over the country to help social justice and peace activists prevent burnout.

Gomes (1992) surveyed 75 peace activists in the San Francisco Bay Area and recorded the most rewarding and most stressful experiences. Gomes states, "One of the most interesting results of the present study is that the community of fellow activists was cited as both the most rewarding and the most stressful aspect of being a peace activist" (p. 143). Because relationships between peace activists were such a common source of stress, Gomes suggests how psychologists can help the need for peace activists to "attend more to the interpersonal realm" (p. 144). Furthermore, Gomes outlines an analogy of how eliminating conflict between left groups can serve as a model for world peace. She states, "Improving their ability to resolve conflicts in their own groups and between groups will

likely translate into useful approaches that could be applied to increasing world peace" (Gomes, 1992, p. 144). Other interesting findings were that the success of political goals was not as high a stressor as previously thought (p. 145), and Gomes notes, "People can and choose to endure a great deal of stress if their actions are felt to be meaningful" (Gomes, 1992, p. 145). Gomes (1992) lists various stresses that peace activists face: interpersonal problems with other activists in the community, lack of progress, public apathy, the activist feeling overextended, lack of resources, and opposition to the activism (pp. 142-143).

Oskamp et al. (1992) investigated peace activists in the American organization, Beyond War. Using a snowball sampling method, 21 people were selected from the Los Angeles suburban area to engage in semi-structured open-ended interviews. Participants were asked to describe their history and stages of activism, as well as obstacles to activism. Results showed that most of the activists had professional backgrounds and their average involvement in peace activism was three years. Almost all the study participants reported feeling optimistic about attaining peace, felt highly motivated for further activism, reported strong family support and depicted peace activism as a moral issue. Most activists also recounted a particular event that propelled them into activism.

Adams (1995) suggests the importance of psychology playing a central role in the development of activists and the peace movement, offering ideas for burnout prevention. With his idea of a "new psychology," Adams (1995) argues against the individualism enforced in every aspect of American society, making

implications for healthier relationships within one's family and within the peace movement as a whole.

> The new psychology has a special role to play in helping activists achieve personal integration of their political lives. Burnout becomes more of a risk when activists are faced with an increasing number of potential actions and organizational commitments. . . . Activists must learn to share the load with others and develop a stable and supportive family and work situation for sustainable, long-term activity. (p. 33)

Using in-depth interviews, Downton and Wehr (1997) conducted a comprehensive study on 20 people who had been peace activists for five or more years, and with 10 people who left the movement, all living in Colorado. The study suggests several reasons as to why people became activists, why some quit activism and why some persist as long-term activists. Downton and Wehr's findings show that long-term peace activists have certain common characteristics that precluded their activist work.

> They had developed beliefs about the need to help others, had become disenchanted with the political establishment, felt a strong sense of personal responsibility to work against violence and social injustice, and felt such work to be both useful and urgent. (p. 31)

Long-term activists often have "had childhood experiences in the family, church and school which taught them the values of loving and helping others" (p. 19). Some activists were motivated by peace organizations, which were able to provide "a meaningful conceptual framework for analyzing conditions" (p. 6). Other reasons for long-term peace activism noted by Downton and Wehr include level of commitment, moral conviction, the pressing nature of a problem, modest gains in the peace struggle, gratification from living in harmony with one's values, the feeling of community, and the meaning that activism brings to life.

Reasons that activists quit include: major political disasters, fighting within the left, competing family and career responsibilities, physical or emotional exhaustion, lack of progress in political change, a "bad fit" with an organization, and opposition from relatives (Downton and Wehr, 1997).

Using a constructivist research design, Marks (1998) studied the qualities of long-term political activists who were involved in varying political struggles. Marks (1998) notes that long-term activists have several traits in common. For example, long term activists understand that change takes time; they are not outcome-oriented; they have a sense of personal responsibility and these activists have an innate drive (Marks, 1998). In addition, long term activists are focused, committed, entrepreneurial and are able to bring people together (Marks, 1998).

Davis (1998) investigated whether psychotherapy hindered or facilitated the activism of social justice activists. Fourteen activists were interviewed and all respondents reported that their activism was suffering until they participated in psychotherapy. All fourteen confirmed that psychotherapy helped them improve their self-care skills and psychotherapy helped them participate in their activism more holistically and effectively (Davis, 1998).

More studies on anti-war activists emerged after the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003. Schwebel (2005) identifies two types of peace activists, conventional and unconventional. Conventional peace activists work within the existing governmental structures. Unconventional peace activists do not believe that change will come through the existing system, so they work outside the system, forming organizations, distributing literature and information over the internet, as

well as facilitating demonstrations and marches to influence the public. Schwebel (2005) reports that motivation for peace activism is often formed in childhood and involves duty, responsibility and feeling that one's values are threatened.

In a more recent article, Schwebel (2008) insists that the need for further research on peace activists is considerable. He writes, "Peace activism has had little attention from scholars and researchers, despite evidence of its relative effectiveness in avoiding and halting wars" (p. 215). Schwebel (2008) suggests three ways to keep up morale with peace activists: "(a) develop an historical perspective; (b) live a balanced and enjoyable life; and (c) introduce organizational practices" (p. 217). Schwebel (2008) goes on to make several suggestions for a healthy organization, including: social bonding, widespread participation, conflict-resolution strategies, setting modest goals and celebrating achievements.

Maslach and Gomes (2006) discuss coping skills that are necessary for peace activists to avoid burnout and continue their work over the long-term. Both paid and unpaid activists experience burnout (Maslach and Gomes, 2006). Maslach and Gomes (2006) suggest six areas that need to be addressed in order to combat burnout: work overload, lack of control, insufficient rewards, breakdown in community, lack of fairness, and value conflicts. For work overload, solutions include: rest, relaxation and taking care of one's physical health, setting limits and being willing to take on less demanding work. Regarding lack of control, shared leadership and more autonomy is suggested. For insufficient rewards, forms of acknowledgement must be developed. Breakdown in community can be solved

by keeping activist relationships healthy and constructive. For lack of fairness, "the solution is to ensure equity by developing clear and transparent policies and procedures" (p. 47). To address value conflicts, suggestions include: stay focused on the passion of being an activist, expect ups and downs in the movement, remain flexible, and prioritize smaller steps that can be accomplished successfully.

Sloboda and Doherty (2007) make a summary of the psychology of the anti-war movement in Britain after 9/11 by referring to a study by Granovetter (1973), in which findings showed that a social movement with weaker ties will grow more quickly than a social movement between people with strong ties. Sloboda and Doherty connected Granovetter's study to that of Tarrow (2000), who concluded that the nature of activism is changing with the age of the internet and cell phones. Tarrow (2000) explains that in the 1980s, the activist base was smaller and more socially connected, based on monthly local meetings, while current mobilizations are much larger, with the activist base not as bonded with each other as in the past. Tarrow (2000) also argues that old time activists from the 1960s only protest intermittently, coming out only for large mobilizations.

The job of the anti-war movement, according to Sloboda and Doherty (2007), is to learn how to keep the intermittent activists sustained in the struggle. The study suggests that anti-war organizations serve to sustain activists for the long-term, especially if the groups function well as a team. In order for these "teams" to support long term activism, an anti-war organization must have quality interpersonal relationships and address the many cultural and religious differences

(Sloboda & Doherty, 2007). The organization must perceive fear of a global threat, have simple campaign messages, skilled activists, a geographic focus for demonstrations and the organization must have an over-arching analysis of politics that can stand the test of historical events (Sloboda & Doherty, 2007). Only under these circumstances, Sloboda and Doherty (2007) argue, will activists be able to stay committed to anti-war activism for the long-term.

In the last ten years, there has been very little psychological research done on anti-war activists, but a few studies are worthy of mention. Burdge (2006) investigated the experience of spiritual peace activists in Israel. Findings show implications for current theories on empathy, morality and spiritual development as well as ideas for cross-cultural diplomacy (Burdge, 2006). Swank and Fahs (2011) analyzed undergraduate social work students and the traits that led them to join the movement against the Afghanistan war. In addition to levels of education, political outlook and ideals of the activists, and the efficacy of the peace movement, Swank and Fahs (2011) demonstrate how activist organizations play a large role in the development of peace activists. Toussaint (2011) studied peace activists involved in 9/11 activism and she suggests five strategies for diversifying and strengthening the peace movement, which include "consciousness, reflexivity, intentional representation, coalition building and community building" (p. 282). Sheridan (2012) tracks burnout and polarization in political activism, as well as the dawning antidote of "spiritual activism," "sacred activism," or "engaged spirituality" to combat burnout (p. 193).

More recently, with the U.S. government's proposal to build new nuclear reactors in the U.S., as well as the nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi power plant in Japan in 2011, there has been a re-emergence in anti-nuclear activism (Hartmann, Apaolaza, D'Souza, Echebarria, & Barrutia, 2013; Ogawa, 2013). Ogley-Oliver (2012) conducted a study with long-term anti-nuclear activists in Georgia, using semi-structured interviews about their experiences as activists. Specifically, the activists were asked to describe their perceived facilitators and barriers to activism. Using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological framework for individual development, Ogley-Oliver looked for how the activists' development was influenced by family, non-profit organizations, media, political systems, culture, values, and ideology. Findings showed that activists perceived facilitators and barriers to activism lie beyond the individual level, that the political system, the media and the imbalance of power and resources in society are the larger facilitators and barriers to activism (Ogley-Oliver, 2012).

**Peace Psychology Literature**

A review of the peace psychology literature is beyond the scope of this study, however, a few historical moments in peace psychology are worthy of note. Christie and Montiel (2013) summarize the history of American psychologists and their interventions in war and peace. Psychologists have intervened in U.S. wars during four periods of conflict: World War I, World War II, the Cold War, and the Global War on Terror (Christie & Montiel, 2013). Historically, American psychologists have supported the U.S. government and U.S. foreign interventions (Morawski & Goldstein, 1985). It was especially during the Vietnam War that

psychologists used their expertise in "psychological operations" (PSYOPS) to help the U.S. military influence the enemy (Christie & Montiel, 2013). Later, during the Global War on Terror, PSYOPS was also used to improve a commander's decision-making ability during combat operations (Staal & Stephenson, 2006). Most recently, positive psychology has been playing a role in resilience training for the military's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program (Seligman & Fowler, 2011).

It was not until the 1960s that psychologists began to criticize U.S. foreign policy (Morawski & Goldstein, 1985). After the Cold War, the Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict and Violence: Peace Psychology Division (Division 48) within the APA was established (APA, 2013). The division of peace psychology within the APA promotes a multidisciplinary approach to the pursuit of peace. More and more peace psychologists are acknowledging the necessity of social justice and activism in order to achieve a peaceful world (Christie & Montiel, 2013).

> Peace psychology should be based on both activism and analysis. . . . Will psychologists apply our knowledge to confront and change unjust social institutions? Because public policy is a psychological issue, we believe that students should be trained how to think about, research, lobby, and affect peace. . . . Peace is a political process and psychologists cannot abdicate the political dimension of our work. Our roles as scientists do not require us to remain politically neutral. Science itself is value laden; feigning neutrality is intellectually dishonest and socially irresponsible. (Winter, Christie, Wagner, & Boston, 2001, p. 366)

Schwebel (1993) proposes that psychologists are needed to teach people why we need activists, help empower activists, and teach activists how to sustain themselves against overwhelming odds. Adams (1995) suggests that rather than

pathologizing the anger against all the social and economic injustice in the world, psychologists must teach how to harness justifiable anger into activism that "resolves the institutional contradictions of history" (p. 31). Kimmel (1995) insists that psychology is value-laden and not an objective science and that psychologists have a duty to facilitate a more conscious, culturally sensitive, and international perspective on global relationships and sustainability. Peace psychologists Cohrs, Christie, White and Das (2013) state their hope that positive psychology, which is known for individualism and nationalism, can learn from peace psychology to work towards global well-being. Christie and Montiel (2013) end their literature review of psychologists who have intervened in war and peace with the following statement, "Not surprisingly, we should expect tensions will remain between peace psychologists and psychologists more aligned with the goals of the U.S. defense establishment" (p. 510).

This chapter began with a summary of the research literature on burnout, followed by an overview of self-care. The self-care literature review included a brief overview of self-care, mindfulness, positive psychology, and well-being. Next, a brief summary of the activism literature outside the field of psychology was presented, followed by a review of the psychological literature on anti-war activism. Finally, a brief summary of peace psychology was presented.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to explore burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists. Currently, the activist literature primarily focuses upon studies of why people become anti-war activists, rather than upon activists who remain and continue to work in the long-term. Similarly, the burnout and self-care literature consist mainly of people who work in the traditional helping professions, not activists.

The phenomenon of burnout and the phenomenon of self-care can mean different things to different people. Researchers have been investigating these topics for several decades. Exploring burnout and self-care among long-term anti-war activists can contribute to the increasing literature on self-care as a method to avoid burnout. This study could prove to be a resource for activists and all people in society who would like to reduce stress and burnout.

The current study sought to address two core research questions. The first research question asks what is the phenomenon of burnout as experienced by long-term anti-war activists? The second research question asks what is the phenomenon of self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists?

### Rationale for the Research Method

The current study was implemented through a qualitative phenomenological approach for several reasons. First, qualitative research was chosen due to the exploratory and descriptive nature of the original research questions. Qualitative research is an excellent method when the researcher needs to extract detailed

information (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Phenomenology, in particular, explores the experience of several individual participants in an effort to uncover common meanings and features of a phenomenon (Patton, 2002).

Second, qualitative research was chosen because, rooted in the advocacy/ participatory worldview, qualitative methodology can challenge the traditional research model where the researcher is the "expert" who is qualified to judge the research participants (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Qualitative research allows for the subjective experience of the each of the co-researchers to be heard. Phenomenology, in particular, investigates the subjective experiences of the participants and how they interpret the world (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenology seeks to understand the meanings that individuals attribute to their own lives, acknowledging that people are the experts when it comes to their own lived experience (van Manen, 1990).

> The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions general or universal meanings are derived, in other words the essences or structures of the experience. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13)

Thirdly, qualitative research was chosen due to its personal nature, which can produce results that are useful in clinical practice (Goering et al., 2008). Findings from this study could be used clinically to help activists and others through times of burnout.

> Qualitative research draws on a practitioner's intuition and experience so it can generate findings that are meaningful and useful to them. The great strength of qualitative research is its familiarity with real people in real situations and its interest in understanding human beings in the course of their day to day lives. (Goering et al., 2008, p. 146)

Finally, of all the qualitative traditions, phenomenology was chosen for the current study because phenomenology is particularly suited for research in which potential variables worthy of study have not yet been identified (Creswell, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenology is the most effective method when a subject matter needs to be explored further because little research has been done, variables have not been identified, and few theories exist (Creswell, 2013). Because long-term activism is a relatively unexamined phenomenon, phenomenology offered the most effective research approach.

## Introduction to Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a word originating from the two Greek words, "phainomenon," meaning "that which appears," and "logos," meaning "study." Phenomenology was first used in the philosophy of Kant (Kockelmans, 1967). Kant's philosophy of transcendental idealism is rooted in the belief that consciousness determines the way people process information and what transcends observable phenomena can never be known (Warburten, 2011). Everything in the world must be experienced by human consciousness in order to be known. Our mind is the filter of experience. "The objective unity of all empirical consciousness in one consciousness, that of original apperception, is thus the necessary condition of all possible perception," (Kant, 1781/1965, p. 145). A few years later, Hegel published the book, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, outlining the evolution of consciousness from sense-perception to absolute knowledge (Warburten, 2011). Moustakas (1994) reiterates Hegel's definition of phenomenology: "knowledge as it appears to consciousness, the science of

describing what one perceives, senses, and knows in one's immediate awareness and experience" (p. 26).

Although phenomenology was written about by Kant and Hegel, it was Edmund Husserl who made phenomenology a philosophical movement (Moustakas, 1994).

> Hegel formulated phenomenology as the science in which we come to know mind as it is in itself through the study of the ways in which it appears to us. However, with Husserl phenomenology became a descriptive method as well as a human science movement based on modes of reflection at the heart of philosophic and human science thought. (van Manen, 1990, pp. 183-184)

Breaking with positivism and empiricism, Husserl asserts that consciousness is the source of all knowledge (Kockelmans, 1967). According to Husserl, in order for a phenomenon to be studied, the phenomenon must pass through human consciousness (Moustakas, 1994).

> The object that appears in consciousness mingles with the object in nature so that a meaning is created, and knowledge is extended. Thus a relationship exists between what exists in conscious awareness and what exists in the world. What appears in consciousness is an absolute reality while what appears in the world is a product of learning. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 27)

Husserl's methodological approach to phenomenology extracts the essential features of a phenomenon, transcending the phenomenon to its pure essence (Moustakas, 1994). Husserl describes this "transcendental phenomenology" as the study of pure consciousness (Husserl, 1913/1931). Moustakas (1994) explains how this transcendental science evolved:

> Transcendental science emerged out of a growing discontent with a philosophy of science based exclusively on studies of material things, a science that failed to take into account the experiencing person and the

> connections between human consciousness and the objects that exist in the material world. (p. 43)

Influenced by Brentano, Husserl maintains that consciousness is always intentional (Kockelmans, 1967). The intentionality of consciousness means that consciousness always exists in relation to an object.

> Brentano's insight into the intentional character of consciousness provided the springboard and inspiration for Husserl's extension of a transcendental philosophy. Husserl's phenomenology is a transcendental phenomenology. . . . Husserl's approach is called "phenomenology" because it utilizes only the data available to consciousness—the appearance of objects. It is considered "transcendental" because it adheres to what can be discovered through reflection on subjective acts and their objective correlates. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 45)

Husserl (1913/1931) uses the terms intentionality, *noesis* and *noema* to describe transcendental phenomenology. Nothing can be experienced separate from consciousness. Intentionality consists of the experience of subjective human consciousness (noesis) and the phenomenon being experienced (noema). "Intentionality refers to consciousness, to the internal experience of being conscious of something; thus the act of consciousness and the object of consciousness are intentionally related" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 28). The noesis consists of "perception, memory, judgment, thinking and feeling" (Husserl, 1913/1931, p. 249) of the participant.

> The noesis refers to the act of perceiving, feeling, thinking, remembering, or judging—all of which are embedded with meanings that are concealed and hidden from consciousness. The meanings must be recognized and drawn out. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 69)

The noema is the phenomenon being experienced by the participant. "The noema, in perception, is its perceptual meaning or the perceived as such; in recollection,

the remembered as such; in judging, the judged as such" (Husserl, 1913/1931, p. 258).

> The noesis and noema refer to meanings. When we look at something what we see intuitively constitutes its meaning. When we reflect upon something and arrive at its essence, we have discovered another major component of meaning. To the extent that the perceptual meaning of an object refers to a reality, we are describing a real thing. The description of a thing incorporates its meaning. Thus the Husserlian "back to things themselves" is a way of emphasizing knowledge that is rooted in meanings rather than in an analysis of physical objects. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 70)

It was Descartes who influenced Husserl to develop the concept of epoche (Moustakas, 1994). Epoche is a word coined by Husserl (1913/1931) from the Greek meaning to refrain from judgment. Husserl adapts the notion of epoche to his philosophy of phenomenology. Through bracketing out any perceptions, preferences, judgments or feelings, one is thought to be able to suspend judgment and thus examine phenomena as they are purely given to consciousness. Husserl (1913/1931) explains epoche:

> All sciences which relate to this natural world . . . though they fill me with wondering admiration . . . I disconnect them all, I make absolutely no use of their standards, I do not appropriate a single one of the propositions that enter into their systems, even though their evidential value is perfect. (p. 111)

## Phenomenological Research Methods

Based in the philosophy of phenomenology, many psychologists have developed phenomenological research methods. Giorgi and Giorgi (2008) have noted that it is very difficult to define phenomenology and it is also difficult to define psychological phenomenology. Giorgi and Giorgi (2008) summarize the problem:

> It is fairly well known that it is difficult to give a univocal definition of phenomenological philosophy that is comprehensive enough to include its varied interpretations. The same is true when phenomenological thought, or methods, are applied to psychology. Since the major phenomenological philosophers differ significantly among themselves, it should not be surprising that different strategies emerge when psychologists seeking to ground their work in phenomenological philosophy use different thinkers as their primary source. (p. 165)

Giorgi and Giorgi (2008) list the types of phenomenological methods used for psychological research in the twenty-first century: (a) Goethean pre-philosophical experimental phenomenology, (b) grass-roots phenomenology, (c) interpretive phenomenology, (d) descriptive pre-transcendental Husserlian phenomenology, and (e) Husserlian phenomenology based on a return from the transcendental (p. 165). Giorgi (1989) has summarized that all phenomenological research holds four attributes in common. Phenomenological research is descriptive, uses phenomenological reduction, explores the intentional relationship between the participant and the subject under study, and roots out the structural meanings through imagination variation (Giorgi, 1989). Later, Giorgi (1997) distills phenomenological research down to three common denominators: phenomenological reduction, description, and essences.

## Description of the Research Method

Transcendental phenomenology developed by Moustakas (1994) is the research method employed for the current study. Moustakas created a four-step process for researchers to implement transcendental phenomenology for qualitative research. The first step in the process is called epoche, with which the primary researcher's personal judgments are set aside. The second step in the process is called phenomenological reduction, which involves extracting the

texture of the experience under investigation. The third step in the process is called imagination variation, which involves observing the phenomenon from every angle, thus finding the consistent structural make-up of the experience under investigation. Finally, the last step in the process called synthesis, which binds together the textural and structural essence of the research.

**Epoche**

Epoche is first step of transcendental phenomenology according to Moustakas. It is important for the study that the researcher be able to suspend her own prejudices and presuppositions about the phenomenon. The researcher must look at the experience under investigation as if for the first time. Moustakas (1994) describes how the process of epoche helps the researcher attain a transcendental state of objectivity.

> Phenomenology is the first method of knowledge because it begins with "things themselves"; it is also the final court of appeal. Phenomenology, step by step, attempts to eliminate everything that represents a prejudgment, setting aside presuppositions, and reaching a transcendental state of freshness and openness, a readiness to see in an unfettered way, not threatened by the customs, beliefs, and prejudices of normal science, by the habits of the natural world or by knowledge based on unreflected everyday experience. (p. 41)

Epoche refers to the constitution of the researcher, how she creates a space within herself for the phenomenon to be experienced with a new and fresh perspective. It is through epoche that the researcher is able to examine phenomena as they enter into the flow of consciousness. Moustakas describes how epoche facilitates a researcher's ability to access pure consciousness.

> As I reflect on the nature and meaning of epoche, I see it as a preparation for deriving new knowledge but also as an experience in itself, a process of setting aside predilections, prejudices, predispositions, and allowing

> things, events, and people to enter anew into consciousness, and to look and see them again, as if for the first time. (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85)

Although perfect epoche is impossible to achieve, researcher bias and expectations must be set aside in order that the research be as objective as possible. Furthermore, epoche must be practiced through out the research process, from beginning to end, always suppressing presuppositions so the data may be experienced in a wide open sense each time.

The primary researcher brings many biases, expectations and presuppositions to the current study. Transparency of researcher bias is essential in any scientific methodology. With an extensive background in anti-war activism in the San Francisco Bay Area, I participated in numerous marches, demonstrations and actions over the past 10 years. I met numerous activists and organizers who have been active in the anti-war movement since the Viet Nam war. I have developed my own political orientation and I disagree with the politics of many people in the anti-war movement. I have experienced burnout on several occasions, very similar to the experiences of the co-participants of this study. I have also been involved in many of the same self-care activities as my co-researchers. Because of my history and involvement in the anti-war movement, it was absolutely crucial to the accuracy of the current study that I bracket out my experiences, prejudices and judgments, in order that I approach the research process with a fresh perspective.

**Phenomenological Reduction**

The second step of transcendental phenomenology for Moustakas (1994) is transcendental-phenomenological reduction. Transcendental-

phenomenological reduction; which uncovers the texture, the "what," of the experience under investigation; consists of four primary steps. Step one is called bracketing, which keeps the research focused only on the topic and question at hand, with no outside influence or contamination (Moustakas, 1994). Horizonalization is the second step, which places equal value on all transcribed statements from the interviews, reducing the phenomenon to "textural meanings" and "invariant constituents," called horizons (Moustakas, 1994, p. 97). The third step is "clustering the horizons into themes" and the fourth step is "organizing the horizons and themes into a coherent textural description of the phenomenon" (p. 97). Phenomenological reduction reduces the transcribed interviews into the texture, the "what" of the experience under investigation. Moustakas (1994) explains,

> In the transcendental-phenomenological reduction, each experience is considered in its singularity, in and for itself. The phenomenon is perceived and described in its totality, in a fresh and open way. A complete description is given of its essential constituents, variations of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, sounds, colors, and shapes. (p. 34)

Step one, bracketing, involves placing the phenomenon within a bracket, free from history and external conceptions. For Moustakas (1994), bracketing creates a new "phenomenon… known naively and freshly through a 'purified' consciousness" (p. 85). Common knowledge and the "biases of everyday knowledge" (p. 85) are discarded and replaced by the lived experiences of the co-researcher.

For Moustakas (1994), steps two, three and four begin with "horizonalization" (p. 97). Once the interview is transcribed, descriptions of the

phenomenon at hand are listed, using the words of the participants. Each phrase, statement or paragraph that describes the phenomenon is called a horizon. In the process of delimiting the horizons, any statements that are redundant, overlapping or irrelevant are discarded. What is left are the "invariant constituents" (p. 97). Steps three and four involve organizing the horizons into themes and then creating a narrative, a coherent textural description of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994).

**Imagination Variation**

Imaginative variation is the third procedure in the process of phenomenological data analysis according to Moustakas (1994). Imaginative variation involves distilling the overarching essences of the co-researcher's experience by looking at the phenomenon from different perspectives. There are certain "universal structures" that arise from the data (p. 99). These structures, such as time, space, relationship to self, relationship to others, bodyhood and causality are stable from every angle and can be used to "facilitate a structural description of the phenomenon" (p. 99).

> This process of imagination variation of altering allows for the sifting through of those aspects of the experience that are contingent and variable, thus leaving to be gleaned the necessary and sufficient ingredients—that is, the essence of the object of consciousness. (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 42)

Imagination variation discovers the structure, the "how" of the experience under investigation. Creswell (1998) summarizes phenomenological reduction and imagination variation:

> The original protocols are divided into statements or horizonalization. Then, the units are transformed into clusters of meanings expressed in psychological and phenomenological concepts. Finally, these transformations are tied together to make a general description of the experience, the textural description of what was experienced and the structural description of how it was experienced. (p. 55)

### Synthesis

Finally, Moustakas (1994) uses the fourth procedure of synthesis to conclude the data analysis. Synthesis involves a composite of the themes and meanings from phenomenological reduction and imaginative variation into essences of the phenomenon.

> The final step in the phenomenological research process is the intuitive integration of the fundamental textural and structural descriptions into a unified statement of the essences of the experience of the phenomenon as a whole. This is the guiding direction of the eidetic sciences, the establishment of a knowledge of essences. (Husserl, 1913/1931, p. 44 as cited in Moustakas, 1994, p. 100)

Phenomenological reduction creates the texture of the phenomenon and imaginative variation builds the structures of the phenomenon. From the interview transcripts, the primary researcher will extract significant statements, meanings, themes and eventually a narrative description, which is a synthesis of the textural-structural essence of the research. These essences represent the essences at a particular time and place and are never a finite synthesis of the possible essences. As Moustakas (1994) describes,

> The essences of any experience are never totally exhausted. The fundamental textural-structural synthesis represents the essences at a particular time and place from the vantage point of an individual researcher following an exhaustive imaginative and reflective study of the phenomenon. (p. 100)

## Procedure

### Target Population and Participant Sampling

Participants were gathered using the snowball sampling method throughout twelve known anti-war organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area.

These organizations are: Act Now to Stop War and End Racism, World Can't Wait, International Socialist Organization, Barrios Unidos, Free Palestine Alliance, Bay Area United Against War, Code Pink, Global Exchange, American Indian Movement, Socialist Action, Radical Women, and United for Peace and Justice. The mass emailing of a flyer (Appendix A) was sent to activists in these groups. Eight participants who met the eligibility criteria were selected from the people who responded using "snowball or chain sampling" (Patton, 2002, p. 230). Snowball or chain sampling is a purposeful sampling strategy that uses networking and word of mouth to find "information-rich" examples for research. Patton (2002) explains,

> The logic and power of purposeful sampling derive from the emphasis on in-depth understanding. This leads to selecting *information-rich cases* for study in depth. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research. (Patton, 2002, p. 46)

Because there is very little literature in the field of long-term activism, the criteria were developed from my personal experience of working with activists. The participants were at least 26 years of age, with at least 10 years of experience in the anti-war movement, either consecutive or non-consecutive years. They were self-identified as long-term anti-war activists, with a maximum of 24 months of breaks from activism within a 10-year period. Participants had experiences with both self-care and burnout and these co-researchers were willing to participate in the research project as it was designed. The term co-researcher denotes the collaborative nature of this type of research, in which participants are viewed as experts of their own experience. A traditionally gender-balanced and

culturally-balanced group of eight co-researchers was chosen, four men and four women, six participants born in the U.S. and two participants born in other countries, five Caucasian participants, one Latina participant, one Asian participant, one African American participant and one participant who identified as LGBT. Participants had not suffered from severe psychiatric symptoms within the last year.

**Interview Questions**

Co-researchers were interviewed with open-ended questions regarding the activists' experience of self-care and burnout in the process of anti-war activism. Participants were asked to speak spontaneously and at length about the aspects of their experience that were most meaningful to them. The following seven interview questions were asked:

1. What is your experience of burnout in your long-term anti-war activism?
2. What dimensions, incidents and people intimately connected with burnout stand out for you in your long-term anti-war activism?
3. What feelings, thoughts and bodily changes are you aware of from your experiences of burnout during your long-term anti-war activism?
4. What is your experience of self-care in your long-term anti-war activism?
5. What dimensions, incidents and people intimately connected with self-care stand out for you in your long-term anti-war activism?
6. What feelings, thoughts and bodily changes are you aware of from your experiences of self-care during your long-term anti-war activism?

7. Is there anything else that you would like to add about your experiences of burnout or self-care in your long-term anti-war activism?

**Data Collection**

For the present study, data collection consisted of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with long-term activists who had sustained political activism in the anti-war movement in the United States for at least ten years. Each participant was given the Research Participant Information Letter (Appendix B), Participant Informed Consent Form (Appendix C), the Confidentiality Statement (Appendix D) and the Bill of Rights of Participants in Psychological Research (Appendix E). The entire content of the Confidentiality Statement was read aloud and explained in great detail to each co-researcher. Each participant agreed that he or she understood the limits of confidentiality. All the participants signed the Participant Informed Consent Form (Appendix C), the Confidentiality Statement (Appendix D) and the Bill of Rights of Participants in Psychological Research (Appendix E).

Then the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews. There were two interviews for each participant, one initial interview of 60 minutes and then a follow-up verification interview of 30-60 minutes. The format of the initial interviews was informal conversations at a location of the co-researchers' choice. Five interviews took place in the co-researchers' homes. Two interviews took place at the primary researcher's home, and one interview took place at the anti-war office where one co-researcher volunteers.

Verification of study findings is critical in order to draw valid conclusions. Verification can take many forms during the research procedure.

> Conclusions are also verified as the analyst proceeds. Verification may be as brief as a fleeting second thought crossing the analyst's mind during writing, with a short excursion back to the field notes; or it may be thorough and elaborate, with lengthy argumentation and review among colleagues to develop "intersubjective consensus." (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014, p. 13)

To maintain methodological rigor, each initial interview was verified by the co-researcher during a second interview. The second interview was conducted to ensure that the principle researcher had extracted accurate conclusions from the first interview. After each initial interview was transcribed, a copy of the transcribed interview was emailed or mailed by the U.S Postal Service to each participant. Each co-researcher was then asked by telephone or email if the transcribed interview was accurate and if there was anything that each participant would like to add or delete from the transcription of his or her experience. The verification response from each co-researcher is recorded in the results section.

The interviews were digitally audio-recorded, precisely transcribed, and the participants' confidentiality was strictly protected. All data and consent forms, written, audio-recorded, transcribed materials, digital copies of interviews and text are kept in a secure location or on the primary researcher's password protected computer, to which only the primary researcher has access. All interviews were deleted from the recording device. The names of the participants are not associated with participants' answers in any private or public report of the results. All confidential material is coded and identified by numbers only. Codes for real names are locked up and stored separately from the transcripts for seven

years. All identifying information was deleted when direct quotes are used in the dissertation. Neither the participants' names nor any other identifying information are included in the dissertation. The notes, digital recordings, transcriptions and any other written data materials will be destroyed after seven years have elapsed from the completion of this dissertation.

## Data Analysis

Using Moustakas's (1994) guidelines, the data was organized, analyzed and synthesized according to the four-step process of epoche, phenomenological reduction, imagination variation, and synthesis. Individual textural and structural descriptions were formulated. Composite textural and structural descriptions were generated, and a synthesis of the textural and structural meanings and essences was developed into a narrative summary (pp.180-182).

### Step One: Epoche

Before beginning the data analysis, the primary researcher continuously attempted to suspend all judgments and set aside all presuppositions about the phenomenon in order to maintain as much objectivity as possible. The researcher made all the preconceptions conscious regarding burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists. These presuppositions consisted of: the researcher's psychological and emotional perspective on the experience of burnout and self-care; preconceptions regarding the possibility to verbally express and accurately analyze the experiences of the co-researchers, presuppositions regarding assigning value or significance to the experiences of the participants, preconceptions regarding psychoanalyzing and psychologically interpreting the

experiences of the co-researchers, as well as the expectations of the primary researcher regarding the possible results, which could potentially influence the direction and course of the interview process.

Practicing epoche, the researcher maintained a consistent and receptive atmosphere during the interviews with each co-researcher in order to obtain accurate data. Preconceptions and judgments could openly enter and exit the primary researcher's consciousness. After practicing epoche, the primary researcher delineated the meaning units found in the text of each of the transcribed interviews.

**Step Two: Phenomenological Reduction**

After bracketing out any preconceived notions, textural statements were extracted from each of the transcribed interviews. The textural statements were recorded in a notebook. Through horizonalization, every statement was given equal value. Delimiting the horizons was accomplished when all repetitive and overlapping horizons were discarded. Horizons that stood out as invariant constituents of the experience of burnout or self-care were clustered into themes. An integrated textural description of each of the invariant textural constituents and themes was formulated for each research participant. Finally, all the individual invariant textural constituents were integrated into a universal textural description of the invariant textural themes of the experience of burnout and self-care for the group as a whole.

**Step Three: Imagination Variation**

Each invariant textural constituent was observed from different vantage points. For each invariant textural constituent for each research participant, structural qualities were listed. The structural qualities were clustered into themes of time, space, relationship to self, relationship to others, bodily concerns and causality. For each co-researcher, structural qualities and themes were integrated into an individual structural description. Finally, all the individual structural descriptions were integrated into a universal structural description of the experience of burnout and self-care for the group as a whole.

**Step Four: Synthesis**

Using intuition and assessment, the composite textural and composite structural descriptions were integrated into a synthesis of the meanings and essences of the experience of burnout and self-care. The composite textural and structural descriptions were distilled down to the essence of the experience of the group as a whole. The primary researcher established a knowledge of essences of burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists.

## Standards of Quality and Verification

Several phenomenological researchers have established criteria for determining the standards of quality of a phenomenological study. Giorgi (1988) summarizes the process of validity and reliability in descriptive phenomenological research:

> If the essential description truly captures the intuited essence, one has validity in a phenomenological sense. This means that one adequately describes the general essence that is given to the consciousness of the

> researcher. If one can use this essential description consistently, one has reliability. (p. 173)

Polkinghorne also suggests how to verify if the findings in a phenomenological study are valid. Polkinghorne (1989) asks, "Does the general structural description provide an accurate portrait of the common features and structural connections that are manifest in the examples collected?" (p. 57). Moustakas (1994) recommends that validity begins with the researcher's perception "establishing the truth of things" (p. 57). After the primary researcher's validation, Moustakas (1994) proposes, "A continuing alteration of validity occurs as people articulate and describe their experiences" through "intersubjective validity" (p. 57).

Creswell (2013) also created a list of questions to use as a guideline to test the validity of a phenomenological study. These questions can be used to verify that the data was collected and analyzed accurately. Creswell asks the following five questions to assess the standards of quality of a phenomenological study:

1. Does the author convey an understanding of the philosophical tenets of phenomenology?
2. Does the author have a clear 'phenomenon' to study that is articulated in a concise way?
3. Does the author use procedures of data analysis in phenomenology, such as the procedures recommended by Moustakas (1994) or van Manen (1990)?

4. Does the author convey the overall essence of the experience of the participants? Does this essence include a description of the experience and the context in which it occurred?
5. Is the author reflexive throughout the study? (Creswell, 2013, p. 260)

Using the five questions from Creswell (2013) as a guideline, the standards of quality of the current study were assessed. The philosophical tenets of phenomenology were addressed earlier in this methodology chapter, and an understanding of phenomenology was maintained throughout the entire study. The phenomenon of burnout and the phenomenon of self-care were articulated concisely in the research questions as well as the interview questions. The phenomenological procedure of data analysis was used according to Moustakas (1994). The overall essence of the experience of the participants is clearly summarized in Chapter 5, the discussion. The essence of burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists includes a description of the experience and the context in which it occurred. Finally, the primary researcher maintained a reflexive mindfulness throughout the study and remained open to feedback from co-researchers as well as the dissertation committee members.

## CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

### Introduction

This chapter reports the individual results of the interviews with eight long-term anti-war activists and their experiences of burnout and self-care. According to transcendental phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994), the essence of each co-researcher's experience was extracted from the transcripts of the interviews. In order to determine the essence of the co-researchers' experiences, the researcher suspended all personal judgments of the phenomenon. This process is called epoche. Second, through the process of phenomenological reduction, the researcher distilled out the texture of the phenomenon, "what" the participant experienced. Third, through imagination variation, the researcher extracted the inherent structures found within the phenomenon, "how" the experience happened.

### Participant 1: "Emma"

Participant 1, who will be referred to as "Emma," works in the field of education. She responded to the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is in her sixties and has been active in the antiwar movement for forty-six years.

**Verification**

Emma was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. She was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything she would like to add or delete from the transcription of her experience. Emma responded by email and she made a few grammar and spelling corrections,

but otherwise agreed with the transcription of her experience. She also added that she is currently "not burned out on the struggle for justice." She clarified, "Unfortunately the antiwar movement of the early 2000s got side-tracked and largely co-opted by the Democratic Party, a sad development." She ended by summarizing that "activism helps me cope with the horrors of this sick society we live in and the difficulties in my own family," and she emphasized, "A vigorous anti-war movement will rise again."

**Textural Themes**

The following five textural themes were identified in Emma's experience of long-term anti-war activism: (a) stress and frustration, (b) constant tension, (c) being present with children as a means of self-care, (d) deep understanding , and (e) enrichment of soul.

**Theme 1: Stress and frustration.**

Emma reports that there is a lack of success in the anti-war movement. She states, "The success is not there. . . . And so it's really frustrating and it's been so for like over 30 years, over 35 years, it's been really frustrating." She laments, "Since [Viet Nam] we have not had any successes with . . . forcing the U.S. government to get out and stop killing people in the wars." Emma summarizes her feelings of participation in the anti-war movement since Viet Nam: "Since then I consider the whole participation has been one of extreme stress." She continues, "Just reading the newspaper is very stressful. . . . I find myself reading the newspaper and crying frequently. So that's, I imagine, stressful."

Emma's experience of the lack of success of the anti-war movement is compounded when the news reports the casualties of war. Emma recounts how stressful it is to hear of current events in the Iraq war.

> I was just looking at my email before you came and somebody who's an Iraqi American who's active in the anti-war movement sent an article from a British newspaper, and I don't even know which one, about child deformities in Fallujah, which is all related to the U.S. bombing of Fallujah . . . using toxic weapons. I find that horrifying.

Emma also feels stress related to attacks from the political right. She chronicles several traumatic incidents during her anti-war activism. Many years ago armed gunmen raided her political office in Los Angeles.

> It comes flooding back to me. . . . I was in the office at a time when it was physically attacked by anti-Castro Cubans, gusanos, and they brought guns and they set the place on fire. There were 4 of us in there at the time and they made us lie on the floor. They pointed guns. I thought we were going to be killed.

She reflects, "I totally wipe it out of my mind. I don't think about it, but every once-in-a-while. 'Oh My God!' . . . This terrible fear thing happens and I remember it." She recalls another traumatic incident she experienced.

> I remember at the beginning of the Viet Nam war, I was a student at Boston University. There was either a forum or an activity, an anti-war demonstration and I was passing out flyers on the campus and I was surrounded by a group of business school students screaming at me.

Emma relates her experience of burnout when there is fighting within the anti-war community. She feels upset when other left groups are not acting in a principled manner. She reports, "I'm going through something right now in the anti-war movement that is very stressful to me. And I'm trying to keep a perspective on it." She remembers a recent situation when an anti-war coalition made what she felt was the wrong decision politically, refusing to launch a

specific anti-war protest. She recounts, "I thought it was shameful to do that. I thought it was horrendous and I tried to say, 'How can you do this?' . . . 'This is wrong!' And we weren't even allowed to bring it up at a meeting!" Later, she was able to write an article defending her position and she distributed the article widely.

She bemoans the fact that "it's very stressful to be having this fight within the movement and to be such a small minority in this fight. I find that kind of an incident stressful to be carrying out that kind of fight with the [anti-war] people." She further recalls,

> During the Viet Nam war, I remember we had big, big fights at national conferences. And the biggest issue of all was, "Bring the troops home now!" versus, "Negotiate to end the war!" . . . How to end the war? How do you end the war? That fight was carried out for years. Finally, the "Get out!" position won . . . as people radicalized and realized that the U.S. had no right to negotiate anything in Viet Nam.

She reports a recent victory of arguing her position within the anti-war community, to include protesting the war against Afghanistan as well as the war against Iraq.

> We had to carry out a fight because the leadership of the group was against what we were doing. But we won. The ranks agreed. . . . And since then some of the leaders have said, "You were right. . . . We were wrong." That was very positive. But now there's another argument going on in that group.

She recounts another situation where most of the anti-war groups in an anti-war coalition capitulated to the group with the most money and influence, which led to the break up of the coalition. She recalls,

> And it really hurt the anti-war movement. And after that everybody was going it alone. It was really hard to get real coalitions going. . . . So that was very stressful. People thought we were crazy. That's a more recent

> incident of the kind of stresses that come with long-term activism and commitment to certain principals and ideals.

Emma touches her face as she embodies her experience. She reflects,

> God, even now as I'm talking about it, is my face red? Even recalling some of these things now, I feel my face getting red. Is it? I don't know. I feel hot. I feel revved up about it. So yeah, there's always noticing, especially with controversy—arguments, votes . . . differences of opinion that are about important things. . . . I feel it. I feel it in my body. Or it brings these . . . wound up feelings.

**Theme 2: Constant tension.**

Emma experiences a constant tension when it comes to her anti-war activism. Although she can often associate her activism with feelings of burnout, she reports that she also associates her activism as an element of her self-care. Emma suggests that a healthy expression of legitimate anger involves funneling the anger to activism.

> But if you have some kind of bad thing and you were able to go on and funnel your anger in another way or something. I mean the anger's legitimate, but you're angry at the government and whatever and you're still fighting it. That's a healthy kind of response and it helps, I think.

Emma describes her activism as a healthy expression of anger and she categorizes her activism as an experience of self-care.

> Basically I think probably the long exposure to stress is probably a positive thing in my life, of that kind of stress. . . . Worrying about how you could influence changing the world is probably a positive factor in my life.

Emma reports feeling good about small accomplishments in life, in both her career and her activism. She remarks, "Every once in a while there's a small victory." She smiles and adds, "I always feel good about any little thing . . . that I can do. I feel not just good, I feel great about it." Emma begins to list her smaller accomplishments as an activist, including her financial donations to anti-war

groups and her work helping political prisoners. She confirms her smaller successes and says, "There are other accomplishments . . . little things." Emma reminisces about these little successes in her job as well as little successes in her activism. She reflects,

> The job comes in as a healthy thing, because as a teacher, we can accomplish little things, nothing major. You can give kids a nice experience and that's really a good thing. . . . You could maybe even teach them how to read and do some math. That's good. It's all good.

Emma enjoys her political activism. She reports, "But I have to also say I get a tremendous amount of pleasure from being involved in organizing. I really do. It's not all suffering and pain." She explains that because her actions have impact, that her political activism gives her a feeling of self worth. "And my feeling about my self worth is probably very much related to [my activism] . . . feeling like I could do something important about things." Emma reports her need to fight the system, that she couldn't imagine her life without activism. She summarizes,

> There's a lot of suffering and pain. I would kill myself if I couldn't be involved in fighting the system. I really think I couldn't live with myself. You know what I mean? . . . It's the only thing that really makes it worth living. I have no respect for people who . . . just want to have fun all the time. . . . You meet people like that. You do! And I just think, 'Oh, come on. Look at the world!'

Emma reflects on her feelings of accomplishment and self-care as an activist, as well as her feelings of burnout. She describes an experience of constant tension. She concludes,

> Most of the time I don't feel I can do anything important, but the fact that I'm trying to. . . . I just think that a lot of feeling healthy and taking care of myself is wrapped up in my . . . activism, in the feeling of being able to accomplish something. And then of course, I haven't really been able to accomplish anything, really, lately. . . . In politics, I haven't really had any

> kind of major impact in all my years of trying. . . . But . . . I mean the thing is, when you want to do everything, when you want to turn the whole system up side down, when you want to make a peaceful world, these things will be really little in comparison to what the goal is. You know what I mean? So, constant tension between trying to live, trying to be a good person, and trying to do what needs to be done.

**Theme 3: Being present with children as a means of self-care.**

Emma associates being present with children as a form of self-care. She reports her experience that children stay in the present moment, which she categorizes as healthy. She explains,

> It was the first Gulf War. I was a Kindergarten teacher. . . . Kids that are that age . . . are there in the present. You do not have time to reflect on the past or think of the future when you're with them. It's very healthy to be involved with little children who are dealing with right now.

Emma describes her experience when she is with her young students. She remembers that they comforted her when she felt depressed during the bombing of Iraq in 1991. She recounts,

> I can't really say what it is I mean but I just felt like, "This is keeping me sane." Because I was so depressed, you know, in 1991 when they started bombing Iraq. And it was comforting to me to be dealing with little kids.

Emma describes her job as a school teacher to be part of her self-care, a necessary component to her mental health. She characterizes children as having a special ability to help her endure the realities of war. She reflects,

> Over the years I can say [my job] has . . . kept me sane. . . . Working with children is mentally healthy for adults. . . . But another aspect is I've had a kind of job that makes me be in the present and with human beings, with children.

Emma's daughter has been another child whom she associates with self-care. She recalls an incident with her daughter that enabled her to experience the fun of children's directness and honesty. She remembers,

> Children have a certain directness and an honesty that adults don't have. I mean it's really nice. It's really good for adults to be around kids. . . . My oldest daughter's first sentence was, "Free abortion on demand." She was under two and I had just taken her to an abortion rights demonstration. So I'd hear her in her crib, "Free abortion on demand!" It was really funny!

**Theme 4: Deep understanding.**

Emma characterizes her experience of taking care of herself as making sure she understands world events as part of a broad social framework. She explains that she is "trying to read, trying to have a long-range perspective, trying to understand deeply so that you're not just reacting to each thing." She is learning how to "understand" the system better. She finds that as a school teacher, she takes care of herself by trying to "understand" what is happening.

> And that's been true of anti-war activism too because I became an anti-war activist at the same time that I became a socialist. It just happened that way, that the Viet Nam war was getting going. [After] the first march on Washington . . . I was meeting up with a socialist group at Boston University. So there was a lot of education in there, and . . . you could understand why, what is this all about.

Emma reports that she mentally prepares herself for her activism by trying to keep a long range perspective. She describes herself as a socialist and believes that all the ills of society are caused by capitalism and class society. Through the structure of her socialist analysis, she states that she is better able understand social reality. She reports that world events are evidence that supports her analysis.

> Having a framework, a broad social framework to understand these— I mean it's totally irrational. Our society, our system, everything is irrational. As my husband said recently, "The whole thing is based on murder." Everything is murder . . . the wars, the environment, the way people are shooting each other in the streets. I mean, it's a murder society. And it's irrational. . . . We can do better as humans. But if you understand where it's coming from, why is it that although humans can be very bad, they can be very good. We have the capability, potential for both. Why is

> it that it all goes the bad way? And it's the social system and understanding. . . . It's capitalism. It's class society. That gives a broad framework for understanding all the social reality.

She further clarifies that her broad social framework helps her to understand society, and that her socialist analysis makes sense to her.

> I think [class society] does not let you understand everything, certainly not, and not everything about human psychology for sure, but everything about the way the system operates and the war, the broad social realities, the health care system, the schools, the . . . institutions. I think so.

**Theme 5: Enrichment of soul.**

When asked about spiritual self-care, Emma reports that she is an atheist, but she does recount many tangible activities that she describes as enriching her soul. She spends a lot of time talking about children and being in nature, and certain ways that she likes to have fun.

> I don't believe in God . . . although there certainly are things that I do that enrich my soul . . . like going to the beach, tide pooling, hanging out with my dogs, and now with grandchildren . . . that kind of stuff, sure. I like to have fun . . . although these are tangible.

Emma expresses her love of nature. She reflects, "I love to go into the woods, love to be in nature." She enjoys engaging her senses at the beach. She describes, "I love to go to tide pools. I'm probably going to do it today. I think there's a minus tide today." She paints a picture:

> I love to be at the beach. I love the colors. I love the feeling of it. I love the way all your senses are engaged when you go to the beach. I mean that's why children love the beach. They all do. It's universal. I always take my class every year. It's a science thing, but there's more to it, as to why they love it. . . . You feel it; you smell it; you taste it; you see it; you hear it. It's all there.

Another activity that Emma associates with enriching her soul is spending time with a friend. Emma illustrates how she likes to have fun on a regular basis

with a particular friend. She passionately reports, "We do tourism…we went to North Beach Wednesday. We had the day off. And we like to sit in the Puccini's Café and play opera on the juke box, drink their great lattes. Yeah, I mean, we have fun!"

**Structural Themes**

With regards to temporality, Emma has been "pretty continuously active" since 1964, although she has taken breaks from her activism from time to time. She clarifies, "I've had periods of less activity. But it was more when I had small children, babies. And I would take a little bit of a break."

With regards to space and location, Emma relates her happy childhood to her place of birth. She characterizes herself as lucky. She reflects,

> I think that my mom gave me a good start. So I had a pretty happy childhood, pretty free childhood. . . . And then I think, "How can I feel that way when people are in such trouble all around the world?" . . . It does not seem right. It is luck. It's luck of the draw if you're born here or you're born in El Salvador or in Ghana or in Iraq.

Emma continues to explain how lucky she feels about her location of birth.

> Where you're born, and who your parents are, and having material comfort, . . . that's really luck. . . . It's not like I worked harder than other people who don't have it. I mean it's just pure luck. And it's a question that I deal with is how come I'm happy given what I know about the world? What I understand? . . . Yeah, well, I'm saying most of it is luck.

With regards to Emma's relationship to herself, Emma describes herself as healthy and happy. She reports, "I feel like I'm a really healthy person. . . . I am a relatively happy person. I mean I wake up in the morning; I'm happy to start the day."

With regards to her relationship with other people, Emma remembers several incidents of traumatic right-wing attacks to be "really scary" and "stressful." She depicts fighting within the anti-war community to be "very stressful" as well. At the same time, Emma reports that she needs other people to help her take care of herself. She needs other activists and she needs to be with children. She has spoken with other activists who agree that "working with children is mentally healthy for adults." She spends time with a friend "having fun" and she also depicts her exercise class as a necessary part of her self-care. She explains,

> I had to join an exercise class in order to take care of myself in that way 'cause I never would just do it on my own. 'Cause I'm not really good at taking care of myself. But I finally realized that I could let somebody else lead me in that way. That was a step forward for me.

In addition to her exercise teacher, Emma associates her husband as a person intimately connected to her self-care.

> My husband [is] a big part. Because we do things together a little bit, not too much, but . . . we have fun together. We go to the beach together. . . . We have dinner together. . . . It's kind of like taking it for granted. . . . I mean I did not even mention him, yet he is a huge part of my mental health.

With regards to bodily concerns, Emma feels she is growing old. She reports, "I'm becoming an old woman in the movement and I really notice it and I really feel it." She continues, "I'm not strong or anything. I really feel that now." She describes that she is "starting to get arthritis in my hands and I write a lot of letters . . . and that's going to be an issue, I feel. I'm worried about it." Emma describes her awareness of her aging body.

> I'm really getting super aware of aging issues in my body. It's contradictory because this movement, it's really, it's for the youth. It's for the future. And the 60s was a youth movement. And that was the formation of my consciousness. So I identify with the youth. And here I'm becoming an old woman in the movement and I really notice it and I really feel it. It's almost like a contradiction to be an aging body in a movement that requires tons of bodily energy and . . . strength.

Emma finds that she can ignore her body at times. She reports, "It's almost new for me to think about the body. . . . It's something I ignored for a long time, I mean, taking care of my body." She specifies how exercise is a form of self-care for her.

> I started exercising about 6 years ago. So before that I had an excuse. I always said to myself, "I'm so active on my job, I don't need to exercise." But that's not really true. You could be active and on your feet all day, but whether you're doing aerobic exercise and sustained work to try to be healthy in your body. That's not the same thing. So I started going to an older women's exercise class. And I've stuck with it. I was going 3 times a week, but I just started going 2 times a week because I just started a yoga class.

With regards to causality, Emma reflects on her history of anti-war activism. She remembers how the anti-war movement helped to end the war in Viet Nam. She reports, "We ended up with a withdrawal of our government from Viet Nam, so we had a success. So that kind of set the tone for everything since in my life, I have to say, and in my anti-war activism for sure." Emma also connects her anti-war activism to other kinds of activism. She explains, "I've done a lot of other kinds of activism, too, besides anti-war, but . . . I have a holistic approach towards social change. And I don't see any kind of big walls between them."

Emma is very interested in the study of stress and burnout and she connected her own health and well-being to socioeconomic status and place of

birth. She recounts a television show she watched recently, which studied the relationship between socioeconomic status and health.

> The fundamental thing seemed to be that how much power you had over your life determined your health to a large extent. . . . They actually measured this, the level of this cortisol stress-causing stuff in [several people's] bodies, and connected [it] to their social [class]. . . . That's why I thought this [television show] was really very profound.

**Participant 2: "Amanda"**

Participant 2, who will be referred to as "Amanda," works in the field of education. She responded to the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is in her thirties and has been active in the antiwar movement for ten years.

**Verification**

The co-researcher Amanda was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. She was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything she would like to add or delete from the transcription of her experience. Amanda responded by telephone and agreed with the transcription of her experience. She wanted to add that since the interview, she noticed that she has "become more aware of taking care of [herself]" in order to avoid burnout. She also began to observe people at the anti-war office where she volunteers. She notes that "most of the long-term activists have a regimen of self-care, with a few exceptions." She also reports having witnessed several people whom she feels did not take care of themselves very well and have since quit activism.

**Textural Themes**

Four textural themes emerged from the interview with Amanda: (a) inner and outer pressure and responsibility, (b) exhaustion, (c) feeling good about setting limits, and (d) Awareness.

**Theme 1: Inner and outer pressure and responsibility.**

Amanda describes an overwhelming feeling of responsibility for the success of the anti-war movement leading to feelings of burnout. "I think there's a particular level of stress associated with being in the anti-war movement because . . . you almost feel like it's on your shoulders to make sure it all goes forward." She explains that because she became an activist and learned a solution that could help stop the war, she feels responsible to continuously help the anti-war movement. She believes it is easy to feel burned out as an anti-war activist. For Amanda, the increased feeling of responsibility leads to an increased level of stress.

> 'Cause you're introduced to a solution, you're introduced to a response to all the social ills you've seen your whole life. And now you know things you can do about it and . . . you don't want to . . . sit back and not have done something that could help the movement grow or not have done something that could have helped to stop the war.

Amanda holds a very high standard for herself politically. She reports feeling personally responsible for helping to stop war. "[Ignoring signs of stress is] easy to do . . . when you're in the moment . . . and this demonstration's really important and you understand the political context of having it be successful." Amanda speaks of her past inability to take care of herself when there was a major demonstration. She feels such a personal sense of responsibility that she

must do everything in her power to bring out the masses and make the demonstration as successful as possible. Her passion and commitment to the cause become more important that her own needs. "When we take on a task that in many ways is beyond the people and the resources we have, . . . there's a high . . . level of motivation to do whatever you can to get it done and make it happen."

Because of her personal sense of responsibility as an anti-war activist, Amanda finds that she can no longer stand by silently when she experiences injustice in her environment, wherever she is. Her new sense of responsibility can cause her a higher stress level because she is often acting outside of her own comfort zone.

> I think [witnessing injustice] can be associated with being more stressed out . . . because, before, I could just go to school or go to work and there were things that maybe I did not like, but I did not feel as beholden to say something or beholden to speak out . . . and now . . . I would be disappointed in myself if I did not [speak out].

Amanda reports feeling a certain internal and external pressure to participate in anti-war activities. She depicts an internal pressure due to her commitment to the anti-war movement. "There's a sort of internal pressure to do everything you can and the best that you can. So the pressure's not toward self-care." She explains that she believes her personal commitment as an anti-war activist leaves her with a heightened sense of personal pressure because it is not a job, but a lifetime dedication. She suggests that people who have anti-war work as a paid job are more able to set boundaries and not burn out because they know they are off work at five o'clock. She states that, "being an activist … whose

politics, whose engagement in the movement is not based on a job" can lead to burnout.

She makes vivid a certain internal pressure to fight injustice wherever she is, even if it feels uncomfortable or unnatural to her.

> My feeling is that it's a requirement of me to [fight injustice] wherever it is. . . . When things happen at work, I don't keep my mouth shut. . . . It's like a pressure almost, that for me is somewhat associated with burnout because in some ways it does not feel natural to me . . . and it's very stressful for me. . . . When I leave those situations I feel all of the indicators of high stress . . . almost like you had too much caffeine.

Amanda portrays a sort of pressure she feels when she is fighting injustice. She reports a "sort of psychological and emotional pressure of constantly taking a stand and being in the small opposition, which for me, it's not natural to do that."

She characterizes a sort of external pressure from others in the anti-war movement as well. She jokes that unfortunately the social pressure in the anti-war movement is not towards self-care. "The pressures are all towards stress rather than the other direction." She explains, "I have a heightened sort of feeling, of reaction, when I'm being asked to do more than I can handle." She recounts the physical pain she has felt when she is pushed beyond her limits. "I do not want to feel that pain again. . . . It's a very strong, a very strong feeling."

**Theme 2: Exhaustion.**

Amanda remembers feeling a sense of exhaustion at times when being against the war was not popular. She was part of the "small opposition," which can be very emotionally draining and stressful for Amanda. She found herself constantly having to defend her beliefs and her position on world events. Because

her views were often not the popular views of the time, she often felt feelings of burnout. She recounts answering the phone at the anti-war office.

> Half the phone calls you got would be some irate person who was racist and horrified— just like really offensive. So that sort of dimension of the work was very . . . I took it too personally. . . . And that was an aspect that's really associated with burnout. It was just exhaustion.

Furthermore, opposition to the anti-war movement led to feelings of burnout for Amanda when dealing with counter-demonstrators in the middle of an anti-war demonstration. She spoke of "the sort of stress of organizing a demonstration when there's right wing groups going through the middle of the demonstration and punching people out and you're trying to stop them."

She also explains that complying with government restrictions at the demonstrations was extremely stressful. She feels that regulations for demonstrators that the government puts in place are purposeful obstacles to discourage the demonstrators. Not only did she find herself having to defend her views with many people, she also found herself having to defend her views against the government. It can be very daunting for Amanda to organize an anti-war event when the government is actively opposing what she is doing. "The government does not want the . . . demonstration. . . . So they put every possible difficulty in place, running . . . right until the last moment. . . . So physically you're exhausted."

**Theme 3: Feeling good about setting limits.**

Over time, Amanda has developed the ability to say no. She categorizes her new ability to understand her limitations and set boundaries as a form of self-care. She can identify what she is capable of doing, and what she is not able to

do. "I think self-care for me has been learning how to say 'no' or how to say 'I can't do that right now,' or . . . 'that's not going to happen,' or 'I need this time and I'm not going to be able to do that.'"

Amanda emphasizes that she has learned how to feel good about herself when she says no. She especially appreciates her newly learned skill to feel good about herself when she sets limits. She acknowledges that her new boundaries are a part of being a good activist.

> [I am] learning that I can't, I'm not capable of that [assignment] . . . and not taking it like . . . that means I'm a bad activist or it means I'm a bad person or anything like that. But just saying like, "I can't do it. I'm not going to be able to do that."

Amanda also talks about feeling a sense of confidence. She has let go of a lot of her self-doubt. "Self-care is also associated with confidence . . . in myself as a person and being able to do what I can do and make the contribution I want to make."

**Theme 4: Awareness.**

Self care has brought a level of awareness in Amanda, that she is clearly able to identify when she is burnt out and when she needs to take care of herself. "Like I know what it means to feel burnout and stressed out and horrible and I know what if feels like when I take care of myself. Those feelings are very clear to me." She has learned how to gauge her burnout levels and self-care activities better in order to maintain some regular balance in her life, rather than the lows of burnout that she has experienced in the past.

Amanda has been able to identify when she must take care of herself in order to function. She describes her experience of taking action when she feels herself burning out.

> For me it's that experience of being able to function in that way for a while and then just all of a sudden just not being able to function at all. So instead of doing that, when I know that I'm stressed out, taking action to maintain my functionality.

She has noted that for her, "self-care is a constant thing that you need to think about."

Amanda speaks about a few of her feelings when she is taking care of herself. She describes "getting centered" and "balancing things out." She is aware of the "feeling of taking care of yourself." She elaborates further that, "I know when I eat well, I feel better. I feel like I can handle things." She explains that when she is taking care of herself, she notices "a very strong feeling of awareness of what the results of taking care of myself are."

**Structural Themes**

With regards to temporality, Amanda can experience burnout when she uses her time for her anti-war work, not leaving any time for the rest of her life. She has made critical decisions about her use of time, often leading to a feeling of burnout. Time pressures and constant deadlines can lead to feelings of burnout.

> The time was necessary to invest in a demonstration or a movement or a conference or something that was immediate and that needed to happen and I could feel it. . . . And that in a lot of ways is associated with burnout.

Another aspect of time for Amanda is her need to take time and get away on occasion. "I value [getting away] much more now than I had previously. I value the time that I can just take by myself or that feeling of needing to be kind

of shut off a little bit." For example, Amanda remembers a time after a demonstration when she took some time for herself. "I went to my friend's college dorm room for 2 weeks, I think, and did not go anywhere, like I basically hid out in her room."

She emphasizes how important it is for her to take time out of her day for exercise and other relaxation activities. Recently, she has spent a lot of time doing yoga.

> Yoga . . . made it possible for me to take care of myself and to . . . carve out a piece of time and just say, "I'm not doing anything but yoga," . . . which has made me more available to do the things I do still want to do and be part of political activity.

Amanda also describes her use of time with regards to making sure she always creates some time for her activism. She believes that her she can never pull herself away from activism completely because her activism is such an integral part of her life.

> For me what was really important was not pulling out completely, because activism is part of my life that I value. It's something that contributes to who I am and how I interact with the world. To just give it up . . . would be incredibly frustrating for me.

With regards to Amanda's relationship with herself, she finds it difficult to recognize when she needs to stop and take care of herself. She is so passionate about her commitment to fighting injustice and organizing a mass movement against war, that she often loses touch with her own personal needs. She describes the feeling of burnout when she is working too hard. "Oh, OK. I'm at this point where I'm not really taking care of myself. I'm not really functioning. I'm just sort of doing whatever it is I can do." She illustrates how difficult it is

for her to take care of herself rather than to just continue burning out. "And in some ways, it's like at that moment it's easier. It's easy to be burnt out. It's easier to [burn out] than to do the things you know you can do to take care of yourself . . . which involves a lot of different stuff."

Amanda makes clear that she has learned to take care of herself during her ten years of activism. She is able to take care of herself much better now than in the past. She remembers her feelings of burnout in the past compared with her feelings now. "Since then it's much better . . . 'cause I've learned how to deal with myself."

Because Amanda's commitment to her politics and her passion to fight injustice often becomes the most important thing in her life, her relationship to herself and others often suffers. Not only does she put her own needs aside, but she can also put friends and family aside when she is preparing for a major political event. "I very often, in the heat of an organizing moment, . . . put everything in my life to the side and not deal with it and it builds up."

With regards to her relationship with others, she described how she makes a point to keep friends who are not activists. She includes her husband as a necessary component of her self-care because he is not political. She finds that it is important to maintain these friends who are not activists, so she can step away from her political activity when she is with them.

> Cause I think for me, that's been an important component of self-care, is just to have people you can engage with and depend on that in some ways don't understand the world you're in. So that you can step out of it a little bit, and that's very important.

In addition, Amanda recognizes how she also relies on her activist friends for support as part of her self-care. Amanda sees her activist friends as very

dependable. She keeps her activist friends "because those people who are organizers understand better when you're in a moment of stress or you need to take care of yourself."

Amanda explains how she is better able to take care of herself now when someone who is pro-war or racist calls the anti-war office and attacks her. She has learned how to protect herself emotionally.

> And now if you pick up the phone and it's a racist or something like that, I know exactly how to respond. I know how to handle it. After I put down the phone, it might be a story to tell someone or something like that, but it's not something that I feel emotionally or psychologically.

With regards to bodily concerns, Amanda's experience of burnout in her body was a feeling of being "shut down" and in physical pain. "My body basically shut down at a certain point. It involved a lot of pain, like joint pain, physical. Just not feeling like I could function. Not feeling well. And that lasted for about a year." She remembers how it felt in her body.

> I realized I couldn't move, like I literally felt like my body could not move. I couldn't get out of bed and it really hurt, mostly in my joints, things like that. And the pain just kept up. I went to the doctor. There was no explanation for it at all.

Amanda reports that she learned how to take care of her body so she could continue her activism. After her body physically shut down, she describes her experience. "That was the basis for me learning about how I could take care of myself in order to continue being an activist." She explains that she had to learn a balance between taking care of herself and her activism. "So I began a long process over the next year where I suffered that pain, but I also started trying to

learn how to manage it without having to pull myself completely out of the movement."

As she learned to take care her physical needs, Amanda discovered that she began to relate to her own body in a new way.

> I can identify that after going through a process of trying to figure out how to take care of myself also gave me a relationship to my body that was different in a lot of ways. It changed, because I've always been self-conscious about my body. I've always felt that it was not right or wrong and that changed a lot over . . . this period in which . . . I've been an activist.

With regards to causality, Amanda attributes some feelings of burnout to the search for the cause of her physical pain. The doctors could not explain Amanda's pain so they diagnosed her with fibro myalgia and prescribed her narcotic medication. Amanda found this diagnosis to be insufficient, however, and she instead connected her physical condition to how she was taking care of herself. "I immediately connected [my physical pain] to what was going on in terms of my livelihood which was sleeping very little, not eating very well, and constantly being active."

Amanda draws the conclusion that a certain level of her own burnout has also been caused by her competitive nature. She describes a certain level of burnout associated with comparing herself to other people, especially other women anti-war activists. She can find herself competing with other women in the movement, wanting to be as productive as they are. She explains that she can set an unrealistic standard for herself, admiring other women whom she perceives as being more sacrificing or dedicated than she is. Amanda remembers how her comparisons have led to burnout.

> For me I think it's part of being a woman, too, in the anti-war movement, is I think that women in this society are trained to constantly compare themselves to the people around them. . . . And that definitely is a factor that led to me being burnt out.

Amanda reports that one of the challenging aspects associated with burnout is "capitalist society." She depicts the stress involved in recognizing all the social injustice in the world and she connects her awareness to burnout. She summarizes,

> I think one of the challenging aspects that may be associated in my head with burnout is . . . just capitalist society in general. . . . Once you've become an activist, then you're engaged in fighting it and building a movement to stop what's happening. Everything in the world seems to become a little more even potent to you . . . like this does not have to happen, but you see it everyday!

**Participant 3: "Hanna"**

Participant 3, who will be referred to as "Hanna," is a retired activist who worked for several progressive organizations in her lifetime. She responded to the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is in her eighties and has been active in the antiwar movement for sixty-nine years.

**Verification**

Hanna was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. She was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything she would like to add or delete from the transcription of her experience. Hanna responded by phone and made several corrections to the grammar of the interview and she added names of people who were left out. Hanna did not

change any of the content of the interview, but she wanted to emphasize a few points.

Hanna added that she is currently experiencing physical burnout. She feels frustrated because her body will not allow her to do as much political activity as she has in the past. "I'm used to being active," she laments as she recounts a litany of physical problems that she has encountered since we did the original interview. "Of course, it makes me feel depressed sometimes," she admits about her physical limitations, but she is not sure if her body is experiencing burnout, or just natural symptoms of old age.

Recently, she reports that her spirits were lifted by two events. First, she felt appreciated and acknowledged by friends who threw her a birthday party. Second, she was overjoyed to be able to attend a demonstration in honor of Cesar Chavez, Martin Luther King and union workers a few weeks ago, despite her physical ailments. She affirms, "I had a wonderful time"!

**Textural Themes**

Four textural themes developed from the interview with Hanna: (a) betrayal, (b) depression, (c) resilience, and (d) feeling loved.

**Theme 1: Betrayal.**

Hanna reports that the biggest causes of burnout in her life were when her second and third husbands abandoned her. Although she has been participating in anti-war activism her entire adult life, she believes her marriages ending were the actual cause of her burnout. "It's hard to say that I burned out on movement

work, per se, but the things connected with it, especially my two husbands basically deserting me . . . us."

In the interview with Hanna, she describes the very dramatic break up of her second marriage. She and her husband both worked together in the anti-war movement, and after 35 years of marriage, he left both her and his own children for a younger woman. Furthermore, she found out later that he had been cheating for years with many women and his infidelity was common knowledge to many people in the anti-war movement. Hanna states that she thinks that everyone knew about his infidelity, except herself. She described a feeling of humiliation, which was compounded by the feelings of pain and betrayal.

> I knew my husband had affairs over and over again. I did not know that people in the movement knew it until after he left me and then a lot of them said, "we'd been waiting for this to happen". . . . It was in the gossip circles, which also hurt me.

Hanna illustrates another experience of burnout that occurred many years later with her third husband. "I was by myself for 15 years and I remarried in 1995 . . . and he has just deserted not only me, but his whole family. He has a number of children." She reports feeling angry and betrayed by what she describes as his abandonment of her. She spent many years fundraising for his political causes and supporting him in the relationship. She adopted and raised one of his daughters as her own, yet he couldn't even tell her why he left the marriage. She admits, "I'm not happy about it."

**Theme 2: Depression.**

When asked to describe burnout, Hanna talks about a feeling of depression that has come over her several times in her life. She outlines the depression she

felt with the dramatic end to her second marriage. She reports that she felt very shocked and had a difficult time coping with the situation. She described herself as suicidal and landed in the psychiatric ward of a hospital. She attributes going to therapy for 8 years because of that marriage ending.

> I was married for 35 years to my second husband . . . and he walked out on me . . . and 4 kids . . . to go live with a woman 30 years younger than me. I was devastated. I was suicidal. I . . . was in therapy for 8 years after that. . . . I was in the hospital for a month, in a psychiatric ward of the general hospital. . . . It was a rough go for a long time.

She admits feeling depressed once again at the sudden end of her third marriage. During the interview she explains that her third husband only left her recently. She expresses a sadness in her voice, an underlying grief. After recounting the break up of her third marriage, she summarizes, "I've worked through a lot of depression." But she admits that she is not done grieving her most recent marriage.

With sadness in her voice, Hanna explains that she has always lived in an environment with very little money and that this lack of money has led to a feeling of burnout. She gets an extremely small pension and she lives in subsidized housing. "I don't have much money and that's one of the burnout effects. You just always have to watch your pennies. . . . I know that's true of millions of people these days, but . . . that's been true for me my whole life." She reflects on her finances throughout her life. "I grew up very poor, always hungry."

Hanna explains how working in the anti-war movement means working in an environment with very little money. "One of the effects of being in the

movement has been that a lot of the time it was . . . fairly low paid work. Even though I headed up a lot of different organizations, they don't pay very well. So I don't have a lot of social security." She explains that although she has gone to psychotherapy in the past, now she cannot afford it. Recently, she has been feeling depressed, but has been unable to go to therapy. "I haven't had money to go to a therapist this time because I'm no longer working." She admits feeling sad to be so poor after so many years of hard work.

**Theme 3: Resilience.**

Hanna describes her feelings of resilience and ability to bounce back from adversity. Although she could relate to having periods of burnout in her life, she was ever insistent to identify her ability to rebound from periods of burnout.

> I think the main feeling is that I always bounce back. . . . So I think no matter how badly I may feel or what pain I may suffer, I always bounce back. I think that's something I've learned to expect from myself. "This is really rough, but just hang in there."

Hanna has a lot of energy. She describes being very active as a child, that her active nature helped her override her physical pain. "I was a dancer. I was an athlete. I played tennis. I played field hockey." This high energy lifestyle continued for Hanna as an adult. "I've always been high energy, just go-go-go, sleep 4 or 6 hours a night."

Hanna outlines how her activism caused her to become stronger. "I think I got stronger as a result of all those walks and vigils, and sometimes, punishing experiences." She chronicles a particular experience when she got arrested.

> I got arrested once and I usually non-cooperated with arrest and I got put . . . in the county jail and I would not take off my clothes and put on jail clothing. . . . The warden was so mad that he made the woman attendant

> tear off my clothes and put on a nightgown, then [he] pulled the nightgown up over my head and dragged me all over the jail, on the floor, in front of the men's cells as well as the women's, to teach me a lesson. . . . Incidents like that, I suppose they make me stronger.

**Theme 4: Feeling loved.**

Hanna explains how love from others played such an important part of her life while she was growing up. She had three important women who helped to raise her as a child, one was her step-grandmother, one was her nanny and one was her Sunday school teacher. She believes that she learned about love from these women.

Hanna characterizes her step-grandmother as a very loving school teacher and mother. She married Hanna's grandfather and raised Hanna's father as her own. "My grandmother was wonderful. . . . She was a wonderful stepmother to my father and his 2 sisters. So I had love in my life."

Hanna remembers her nanny who took care of her when she was a child. She speaks tenderly of this woman whom she admired.

> We had a wonderful African American lady who came and took care of our family. . . . It was from her and my grandmother, my father's step-mother, that I really learned what love was. I did not learn from my parents. I learned it from those two people. And then I had a Sunday School teacher who just radiated love.

She remembers how her Sunday school teacher was disabled and used to tell her, "Don't you ever look down on somebody because he has different colored skin that you, or she talks different from you, or they wear raggedy clothes because Jesus loves everyone of us, no matter what we look like or who we are." Hanna's entire body language changes as she remembers her love for

her Sunday School teacher. A broad smile spreads across her face as she sits up in her chair.

Hanna recounts some of the friends that she has met along the way during her anti-war activism. "I do have people who love me and whom I love and not just my family but dear friends and colleagues." She explains that it is the love between family and friends that gives her strength.

**Structural Themes**

With regards to space and environment, Hanna considers her relationship with nature to be her form of spirituality. She does not believe in God, per se, but she feels empathy for all of life. She has been very concerned with the environment since before the environment was popular. She reports that she has always been into organic farming and against nuclear power.

> Spiritually I have a lot of strength. . . . I believe in spiritual connection of all human beings and maybe animal and plant life too. I believe; I call it the holy spirit that connects all of us. And I think that I operate in that realm of empathy and concern for all life.

In terms of her relationship with self, there are several things that are very important to Hanna's self-care plan. First of all, Hanna talks about her commitment to seeking professional help. She believes that psychotherapy has always been a valuable tool in her self-care plan, even early in her life when she was married to her first husband. "I've had therapy a number of times in my life, even before my second husband left me."

Secondly, Hanna depicts her activism as a form of self-care. When her activism is effective, she feels rewarded emotionally. "Just doing things that are effective, it's self rewarding. I mean when you have to organize and carry out

some big project and it goes well, and you feel like you affected some people or some change, that's self-rewarding."

Thirdly, Hanna views her relationships with others as a form of her own self-care. She feels very close to many of her friends in the anti-war movement. She relies on these friends for support because they have all been through many intense experiences together. She remembers them as people closely associated with self-care for her. "All these close friends I've had through the years, that's very supportive when you know people care for you and admire you and appreciate you."

Hanna explains that she is also very close to all her children. She fondly remembers her oldest daughter who died in 2008 of cancer. She speaks lovingly of all her children and how she visits them regularly. "I've always had close relationships with my children and I still do."

Another way Hanna gets inspired is by watching other activists. She feels happy and fulfilled when she sees other people doing good work in the anti-war movement, even if she does not know them personally. "It's rewarding, it's gratifying to know a lot of human beings who don't [act badly toward each other] and instead try to help each other and help the world and help the environment and help people who are suffering and that's it's own reward."

Having recognition and appreciation from others in the anti-war movement has been important to Hanna as well. "I have had appreciation in my life. I've received several awards." She sees this recognition for her work as an experience of self-care. She reports that she still gets recognition for her past

work. She explains about how she attended an awards dinner recently and she was included in the program. "And they put my note and the fact that I was a recipient in the program for the evening and I appreciated that because I feel I'm not forgotten."

When asked about bodily sensations associated with burnout, Hanna chronicles the physical pain in her body that she has suffered for her entire life. She recounts the physical abuse to her body that she experienced as a child. "I don't know if you could call it burnout. My body has taken a beating. I was beaten by my father, literally, at the first time when I was 2 months old, and it injured my back." She reports how her father's abuse caused her to develop severe scoliosis.

Hanna feels the effects of aging on her body, and she finds that her physical pain makes it more difficult for her to participate in anti-war activism.

> I have overridden pain my whole life. And now it's getting harder, much harder. . . . I can no longer stand on a vigil for hours or walk for miles on peace or civil rights walks. I have to sit down, and . . . that's burnout of my body. That's for sure.

Hanna talks about her energy level, that in general, she has had a history of high energy throughout her life. However, she has not had much energy lately and considers herself in a period of burnout at this time. "This [loss of energy lately] is very hard on me and I don't know if you can call it burn out. My body's burning out, maybe. I'm 88!"

With regards to physicality, Hanna describes how taking care of her body has been important to her over the years. Eating well has been a part of her self-care plan. Hanna expresses how gardening was very important to her and her

family when she was growing up, and that she raised her own children on organic food. "My husband that I was married to for 35 years was very knowledgeable about and very strong on eating well. I knew about organics long before we heard about them in the market place."

Hanna explains that she has conquered her physical pain for most of her life. She believes that in the past, her youth and physical fitness has helped her overcome her physical pain. As an adult, she has learned to meditate and write and she stresses the importance of exercise. She abstains from drugs and alcohol and she makes sure to have fun. "It's important to watch your diet, to exercise, to take care of your body as well as your mind and your feelings."

With regards to causality, Hanna is trying to investigate the cause of her low energy level. She believes that if she does not figure out the cause of the weakness in her body and address it, she may suffer further consequences. She is not sure if this weakness is natural aging or something else.

> I just don't have that physical ability anymore. I walk outside with a cane because I have fallen a couple of times. I don't have the staying power I used to. And just this summer I woke up one morning and my legs—this was very sudden—my legs were so weak I could hardly get out of bed. We're still trying to find out what the cause is.

Hanna looks to her childhood to find answers. She remembers how her father and mother were very abusive. "I grew up . . . very abused by my parents." She thinks about the kind of abuse that she received from her parents and makes clear, "My father was physically abusive. My mother was emotionally and verbally abusive."

During her childhood, she was told by her mother and grandmother that her father was violent because he suffered from posttraumatic stress disorder from the war. Her mother said, "Daddy acts like that because he was shell-shocked and gassed in the war." When Hanna got into psychotherapy, she began to believe that instead, her father's violence was caused by his own childhood abuse.

> Later I found out that more likely, Daddy acted like that because his father had abused him and his two sisters and his father's father had abused his children. You know how it gets passed down. But I connected the violence of war with the violence at home. Very early, those two were synonymous for me.

Hanna associates her becoming an anti-war activist as a direct result of her violent childhood. She explains how fighting against the war became a self-care tool for her to escape the disempowerment of her childhood.

> I heard and met these people in the movement and I heard about nonviolence right in church and even at the university. And I just felt like I was home. Nonviolence just spoke to me right then and there because my life, my home life had been so violent.

In addition to investigating her personal history, Hanna has spent a lot of time trying to understand why countries go to war. Fighting against war has been her lifetime passion, so it has been difficult for her to understand the causes of war.

> I cannot understand why human beings act toward each other the way they do so much of the time. It totally baffles me why do we spend trillions . . . on military expenditures when we need that for good health and good education and good housing. I'm totally baffled about why human beings act the way they do sometimes.

**Participant 4: Silvia**

Participant 4, who will be referred to as "Silvia," works for a non-profit organization in San Francisco. She was selected through networking and word of

mouth snowball sampling, which started with the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. She is in her fifties and has been active in the antiwar movement for twenty years.

**Verification**

Silvia was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. She was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything she would like to add or delete from the transcription of her experience. She responded by phone and remarked, "I finished reading it and I think everything is o.k." However, Silvia wanted to add that she felt there is a difference between an anti-war activist and an anti-war organizer. Silvia sees herself not as an anti-war activist, rather she sees herself as an anti-war organizer. She does not just attend anti-war events and activities; she initiates and organizes numerous anti-war actions. She emphasized, "I don't know if it's possible, but I don't want to be an anti-war activist. I want to be an anti-war organizer. I see a big difference between those two terms."

**Textural Themes**

Seven textural themes developed from the interview with Silvia: (a) frustration, (b) responsibility, (c) isolation, (d) depression, (e) support, (f) belief, and (g) integration.

**Theme 1: Frustration.**

When asked about burnout, Silvia described her feelings of frustration and hopelessness. She sighed and began to talk about struggling through the process of anti-war organizing and feeling tired. She remembers:

> the feeling that . . . there's nothing you can do. . . . You do the process. You're struggling. You're organizing and then you feel like you're getting nowhere. And so in that sense you feel like tired, like you don't know what to do next. . . . And then you feel . . . am I really doing something? Am I really contributing to something?

Silvia continued to talk about her feelings of burnout. She reported a feeling of not getting anywhere and a feeling of anger. She described feeling worried that all the anti-war groups are not getting anything accomplished in order to stop war. She expressed her "feeling of frustration. . . . Also sometimes I have this feeling of hopelessness and I don't like that either, like we're not getting anywhere." She illustrated how her feelings progress from frustration to anger to poor self-care. She explained, "You're frustrated; then you get angry; then you don't take care of yourself; You eat wrong."

**Theme 2: Responsibility.**

Silvia reports that feelings of worry and responsibility plague her. She describes her thoughts of self-doubt, "Am I doing these things right or am I doing the things wrong? Am I using— maybe we should do something else? You feel the stress." She states that she second guesses her choices and often worries. She reflects, "Maybe you're not the one who's doing something right? Maybe it's your responsibility that things are not happening the way they should be happening?" She reports that her mind often brainstorms about activities she could be doing between demonstrations, questioning, "What is it that we are doing? . . . I always feel . . . that responsibility."

Silvia states that she feels the responsibility of the entire anti-war movement. She reports feeling responsible for the movement's inability to bring new people to the anti-war events. She describes a feeling of worry and asks,

> Are we really reaching out, people? I'm concerned because it's always the same people that we get together. . . . It worries me that we are unable to bring new faces, young people, people from . . . regular working class people to meetings. . . . So those are the type of stress that I feel going into the meetings.

She recounts how her mind often races with ideas of how to bring people together to help stop the war. She reflects, "I go to church, to my work, to my family. . . . That's constantly in my mind. . . . How [are] we going to do it? And that, in itself, is stressful because you know you have to do something."

Silvia reports that she feels worried when people do not understand the politics behind war. She explains,

> That worries me because I feel that we'll never end a war in this country if we . . . are not really able to show the people in this country that war is a result of United States policies. It's not a mistake. It's not because Saddam Hussein was not a good guy. It was not because of any of that. But it was a planned thing.

**Theme 3: Isolation.**

Silvia describes feeling isolated and overwhelmed when she lets herself think about all the U.S. wars abroad. She reflects, "[My feelings are] overwhelming sometimes, like I'm alone." She notices that her own family usually ignores all the suffering abroad at the hands of the U.S. government. Silvia reports, "They don't want to put themselves in that position of stress or that position of responsibility. So . . . then you feel alone." She also describes the pain she feels when she does not get the support she needs from her family for her

anti-war work. "It affects me very much. . . . It is kind of hard. It's just painful because in some ways . . . the person is telling you what you do is useless. . . . It's hurtful."

She also confirms feeling isolated in her thinking around some people in the anti-war movement. She explains, "The other thing that burns me out, terribly, the thing that I just can't stand is when the people only talk about the troops here. That really upsets me a lot." While the U.S. wars abroad are "destroying whole countries," she reports that some in the anti-war movement only care about the lives of U.S. soldiers. She describes longing for others to look at the world the way she does. She insists, "We must think about how wrong it is to kill! How wrong it is to send bombs to other countries and how wrong it is to send soldiers, and how wrong it is to control all the people's lives just so that we can have more!"

Silvia reports feeling alone and misunderstood by the people around her at work as well. She states, "One thing that really concerns me is that is with me, it's my inability sometimes to make myself understood by some of the workers around me about how important it is to be anti-war." Or, she explains, even if the workers understand the importance of standing against the war, they are too afraid. She quotes the workers, "'I have to survive. I have to go to work. I have to take care of myself. I cannot say anything because they may deport me'." Silvia wants people to step outside of their own comfort zone. She laments, "People need . . . to develop love for humanity!" She expresses her sadness, "It's

a situation that makes me sad, too, that when you see that unless it affects me directly, I won't move."

**Theme 4: Depression.**

When describing the experience of burnout, Silvia explains, "I had . . . depression at one time. And I had to really deal with it. . . . I went through a depression all about 3 years, a really bad depression." She remembers the stress she felt during her depression, "I got that depression which was severe, horrible." She details her experience further: "I get [a] bad temper too, and I get angry. I get attitudes that develop, you know, like you do that [which] you don't want to do."

She attributes her depression to the fall of the Soviet Union and how it caused her to question her life-long anti-war work. Without the Soviet Union, she felt the world could never achieve justice. She summarizes, "I would keep asking myself what I believed all my life, that's not true. I mean, justice is not true. I mean I'm wrong about all these things. So I went through a very severe depression."

**Theme 5: Support.**

Support is a big part of Silvia's self-care. She describes her relationship with her family during her depression, "I got very close with my family. I asked them to please come with me, what was happening to me." Silvia sings to her daughter, "You are the sunshine of my life." Silvia explains that both her children "have been by [her] side constantly," and "they come and they take care of [her]." She feels comfort because her son and daughter are both "politically aware," and Silvia explains, "They believe in socialism like I do." Silvia thinks back to her

past and admits, “Without them, I don’t think I could‘ve ever made it.” Her grandchildren “bring a lot of happiness” too.

Silvia reports that she draws a lot of strength from both her parents and her best friend. Silvia remembers that her mother “stood by me at the moment of my depression.” Although he passed away, Silvia recalls her father:

> My father . . . founded the first trade union in my country. And he has always been there and my strength. . . . When he was alive and even now that he is gone, I feel very connected with him. I feel like he is my guardian angel in so many ways. His wisdom . . . always is there with me.

Silvia also acknowledges how her best friend played a key role in “encouraging” her during her depression. Her friend comforted Silvia, that she “would make it through.”

Silvia states that she also relies on support from the political left. She assures herself that the left in this country has “advanced from last year,” so that they are one step closer to a just world. She comforts herself with the thoughts that, “We are still together.” She feels that she is “not alone” when she thinks about “that there is a revolutionary left in this country.” She revels in the thought that “there’re people still fighting. I have comrades that are doing that.” She is happy when she remembers that “they think like me.” She describes that “we are thinking together. Here we are trying to stop this thing.” She draws strength from thinking that “we’re still here.” For Silvia, self-care is remembering that she is not alone in her struggle against wars of aggression. She affirms, “Knowing, too, that there are people who believe, finding . . . comrades that are political and that are active and all that. That helps me a lot. . . . I hold onto that and that has been good.”

**Theme 6: Belief.**

Silvia often experiences a sense of belief in which she draws strength. She used the word "belief" numerous times during the interview. At some points, she seemed to be describing a belief in God or a belief in Jesus. At other times, she seemed to be referring to a belief in her comrades on the left or a belief in the inevitability of socialism. She recounts how in the past, she "left the church, but not [her] belief." When Silvia contemplates self-care, she admits, "the main thing that kept me is my belief."

Silvia describes her belief that world social justice is inevitable. She takes comfort in the fact that:

> Even if it's not in my lifetime, yes, it will happen. Yes, we will have a just world. Yes, there will be plenty for everybody. Yes, we will get rid of poverty. All those things, I would draw to that part of me, internal, in my belief. I believe in that. Then that helps me a lot to be able to continue.

She affirms, "that is a promise that [socialism] will happen. So I believe that it will happen. So I believe it will happen." She summarizes, "I believe in a higher force, not just one party, one organization or one individual, but in humanity."

Silvia experiences a spiritual belief, which she calls "that spiritual connection with God." She describes a "connection that this is not it." She explains that "there's more to life than this ugly world." She further relates that it helped her "tremendously to have that connection, that spiritual connection, with God." She explains that she feels "a lot of things that were unbelievable in my mind." She feels a sort of hope, that "this is the beginning." She talks about a type of "knowing" that she is "not alone."

> Even if there's not one single person next to me, I'm not alone. . . . My spirit is connected to the world. My spirit is connected to all the human beings. We are like so connected. . . . We are one. We are one. . . . I feel that wonderful connection and that wonderful communication with that spiritual part of me.

**Theme 7: Integration.**

Silvia emphasizes the importance of her ability to "link the ideas of socialism to [her] faith." She exclaims, "I always believed that Jesus was the first socialist." She connects the biblical teaching that "the poor will inherit the earth" to the socialist belief that the "working class . . . are the ones who will change the world." She explains that the connection of her spiritual beliefs and political beliefs "came so clear" to her. She connects a socialist planned economy to how the first Christians "put all the richness that they have together" and they "distributed according to the needs of the people."

Silvia reports that she has integrated all the parts of herself. She explains that she can now try to "change the world from so many directions: from my spiritual life, to my political belief to my everyday life." She describes "a connection of body and mind that happened . . . to refresh me and prepare me." She calls herself "an integral human being." She states that "you cannot have your life separated because that's more stressful." She explains, "We are a total thing." She reports that she believes "in God" and she believes "in revolution" and she believes "in change" and the she believes "in humanity," that she loves herself. She emphasizes, "You can do all these things. Then you become a whole being. That's a wonderful feeling, too. That's how I felt and I still feel that way."

**Structural Themes**

With relationship to time, Silvia would often wonder if her anti-war work was effective. She would question herself, "Am I wasting my time?" She describes that during her depression, she began to feel that she had wasted her entire life, "I've been doing this, doing all this work and really there is no chance to change the world. What did I do with my life? I wasted it since I was 14-1/2 years old. I wasted my life fighting for justice."

Silvia wants to be very effective with her time. She says, "I'm older and so I don't want to spend the rest of my life just like a chicken without a head . . . doing this [activism]." She continues, "I want to be able to contribute something that would be able to help people in the future." She believes that if she influences children now, that there will be hope in the future for the anti-war movement. "I focus on the children in my school . . . the children that are 3½ - 4 years old . . . and the families influence the children to think . . . about caring for one another and loving one another and peaceful ways of resolving conflict."

Silvia also questions many organizations' use of time.

> I can see how wrong war is and then how in-between the time that we have one demonstration and the next one. . . . A whole year went by before another demonstration. And then I see all these groups coming in. Some of them had done wonderful work in-between. But the majority had done nothing in-between, had done nothing!

With regards to spatiality, Silvia states that most people who live in the U.S. "don't feel war at all." She acknowledges, "I feel blessed that I am aware of what's going on. I feel blessed that my heart is in the right place, that I can see these things." She feels blessed that she is able to see how morally wrong the war

is. She admits, "I feel like I have to share that with other people, the importance of being in that place, the importance of seeing how wrong war is." Silvia explains that many people in the U.S. have "total disregard for the life of the peoples in those countries that . . . the United States invaded."

As far as her relationship with herself, she affirms, "I love myself and I can take care of myself and it's OK to take care of myself." She states,

> I love meeting people, and doing poetry. . . . I write little stories. . . . I love all those things. That's how I take care of myself. . . . When I can relax, then I heal myself. When I take care of my mom sometimes, I go there. I lay down with her and talk. And then I read all day long and relax.

With regards to her relationship with others, Silvia reports experiencing burnout often when she goes to meetings with other left groups. She finds the arguing between groups to be stressful. She asks, "[Are we] going to be able to accomplish something or are we just going to argue and argue and get nowhere?" She acknowledges feeling disdain for people in the left who are "more interested in the power-play in controlling the movement than in really stopping the war." She also reports feeling stress when other left groups are not taking time to educate others. She complains that these groups have done "nothing to continue educating the people around them."

Silvia acknowledges her need for others in her anti-war work as well, that other people are part of her self-care. She insists, "You cannot do it without each other." She explains that alone, anti-war activism would be "impossible." When asked about self-care, she emphasizes that she needs her "friends, comrades, family."

With regards to bodily changes, Silvia sometimes experiences depression in her body. She explains, "In my body you know, [depression] affects my body." She closes her eyes and remembers, "I had those feelings [of depression in] . . . my body." She details the experience further:

> I get these feelings . . . when I had to go to these meetings, when I had to do these things. . . . Its like my body . . . came to . . . some sort of shock. . . . I'm preparing for what I know is going to happen and I'm unsure and I feel it . . . the tension.

In her body she would experience panic attacks at times. She recalls, "I would feel like I was getting a heart attack."

Silvia describes how she improved taking care of her body. She changed her diet and "started eating healthily" and "going for long walks." She became a vegetarian and describes how her body "cleaned out" and she felt "full of energy." She reports a "total change" in her body that was "unbelievable." She says, "I was walking. I was running. I was feeling full of energy. I never got tired." Now she gives herself permission to wear new clothes or lipstick.

With regards to causality, understanding the cause of her depression brought immediate relief to Silvia. "I was getting panic attacks and all that. So I saw a psychologist for about three months. Yeah, he was excellent. . . . I finally understood what was happening to me." Assigning meaning to her depression was of the utmost importance. Silvia's girlfriend named the depression "growing pains." Silvia remembers how important it was for her to hear that explanation. She recalls, "I held on to that definition. I was growing. There [were] some new things developing, some new understanding. I was becoming wiser. And in order to do that I went through all this pain."

**Participant 5: "Auzrah"**

Participant 5, who will be referred to as "Auzrah" works in the field of education. He responded to the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is in his fifties and has been active in the antiwar movement for more than thirty years.

**Verification**

Auzrah was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. He was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything he would like to add or delete from the transcription of his experience. Auzrah agreed with the transcript of his experience and he wanted to add a little more information. He reports that he is currently being paid for his activism, which is "good for [his] mental health". He currently represents 2,000 people who live below the poverty line and sometimes he views his activism as a "crushing burden," because he wants "to do it right." He describes himself as "way more engaged" in his activism than during the first interview. Auzrah also reports that he is currently "in therapy." He is also interested in a recent study of anti-war veterans, who have had their "souls compromised" because they were "forced to obey orders that they disagree with." He states that he longs to fit his activism into an institution so he is not so alone. He describes himself as "making really big changes" in his life. He is getting back together with his partner, whom he acknowledges is "quite special" and someone greatly associated with his self-care.

**Textural Themes**

Five textural themes emerged from the interview with Auzrah: (a) grief, (b) betrayal, (c) isolation, (d) impact of significant dream, and (e) healing.

**Theme 1: Grief.**

Like many activists on the left, Auzrah is involved in many progressive causes, including anti-war organizing, Native American rights, anti-corporate activism, and many other causes. When I met with Auzrah, he was full of grief for the financial collapse and dissolution of the organization where he worked. Many times during the interview, he sobs openly. "The most severe burnout I had was working at [the organization]. . . . I was involved in about four different capacities with [the organization]. . . . I was a community organizer."

Auzrah experienced profound grief. He is concerned that there is not enough anti-corporate political work being done, which he describes as a "concern to me and loss." He reports that he found himself in shock at times, that the organization he worked for went out of business. "So the burnout had to do with seeing the [organization] collapse, not really believing it." Although he saw the collapse coming, Auzrah had tried to prevent it.

He speaks of one of the leaders of the organization as having a lack of structure, a lack of ability to hold people accountable for their behavior. He recounts that he was in denial when the organization went out of business. Auzrah's grief is palpable.

> Nevertheless, I did not anticipate that the [organization] would actually close. I thought maybe the president would be removed. I thought maybe some of the different [staff] would be removed. I was promised that there would be an open hire.

Auzrah cries when he speaks of the collapse of the organization.

> This ended in the [organization] closing. And it had been an institution on the left for 30 years. . . . And it was also the place where I was sharing the analysis that I had been working on for many years about empire and it was actually the first institutional base for [Native American] empowerment in San Francisco.

Around the time of the collapse of the progressive organization where Auzrah had worked, he took a trip with a friend to New Orleans. During the trip, he reports that he identified with the loss of New Orleans after Katrina. He also identified with a Native American site in New Orleans that was vulnerable and threatened. He recalls that he grieved openly while he was in New Orleans. At the same time, a truck totaled his car in an accident that was not his fault. Auzrah characterizes the man who hit him as a victim of life circumstance, much like Auzrah sees himself. The man did not have insurance, which Auzrah explains, compounded his loss. Auzrah talks about how he and his friend both felt grief. He recalls,

> But there was something about the anger and the loneliness of both of us and the sense that the way of life that we had had where it would be possible to communicate was ending. And that the [organization] was ending and that the possibility of working with the [Native American struggle] seemed like it was ending and that the possibility for me of creating different media collectives that would be able to tell counter narratives was coming to a close because of that. And that part has completely come to a close.

**Theme 2: Betrayal.**

Auzrah begins to tell the story of how the organization collapsed. He recounts that it began with tension and in-fighting. Auzrah explains, "I got overwhelmed with all my responsibilities there and with the levels of in-fighting

and tension and with the incompetence." He reports that many of the staff were against his ideas and successes. He reflects, "That was pretty stressful."

He describes some people at the organization who "pushed me out and tried to even lock me out of the building." Some anger was mixed with his grief. He exclaims, "When I engaged in that and took out loans and committed my life to that, I was promised that there would be, at least, an open hire. . . . But instead there was this bullshit!"

Auzrah speaks about his feeling towards some of his enemies in his organization. He reports that he felt betrayed. He describes one person in particular as "incredibly disappointing. It was incredibly pathetic to see that happen and have no power to affect that. . . . I don't know why I did not anticipate more need to feed myself in that process." Auzrah feels that his support of the Native American struggle for justice was not supported by some factions within the [organization]. He explains, "It was somewhat unbelievable to me that people did not acknowledge the power and importance of that." Auzrah has mixed anger and feelings of betrayal. He recalls,

> I allied with someone who later I began to see as probably the most dangerous person in the [organization]. And I still feel a betrayal of myself in terms of why did I trust him? There was an important point at which I stopped trusting him and that was clear to both of us. After that he became a vicious, fucking tyrant towards me.

Auzrah admits that there were problems with some of the staff as well. He reports, "Some of those [staff members] should have been fired." He continues, "Many people wanted them fired. It was clear that they were not competent. The facilities were a thousand times better than they were." Furthermore, there were

staff members who had "the propensity to blame the hippie culture for the failings of society at-large and were willing to sacrifice those institutions. I remember people saying, the [organization] should go down."

**Theme 3: Isolation.**

Auzrah chronicles the evolution of his activism. He reports that more recently, he "became much more committed to working with institutions." He explains how his organization that collapsed gave him "access to certain things" and gave him "a perspective on time and history that was bigger." He summarizes, "I guess what I would say in summary, the problem that I'm on is how to not be alone in terms of self-care . . . how to not experience this as a isolating trauma."

Auzrah depicts his view of anti-war activism. "[Anti-war activism] primarily is about not being lonely. . . . It's about the sense of being in a common struggle and . . . joining with a larger movement." Auzrah describes a feeling of deep loneliness because he misses the organization that supported his activism.

> I guess one thing is there's that feeling of loneliness. . . . It's partly the loneliness of just having a vision and then being somehow like, where is it reflected?. . . . Can there be a movement that is true to it? How can I share it with the movement? What is it possible to do? So there's a loneliness.

Auzrah experiences both depression and isolation since the collapse of his progressive organization because he does not see a mechanism for continuing his activism as before the collapse. He reflects,

> And you ask about the personal feelings, you know there's the . . . loneliness; there's certain dimensions to that of depression and . . . one of the aspects of depression is a sense of timelessness and . . . futility and the lack of meaningful engagement with the things that you know are possible.

**Theme 4: Impact of significant dream.**

During the collapse of Auzrah's organization, Auzrah experienced a dream. He explains, "The other thing that happened was I had a dream of fighting with a bear." He continues, "There's a lot of ways to take that symbol." Auzrah reports that after his bear dream, "Somebody gave me a grizzly bear skin. So I had it in my room and I was not quite sure what to do with it."

Auzrah emphasizes that he identified with his bear dream. He characterizes the fight with the bear in his dream as a willingness to face death.

> So to be in contact and dialogue in any kind of dance with a bear is to be confronting that foundational myth in a way that means that you're in some way putting your life on the line. That's in part what I felt. And that was the level of commitment that I actually brought to the work that I was doing. So those were the things that were in that dream for me about why am I there and why am I in this confrontation with this creature that is so powerful.

Auzrah continues to explain what the bear dream meant to him. He specifies,

> But for me one of the things that the bear is . . . the last survivor. . . . You can imagine the things which threatened the way of life that the settlers wanted to carry on. The bear was the most obvious. . . . I guess you could see that because they're so equal, because the challenge is so fierce that you can't just have a life of ignoring nature if there [are] bears around. You actually have to deal with them in their terms . . . or exterminate them.

Auzrah describes how he came to support Native American Bear Dancers. He reports, "One of the surprising things that I get to do now is to support . . . the . . . [Native American] dancers to do a bear dance." Auzrah explains that his Native American friend taught him about the significance of the bear and the bear dance. He recounts,

> [Bears are] creatures that are so powerful that they can absorb the pain and the mistakes that we have. Their strength is in being massive enough to absorb all of our anguish and all of our suffering and all of our doubts and all of our incapacities. So for them the healing ceremony with the bear is actually about preparing the dancers in such a way that they are purified which means that they've sweated and fasted and that they have dreamed. . . . Then they dance around a fire and the people who are in the community participate by touching them and by giving them their suffering, giving them their pain, giving them their illness, giving them whatever is troubling them through touch. And then they have the bear skin and they just dance it off. So it's kind of fantastic.

**Theme 5: Healing.**

Auzrah characterizes himself as a healer. He reports that he combines personal healing with the political healing of society.

> I've been a political activist since I was in my 20s. I've also been a kind of therapist and . . . I saw what was happening in our society as a kind of insanity, and that there must be some way of healing that that does not involve . . . having a revolution or . . . getting some kind of army to take it over.

Auzrah also explains how he teaches anti-war activism. He describes society as having a destructive nature and he reports that he likes to teach about the most significant political efforts and successes. He states,

> Some people think it's the anti-war thing of the direct confrontation of a pacifist approach . . . which I never believed in. Although I do believe . . . there can be political efforts like that which are significant. And I was able to study those and teach about those. And one of the big beauties, one of the tremendous beauties of being able to teach was being able to teach those threads of our culture. So how is it that we have had success at taking certain parts of the vociferous destruction that the culture seems to be bent on.

Auzrah reveals that he participates in a process called co-counseling as a part of his own self-care. He describes co-counseling as a healing tool for himself and others. He explains,

> A couple of the core principles of co-counseling are . . . that we are born . . . healthy and whole and want to love people and that what happens is we get hurt and as we get hurt we learn to do things that are . . . self-protecting, but that are often times not open to the reality of the experience of other people. So we repeat patterns of hurt. We sometimes get into our own cycles of hurting ourselves and having those repeated. . . . And it's also that our emotions are actually signs. They're things which are helpful in giving, in helping us pay attention to the things, where we're making mistakes and where we need clearer thinking.

Through co-counseling, Auzrah reports having learned that crying is a healing tool for him. He realizes after one particularly productive session, "Wow. All I actually had to do was cry!" Another time, he recognizes, "I'm mad about that!" He explains, "That kind of insight teaches me that we can succeed!"

Auzrah also categorizes his history with LSD therapy and holitropic breath work as a form of self-care. He has used breathwork as a tool to heal from trauma. He explains,

> I also got involved with the psychedelic community and the efforts to re-imprint some of the alienation that some believe is the core problem for people on our society. So I found the holitropic breath work which was derived from LSD therapy and we were practicing the modalities of intervention that we thought would be important for trauma recovery.

When asked about self-care, Auzrah also reports having experience with healing through plant medicine and Ayahuasca ceremonies. He remembers, "The ceremonies were beautiful. There's a lot of art. There was a lot of gifting giving. There's a lot of vision sharing."

**Structural Themes**

With regards to spatiality, Auzrah experienced most of his burnout within the context of the collapse of the progressive organization in San Francisco where he worked. He describes how he and other staff "were having these debates and

having these struggles." He recounts betrayals and infighting within the organization. He recalls, "These are the kind of tensions that I went through and that everyone there went through." He reports how the people in charge "destroyed" the organization and that destruction was "appalling." Auzrah also compares the collapse of his organization to the collapse of progressive culture in San Francisco. He states that there is a progressive "culture in San Francisco that's dying."

With regards to his relationship with himself, Auzrah experiences many modalities of healing, including his own activism, as well as co-counseling, holotropic breathwork and Native American ceremony. He speaks of the need for everyone to heal from the "trauma of our culture." He wonders, "Is there something that I can contribute to that? If so, is that a kind of self care?" He reports that he wants to feel engaged in life's activities. He summarizes,

> I'm not that convinced . . . personal salvation is that great for anybody. But I am interested in the experience of feeling engaged and in having a consequence to some of life's activities that you can feel good about, [that] I can feel good about.

As far as relationship with others, Auzrah associates many of his former co-workers with burnout. Auzrah talks about an entire department in the organization ganging up against him. He recalls feeling betrayed and powerless over the situation, as well as a lack of acknowledgement for his efforts. He explains, "[They] tried to have me excluded. So I still don't really know what that was about, and my response to it was to just and try and be more effective, and to think that was going to get acknowledgment."

When asked about self-care, Auzrah recounts many examples of his relationship to other people. He reports about how much he enjoys teaching others, healing others and giving service to indigenous people. He remembers that in the past he had adopted the purpose "to develop leadership that was comparable to the civil rights leadership of the major communities that have been the benefit . . . of that struggle, and to do identity formation and counter-corporate work."

Another relationship that Auzrah categorizes as important to his self-care is Auzrah's friendship with a Native American woman from New Orleans. Auzrah recounts how important she was to him when they traveled together to New Orleans to make a film documentary. Auzrah explains, "She wanted to go back to New Orleans. She wanted to see, at 62, find a way back to her native people. So I went with her. We made that project a film documentary project." Auzrah remembers,

> I'm going to just keep finding projects that I believe in and that I feel I can excel in and that I can make a meaningful contribution with and so I go to New Orleans with her, and this after Katrina, about a year after. Of course, she is very concerned and of course the Native People that have mainly all been pushed out to the bayous and other underserved, over-exploited regions around New Orleans where they inhabit. So we had a grand time, amazing beautiful time!

Auzrah reflects on his relationship with his friend. He paints a vivid picture of the nature of their relationship. He describes,

> There is a part of me maybe it's like a parallel universe where I am writing. I am Carlos Castaneda and she is Don Juan. We're like sharing some kind of amazing wisdom with people, like she is just great. I truly love her and our time in New Orleans together was really amazing.

With regards to bodily concerns, Auzrah begins to describe a severe nerve condition, which he associates with burnout. At the time of the collapse of Auzrah's organization, he experienced paralysis in his facial nerves. He explains how most people with the disorder experience "residual paralysis" and that the disorder is "stress related."

With regards to causality, Auzrah reports that most of his feelings of burnout were caused by the collapse of the organization where he worked. Furthermore, he characterizes one of the staff members as the primary cause of the organization's failure. Auzrah recounts the betrayal of this administrator who "was willing to connive and to lie in order to gain support and was willing to fink to the state and in that manner is probably the single most important cause of the [organization's] closure." Auzrah explains that this man "attempted to have me banned from [the building]. I mean it's unbelievable what these people did! . . . It's fucking horrible! And the reason was because I was willing to speak up and I was willing to organize [people]."

Furthermore, Auzrah outlines his belief that our culture needs to be healed because it was founded on the genocide of Native American nations. He characterizes the political climate in the U.S. as acting out this genocide. He summarizes his belief, "The trauma of being genocidal perpetrators is a defining experience for our culture. The ongoing denial of that [genocide] permits the rest of the complex of misunderstandings and acting out which are so evident."

### Participant 6: "Adrian"

Participant 6, who will be referred to as "Adrian," has a staff position with a progressive organization. He was selected through networking and word of mouth snowball sampling, which started with the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is in his fifties and has been active in the antiwar movement for thirty-five years, since the close of the Vietnam War.

**Verification**

Adrian was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. He was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything he would like to add or delete from the transcription of his experience. Adrian agreed with the accuracy of the transcription of his experience. He only wanted to add that he works for his union as a "steering committee representative" and that most of his anti-war work has been volunteer work, although he was once paid for his anti-war work when he had to take off from his "regular job for several days right before the 2003 mega-actions."

**Textural Themes**

The following five textural themes were identified in Adrian's experience of long-term anti-war activism: (a) tension with others, (b) body shut down, (c) enthusiasm, (d) great love, and (e) vindicated.

**Theme 1: Tension with others.**

When asked about burnout, Adrian speaks of many tensions he experienced with other people. Some of these tensions include coalition tensions

within political left groups. He explains that when many anti-war groups work together to make events happen, certain tensions arise. "Obviously when you're dealing with a broad area of political forces, there are the tensions that you encounter with those forces, even though you have broad unities."

Adrian feels sadness at the political tensions that split up groups within the anti-war movement. He speaks about how he lost friends due to a recent political split. "It saddens you to see friends who you've been working with to be at odds with you. . . . I think the stress was . . . apparent within the community. . . . It's sad . . . they're doing this. They're making an ass of themselves."

In addition to fighting within the left, Adrian reports that his anti-war activity creates tension in his relationships with his relatives. His siblings are not interested in joining the anti-war movement. He reflects,

> Well, there's always a tension with one's own relatives. But I noticed the generational gap, my own siblings, because they're set, they're making money, making both ends meet. They're harder to convince about the importance of being involved.

**Theme 2: Body shut down.**

Adrian describes how he sometimes gets physically ill when it is time for him to take a break from his political activity. He notices that his body will shut down first, signaling him that it is time to take a break. He reports,

> The way that I've experienced burnout is really more when I'm overwhelmed physically by the demands of political work at hand, I get sick and I'm not physically able to carry on, even though mentally and otherwise I'm still very much engaged in wanting to participate.

Adrian explains that when his body gets sick, he knows he is beginning to burn out. "What happens is I get sick more often. And I just have to scale back

when that happens." He further analyzes how his body shuts down from time to time. He acknowledges,

> A lot of times my weakness is to overestimate myself and to over extend what I can do. So when I do get sick. . . . I guess my body shuts down then. . . . So the level of burnout is really one where, it's limited by the fact that I periodically get sick.

Adrian reports that he feels the aging of his body, affecting his level of anti-war activity. With age, he notices that when he gets sick, it takes him longer to recuperate. He explains,

> It's not necessarily associated with the anti-war work, but I think that in general, overtime, one gets to feel age catching up overall. So your ability to burn the candle on both ends, so to speak, is more acute as you grow older. You have to be more mindful of those things, that you're more prone and you're more sickly.

**Theme 3: Enthusiasm.**

When asked about self-care, Adrian explains that enthusiasm is a big factor in his ability to do anti-war work.

> I think if the purpose is clear and you feel that what you've gotten into as involvement is clear in your mind, I think sometimes your enthusiasm gets the best of you and that's why you end up extending beyond the limits of what you're capable of. And very often you surprise yourself, and you're able to endure and carry on longer . . . without even paying attention.

Adrian exudes enthusiasm for his anti-war work, even when he takes time off to recuperate. He admits, "I have to recuperate. I end up doing other things in the meantime, like more reading, more reflection. But enthusiasm for participating has never been a problem for me."

Adrian speaks over and over again about his enthusiasm for anti-war work. He describes the fuel of his enthusiasm. "I keep up with the events of the world, and I think it is what fuels my enthusiasm. I've been able to avoid

cynicism." After a break, Adrian explains, "I think the enthusiasm . . . gets me back in the groove in a short period of time." Adrian speaks about the cause of his feelings of enthusiasm. "Why do we do it? We do it because . . . I think because we refuse . . . to act like the sheep that society has made everybody else. And because it makes you feel human. That's why you do it with such enthusiasm."

He describes his enthusiastic feelings of organizing a mass demonstration. He reflects, "It takes your breath away to see . . . such achievement. You thumb your nose at authority. We thrive on adversity, I think. Organizers do and you're always in the underdog position."

**Theme 4: Great love.**

Adrian compares his anti-war work to a doctor healing a patient. He reports feeling a certain satisfaction with facilitating the "healing" of society. He explains,

> You just look at healing on a societal level. You need to heal the collective suffering of millions. You're going to help millions as good as if you were helping your very own patient. And that's what's been driving me, you know. I think that's the reward. It's hard to describe the reward: a level of satisfaction that's beyond merely being congratulated on the personal level.

He speaks of the joy of organizing people in a mass movement. "After a lot of hard work, see hundreds of thousands of people in the streets with you. And we've seen it. It's a joy that's hard to match. . . . I think it's the kind of feeling that will get you going for the rest of your life."

Adrian believes his motivation for anti-war work stems from a feeling of great love. He describes "a certain missionary zeal" for his anti-war activity that

"makes one very, very human." He notes the most important experience for him around self-care and his anti-war activism: "Funny, I just said a lot of things, but the most important, I think, to me is (maybe sounds ridiculous) but you're really motivated by great love to be doing this thing."

**Theme 5: Vindicated.**

Adrian feels "vindicated" in his analysis of political events. He insists that "sound analysis" is critical in avoiding burnout. He reports,

> I believe the analysis that I cling to is sound. And it has been vindicated. There have been political events in the past that have cast serious doubt. I've been able to resist it. And I've found company in people who have done the same. Over the last decade and a-half, [I've] seen vindication.

He further explains how some people burnout because they do not have sound analysis: "At first there was such enthusiasm because all the anti-globalization protests. Suddenly the 9/11 thing put a damper in the weak. Feeble minded easily vacillated, but not me".

Adrian insists that many people burn out because they have a false political analysis that does not match the facts of world events. These people, he argues, give up on their activism because they do not understand the big picture and burn out. Part of Adrian's analysis of world events stretches past his anti-war activism. He believes that he must join many struggles together in solidarity with each other. He reveals,

> One realization I got from all the historic mobilizations is . . . organizing outside of just the mobilization that's necessary, whether it's mobilizations on other issues that explode, that equally will be able to draw people in large numbers, like immigrant rights. . . . We need to be able to have the far-sightedness to see all these complex issues. And few people still have that ability.

Adrian reports that he strives to unite the anti-war movement with unions as part of his big picture of sound analysis.

> As long as we're around working with people who can lead, then . . . this anti-war movement will not go away. . . . Things that we take for granted today were the product of unions fighting for them. If we do not organize unions, if we do not organize working people into unions to fight for our rights, it's going to get worse.

Adrian believes sound analysis of political institutions and events consistently nourishes his passion for anti-war work. As a union organizer, Adrian sees U.S. wars as attacks on working people abroad and at home. He states,

> The only hope that working people have is to send their sons to have an education in the military, to be cannon fodder in unjust wars for corporate America. The gravity of [the situation] is there. . . . The war is a war not just of the empire against countries that they want to pillage because of their strategic resources; it's also a war against the working people in the United States.

Adrian's feeling that history has vindicated his political analysis feeds his enthusiasm for his anti-war work. While describing his experience of self-care, Adrian explains how he gravitates toward people with "sound analysis": "I found company in people who thought the same and had vision, strategic vision, not just of critiquing empire, but seeing an alternative and fighting for a society based on human needs, socialism." He reports that his political analysis is vindicated, that he is following leaders who are consistent and clear-headed.

Adrian describes how important it is for him to follow consistent leadership. He speaks about several specific people whom he looks to for direction on world events. He talks about the respect he has for these individuals.

> They're consistent; They're clear-headed; And they're real. I think there have been in the last few decades people who presented themselves as leaders, but . . . like shooting star leaders, enter the scene and they're gone in a heart beat. . . . I think that we have great comrades who have been veterans of struggles from decades past. They're still around. It's a great asset to have.

He characterizes these leaders whom he respects as "heroic examples" of "strategic vision." He ascertains, "It makes my respect for them all the more because they know what's needed . . . in a way that enables folks to gravitate to them."

Adrian contrasts the leaders he respects to the leaders who have bad politics and thus little influence. He summarizes, "There are other groups out there; they're just hopelessly in the fringes without any influence. And these groups come and go. A lot of them have gone."

**Structural Themes**

With regards to temporality, Adrian expresses the need for an activist to pace him/herself. He explains,

> Well, I think the excitement, the passion of being on an organizing campaign drives you. . . . You have this insane surge of energy. But just like a sugar high, you come crashing. And it's important to pace oneself. This is a marathon. This is not a sprint.

Adrian describes the need to set boundaries around political activity. "But with all things, there are limitations and I think reality sets in and you have to scale back." Adrian reports that he often has to take a break from political organizing in order to recuperate. "As far as the mobilizations go, or anything for that matter, I've had to beg off from participating just to recuperate. But it's always

been a temporary thing." He describes some activities in which he engages as a part of his self-care regiment:

> There is a need I think to re-charge. There's a need to sometimes go out and just unwind, go see a movie. I mean not everything has to be dictated by the urgency of the campaign. Actually sometimes there's an urgent need to take care of oneself and to recuperate so that you can come back fresh.

With regards to his physical body, Adrian explains that he experiences burnout at times when he does not take care of some basic health needs. He sees the importance of regular meals, regular exercise and regular sleep. He recalls his poor habits when he is immersed in political organizing:

> You don't have the same time to have an exercise regiment, stuff like that. I think having been an activist for various movements and causes for the last 4 decades, it's really hard to . . . overcome . . . eating on time, getting enough sleep and exercising properly. Running around is not the same as exercising.

Adrian speaks about his need for balance, that he has to balance his enthusiasm to be an activist with his body's need for recuperation: "You know, the physical limitation become more serious over time. One has to balance enthusiasm that one has. I think I still have the enthusiasm of a giddy teenager or 20-year-old, but the problem is that the body is not as up to par." Adrian tries to eat healthy and to get at least 6 hours sleep. He also keeps his "active mind" busy by being a "voracious reader."

With regards to his relationship with other people, Adrian talks about coalition tensions. Adrian does not necessarily agree that these arguments within the left organizations cause him a feeling of burnout, but he sees this tension as a negative situation. He confirms,

> Your coalition is only as good as different participants' enthusiastically pushing along. If internally within your particular movement there are problems, obviously that brings to bear on how the overall community participates. So . . . I would not say it's burnout. I'd say it puts constraints into the kind of participation.

Adrian speaks about the tensions in the anti-war movement as causing some people to leave an organization or coalition, whereas some tensions cause people to stay. "People handle it differently. There are those who aren't bothered at all by those constraints. There are also some who are not able to sustain their participation because of the tensions within one's community." Adrian sees these tensions within the community as both positive and negative. Whereas he feels sad at the loss of friends, he also feels proud that many of his comrades can understand the underlying political analysis of a certain situation and take a strong stand against the opposition.

> There's positive and negative. The positive is that you've grown closer to friends. . . . I've also ended up not working with our other forces as a result. . . . I'm gladdened by the fact that comrades I've been working had the maturity to discern right from wrong without much explanation. There's tension on the one hand and there's good realizations on the other.

Adrian also describes his relationship with his relatives with regards to burnout. He speaks about how some of his relatives respect his anti-war work, and some do not. "In the past they were more dismissive and less appreciative of what I do. But I think now there's at least a polite respect. Then again, there's a few of them who don't get it."

With regards to his relationship to the general public, Adrian describes having to have patience with the masses as an activist. "We have to have eternal patience to believe that working people can do it. After all, they're the ones that

come out into the streets. It's a tricky business uniting the class." Adrian is happy when more and more people become anti-war activists. He describes the understanding of many young people today.

> I've seen that there's a difference relating to nephews and nieces and younger people. I think because the demands on the new generation are much more acute. . . . You're crushed with debt you have to pay back. And I think that produces radicalization among the young folk.

Adrian is very confident that his anti-war work is building consciousness in the general public. He reports, "I've seen so much in the last decade that outstrips what I've seen in two, three decades even before that. So things are getting better." Adrian admits that anti-war work was much more stressful in the past when people were "questioning whether empire is as evil as it is." Now, he feels that his anti-war activism is much easier because many people are beginning to agree with anti-war politics. He further explains, "People are waking up, becoming more conscious. . . . More people see the nonsense, that this is really a war of empire." He states, "More young people saw the nonsense of the war and that it was about blood for oil."

Adrian always takes action for others when he observes situations of injustice. He reports that "the more you know, the more sensitive you are to your fellow brethren, your sisters and brothers around you." He explains, "I fight and advocate . . . when somebody's wrong. And I take it on with the same passion as I do the world." He believes he is able to "sleep at night" because, he says, "after a long day, I always find it's comforting to go to sleep knowing that you've done your best to help.

Adrian's relationship to others draws him toward certain leaders who fuel his motivation for anti-war activism. "Key leaders . . . have always been an inspiration." He further explains, "As long as there are dedicated comrades leading the way, it inspires a great deal of hope. And one is able to, also, overcome physical burnout and rally back to the cause when you see heroic examples around you."

With regards to causality, Adrian believes that burnout can be caused by a person's political orientation. If world events do not support a person's political explanation of why things are the way they are, this conflict can cause what Adrian terms a "crisis of purpose." He has seen people burnout when current events contradict a person's politics. "I think it's a different kind of burnout when you undergo crisis of purpose."

He recalls several political groups in which he has witnessed many people burn-out:

> They probably have more resources and more connections. But the trouble with them is they don't have this: They don't have the intellectual temerity to anchor their thoughts on principal. They go with the wind, on political convenience. And because they are so, they're not able to weather storms.

**Participant 7: "Owen"**

Participant 7, who will be referred to as "Owen," is the executive director of a nonprofit coalition. He was selected through networking and word of mouth snowball sampling, which started with the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is in his sixties and has been active in the anti-war movement for fifty years.

**Verification**

Owen was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. He was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything he would like to add or delete from the transcription of his experience. Owen agreed with the transcription of his experience, but he wanted to add a few comments, including that he never plans to retire from anti-war activism or any of the activism in which he participates. He acknowledges that there are many struggles out there in the world and that he would like to participate in everything, but that his health is not the same as it used to be and he must take care of himself and take regular breaks. He jokes that he "is not stupid" and knows that due to health problems at his age, he has limitations.

**Textural Themes**

The following five textural themes developed from Owen's experience of long-term anti-war activism: (a) stress and exhaustion; (b) betrayal; (c) outer pressure; (d) inspiration; and (e) keeping balance.

**Theme 1: Stress and exhaustion.**

When asked about his experience of burnout, Owen reports that he wants to see results from his activism, and that he is waiting for justice. He describes how he keeps looking for progress. He makes clear how exhausted he feels as the U.S. enters war after war.

> Peace is . . . not quite on the horizon yet. . . . We still are in war after war. And we're still organizing around those particular issues which is the right thing to do but at some point you . . . begin to wonder well am I . . . spinning my wheels? . . . You get somewhat . . . exhausted . . . yes somewhat exhausted.

Owen recalls many anti-war activities or marches where he wanted to participate, but was unable. "You know I may want to go but then I may not necessarily go because . . . I may be. . . . a little exhausted." He reports, "I may . . . stay in and read about what happened or get a report back on what's happening."

Owen attributes some feelings of burnout to the fact that "social change . . . does not happen overnight." He describes that over the years he has felt a little weary. He explains that he likes to be there in the action. He stresses the fact that he is not only an anti-war activist, but that he is involved in many causes. "I like to be involved in . . . the entire cause . . . that relates to improving the quality of life for people or making a better society, be that antiwar . . . or other issues." He admits, "I sort of spread myself thin . . . in many cases."

Owen talks about some of the stress associated with political losses. "Stress is not good for high blood pressure, stressful conditions and so forth. . . . [I have some] stress [and] some high blood pressure periodically." Owen admits, "An ongoing type of stressful situation is not good for your health." Owen recounts watching the news. He reports that when he hears what he believes are lies from Bush or Obama, he can often get very upset.

> Many times I'm just watching the news and you'll hear all the lies that the President [says], be that Bush or Obama. . . . And knowing that this is lies and nonsense . . . is just really . . . disturbing to me. And many times I feel myself getting upset.

Owen extends his anti-war activism to the local community's problems with violence. He states that he feels very connected to the community and responsible for the community, but with that responsibility, he reports feeling the stress around gangs and drugs and violence. He specifies that he wants to find the

underlying causes for this activity and solve the underlying problems. When there are drive by shootings and violence he explains, "I have an obligation . . . to work with the community to come up with some answers or solutions. But just to see people's . . . lives being wasted for foolish things is disturbing to me." Owen expresses how he feels about murders in the community:

> But this type of nonsense, I mean, it's disturbing. And it's disturbing you know because I know that it's really meaningless and it keeps the community frightened and people being hit by, children and people be getting hit by stray bullets and so forth.

Owen makes clear how he feels discouraged and disturbed at times when he sees other people are not as involved as he is. Sometimes, Owen has fleeting thoughts to "go do something else" besides activism. "It could be a little disturbing . . . especially if other things [are] happening in your life. . . . I've had the feeling at times: Just go do something else and just go look out for yourself!"

**Theme 2: Betrayal.**

Owen remembers certain experiences on the job when people in the movement have let him down. He explains, "There are certain principles that . . . we're supposed to adhere to as . . . peace activists, social activists, and activist's period." He recalls one organization to which he belonged, "The main leaders . . . were not practicing what they preach," so the organization had to be dissolved. He admits, "That was a little disturbing." He explains that there are many other examples of "organizations that . . . don't practice . . . what they [are] supposed to . . . stand for." Owen feels:

> That's sort of discouraging to me in the sense it does not stop me as a person from going forward in terms of . . . my commitment to peace or antiwar or social justice. But . . . it sort of puts a damper in a way in terms

> of asking the question, . . . Where are we really? Where is it really going? Because I know that . . . I can't change the world by myself! . . . It takes leadership and organization!

Owen describes "another type of . . . let down . . . with friends and . . . family . . . that hasn't been so positive and so encouraging." He gives a more personal example of trusting a person who let him down, a coworker in his social justice organization who had a drug problem. Owen characterizes this coworker as a man who did not fulfill his responsibilities, would not be truthful and honest, would not admit that he had a drug problem, and who was not in his "right frame of mind." Owen "had to let the person go and hire somebody else to do the job," which he admitted was quite disturbing because he had confided in this person and was trying to really help him. Owen reports feeling discouraged at the time and he explains how the unprincipled behavior of a few people in the movement "saps [his] energy and . . . diverts" him and can encourage him "to give up or just quit period." Owen admits, "Those type of situations . . . were quite disturbing."

**Theme 3: Outer pressure.**

Owen recounts some stress he felt when he thought that he might go to jail for becoming a conscientious objector to the Vietnam war. He was afraid that he "was going to be hassled for trying to stand on [his] principles." He describes the anxiety of just anticipating having to face the Draft Board and possible arrest. Owen remembers the "stress for me as well as my family . . . thinking that I would be going to jail for refusing to go into the war."

Owen depicts the stress and turmoil he feels when people see him as a troublemaker because he honestly assesses the issues and has taken a principled

stand. He contrasts his principles of social justice and democracy to what he believes is the lip service of hypocritical government leaders. Similarly, he reports feeling social pressure when he goes to the store with a political button on his lapel, noticing that people give him odd looks and glances. He explains that an anti-war button can be problematic in a pro-military area, that he has been accosted for being anti-war in the past. He describes, "If you have some peace button or . . . 'Bring the Troops Home' [button] . . . you feel in a sense that people are saying, 'Yeah, well you know he is a troublemaker! . . . Look at the button!'"

Owen characterizes himself as feeling not quite defensive, but on edge. He explains that the government discourages protesting, dating back to the era of Ronald Reagan. Owen believes, "Protesting does not have a good reputation in this society." He reports, "People maybe say something if you're in the wrong place . . . like you're some type of troublemaker, or you're out of line . . . because you're a social activist or protester." He gives an example of wearing a button from a protest and then walking into a professional environment, how it makes him feel uncomfortable. He remembers "taking off my buttons to go in a place or something because first I don't want to have that feeling." He talks about the stress of "just having to deal with that [social pressure]." He recounts the stress of working in an occupation where protesting is discouraged. "It's not acceptable in society, especially if you just want to climb up the establishment ladder in whatever way, or be fully acceptable by the powers that be . . . then you don't . . . protest!"

**Theme 4: Inspiration.**

When asked about self-care and anti-war activism, Owen begins to describe some moments of inspiration during his activist work. He recalls several situations in which his activism improved the lives of other people. Owen takes note of political victories. "It's helpful to me in the sense to see some progress . . . that when they win some victory today . . . that keeps you motivated." At the end of the Vietnam War, Owen remembers feeling so happy about the political victory of the Vietnamese people.

> When the war was over . . . I never will forget because I was on my way to Oakland and I was driving a car and I remember hearing on the radio when Ho Chi Min and the Freedom Fighters had basically won the war and were marching to the capital. And I was really excited about that and quite pleased that they did. . . . I had to hold onto my steering wheel . . . because . . . I felt that . . . they were fighting the right and just cause.

Owen specifies that he does not separate his anti-war activism from his local community activism. For him, they are all on the same continuum. In his local community, he had helped to organize a baseball league, a community garden, and a parade. He recalls how this positive activity in his community greatly inspired him and all the people.

> We formed this little league baseball team. So that was really inspiring . . . to see the streets full of youngsters, all with their uniforms on and parents were all inspired and they wanted to do things, [asking] what can they do to help?

Owen glows as he described the impact of the community organizing.

> Well that was quite inspiring you know, and not only to myself but to the children in the community too to see their spirits uplifted and to see things are really happening in the community where people don't expect very much to be happening.

Owen explains his feelings of fulfillment were "because of the fact that my whole life has been dedicated to social activism . . . social change and progress." He talks about his joy "especially seeing the young people, and not only the youngsters, but the parents and the whole community [experiencing] hope . . . hope and possibilities. That's inspiring to me."

When Owen is feeling discouraged and having doubts about his political work and someone thanks him or acknowledges his good work, he reports feeling inspired. Often this kind of praise comes "at a moment where I'm pretty down and contemplating throwing in the towel." He states that he would never quit activism, but that doubt crosses his mind from time to time. He expounds, "So then somebody may come in the office and say . . . 'I read about what you said in the paper. That's really great what you're doing. Keep up the good work!'" He gives the example that on other occasions, he "may get some letter in the mail . . . [from] some organization . . . [that says], 'we want to present this award to you for the work that you've been doing.'" Owen explains that he does not "go around looking for praise," but "when it does happen, obviously it's a motivation and uplifting, especially if you're sort of feeling down at the moment."

**Theme 5: Keeping balance.**

Owen notices that he likes to say yes to everything, to be as involved as he can be, but that sometimes he overextends himself. Owen admits, "I realize . . . I can't be everywhere . . . that I want to be and I have to keep some balance . . . for my own health sake and so that I can maximize the length of time that I'm around

. . . to be able to participate in any activity." He describes the need to keep a balance in all his activities in order to maintain good health.

> I try to keep some balance because I do have some background in spiritual holistic health. So because of that I really try to keep some balance in terms of . . . watching the things I eat and your lifestyle and all that type of stuff and how things affect my health and body. But the stress part is quite a challenge . . . especially in terms of any type of social activism.

Owen talks about maintaining balance in his activity because he has diabetes. He reports, "[I'm] dealing with some diabetes also. . . . The doctor always tells me to avoid stress. And I always laugh to myself, yeah okay. . . . That's hard to do!. . . . But I got the message! That's why I have to be more careful and realize to keep some balance."

Owen describes a few other ways that he takes care of himself. He tries to "keep some type of spiritual or mental [or] physical balance." He likes to go to the park or go to the ocean. He recounts engaging in entertainment activities for relaxation as well. Sometimes he will "listen to some music or other different type of strategy that [he uses] to cool out, as they say." Owen reports, "I'll just ride out by the ocean or something and just sit and rest and relax, something like that, to maintain a balance."

**Structural Themes**

With regards to temporality, sometimes Owen takes a break from his activism. He explains that in order to take care of himself, he tries to keep focused and "cool out for a minute." He illustrates with an example of trying to "reduce [his] schedule or go out by the water, the ocean or something and just cool out." He reports that he takes time to "get in contact with nature and

meditate." Owen monitors his level of political activity based on life circumstances. He describes taking a break.

> If I felt so burnt out that I would go on the other side, but it would only mean that I may just withdraw. . . . I may just withdraw from a lot of the activities that I'm involved in and minimize my load until I felt that I was spiritually and mentally and physically strong enough to increase the level of involvement where I did not feel like I was so overwhelmed and so overburdened in that particular sense.

Despite his time out from activism, Owen insists that he will always maintain political involvement at some level. He states,

> It all depends on what was going on health wise and otherwise to that I'm able to scale back from maybe say going to a lot of meetings or demonstrations or activities and may just stay at home and read the paper. . . . But I'm still involved.

He insists,

> I know that I'll always be involved . . . because that's what my life is dedicated to. . . . But in terms of the level of my activity at any given time . . . it depends on . . . other factors that may be going on in my life as to the level of my participation.

As far as his relationship with others, Owen reports that he feels discouraged when other people do not get involved in activism. He describes feeling a sense of responsibility to help and solve community problems, but discouraged when others do not feel the same sense of responsibility. He explains, "I'm one person. . . . It can be a little kind of discouraging and lonely. . . . knowing that you're all affected . . . but it does not seem like too many other people are concerned or motivated to do anything."

As far as his relationship to others on the left, Owen confirms that conflict within left groups is necessary to determine the strategy of the struggle. He

admits, however, that fighting within the left can leave him with a feeling of burnout. Owen reports:

> I have to do what [is] considered the principled right thing to do and keep going forward on the path to what I believe in, the principles that I stand for. . . . But obviously in order to do that it would be much smoother . . . and less stressful and if . . . conflicts did not occur. But. . . . there [are] always some ups and downs and trials and tribulations, as they say. And so [I] sort of anticipate these types of things to occur, not that I welcome them. . . . But I know the reality of life and so I'll deal with them accordingly.

At the same time, Owen characterizes his relationships with close friends and associates as a necessary part of his self-care. In fact, Owen's relationship with others is an important way that he takes care of himself mentally and spiritually.

> I . . . periodically try to not drive my car and just take public transportation. For many reasons why I do that, not only for the exercise and so forth, but I found that as I get out of the car and get on public transportation I run into people that I haven't seen in ages. So I see that it pays off in many type of ways other than just being healthy. Well that's healthy too, you know, because it's a good feeling to see someone that I haven't seen in 20 years or so. So . . . that's a good thing too . . . for that particular moment for spiritual and mental health.

With regards to causality and bodily concerns, Owen admits that sometimes his political activity affects his physical health and causes burnout. He told the story of once when he got some bad news at a meeting and the next day he went to the dentist. He saw a connection between his stress level and his blood pressure.

> I had to go get a tooth pulled but the doctor told me that . . . my blood pressure was up and I had to take some blood pressure medication for it to come down before they would pull my teeth. . . . I knew the cause of [the high blood pressure] . . . because I just went to that meeting the night before . . . and I was still going over the things in my mind . . . in terms of

> what had happened. And so obviously my blood pressure goes up. . . . Basically the social activism is affecting my health.

Owen recognizes that his passion for activism can lead to physical health problems, as well as a feeling of burnout. Owen explains that he sometimes has difficulty knowing when to cut back on his activism in order to take care of himself.

> Personally I'm so dedicated to social change in a positive way that in many cases I do overload myself because someone called and asked me to come to some meeting. Something's going on. I say, 'yeah I'll be there' . . . Or I see a flyer of some meeting, a protest or something going on.

Owen reports taking care of his body as a part of his self-care. He illustrates, "I pretty much always try to take care of myself in the sense of health, or watching the foods that I eat, and trying to stay in good health. At one time I was pretty active and I tried to set aside maybe say on Saturday to maybe jog or do some exercise." He confirms that he continues to exercise regularly: "I still try . . . some degree of keeping in shape. I may do some calisthenics or something like that."

**Participant 8: "Duncan"**

Participant 8, who will be referred to as "Duncan," works in the field of publication. He was selected through networking and word of mouth snowball sampling, which started with the mass email of a flyer that was sent out to twelve anti-war groups in the San Francisco Bay Area. He is in his fifties and has been active in the antiwar movement for thirty-eight years.

**Verification**

Duncan was sent a copy of the transcribed interview and asked to make any corrections. He was asked if the transcript was accurate and if there was anything he would like to add or delete from the transcription of his experience. Duncan responded by email and shared that he enjoyed reading the interview transcript and felt that it was accurate, although he wanted to add, "For me it is not a question of burnout, it is a question of necessity and how to enable activism." He further clarifies, "Anti-war activism is just as necessary today as when we spoke." He summarizes that he cherishes what he has accomplished collectively with other activists and that he surrounds himself with other activists. He finds that at times he needs to "create a space that is separate and apart from that activism." He concludes the email, "War has prevailed throughout the centuries; It will not be overcome in a lifetime. But every contribution to that objective will aggregate some day and do so."

**Textural Themes**

The following four textural themes were established from Duncan's experience of long-term anti-war activism: (a) responsibility, (b) centered and consistent, (c) awareness, and (d) satisfaction.

**Theme 1: Responsibility.**

When asked about his experience of burnout, one of themes that keeps surfacing in the interview with Duncan is his feeling of personal responsibility to help stop war. He describes several wars in which he was helping to build an anti-war movement. He explains that the older he has gotten, the more a sense of

personal responsibility he feels to prevent and stop war. Duncan expresses his feelings of burnout around the U.S. invasion of Iraq:

> I think most significant for me was the buildup to the 2003 invasion of Iraq, coming off the heels of 9/11 and the invasion of Afghanistan to have the looming of this new war and the necessity, and the possibility of doing something to possibly stop the war. It demanded a lot of effort. And I think it constantly demanded a lot of effort. And it probably stands out to me personally as the most significant time that I have dealt with such a high level of demand [and] . . . not necessarily . . . being able to keep up with that level of demand.

Because he felt that the anti-war movement might stop the 2003 Iraq war before it started, Duncan's sense of personal responsibility led him to experience an overwhelming burden of responsibility for anti-war activity. Duncan had never seen such an outpouring of people in the streets before. Every action by the anti-war movement felt more powerful and effective than the last. He recounts,

> It was a big responsibility to feel that there might be something that I can do that will make the difference, that will make this happen, that will stop this war. So it was a, it was a constant, it was a constant, it was ever present. That idea was ever present.

Duncan relates his feelings of overwhelming responsibility. He remembers,

> a feeling of an overwhelming demand for either my work or my input, insight, experience. Those I think are the dimensions that I associate with burnout, having a very heavy demand for those, feeling a heavy demand for those. And that can either be external or more oftentimes it's internal . . . because it's sort of like my recognition. It's not somebody necessarily . . . sitting there saying you have to do this. It's more like my brain sitting there saying you have to do this because it needs to be done, and you can do it, and there's not somebody else who can do it right now.

With the feeling of personal responsibility, Duncan is reminded of his human limitation. This very human limitation leaves Duncan with a feeling of frustration and burnout. He describes,

> Feelings associated with [burnout] are a lot of times a feeling of frustration that I am not capable of more or either physically capable of more or emotionally or intellectually capable of more because it seems that more would help. That's pretty common and I think it's pretty easily recognizable and it's also one of the things that feels like sort of a hard limit. It's a feeling of frustration, but there is actually a finite limitation that's there.

**Theme 2: Centered and consistent.**

Duncan depicts two kinds of self care. The first kind of self-care is in regards to his every day activism, where his is consistent and maintains a "work life balance." Duncan reports, "I'm usually a little more even keeled than most people. I don't have extremes. I'm usually a little more centered than a lot of people." Duncan goes on to explain that he works hard on his political activity, whether the politics of the moment demand it or not. He is very consistent. He confirms that he knows not to run himself ragged:

> I'm definitely not somebody who's going to say I can pull an all nighter for three nights and it's going to change the world. . . . It's mostly going to just change me because after not sleeping one night. . . . I'm not going to be able to do anything.

Duncan sets limits with his political activity. He states:

> Even under the most demanding situations . . . I still need to sleep . . . regularly and I still need to . . . have some downtime and . . . I definitely do those things. I may not have as much sleep, or as much downtime, or the quality of it may not be as good.

He likes to keep active, but not do so much where he burns out. He explains how he keeps focused on his political activity, but knows his limitations and is able to set boundaries with himself and stop his activism when he needs to stop. Duncan describes that enjoys "feeling that you can incorporate your activism but still have a sense of normalcy about your life rather than . . . just constant demand."

**Theme 3: Awareness.**

The second kind of self care depicted by Duncan is in regards to short-term intense political upsurge. He expresses his experience, "I can . . . be very focused and put a lot of attention and effort into something. But I also know that I can only do that for so long. . . . I need to have my reserves replenished." When demand for activism grows intense, Duncan describes how he keeps his eyes on the prize, reminding himself that the short-term political intensity is finite. Duncan specifies, "I'm doing the minimum that is necessary during the prolonged period of activism to keep myself being able to do it again the next day." Duncan recounts his inner dialogue at times when he feels himself heading towards burnout. He recalls,

> I will be able to succeed here. I will be able to get to a place where I have the ability to do the things I need to do to take care of myself so I can continue to do this in the future. That's a very ever present thought for me when I'm feeling like I'm heading towards burnout, sort of like a little bit of a promise to myself.

Duncan outlines his experience of pacing himself, remembering that stressful periods will end. He states,

> It's . . . with a knowledge that after a period of time I will have to change those circumstances more dramatically and I will either need to sort of pull back a little bit or I'll just need to go on vacation. . . . There is a finite sort of thing that's there.

Duncan reveals that he is able to increase his activity during these political upsurges because he sees an end in sight. He explains,

> You also know that at a certain point you will be past that and you will be able to recuperate and recover from that and . . . continue on again at a, either a slower pace or a later time. . . . Usually just at a slower pace until there's some new demand.

Duncan often tells himself, "This too shall pass" or "I will get to . . . plan my life a little better." He remembers, "counting the hours, the last few days, until the thing would be done so that I could just stop and then start taking care of myself." He recounts his experience,

> I can find myself in a situation that is going to exhaust a lot of my bandwidth before I can stop doing what I'm doing. And when I realize that, I tell myself when it's all over . . . I'm going to be able to focus on doing some things for myself and find some things that help me feel recovered. . . . So I enjoy doing things afterwards that I might not have time for, going to the gym, or going to the gym a couple a more times a week than I would normally get to if I was really pressured or . . . going to the movies, or just not having my day mapped out from the moment I wake up until the moment I get home . . . a return to normalcy.

**Theme 4: Satisfaction.**

Duncan describes experiencing a certain satisfaction at times when he is finished organizing a political event, a certain sense of relief and achievement. He tends to revel and to "bask in the success or the accomplishment." He recounts how he enjoys "having an opportunity for some reflection and some evaluation about what your efforts were and what they amounted to. Those are the sorts of things that I enjoy doing, like looking back." Duncan further reports on his inner dialogue of satisfaction after each political action. He often thinks,

> Over the past couple of days I felt a great satisfaction in the success of what I've done and I've also felt a great sense of relief that the responsibility has passed and the opportunity to take care of myself . . . is available to me.

Duncan likes to reflect on his political accomplishments as a part of his self-care. He enjoys "accomplishments" and, "feeling a sense of relief from the pressure or the frustrations of just having so much to do." He savors,

> seeing how I brought a specific element to the whole struggle . . . and evaluating, did I do better than I've done before? Did I learn something from this? I think the feelings I usually have are when I take care of myself is satisfaction, maybe a little relief.

He especially reports feeling relief after events because he no longer needs to remember details and worry about how things will go. He describes his experience after one particularly stressful political event:

> I felt so peaceful at work because I could just focus on work. I did not have in the back of my head . . . some of the other things that had been constantly invading my concentration or my thoughts previously. Those little things that pop into your head like oh I'm really worried about this, or I'm really not focusing on this or . . . those things that come to you when you're in the midst of organizing something.

The morning after another particularly stressful anti-war dinner, which Duncan had organized, he remembers how he felt:

> And I took one bite of this Danish and one sip of this coffee and I said to [my partner], "This is the best Danish I've ever had. This is the best tasting cup of coffee I've ever had." Because things were done, . . . I could just enjoy without the . . . interference of other things.

**Structural Themes**

With regards to temporality, Duncan describes a both a cyclical and a chronic experience of burnout. When there is political upsurge, he sometimes experiences cyclical burnout. Time pressures can lead to feelings of burnout and stress. He explains,

> One is sort of a cyclical thing that . . . you just put your nose to the grindstone for a long period of time to get something accomplished and during that time period . . . you're not taking care of yourself, and . . . you're kind of just stretched and stressed.

Duncan's depiction of chronic burnout is a type of ongoing stress that is not related to any particular political event. He reports,

> I went through a period of chronic fatigue syndrome which is more prolonged and pronounced in terms of . . . the symptoms and it's not necessarily associated with one particular event. . . . The other sort of cyclical stuff is usually linked to a particular event or a series of events over a short period of time. But of course the symptomology from a chronic fatigue is not associated necessarily with any single event or short series of events, and the symptomology continues for a prolonged period of time.

Duncan refers to time management as part of his self-care. He outlines how he makes time for himself, planning enough sleep, planning vacations that he enjoys, and planning for time spent with his partner. Duncan insists that for self-care he must, "definitely plan . . . to have time even when it's hard to make the time for some down time."

With regards to bodily concerns, Duncan associates "eating badly" with burnout, as well as his history of chronic fatigue syndrome. Duncan elaborates on many physical symptoms, which he associates with his chronic fatigue. He suffered from an unresolved cold or flu, a persistent fever, an elevated white blood count, muscle and joint pain, cognitive lapses, and he constantly felt tired. He remembers,

> I sort of had developed many symptoms, probably the most ever present in my head was the amount of pain in my hips, and I will still get that today. If I get over tired or something like that, I will immediately feel that pain in my hips again.

Duncan began a new self-care regiment to take care of himself around his chronic fatigue syndrome. He recalls,

> I took a leave of absence from work for about six months. . . . I got a personal trainer. I started going to the gym three to five times a week. I started incorporating physical exercise into my daily routine which was initially debilitating, completely debilitating, but over a period of time became less and less debilitating. And then over a period of time became somewhat exhilarating and it helped me build up my tolerance for physical

> activity without being really tired. I started taking Spanish lessons so I could work on the cognitive thing. I started doing crossword puzzles.

Duncan told the story of how he was treated by a physician who was studying the effects of serotonin reuptake inhibitors on people with chronic fatigue syndrome.

> I did a course of about six months on a low dose of Zoloft, and . . . at the end of the six months I felt significantly better. I felt well enough to go back to work and assume more regular activity as I had prior to the onset of chronic fatigue.

With regards to his relationship with himself, Duncan specifies how he changed his relationship to his political activity as a part of his self-care:

> I took on a lot less political activism and responsibility. I tried to stay very connected. In other words I tried to be in that environment [of political work], but I tried not to take on things that would put me in a position of having to fulfill a responsibility when I did not feel either emotionally, mentally or physically capable of fulfilling that responsibility.

As far as his relationship with others, Duncan notices that he can often get short tempered when he is feeling burnout. He will often get irritated with other people. He reports,

> Sometimes you can be hyper critical or . . . feel a negativity or a hyper criticism . . . just all of your senses are a little bit raw so . . . sometimes you can be a little more vulnerable or you can also be somewhat hyper critical of other people, not recognizing that they're suffering from the same limitations and frustrations that you are.

Duncan lists some friends whom he associates with self-care, but mostly he associates his partner with self-care. His partner is often able to recognize when Duncan is burning out. Duncan admits, "He will recognize things about me that I don't yet recognize about myself, or if I'm too stressed or too busy or too . . . self-involved to see the forest before the trees he can recognize those things."

With regards to causality of his burnout, Duncan acknowledges that his response to the U.S. invasion of Iraq was the biggest cause of burnout in his life. "At no time in my life did I feel a greater responsibility, and I think it was with the possibility of stopping the war." Ironically, this cause of tremendous burnout also left Duncan with a feeling of great success and satisfaction, a feeling that he associates with self-care.

> Witnessing . . . the development of this movement and to see how day after day, or week after week, action after action, there was a real growth . . . up until the actual invasion. That was a dynamic that I had never witnessed before. And so in a lot of ways it was very exhilarating to witness that and it also caused me to realize that I was growing in my understanding and my abilities by leaps and bounds in the course of hours or days rather than months or years as our consciousness usually builds. So it was both a big responsibility, but it was also a very exhilarating experience at the same time. And the result of it was a great amount of personal growth I think on my part.

## Textural Presentation of the Data

### Introduction

According to Moustakas (1994), the process of phenomenological reduction extracts the texture of the data in phenomenological research, precisely "what" is experienced by the participant. The process of phenomenological reduction condenses the horizons, recurring themes, impressions, verbal pictures, senses and aesthetic properties, into the fundamental textures of the experience of burnout and self-care. Earlier in the results chapter, textural themes of the individual co-researchers were reviewed. The following section records the composite textural description of all the participants. All the textural themes of the individual participants were woven together to distill the composite textural essence of the data.

**Composite Textural Description**

Eleven composite textural themes emerge from the data. The themes cluster around burnout and self-care and are ordered according to the number of participants who reported the experience or theme in the results. These themes are (a) stress, frustration and exhaustion; (b) inner and outer pressure and responsibility; (c) body shut-down; (d) betrayal and isolation; (e) depression and grief; (f) enrichment of soul; (g) satisfaction and celebration; (h) great love and healing; (i) awareness and keeping balance; (j) deep understanding; and (k) belief, enthusiasm and inspiration.

Stress, frustration, or exhaustion occurs in all of the co-researchers' experiences of burnout. Stress is often used as a broad descriptive word for many differing emotions. Some describe a feeling of horror and pain while others find themselves becoming disturbed and upset. Words like horrendous and shameful are used to delineate the stress. Several participants describe fighting and arguing as a source of the stress. There are feelings of things being really hard, very stressful and crazy, the tension of controversies and arguments, and wound-up feelings. These activists feel tensions with coworkers and in their families, sometimes describing a generation gap. Some participants find it difficult to convince people to join them in their cause.

Many times during the interview process, participants describe a frustration when recounting their personal involvement with burnout. There is a sense that the outcome is not as the person had anticipated. Participants expound on the weight of struggle and hopelessness, that there is nothing to be done and

that all the effort is getting nowhere. Participants depict burnout as discouraging, not knowing how to proceed, not knowing what to do next, not knowing what strategies to implement. There is also a feeling of futility, questioning if all the effort is accomplishing anything, and questioning if all the struggle is a contribution or not. The emotion is one of doubt and hopelessness, wondering, "Am I just spinning my wheels?"

The feeling of one co-researcher is tired to the point of exhaustion. Exhaustion is characterized as taking things personally and being in the small opposition. Some participants are unable to attend anti-war activities due to exhaustion. A description of spreading oneself too thin or feeling weary is associated with exhaustion and activists wonder "if peace would ever come?".

Feeling pressure and responsibility develops as a theme with all of the study participants. This sense of personal responsibility is described as being motivated from a personal commitment to justice, feeling disappointed in oneself if one does not take action. There is a feeling of doubt in oneself for decisions and actions that are taken within the anti-war movement. There is a sense that war is looming, that within each action lies the possibility of halting the war, a constant demand for action against war, and an ever-present sense of personal responsibility to respond. These long-term activists with experience and insight feel a heavy demand, both internally and externally. They recognize their unique talents at anti-war activism and recognize that their actions or inactions can bring huge consequences. There is a feeling of maturity, that the older one gets and the more experienced within the anti-war movement, the more the onus of

responsibility lies with the long-term activist to correctly analyze the politics, plan, organize and orchestrate anti-war actions.

Pressure is experienced internally or externally as psychological, emotional or social. For some of these activists, it does not feel natural to constantly take a stand and be in the small opposition. It feels like pressure to speak up, a feeling similar to having too much caffeine. Furthermore, there is pressure within the anti-war movement experienced by the co-researchers to participate in more and more activism. The pressure is like a heightened feeling or reaction, a feeling that one is being asked to do more than one can handle.

There is also social pressure to conform to the standards of society. It is described as a fear of being hassled, an anxiety for taking a stand, for being a troublemaker. The feeling of pressure is one of being on edge, being out of line, unprofessional, unacceptable to society, and uncomfortable around the establishment and the powers that be.

Most of these activists describe their body shutting down at some point, not being able to go on physically with anti-war activism. Several participants do not notice that it is time to take a break from activism until they get physically ill and are unable to continue. Body shut down is described as being overwhelmed physically and feeling sick, but still having the desire to engage in activism. Several activists observe that they have a tendency to overestimate what they can accomplish and thus physically overextend themselves. Burnout for these co-researchers, ages 30 to 88, involves the body literally shutting down and not allowing them to further participate in anti-war activity.

Several long-term activists report that they feel the aging and deterioration of their bodies. Some notice that when they get sick, it takes much longer to recuperate. With age, they lose the ability to accomplish what they had been able to accomplish in the past. A few participants assess that they are more prone to sickness as they have gotten older. The human limitation of the body is frustrating for some of these activists. Many participants feel capable of doing more work, but have discovered that their bodies have finite physical limitations.

Body shut-down takes different forms for different activists. One activist makes note that he comes down with a cold or flu whenever his body cannot continue with activism. Another co-researcher reports that he suffered from mysterious physical pain and flu-like symptoms in the past and was eventually diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome. The youngest research participant remembers that she tolerated excruciating joint pain all over her body for one year and after numerous tests, was finally diagnosed with fibromyalgia. The oldest co-researcher experiences undiagnosed physical ailments at times, which she attributes to the aging process. After a particularly debilitating period of burnout, another research participant was diagnosed with nerve damage and partial paralysis. Two other older co-researchers experience the loss of physical strength periodically, which they both attribute to age.

Betrayal and isolation emerge as another important composite textural theme. Betrayal is described as desertion, abandonment, as well as dramatic and humiliating. There is anger and pain mixed in with overwhelm, fighting, and incompetence. Lies and jealousy bring about disappointment, powerlessness and

a lack of support. The perpetrator of one participant is characterized as a dangerous tyrant. Another betrayal is described as people not practicing what they preach and not committed for what they stand. Some participants question their own judgment of character. Betrayal is depicted as a let down, discouraging, vicious, unbelievable, putting a damper on one's activism, and "eating you from the inside." For those participants, betrayal can sap a person's energy and divert a person from responsibilities. Betrayal is disturbing, dishonest and not being in one's right frame of mind, causing a person to give up or just quit.

Feelings of betrayal are often accompanied by a feeling that not enough people are taking responsibility for all the suffering abroad at the hands of the U.S. government. The feeling is painful, very hard and difficult, from a sense of lack of support. Participants feel like their anti-war work is considered useless by others, which is hurtful. When other activists within the anti-war community do not have the same politics or strategy, some participants feel betrayed, isolated and burned out. This lonely feeling is terribly upsetting. Several participants want desperately to persuade others to see the world the way they see the world. Feeling betrayal and isolation makes people feel sad, misunderstood, vulnerable, threatened and alone. The loneliness is depicted as having a vision but the vision is not reflected anywhere. Some co-researchers report denial preceding the betrayal and isolation.

Several participants recount periods of depression or grief. Grief emerges as both a current and past theme. When interviewing participants who are depressed, the researcher became aware of a bleakness and grieving in these

activists. One of the participants sobbed openly during the interview process, feeling vulnerable and threatened. Coupled with anger, the grief is associated with being a victim of life circumstance, of things coming to an end and numerous losses that at least three of the four activists have experienced in their activism.

The depression is sad, rough, and devastating with suicidal ideation. Depression is described as bad, severe and horrible, sometimes accompanied by an angry attitude or panic attacks. The co-researchers who experience depression sometimes feel humiliated, that they have gotten things wrong in their lives. For several participants, the depression is associated with many debilitating physical symptoms, including joint pain, cognitive lapses and feeling chronically tired. The depression is described as having a sense of timelessness and futility and a lack of meaningful engagement with things that are possible.

When asked about spiritual self-care, all of the activists describe experiences that nurture the spirit. Some of the activists believe in God and some consider themselves atheists, but all of them talk about experiences that could fall into the category of "enriching the soul." Listening to music, going to the beach, searching for tide pools, and hanging out with pets are activities that are categorized as feeding the spirit. Going to the park or the ocean is portrayed as restful and relaxing. Spending time in nature and engaging one's senses are all seen as enriching experiences. The colors, smells, tastes, sounds and feel of the outdoors is described as touching a person's soul.

Another activity that most participants associate with feeding the spirit is spending time friends or family and having fun. A few co-researchers use the term spiritual connection, a connection to other human beings and perhaps also to animal and plant life too. This connection is distinguished as bringing empathy and concern for all life, characterized by one activist as a spiritual grounding. Another participant outlines a spiritual connection with God, but she also expresses her connection to all people. She expounds on the spiritual connection as knowing that she is not alone, that her spirit is connected to other human beings, and to the whole world. The feeling is described as all people being one, a feeling of solidarity with humanity. The spiritual connection is depicted as wonderful and beautiful.

Three participants mention engaging with children as a form of spiritual self-care. Children help the activists stay in the present moment, which these co-researchers categorized as mentally healthy. The sentiment of these activists is that children are good for adults. While being with children, a person does not have time to reflect on the past or think of the future. Activists are dealing with the right now when they are dealing with children. Being with children is described as a comfort, as keeping the activist sane during U.S. wars abroad. Children are characterized as having a certain directness and honesty that adults lack. Children can make a person laugh. Some of the activists are teachers and several of the participants have grandchildren, recounting positive feelings when children are around. Children are depicted as enthusiastic, excited, full of love, giving of their time and attention and very healing to adults.

All of the activists derive a sense of satisfaction from their successes. Part of the feeling of satisfaction is the act of looking back over one's efforts. Participants describe a feeling of relief and achievement, basking in the successes or the accomplishments. One co-researcher describes enjoying the opportunities he has for self-reflection and self-evaluation for his political actions. The satisfaction sometimes involves taking personal ownership of a specific element to the whole struggle, evaluating if the activist has improved from the past or whether the activist has learned something. Satisfaction involves feeling good about large and small victories, and satisfaction is depicted as feeling good about any little accomplishment, whether with activism or other personal successes.

Another aspect of the satisfaction is combined with relief that the responsibility has passed and the opportunity for self-care is once again easily available. Satisfaction involves feeling a sense of relief from the pressure or the frustrations of just having so much to do. The satisfaction feeling is coupled with feeling relief after events because the activist no longer needs to remember details and worry about how things will go. The satisfaction is characterized by the ability to focus on one's own life, coupled with a sense of peace. No longer are thoughts of anti-war organizing constantly invading the activist's concentration. Thoughts of worry have disappeared. Satisfaction means that things are finished and now life can be enjoyed without interference.

These activists report enjoying their political activism, that the activism and political organizing itself brings a tremendous amount of pleasure, a huge sense of personal satisfaction. One co-researcher characterizes her activism as an

element of her self-worth, that she would "kill" herself if she could not be involved in fighting the system. Satisfaction is feeling like one can do something important. The feeling of satisfaction makes life worth living. Satisfaction is described as doing things that are effective and a feeling that is self-rewarding. Celebrating one's successes is an element of satisfaction, characterized by the good feeling a person gets when a big project goes well and has affected some people and some change. Satisfaction is rewarding and gratifying and a sense of trying to help each other, helping people who are suffering, helping the environment and helping the world.

All of the activists paint a picture of love for humanity, love for what they do and a drive to heal the ailments of society. Many of the activists use the word love when describing their anti-war work, a motivating force behind the activism. The reward for the activism is a great love that is beyond merely being congratulated on a personal level, rather the love of organizing a mass movement is a joy that is hard to match, the kind of feeling that will energize a person for the rest of her life. The feeling of love has the flavor of a certain missionary zeal that exposes one's humanity. The energy behind anti-war work is often fueled by a great love for humankind.

One activist insists that we all need to develop love for humanity, to care for other people, to be able to show love for all people. People need to love each other and people need to love themselves as well. It was suggested that if people do not love their neighbors, it is because they do not love themselves.

Another kind of love depicted by several of the activists was how love from others plays a critical role in the activist's life. Loving friends and relatives are characterized as wonderful, tender and dear. The supportive community of the activist often radiates love. One activist asks her family to accompany her emotionally when she experiences a difficult time and as a result, family members stay by her side constantly. Loving relatives are described as sunshine. There are many examples of family members taking care of activists during difficult times. The love is described as comforting and bringing a lot of happiness. Loving relatives are characterized as always being there full of strength, like guardian angels, standing close by with support. Several participants portray themselves as feeling very emotionally connected to loving relatives, always feeling encouragement, wisdom and support from them.

These anti-war activists make clear that they are healing society similarly to how a doctor heals a patient, healing the collective suffering of millions. One activist explains that society is suffering and diagnosed with insanity and anti-war activists are the healers. Although most of the activists did not use the word healer, many of them describe the ills of society and a society based on murder and vociferous destruction, of which these activists carry the antidote. The healing is viewed as significant, a healing that can be studied and taught, with numerous successes.

Healing of the participant him or herself is another theme that presents itself. Several participants seek treatment of their bodies from medical doctors and still others pursue healing of the mind. Some co-researchers are cured

through medication, while others reject traditional medication and explore alternative medicines and therapy. Healing results from understanding the problem. Healthy foods and beverages restore a person body.

For emotional healing, participants seek psychotherapy and other forms of counseling. Healing from trauma is considered important. Self-healing from trauma involves un-learning self-protecting behaviors, which may be repeating patterns of hurt. Emotions are described as signs of what needs to be healed in ourselves. Emotions help these co-researchers pay attention to where they are making mistakes and where they need to develop clear thinking. Crying is depicted as a healing tool, along with emotional insight that brings about self-healing.

Some participants seek healing through religious ceremony. One person describes herself as a spiritual person and a Catholic. Healing is sought through church and through meditation. Healing is gained through linking political ideas to ideas of faith and the church. Another activist seeks healing through Native American animal and plant ceremonies in order to create beauty. Healing is described as full of art, gift giving and vision sharing, born out of a willingness to face death, a confrontation with foundational myths. Surviving this confrontation, symbolized in ceremony, absorbs pain and mistakes. For these co-researchers, the strength of the ceremony dissolves anguish, suffering, doubt, illness and incapacities. Healing brings purification and is described as fantastic.

Self-care brings a level of awareness in activists, an ability to identify when to avoid burnout. Most participants report understanding the difference between

feelings of burnout and feelings of self-care and these activists take action to maintain functionality before the onset of burnout. Self-care is an ever-present constant that these activists feel they need to think about, a promise they make to themselves in order to maintain long-term activism, an internal monitoring of stress and burnout. These activists are aware that they need to get their reserves replenished, that they must take care of themselves in order to continue to participate in activism in the future.

Keeping balance is described as learning how to say 'no' or 'I can't do that right now,' being able to discern when it is necessary to choose time for oneself over activism. A person cannot be everywhere at the same time. Every person has limits. For one's own health sake, co-researchers have learned to maximize activism and participation, while at the same time, practicing holistic health or spiritual renewal. The participants pay attention to lifestyle and how it affects health and body, focusing on a work/life balance, centered and consistent, even-keeled with no extremes. One cannot stay up all night and expect to change the world. Even under the most demanding situations, activists need regular sleep and down time. Keeping balance is a feeling that these participants can incorporate activism but still have a sense of normalcy, rather than just constant demand. A person develops confidence and awareness of abilities and possible contributions. Keeping balance involves spiritual, mental and physical balance, engaging in rest, relaxation and taking time to cool out.

When heading towards burnout, several activists report having an ever-present thought that they will soon take a break. Some activists count the days and hours until they can stop intense activism and just start taking care of themselves. Activists

maintain the awareness that stressful periods will end, stressful circumstances will change dramatically and that they can eventually pull back and take care of themselves. They promise to themselves that the stress is finite and that they will once again be able to recuperate and recover and continue on again, either at a slower pace or at a later time.

When asked about self-care, several activists describe that they take care of themselves by understanding the context of world events. These participants categorize world events as part of a broad framework, making sure that their social, political or economic orientation matches the history of world events. They read, attend meetings, and have a long-range perspective, trying to understand deeply so that they do not just react to each historical event in isolation. Understanding what is happening politically, socially, or historically is a form of self-care for many of these co-researchers. These activists have a feeling of deep understanding of why there is war, which on the surface seems so irrational. The deep understanding comes so clear to many of these activists.

The feeling of understanding the context of world events is described by one as feeling vindicated. Another depicts a feeling of integration, a connection of mind and body that prepares and refreshes her. Some activists chronicle a process of those who doubt and do not understand world events. These people are portrayed as weak and feeble-minded, people whose politics vacillate, causing them to fall away from activism. The activists, however, who understand the context of world events with sound analysis, are able to resist doubt and feel substantiated. These activists report having far-sightedness, the ability to deeply

understand complex issues, and they are able to put each world event in context and move forward with their activism.

When asked about self-care and anti-war activism, these participants describe feelings of belief, enthusiasm or inspiration associated with successes in their activism. While one activist describes a belief in God, others describe a belief in their activism, a certain sense of optimism and trust that they will win their just cause in the end, that world social justice is only a matter of time. Even if justice takes more than one lifetime, there is a kind of promise that a just world is on the horizon. There is a firm belief that society will purge the social ills of poverty and war, that the victory of social justice is indeed inevitable.

These co-researchers depict enthusiasm as resilience and the ability to bounce back from adversity. Enthusiasm is coupled with an ability to avoid cynicism, characterized as getting the best of a person and causing the person to extend beyond their own limitations and get back into the groove in a short period of time. One activist outlines her high energy lifestyle, which gives her the ability to hang in there when things get rough. Enthusiasm can surprise a person and cause her to endure and carry on longer, without even paying attention. Enthusiasm takes a person's breath away to see such achievement and can make an activist feel human.

With enthusiasm, activists and organizers thrive on adversity because they are always in the underdog position. Enthusiasm is proclaimed to thumb its nose at authority. With the tension of injustice, an anti-war activist launches a struggle against the war. Enthusiasm can grow from activists who refuse to act like the

sheep that society has made everybody else. Several activists explain that somehow all the walks, vigils and punishing experiences can make them stronger, that they needed activism in order to feel good about themselves.

It is suggested that a healthy expression of legitimate anger involves funneling the anger into activism, and that this kind of enthusiasm for fighting injustice is considered to be a healthy response. Feeling healthy and taking care of oneself is tied up in influencing and changing the world through anti-war activism. There is a constant tension of trying to turn the whole system upside down through activism while trying to live one's life at the same time.

Inspiration is associated with political victories. Inspiration is helpful and motivated by progress in one's political goals. Inspiration is a feeling of being quite pleased, a feeling of excitement for fighting the right and just cause. Inspiration is infectious and draws more people into the movement, asking what they can do to help? Inspiration lifts up the spirits of the people. Political change is in motion during feelings of inspiration, bringing hope and possibilities. For these participants, acknowledgement for good work combats doubt and brings inspiration and a good feeling. Praise and recognition is motivating and uplifting and inspiring, especially if one is feeling down at the moment.

## Structural Presentation of the Data

### Introduction

In the process of phenomenological data analysis according to Moustakas (1994), the analysis stage of imaginative variation concentrates the overarching construction of the co-researcher's experience by looking at the phenomenon

from different perspectives, precisely "how" the participant experienced burnout and self-care. These structural perspectives, including time, space, relationship to self, relationship to others, bodyhood, and causality, are stable from every angle. Imagination variation uncovers the structural back bone of the experience under investigation (Moustakas, 1994). Earlier in the results chapter, structural themes of the individual co-researchers were recorded. The following section records the composite structural description of all the participants. All the structural themes of the individual participants were refined into the composite structural essence of the data.

**Composite Structural Description**

With regards to temporality and burnout, many of the activists find that if they use too much time for anti-war work, and not enough time for self-care, a feeling of burnout can often ensue. Several of the co-researchers question themselves during feelings of burnout, wondering if they are wasting their time doing activism? Time pressures and constant deadlines can lead to feelings of burnout. Some of the activists report surges in political activity, that anti-war activism can often be cyclical. Similarly, some kinds of burnout are described as cyclical as well, while other feelings of burnout are categorized as chronic.

When asked about self-care, many of the co-researchers speak about needing to take time off, needing to take breaks from activism on a regular basis. Planning time for self-care activities is considered very important. Time for unwinding with exercise, meditation, sleeping, reading, writing, taking classes, games, relaxation, gardening, vacations, movies, television, nature, spiritual pracitices and listening to

music is highly valued. Spending time with friends and family is also considered critical for self-care by all of the activists. At the same time, many activists insist that making time for anti-war activism is an element of how they take care of themselves. Several of the participants report needing to be effective with their time. Some of the participants report needing to always pace themselves when it comes to anti-war activism, because they understand that anti-war activism is for the long-term.

With regards to space, several participants speak about location, where they live in relation to their anti-war activism, and where they experience burnout and self-care. Some participants describe how they are very conscious of the privileged lives that they lead here in the U.S. These co-researchers have a very internationalist perspective, aware of the suffering in other countries at the hands of war, and aware that they are protected from experiencing war first hand.

Another space that surfaced in the interviews with the activists is their progressive organizations. These organizations often serve as locations of both burnout and self-care. While most anti-war groups are supportive to the activists and a necessary tool for self-care, coalition meetings (where many anti-war groups meet together) are often a source of burnout. Demonstrations, marches, vigils and other anti-war actions in the streets are characterized as locations of self-care more often than burnout.

Many co-researchers mention nature as a necessary location for self-care. Several activists express feelings of renewal and fulfillment while at the beach, in the woods, sightseeing or while working in the garden. Two of the co-researchers experience feelings of self-care at yoga classes. Another participant finds going to

the movies as an important location for self-care, while another enjoys taking public transportation.

With regards to relationship to self and burnout, several activists describe overextending themselves before they remember to take care of their own needs. Furthermore, some participants report that even when they recognize they are headed for burnout, they consciously go against their own self-interest and continue to engage in activism. Another theme associated with burnout and relationship to self that emerged in the interviews is the feeling of self-doubt.

All the interview questions about self-care are connected to the structural component of relationship to self. Several of these structural themes regarding relationship to self stand out as invariant constituents of the experience of self-care. A few co-researchers report loving themselves and feeling that they are happy and healthy. Some participants make clear that they need to give themselves permission for self-care. Many of the activists express that they have learned over time when to take a break and engage in self-care behavior before they reach the stage of burnout. All of the activists participate in self-care activities as a necessary component to their self-care. Many of these activities are reported above, but in addition, participants state that they seek out professional psychotherapy, medical treatment, and alternative non-traditional healing practitioners as well. Furthermore, as stated above, almost all the activists insist that engaging in activism is a necessary component of self-care. Participants describe feeling good about themselves when they make a positive impact on the world. Successful anti-war actions are characterized as bringing a self-rewarding feeling of satisfaction.

When asked about people associated with burnout, every activist lists several people. Fighting within the activist community is a major source of burnout. Arguing and power plays between groups is reported as stressful. In addition, betrayal by family, friends and comrades in struggle is also a great source of burnout for several of the participants. Short tempers, criticism and lack of acknowledgement from family, friends and others on the left are also associated with stress. Some co-researchers depict right-wing attacks and political victories on the right causing frustration as well. Finally, several people specify how the lack of political activity in fellow humans can sometimes evoke feelings of burnout.

With regards to relationship to others and self-care, all the participants report needing relationships with people. These activists need family, friends, partners, spouses, children, grandchildren, and other activists in the movement. Close relationships with spouses, partners and children are a great source of emotional support. Friends in the anti-war movement also care, admire, appreciate and depend on their fellow activists. In addition, several participants thrive on teaching and facilitating political actions, as well as developing leadership skills and raising the consciousness of the masses. A few activists explain that recognition and appreciation from others in the anti-war movement have been important and feel good. Furthermore, several participants admire other activists in the movement and consider these role-models to be inspirational. Finally, many co-researchers seek out professional care, which includes doctors, therapists, health practitioners, exercise coaches, or ceremony leaders.

Every co-researcher reports bodily concerns associated with burnout. Several of the participants describe being out of touch with their body and bodily needs, which results in poor eating, poor sleeping, and lack of exercise. Some co-researchers specify that they are survivors of physical abuse, either in childhood, or due to physical attacks from the political right or the police. A few of these activists are diagnosed with depression or anxiety and several feel excruciating pain in their bodies. One has experienced flu-like symptoms for months at a time. Another has been diagnosed with fibromyalgia after months of strenuous anti-war activity. Other activists are diagnosed with physical conditions including chronic fatigue syndrome, arthritis, diabetes, scoliosis, and nerve paralysis.

Most of the activists describe their bodies shutting down at some point, not being able to go on physically with anti-war activism. Several participants do not notice when it is time to take a break from activism until they get physically ill. Burnout for co-researchers at age 30, 50 or 80 is very similar and involves the body literally shutting down and not allowing them to further participate in anti-war activity. Participants describe a feeling of being overwhelmed physically and feeling sick, but still having the desire to engage in activism. Several co-researchers notice that they have a tendency to overestimate themselves and overextend themselves.

Some older activists acknowledged that increased age had affected their bodily strength and health. These participants reported that they felt the aging of their bodies, that their bodies were deteriorating and "growing old in the movement." One co-researcher noted that when he gets sick, it takes him longer to

recuperate as an older adult. With age, most activists are prone to sickness and have lost the ability to burn the candle on both ends. Many participants feel capable of doing more work, but their bodies have finite physical limitations, which is frustrating.

Almost every co-researcher reports self-care activities that involve the body. Exercising is critical, including running, walking, calisthenics, working out at the gym and yoga. Some activists report needing regular meals and regular sleep, while other activists describe having lots of bodily energy for activism. Several participants insist how important it is for them to eat healthy and organic food. One activist has become a vegetarian. Abstinence from drugs and alcohol is also important to one of the co-researchers, while some participants specify needing to take medication. One participant remembers giving herself permission to wear new clothes and lipstick, while another recounts how she learned to love her body.

With regards to causality, every co-researcher holds deep convictions and explanations for why things are the way they are. Some activists assign reasons as to why they have become anti-war activists. One explains how the anti-war movement helped to end the war in Viet Nam, which caused her to commit to being an activist for the rest of her life. Another credits her activism to domestic violence at home, causing her to seek nonviolent justice in the world. All the participants are active in many social justice causes, viewing their activism as holistic, including all the causes seeking justice for oppressed, poor and working people.

Each activist has an analysis of why countries go to war. A few participants assign the social class struggle and capitalism as the cause of war. Another activist

attributes U.S. wars abroad to the U.S. having been founded on the genocide of Native American nations and continuing to act out this trauma in the quest for empire abroad. Still another co-researcher describes herself as baffled as to why the U.S. spends trillions on the military and so little money on housing, healthcare and education.

Some of the activists have investigated their own physical and mental health issues and have found answers. Several of the participants ascribe their health problems as directly related to there activism. The over-arching theme with many participants is that they get so passionate about their struggle against U.S. wars abroad, that they set unrealistic standards, neglect their own health, and get sick. Other co-researchers attribute their burnout feelings to the aging process. One of the activists has investigated her childhood history and has ascribed her father's violence at home to his own childhood abuse. Another activist testifies to the fact that understanding the cause of her depression brought her immediate relief.

Most of the co-researchers offer an explanation as to why they suffer from burnout. A few activists attribute their feelings of burnout to capitalist society. Similarly, some participants assign their burnout feelings to having a heightened sense of awareness of social injustice in the world. One activist credits his feelings of burnout to the collapse of his political organization. Some of the activists attribute their feelings of burnout due to having been betrayed by family or friends. A few of the activists feel targeted for attack from other people because they are willing to stand up and organize against injustice. Several of the activists assign the cause of burnout to an incorrect political orientation. If world events contradict a person's

political understanding, this conflict is depicted as causing a crisis of purpose and burnout. Ironically, many of the activists credit their own activism as having caused burnout while at the same time integral to their self-care regimen.

## Summary

This results chapter recorded the individual results of the interviews with eight long-term anti-war activists and their experiences of burnout and self-care. The verification process of each interview was also recorded in this chapter. For each research participant, the textural and structural themes were derived from the data. Phenomenological reduction produced "what" each participant experienced with burnout and self-care. Imagination variation generated "how" each participant experienced burnout and self-care. Finally, composite textural and composite structural descriptions of the data were reported. The summary of the results, which consists of the textural-structural essence of the research, is recorded in the next chapter, the Discussion.

# CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

## Assessment of the Research

This research examined the lived experience of eight anti-war activists in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is significant for the psychological research and clinical field to study activists who are struggling to create a healthy, just, and peaceful society. Findings in the current research shed light on the experience of activists. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists. The first primary inquiry was What is the phenomenon of burnout as experienced by long-term anti-war activists? The second primary inquiry was What is the phenomenon of self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists?

The research method implemented for the current study was transcendental phenomenology according to Moustakas (1994). Of all the qualitative traditions, phenomenology was chosen for the current study because phenomenology is particularly suited for research in which potential variables worthy of study have not yet been identified (Creswell, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological research demands exploring the rich, lived experience of a small number of individual cases. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight participants who were able to explore their experiences of burnout and self-care. The primary researcher was mindful of any presuppositions and did due diligence in bracketing of prejudgments and prejudices.

Through the process of phenomenological reduction and imagination variation, the "how" and "what" of the experience of burnout and self-care were uncovered. The themes were condensed down to composite textural and composite structural summaries of the data. Through composite textural and structural syntheses, the essence of the experience of burnout and self-care of long-term anti-war activists was extracted. The synthesis of the experiences of the co-researchers represents the essences of the phenomena at a particular time and a particular place, having derived findings from the conscious experience of the research participants.

**Summary of Results: Textural-Structural Synthesis of the Data**

**Introduction**

Moustakas (1994) uses the procedure of synthesis to conclude the data analysis for transcendental phenomenology. Synthesis involves using intuition to categorize and summarize the themes and meanings from phenomenological reduction and imaginative variation into essences of the phenomenon. The synthesis attempts to blend the textural experiences of each participant with the fundamental structural themes into one integrated description of the phenomena. From the composite textural data and the composite structural data, significant statements, meanings, and themes have been woven together to produce a narrative description, which is the synthesis of the textural and structural data, the essence of the research.

**Composite Textural-Structural Synthesis of the Data**

Burnout is experienced by these long-term anti-war activists as stress, frustration, and hopelessness. The feeling is tired to the point of exhaustion. Exhaustion is depicted as feeling weary and spreading oneself too thin. There are differences of opinion, controversies, and arguments. Burnout can feel discouraging, not knowing how to proceed, not knowing what strategies to implement. Burnout is a feeling of things being really difficult, stressful and crazy.

These activists experience an internal and external pressure to engage in anti-war activities. Burnout feels like disappointed in oneself if one does not take action and a constant sense that war is looming. There is a social pressure, an anxiety for taking a stand, for being in the small opposition.

Activist passion for struggle against U.S. wars abroad can cause self-neglect, burnout or body shut-down. These participants recount many situations in which their bodies began to stop functioning. They report a tendency to overestimate what anti-war activities they can physically accomplish. Some co-researchers become physically exhausted and unable to continue with activism, and some participants become acutely or chronically ill when they overextend themselves.

Burnout is associated with betrayal and isolation and feels desperately lonely. Tension or betrayal from friends, family, others in the left, and political enemies are the most common source of stress and burnout. Betrayal brings devastation, timelessness and humiliation. Short tempers, criticism and lack of

acknowledgement are also associated with stress. The lack of political activity in fellow humans can evoke feelings of burnout. Feelings of burnout can involve depression and a sense of wasting time. Burnout is depicted as grief and loss, with a strong sense of futility.

When asked about self-care, these activists illustrate experiences that enrich the soul. Spending time at the beach, taking walks, listening to music and engaging one's senses are all seen as enriching experiences. Having fun with friends, family and children is portrayed as very important to spiritual self-care. Self-care can consist of spending time in nature, spiritual practices, as well as feeling a deep connection to all people on earth.

All of the activists derive a sense of satisfaction from their successes and accomplishments. Satisfaction involves feeling good about large and small victories and celebrating one's successes. Co-researchers insist that one component of self-care is comprised of anti-war activism itself. These participants report enjoying their political activism, that political organizing itself brings a tremendous amount of pleasure, a huge sense of personal satisfaction.

These activists associate self-care with a great love for what they do and a drive to alleviate the ailments of society through anti-war actions. The energy behind anti-war work is often fueled by a great love for humankind. The feeling of love has the flavor of a certain missionary zeal that exposes one's humanity. Anti-war activists are healing society similarly to how a doctor mends a patient, healing the collective suffering of millions.

Healing of the participant him or herself through relationships with people is another theme that presents itself in the data. Love from friends, family and other activists is depicted as a necessary component to self-care. Several participants portray themselves as feeling very emotionally connected to loving relatives, friends and comrades, always feeling encouragement, wisdom and support from them. Role models in the movement are inspirational. Professional care from doctors, therapists, health practitioners, exercise coaches, or ceremony leaders is highly valued as well.

Self-care is experienced by anti-war activists as keeping balance and maintaining self-awareness of personal needs. Self-care is an ever-present constant, a promise participants make to themselves in order to maintain long-term activism, an internal mindfulness of stress and burnout. Keeping balance is cultivated through spiritual, mental and physical self-care strategies, engaging in rest, and taking time to relax. These participants find a myriad of ways to obtain relief from the stressors of activism and maintain a constant awareness of when they need to take a break.

Self-care is comprised of understanding the context of world events, of enlisting a social, economic or political orientation that matches history. Activists with far-sightedness, who have the ability to deeply understand complex issues, are able to put each political event in context and move forward with their activism. These activists who are able to understand historical events with sound analysis are able to resist burnout and feel substantiated in their long-term activism.

The participants report a feeling of belief, enthusiasm and inspiration. Self-care is made up of a certain sense of optimism and trust that anti-war activists will win their just cause in the end. Belief in a positive outcome is an element of self-care. Enthusiasm causes these co-researchers to extend beyond their own limitations. Inspiration is infectious and draws more people into the movement, lifts up the spirits of the people and brings hope and possibilities. Activists thrive on adversity and almost always stand in the underdog position. The tension of activism can cause burnout at times, but also ignites the passion of the activist. The love of organizing a mass movement is a joy that is hard to match, the kind of feeling that will energize a person for the rest of her life.

Every co-researcher holds deep convictions and explanations. Some of these activists assign reasons as to why they became anti-war activists, looking for the causes of their anti-war passion. All the participants in the current study view their activism as holistic and seek justice in numerous causes for oppressed, poor and working people. Most of these activists have an analysis of why countries go to war and what can stop war. The co-researchers are very intellectual and analytical and almost all have a much easier time talking about causality than more textural descriptions of their experiences. Many of the participants conceptualize the causes and solutions for burnout. Ironically, most co-researchers credit their own activism as having caused burnout while at the same time integral to their self-care regimen.

## Relevance to the Research Literature

### Burnout Literature

The current study lends support to the assertion that burnout is a process that begins with excessive energy, commitment and motivation, and ends in hopelessness and feelings of futility (Burisch, 2006). Participants began their activism with high energy and commitment and found themselves feeling periods of burnout and despair. Co-researchers reported excessive demands on energy, strength and resources, as described in the experience of the participants in the study by Freudenberger (1974). Participants described exhaustion, questioned their own personal accomplishments, and had moments of doubt and cynicism, all consistent with the findings of burnout put forth by Maslach et al. (1996).

Findings show that long-term anti-war activists experience burnout in much the same way as other professions. Co-researchers experienced all three symptoms of burnout: exhaustion, inefficacy, and cynicism, much like studies done with pediatric oncologists (Poulson et al., 2011; Roth et al., 2011); with psychiatrists (Kumar, 2011; Lasalvia, 2011); with nurses (Wlodarczyk & Lazarewicz, 2011); and with teachers (Cheung et al., 2011; Maslach et al., 2001; Moya-Albiol et al., 2010). Exhaustion was the most widely reported symptom of burnout described by activists in the present research. This lends credence to the models of burnout proposed by Kristensen et al. (2005) and Shirom and Melamed (2005) in which exhaustion is considered the only hallmark symptom of burnout. However, in addition to exhaustion, five of the co-researchers clearly experienced

symptoms of diminished efficacy and three of the co-researchers reported symptoms of cynicism.

Melamed et al. (2006) and Houkes et al. (2011) confirm that the most agreed upon definition of burnout in the literature includes all three symptoms of burnout: emotional fatigue, cynicism, and diminished efficacy. At least three of the research participants experienced all three of these symptoms of burnout. During periods of burnout, activists reported reduced productivity and negative morale, as described by Shirom (1989) with workers in the helping professions. According to Cordes and Dougherty (1993), emotional exhaustion can be experienced as frustration and tension, which was consistent with the current findings. In the present study, feelings of cynicism surfaced when co-researchers were talking about others in the movement who had disappointed or betrayed them. The experience of cynicism as a component of burnout is widely supported in the burnout literature (Bährer-Kohler, 2013). Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001) argue that reacting to exhaustion with emotional distancing is a consistent phenomenon in burnout research. The current study corroborated this finding, as well as the finding that inefficacy is a feeling of "incompetence and a lack of achievement and productivity in work" (Maslach & Leiter, 2008, p. 498).

All participants in the current research described stress, frustration and exhaustion as symptoms of burnout. Co-researchers specified that fighting and arguing within the activist community was often associated with this stress and frustration. Similarly, Kaschka, Korczak, and Broich (2011) systematically reviewed the burnout literature and concluded that conflicts, problems of

leadership and lack of teamwork were shown to cause burnout at work. Activists in the current research also experienced burnout associated with not having any control over the outcome of anti-war activity. Burnout due to lack of control lends support to Cerimele's findings (2011), in which lack of control was shown to contribute to physician burnout.

Feeling an inner and outer pressure and responsibility was a common theme reported by all the co-researchers in the present study. These activists were often overwhelmed with anti-war responsibilities, a lack of time and a lack of resources. Increased workload as a common factor contributing to burnout is well documented in the research literature (Leiter et al. 2009; ten Brummelhuis et al., 2011). Similarly, time pressure as a cause of burnout is substantiated in the literature (Kaschka et al., 2011). Furthermore, all the co-researchers reported burnout due to demands outweighing the resources available, which is widely supported in the research literature (Demerouti et al., 2001; Hobfoll & Shirom, 2001; ten Brummelhuis et al., 2011).

Betrayal and depression were themes that surfaced with half the research participants in the current study. The source of betrayal was different for each of the co-researchers. Similarly, Currier, Holland, Rojas-Flores, Herrera, and Foy (2013) found that helping professionals who fought against injustice were at risk for burnout when they experienced morally injurious experiences (MIE) that violated deeply held moral values. Moreover, researchers have long established a link between burnout and mental health, especially depression (Bakker et al., 2000). Symptoms of burnout can include insomnia, fatigue, depression, negative

attitudes, and anxiety (Ekstedt et al., 2009), all of which were reported by the anti-war activists in the present study.

Every activist in the current research reported bodily concerns connected to burnout and associated numerous health complaints with the experience of burnout, lending support to burnout research on physical health (Kim, Ji, & Kao, 2011). Kim, Ji, and Kao (2011) studied the relationship between physical health and burnout among social workers. Findings indicated a correlation between higher burnout levels and more physical health complaints, as well as a faster rate of deterioration in physical health (Kim, Ji, & Kao, 2011).

All the activists in the present study described a passion for their anti-war work, a level of work engagement that is suggested in the literature as the opposite of burnout (Maslach, Leiter & Jackson, 2012). Workers can find themselves on a continuum at all times; on one end of the continuum is work engagement and the other end is work burnout, depending on circumstances in the work environment (Maslach et al., 2012). The burnout continuum is framed with the negative experience of burnout (exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy) on one end and the positive experience of engagement (energy, involvement, and efficacy) on the other end (Maslach et al., 2012). The co-researchers in the current study similarly described a continuum of anti-war engagement and burnout at different times during their activist careers.

Roughly half of the co-researchers were paid for their activism, though some were paid for activism in other areas, not anti-war activism. Research suggests that the psychological contract of volunteers is very similar to the paid

employee, although the volunteer may also be affected by socio-cultural expectations and influences (Nichols, 2013). Compensation for anti-war efforts for the current participants was often attained in other forms of appreciation, not involving money. Both the paid and unpaid activists in the current study experienced burnout, which is supported in the literature (Maslach & Gomes, 2006). Only one participant reported lack of reward as a symptom of burnout, which is also suggested in the literature (Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

Several studies were inconsistent with the findings of the current research. One factor that has been reported to contribute to burnout is whether a person is well matched to his or her position at work (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). This factor did not surface in the current study. All the participants reported that they felt well-suited as anti-war activists and burnout was attributed to other factors. Similarly, the current study did not support the Maslach and Leiter (2008) finding that "burnout has been associated with various forms of negative responses to the job, including job dissatisfaction, low organizational commitment, absenteeism, intention to leave the job, and turnover" (p. 499). Perhaps short-term activists experience these symptoms, but the long-term activists in the present research did not. Finally, no one in the current study reported increased alcohol or drug use as a consequence of burnout, which is a factor suggested in the research literature (Kumar, 2011).

**Self-Care Literature**

Although no universal definition of self-care exists (Godfrey et al., 2011), many of the co-researchers shared their experiences of self-care as they

understood the concept. Self-care methods have emerged as an antidote to stress and burnout and participants in the present study have engaged in many of the same self-care suggestions found in the self-care literature (Hays, 2014). These activists have practiced numerous techniques for coping, prevention, and cures for the state of burnout, most of which are also supported in the burnout literature. Some self-care techniques reported by activists in the current study that are also found in the self-care literature include: breaking isolation by obtaining social and emotional support (Jetten, Haslam, Haslam, & Branscombe, 2009); practicing balance and self-nurture (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011); changing behavior including physical exercise (Sidhu, Vandana, & Balon, 2009); relaxing (Manzoni, Pagnini, Castelnuovo, & Molinari, 2008); eating a healthy diet (Gomez-Pinilla, 2008); making time for play (Faunce, 1990); or developing a spiritual practice (Walsh & Shapiro, 2006).

All activists in the present study were found to use self-care strategies that "enrich the soul." These techniques included listening to music, going out in nature, enjoying pets, spending time with friends and family, developing a spiritual connection, and spending time with children. Similarly, Walsh (2011) reviews the effectiveness of simple lifestyle changes as a treatment for individual and social well-being. Walsh (2011) argues that making simple therapeutic lifestyle changes (TLC's) can effectively increase well-being in mental, medical, and public health. Some TLC's suggested by Walsh (2011) that lend support to the current findings include: time in nature, relationships, recreation, relaxation and stress management, religious or spiritual involvement, and service to others.

All eight co-researchers in the present study derive a sense of satisfaction from their successes and most take time to celebrate their accomplishments. Several of the participants recounted ways that they celebrated their victories and small accomplishments in their anti-war activism, a self-care technique supported in the literature (Weick, 1984; Schwebel, 2008). Weick (1984) argues that moderate successes of social problems must be celebrated in order to avoid triggering overwhelming arousal levels induced by the enormity of global social problems. Schwebel (2008) proposes techniques to maintain morale for peace activists and includes the suggestion to acknowledge and celebrate even the smallest achievements, which accumulate together to achieve powerful progress.

Love and healing was an important theme that emerged from the current research. These activists described many methods that they used to heal themselves, as well as many methods they used to heal the ailments of society. Although co-researchers recounted their own personal self-care techniques, many participants portrayed their activism as a necessary component to their own self-care. These activists' self-care is involved with confronting global injustices in the form of anti-war activism, inextricably binding their own self-care to the justice and well-being of all humanity. These co-researchers seek peace for themselves and seek peace for the world. Lending support to the current findings, Anderson (2004) proposed a definition of peace that integrates subjective and objective measures, as well as micro and macro contexts. "Peace is a condition in which individuals, families, groups, communities, and/or nations experience low levels of violence and engage in mutually harmonious relationships" (Anderson,

2004, p. 103). Anderson (2004) defines peace on all levels of society, including individuals, families, groups, communities and nations. Anti-war activists in the current study also experience self-care on multi-level, micro and macro contexts, linking their own self-care to the care of all humanity.

The finding that co-researchers view their activism as part of their own self-care, is suggested in positive psychology's idea, "that strength-congruent activity represents an important route to the psychological good life" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 4). Keyes (2002) depicts a mental health continuum, with mental health described as flourishing and the absence of mental health defined as languishing. Evidence shows the current participants are flourishing, in accord with Keyes's (2002) definition, when they are practicing their anti-war activism. All of these activists are involved in seeking the answers to global problems. The passion of these activists falls most congruently into the eudemonic approach to well-being, which is based on concepts like meaning, purpose, and autonomy (Ryff & Singer, 2013).

Most co-researchers in the current research claimed an ability to recognize the warning signs of impending burnout and an ability to take action before the onset of burnout. Awareness before burnout is a type of mindfulness, a capacity to identify when to take a break before the onset of burnout. Awareness of the need for self-care is an ever-present constant that these activists described. It is a promise they make to themselves in order to maintain long-term activism, an internal monitoring of stress and burnout. Mindfulness as a self-care technique is also suggested in the psychology literature, including: mindfulness-based positive principles and practices (Wise et al.,

2012); mindfulness-based stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990); acceptance and commitment therapy (Hayes et al., 1999); and positive psychology (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005).

Most participants in the present study specified that self-care involves understanding the context of world events. These activists categorize world events as part of a broader framework, ensuring that their historical, social, political, or economic orientation matches the history of world events. Similarly, Schwebel (2008) and Sloboda and Doherty (2007) propose similar theoretical views. Schwebel (2008) suggests that maintaining a historical perspective is necessary for activist morale. Sloboda and Doherty (2007) studied the British anti-war movement and made recommendations on how to increase anti-war activism. Suggestions include the following:

> To build long-term commitment to anti-war activism will require (among other things) the intellectual leadership of the movement to provide a compelling narrative that is both comprehensive enough to be a reliable framework for several decades to come, and flexible enough to take account of the very different conflicts in different parts of the world. (Sloboda & Doherty, 2007, p. 137)

Keeping balance emerged as a major self-care theme for most of the activists in the current research. Keeping balance involves social, spiritual, mental and physical balance. Engaging in rest and relaxation, finding social support, maintaining emotional and physical health and learning how to set boundaries are all important components to self-care. Likewise, Norcross & Guy (2007) proposed self-care techniques for psychologists, which include: caring for one's body, nurturing supportive relationships, taking healthy breaks and vacations, setting boundaries, and maintaining balance.

All the activists in the current study found that relationships with people are integral to self-care. These participants mentioned family, friends, partners, spouses, children, grandchildren, and other activists in the movement. Healthy relationships are a necessary component to self-care strategies, which is suggested in the literature (Hays, 2014; Norcross & Guy, 2007; Walsh, 2011). For example, Gray-Stanley and Muramatsu (2011) found that a strong social support network is an effective method to prevent burnout for direct care workers. Similarly, many of the activists in the current study recounted peer support, activists who were role models and came to their aid, which is similar to the importance of networking and mentoring suggested by Britt (1997).

Care of the body emerged as a major self-care theme in the current study. Co-researchers reported exercising, running, walking, calisthenics, working out at the gym and taking yoga classes. These activists also detailed eating healthy food, abstaining from drugs and alcohol, taking medication and seeking medical treatment when necessary. Diet, exercise and maintaining physical health are well documented techniques of self-care in the research literature (Walsh, 2011). For example, Shaw, Reme, and Boot (2012) summarize the research on worksite wellness, which involves many self-care techniques including diet, exercise, smoking cessation, and healthcare. Likewise, Jonsdottir, Rödjer, Hadzibajramovic, Börjesson, & Ahlborg (2010) studied healthcare workers and found that exercise lowers the risk of developing depression, burnout and stress. Self-care strategies that include physical wellness, nutrition and exercise are

widely supported in the self-care literature (Brucato & Neimeyer, 2009; Wise, Hersh, & Gibson, 2011).

Belief, enthusiasm and inspiration emerged as major self-care themes for half of the participants in the current study. The belief involves a certain sense of optimism and trust that world social justice is inevitable and only a matter of time. The optimistic outlook of these activists and their focus on success fit consistently with studies in positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Study participants have demonstrated extraordinary altruism, excellent coping strategies, and many are connected to a wide social network. This is suggested in the positive psychology literature as related to long-term happiness and positive mental health (Fredrickson & Joiner, 2002; Harker & Keltner, 2001; Williams & Shiaw, 1999). The present research supports the concept that when people act on their circumstances with intentional activity, they can maintain happiness in the long term (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005), and that sustained happiness arises from an engagement in life called flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Consistent with the research in the field of psychotherapy (Fuselier, 2003; Wise et al., 2012), participants in the current study may not practice enough self-care. Experts agree that pro-active self-care is necessary in order for psychologists to avoid burnout (Barnett, Baker, Elman, & Schoener, 2007; Brucato & Neimeyer, 2009). Findings in the current research suggest the need for pro-active self-care with activists as well. Only one participant in the study mentioned attending a support group in the past as part of self-care, although support groups are widely suggested in the literature as an effective method of

self-care (Larson, 1986). Dealing with grief issues was considered important by a few of the current participants in preventing burnout and is suggested in the psychology literature as well (Sapin, 1985.) Boundary violations, power abuses, and inappropriate emotional involvement, however, did not surface in the current study as a consequence of burnout, but have been associated in the psychology literature with psychotherapist burnout (Porter, 1995).

**Psychology Literature and Anti-War Activism**

Findings in the current study support many of the previous psychological studies of anti-war activists. Some co-researchers cited a catalyst event or circumstance that propelled them into peace activism, as did the participants in the study by Frank and Nash (1965). Their study, which found that commitment to activism and support from other activists relieves stress and builds self-esteem, was also confirmed by several of the co-researchers. All the participants in the current study reported having a group affiliation, which is widely supported in the literature as a buffer against burnout (Keniston, 1968; Soloman & Fishman, 1964; Swank & Fahs, 2011; Toussaint, 2011). Many of the co-researchers reported feeling effective as activists, which lends support to previous studies on how strong feelings of political efficacy can predict anti-nuclear activism (T. Tyler & McGraw, 1983; Watanabe & Milburn, 1988). A few participants recounted spiritual experiences that facilitated their activism, which has been described in previous research (Allan, 1989; Burdge, 2006; Sheridan, 2012). All the activists in the current study recounted receiving emotional support as a part of their

experiences of self-care, which is widely supported in the literature (Bell, 1984; Maslach & Gomes, 2006).

Results in the current study also lend support to some of the results in the Gomes (1992) study on the rewarding and stressful experiences of peace activists in the San Francisco Bay Area. Similar to the research done by Gomes (1992), these co-researchers often cited that fellow activists were both the most rewarding as well as the most stressful aspect of being anti-war activists, and lack of success in political goals was not often mentioned as a high stressor. Activists in the current research confirm Gomes (1992) finding that because their activism is so meaningful, co-researchers have a unique ability to endure a great deal of stress. Similar stressors were reported in both studies: interpersonal problems with other activists in the community, lack of progress, public apathy, the activist feeling overextended, lack of resources, and opposition to the activism (Gomes, 1992).

Findings in the current research are also consistent with the Downton and Wehr (1997) study. As in the Downton and Wehr (1997) study, many co-researchers felt a sense of personal responsibility, felt disillusioned with the government, felt a need to help others, and felt anti-war activism to be effective and necessary. A few of the activists reported early childhood experiences in which they valued loving and helping relationships, as was found by the participants in the study by Downton & Wehr (1997). Research participants in the Downton and Wehr (1997) study and current co-researchers reported similar characteristics, which include: belonging to organizations, having a high level of commitment, having moral conviction, feeling the pressing nature of the problem,

having attained modest gains in the peace struggle, feeling gratification from living in harmony with one's values, feeling a sense of community, and confirming the meaning that activism brings to life. Although none of the activists in the current study have quit activism, as in the Downton & Wehr (1997) study, some current research participants reported similar experiences of burnout regarding: fighting within the activist community, physical or emotional exhaustion, lack of progress in political change, and opposition from relatives.

Data in the current research also supports the Oskamp et al. (1992) study in which most activists reported having professional backgrounds, reported feeling optimistic about attaining peace, felt highly motivated for further activism, reported strong family support and depicted peace activism as a moral issue. Findings in the current study lend support to Adams (1995) suggestion that psychologists help anti-war activists integrate their personal and political lives by helping to build a stable, supportive and sustainable family and work life in order to prevent burnout. One activist in the current research explained how anger can be expressed in a healthy channel through activism, which was also suggested by Adams (1995). In addition, current research participants and long-term peace activists in the study by Marks (1998) all showed similar characteristics, which included: commitment, an ability to bring people together, an understanding that change takes time, and a personal sense of responsibility. Three of the activists in the current study reported psychotherapy as an effective tool for self-care, which lends support to the research by Davis (1998), which found that activists can benefit from certain kinds of psychotherapy.

The anti-war activists in the current research fall into the category labeled by Schwebel (2005) as unconventional peace activists because they do not believe that change will come through existing governmental structures. Schwebel (2005) proposed that motivation for peace activism is formed in childhood, and involved duty, responsibility and a feeling that one's values are threatened. Activists in the current research lend support to Schwebel's (2005) theory. Findings in the current research are also supported by Schwebel (2008), in which he suggests that activists develop an over-arching historical perspective, live a balanced and enjoyable life, and belong to organizations that include social bonding, facilitate widespread participation, set modest goals and celebrate achievements.

Most current participants' experiences of self-care match Maslach and Gomes' (2006) proposed coping skills necessary for peace activists to avoid burnout. Maslach and Gomes (2006) suggestions include: monitoring work overload, taking time for rest, relaxation and physical health, expecting ebbs and flows in the anti-war movement, and focusing on smaller steps of accomplishment. Like the Maslach and Gomes (2006) study, burnout was experienced by both paid and unpaid anti-war activists in the current study. Maslach and Gomes' (2006) findings, that burnout can be caused by lack of control, insufficient rewards, breakdown in community and lack of fairness, was confirmed by some of the current research participants.

Sloboda and Doherty (2007) studied the British anti-war movement and made recommendations on how to facilitate sustained activism. As in the study

done by Sloboda and Doherty (2007), activists in the present research are skilled activists who belong to an organization, have quality interpersonal relationships, perceive a global threat, and maintain an over-arching analysis of politics that stands the test of historical events. Sloboda and Doherty (2007) suggest that difficulties in building an anti-war movement since 9/11 were due to numerous factors, including cultural and religious differences of anti-war activists, complex and differing campaign messages, and lacking a geographic focus for demonstrations. None of these difficulties were salient for the co-researchers in the current study.

The purpose of this relevance section was to relate the current research findings to the psychology research literature. The findings in the present study were explored from the perspective of the burnout literature, the self-care literature, and the psychology literature on anti-war activism. The textural and structural themes that emerged from the data were all related to the research literature. Although anti-war activists have not been a popular area of study (Schwebel, 2008), current findings can contribute to this growing field of research.

## Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

Delimitations in the study are defined by the co-researchers' exclusion criteria. Participants were required to be at least 26 years old and self-identified as long-term anti-war activists, with a maximum of a 24-month break from activism within a 10 year period, and they must have had experiences with both self-care and burnout. These co-researchers were chosen to be a culturally and

gender-balanced group and were not suffering from severe psychiatric symptoms within the last year. In addition, the initial interviews only lasted one hour, thus affecting the length of the interview transcripts. Another delimitation of the study is the small sample of only eight people who live within the San Francisco Bay Area. San Francisco anti-war activists may not be representative of anti-war activists in the United States or anti-war activists in other countries. Although there was an attempt to obtain an accurate representation of the population of study, snowball or chain sampling has its limitations. Furthermore, using the word "anti-war activist" may have repelled some possible participants from responding to the original flyer. Some long-term activists prefer the term "peace activist."

There are several limitations to the study, which also must be noted. First of all, the open-ended interview approach of phenomenological research may make some co-researchers uncomfortable and cause them to withhold information. Some people enjoy talking and exploring their feelings and experiences with an interviewer. Other people may not enjoy the free form of a qualitative interview, and find it difficult to become introspective on demand. Personality styles of the primary researcher and the co-researchers, either verbal or nonverbal, may have caused limitations in the accuracy of the study. In addition, the co-researchers bring their own beliefs, attitudes and assumptions to the study and what they believe the primary researcher may want to hear. Participants may also have had difficulty remembering the details of their personal histories of anti-war activism, which could affect the accuracy of the

results. Furthermore, the activists may have had difficulty expressing their emotions and communicating them effectively during the interview process.

Another set of limitations in the current study involve possible misunderstandings between the primary researcher and the co-researchers regarding the definition of burnout and the definition of self-care, as well as other words that were used in the interview questions. In her study on self-care with psychotherapists, Britt (1997) notes how the definition of "self-care" is problematic, meaning different things to different people. Several participants asked for the definitions of the following words: burnout, self-care, dimensions, incidents, spiritual and mental. The primary researcher was reluctant to clarify the definitions of those words, which may have contributed to the accuracy of the study.

Finally, the primary researcher brings assumptions and biases about long-term anti-war activism, burnout and self-care. The interview questions were based on the primary researcher's predetermined interests. Using the concept of epoche, the primary researcher attempted to exclude her assumptions about burnout and self-care as the research was conducted. Tone of voice and judgments were bracketed out as the primary researcher directed the interviews. Furthermore, bracketing was continually implemented during the data analysis. Therefore, a limitation of the current study may be that the primary researcher was unable to bracket out her preconceptions and presuppositions completely during the entire length of the study. In addition, the primary researcher is engaged in the anti-war movement in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is difficult

to surmise how the activity of the primary researcher within the Bay Area anti-war movement has impacted the co-researchers and the accuracy of the data obtained.

**Personal Statement**

The current study was implemented through a transcendental phenomenological research methodology. Epoche is the process of suspending all judgment when conducting a transcendental phenomenological interview. It is critical to the accuracy of the study that the researcher set aside all presuppositions and preconceptions about the phenomenon in order to maintain as much objectivity as possible. The researcher must maintain a consistent and receptive atmosphere in order to conduct an unbiased interview and obtain accurate data.

I come to this study with a background in anti-war activism. I began to attend anti-war demonstrations in January 2003, before the U.S. invasion of Iraq. I was very excited to participate in demonstration after demonstration, bringing the consciousness of people-power to the masses. After the March 19, 2003 "shock and awe" bombing of Iraq, I was surprised to find that the number of demonstrators diminished markedly. I wondered why so many people gave up demonstrating against the war?

As I got more involved in the anti-war movement, I met numerous activists and organizers who had been active in the movement since the Viet Nam war. There were younger activists as well, who had been involved protesting against war for many years, since the first U.S. invasion of Iraq in 1991. Yet, at

the same time, I witnessed newcomers to the anti-war demonstrations, who got heavily involved in organizing actions against the war, only to drop out of the movement and off the activist radar. I wondered why these activists left?

With intense emotions, I felt high on life when I attended my first march and demonstration against the U.S. invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan. I felt deeply in love with the anti-war movement for an entire year, organizing and engaging in numerous actions. As the years progressed and the wars continued, my passion persisted, although tempered by age and maturity. I learned that I needed to take breaks from activism and take time for myself. I learned that I needed to focus on my sphere of influence, rather than taking on the entire U.S. government by myself. I began to wonder if activists who had quit the movement had neglected to take certain steps to protect themselves from a feeling of overwhelm? I also began to wonder what was driving the persistent activists? What qualities did the long-term activists possess that enabled them to overcome obstacles, including burnout, and continue in the struggle against war?

My history and involvement in the San Francisco Bay Area anti-war movement ignited my passion to study anti-war activists. Yet, at the same time, because of my history and involvement in the anti-war movement, it was absolutely crucial to the accuracy of the current study that I bracket out my experiences, prejudices and judgments, in order that I approach the research process with a fresh perspective. Practicing epoche was essential, so that I might set aside my ego and my assumptions and interview and investigate the lived experiences of the eight activists in the current study.

Regarding bracketing and the data analysis, I continuously attempted to suspend all judgments and set aside all presuppositions about the phenomenon in order to maintain as much objectivity as possible. I attempted to make all the preconceptions conscious regarding burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists. These presuppositions consisted of: my psychological and emotional perspective on the experience of burnout and self-care; my preconceptions regarding the possibility to verbally express and accurately analyze the experiences of the co-researchers; my presuppositions regarding assigning value or significance to the experiences of the participants; my preconceptions regarding psychoanalyzing and psychologically interpreting the experiences of the co-researchers; as well as my expectations regarding the possible results, which could potentially influence the direction and course of the interview process.

In my attempt to practice epoche and bracket the phenomena of burnout and self-care, I was prepared by spending time deeply reflecting on the interviews with each of the study participants. Before each interview, I made sure to be fully emotionally and physically available to each co-researcher, making sure I had gotten enough sleep. I became a blank slate, ready to be filled with each participant's experience of the phenomena. I listened and absorbed the words and unspoken emotions of the co-researchers, focusing on the tone of voice and essence of each experience. I spent time concentrating and reflecting on all the details of the interviews, remembering the time of day, location, proximity to each other, and interruptions that may have occurred. Spending time remembering the

obscure dimensions of each interview supported me in making meaning of what I heard.

By bracketing the phenomena of burnout and self-care, I was able to immerse myself in the essences of the interviews. Bracketing involved clearing out my mind when I read the transcripts of the conversations. I spent time putting blinders on my thinking, and retrospectively absorbing the meanings of each interview. I was mindful of needing to pull back from my tendency to put the interviews into some sort of theoretical framework. Filtering the interviews through my personal psychological theories would have been a mistake.

I believe I did a good job of continuously attempting to suspend all judgments and set aside all presuppositions about self-care and burnout. By practicing epoche, I was able to maintain a consistent and receptive atmosphere during the interviews with each co-researcher in order to obtain accurate data. Preconceptions and judgments could openly enter and exit my consciousness. After bracketing the phenomena of burnout and self-care, I was able to delineate the meaning units found in the text of each of the transcribed interviews, and continue with the process of phenomenological reduction, imagination variation, and synthesis.

At times, it was laborious to bracket out my own presuppositions, preconceptions and judgments. Practicing epoche was especially challenging with regard to my tendency to put the interviews in some sort of theoretical framework. I noticed the psychotherapist in me and the anti-war activist in me trying to categorize the experiences of some of the research participants. I also

found it tough to bracket out my own interpretations of the co-researchers experiences, as well as my expectations regarding the possible research results, which could potentially have influenced the direction and course of each of the interviews. I was mindful to refrain from any need to judge or evaluate the co-researcher or put any labels on his or her experience, but practicing epoche was difficult at times during the interview process.

## Significance of the Study

The current study has generated significant findings within the domains of clinical psychology, positive psychology and peace psychology. The descriptions of burnout and self-care demonstrate that this group of co-researchers experience burnout and self-care in much the same way as other professions, although symptoms of corporate burnout were largely absent. Co-researchers experienced burnout as the following textural themes: (a) stress, frustration and exhaustion; (b) inner and outer pressure and responsibility; (c) body shut-down; (d) betrayal and isolation; and (e) depression and grief. Co-researchers experienced self-care as the following themes: (f) enrichment of soul; (g) satisfaction and celebration; (h) great love and healing; (i) awareness and keeping balance; (j) deep understanding; and (k) belief, enthusiasm and inspiration. These study participants experienced the significant composite textural themes in the structural areas of: temporality, spatiality, relationship to self, relationship to others, bodyhood, and causality. Furthermore, findings lend support to previous studies of the experience of anti-war activists.

With respect to clinical psychology, the findings about burnout are significant because this study sheds light on the similarity and differences of

burnout as experienced by anti-war activists verses other professions. For example, causes of burnout for anti-war activists were similar to other paid professions, including lack of resources, increased workload, time pressure, conflicts, a lack of control, lack of teamwork, little reward, unfairness, value conflicts, and societal factors. Another significant cause of burnout for anti-war activists is fighting within the activist community. However, unlike other professions, perhaps, conflict between anti-war organizations is a necessary political tool for pushing anti-war consciousness forward, a societal factor supported in the sociology literature on social conflict theory (Marx & Engels, 1983). As one activist from the current study noted,

> During the Viet Nam war, I remember we had big, big fights at national conferences. And the biggest issue of all was, "Bring the troops home now!" versus, "Negotiate to end the war!". . . How to end the war? How do you end the war? That fight was carried out for years. Finally, the "Get out!" position won . . . as people radicalized and realized that the U.S. had no right to negotiate anything in Viet Nam.

It is significant for all anti-war activists to engage in the political struggle that is necessary to raise consciousness about class society. Eliminating this kind of fighting within the activist community in order to reduce burnout is a political impossibility. However, findings in the current study show how long-term anti-war activists cope with this necessary stressor.

Another difference between burnout with anti-war activists and other workers is the fact that most anti-war activists are not paid. Most of the participants in the current study were also not paid for their anti-war activism. Research suggests that the psychological contract of volunteers is very similar to the paid employee, although the volunteer may also be affected by socio-cultural

expectations and influences (Nichols, 2013). There are clinical implications for how socio-cultural expectations and influences may affect the experience of burnout for anti-war activists.

Another interesting finding in the current study was the fact that the burnout symptoms of diminished efficacy and cynicism were not reported by all the co-researchers. Perhaps admitting these two components of burnout may be considered a political concession. Another possible explanation of the lack of reporting diminished efficacy and cynicism could perhaps also be attributed to long-term anti-war activists' ability to maintain positive morale and focus only on the positive gains.

In addition, the research uncovered the significant irony that while anti-war activism was a cause of burnout at times, this same activism is a necessary component to self-care. All eight activists described anti-war activism as a source of burnout and self-care. These participants could not imagine their lives without activism. In fact, many of the participants had difficulty descending into the emotions of the phenomenological process. The open-ended questions clearly made some people feel uncomfortable. Many of the co-researchers adapted to the uncomfortable silences of the interview process by going deeply into political explanations of the world, rather than describing their own personal experiences with burnout or self-care. Activism was integral to the personality of the activists in this study.

With regards to positive psychology, an important finding that emerged in the current study was the activists' belief in a positive political outcome. This

optimism and belief in the inevitable success of the anti-war movement is a driving force for most of the participants in the current research. Perhaps peace psychology and positive psychology can learn from the long-term anti-war activists in the current research, who hold an unwavering positive attitude and belief in the future dawning of world justice and peace, an optimism that fuels the anti-war activism through generations.

## Clinical Implications

The clinical implications of the current study stem from the six significant self-care themes that emerged from the research: (a) enrichment of soul; (b) satisfaction and celebration; (c) great love and healing; (d) awareness and keeping balance; (e) deep understanding; and (f) belief, enthusiasm and inspiration. Activists must spend time enriching the soul. Listening to music, spending time in nature, near bodies of water or mountains, having fun and nurturing relationships with friends, family, children and pets are some examples of activities that can feed the spirit. Attending religious ceremony or other spiritual practices can also lift the spirits of some activists. In fact, Allan (1989), Burdge (2006), and Sheridan (2012) found that spiritual practice can facilitate long-term activism. Whether a person believes in a Higher Power or not, experiences that feed the soul are energizing and enriching and bring meaningful clinical implications.

Another activity that most participants associate with enriching the soul is spending time friends or family. Findings in the current research indicate that relationships with other people are not only a source of burnout, but a huge

element of self-care. These activists characterize family, friends, partners, spouses and other activists in the movement are critical components of self-care. Spending time with children is especially highlighted as necessary for mental health. Friends in the anti-war movement also care, admire, appreciate and depend on their fellow activists. Other activists who were role models were especially cited as people associated with self-care. Role models in the movement are inspirational. Professional care from doctors, therapists, health practitioners, exercise coaches, or ceremony leaders is highly valued as well. Burnout is a multi-dimensional problem that can be confronted not only at the individual level, but also at the organizational level. Clinical implications include burnout prevention facilitated by the anti-war organizations, in which support groups and peer mentoring for anti-war activists are encouraged .

It is important to take time to reflect and celebrate one's own and others' accomplishments, as suggested in the activism literature (Maslach & Gomes, 2006; Schwebel, 2008; Weick, 1984). Co-researchers in the current study affirmed that praise and recognition is motivating and uplifting, especially if one is feeling down at the moment. Activists can look back over small and large successes and bask in the achievements. As one participant noted, "Just doing things that are effective, it's self-rewarding. I mean when you have to organize and carry out some big project and it goes well, and you feel like you affected some people or some change, that's self-rewarding!" As studies on sustained happiness demonstrate, continued appreciation of life changes can facilitate

happiness in the long-term (Sheldon, Boehm, & Lyubomirsky, 2013; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2012).

Perhaps it is the oldest lesson in the world, but giving and receiving love and healing on the personal and professional level is the crux of the entire anti-war movement. Seeking out one's own healing, often through professionals, was an important finding in the current study. Individual love and healing must be sought out in one's personal life, while at the same time, love and healing are administered by the activists themselves on the masses through anti-war actions. One of the participants summarized the love and healing best,

> You just look at healing on a societal level. You need to heal the collective suffering of millions. You're going to help millions as good as if you were helping your very own patient. And that's what's been driving me. . . . I think that's the reward. . . . Being able, after a lot of hard work, to see hundreds of thousands of people in the streets with you. And we've seen it. It's a joy that's hard to match. . . . I think it's the kind of feeling that will get you going for the rest of your life.

Participants in the current study reported a level of mindfulness, an ability to identify when to maintain functionality before the onset of burnout. For these co-researchers, self-care was an ever-present constant that activists needed to think about, a promise they made to themselves in order to maintain long-term activism, an internal monitoring of stress and burnout. Mindfulness as a self-care technique is also suggested in the literature, including: mindfulness-based positive principles and practices (Wise et al., 2012); mindfulness-based stress reduction (Kabat-Zinn, 1990); acceptance and commitment therapy (Hayes et al., 1999); and positive psychology (Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005). Mindfulness

as a self-care tool for anti-war activists is an important clinical implication of this study.

Anti-war activists need to live a balanced life, a theme that is supported in the activism literature (Schwebel, 2008). Keeping balance involves spiritual, mental and physical balance, engaging in activism, as well as resting, relaxing and taking time for self-care activities. Pacing oneself when it comes to anti-war activism is very important. Time for unwinding with exercise, meditation, sleeping, reading, writing, taking classes, games, relaxation, gardening, vacations, movies, television, nature, spiritual practices and listening to music are some highly valued self-care activities. Spending time with friends and family is also critical for self-care. Seeking out professional care such as doctors, therapists, health practitioners, exercise coaches, or ceremony leaders is also recommended at times. Exercising is necessary, such as running, walking, calisthenics, or working out at the gym and yoga. Regular meals and regular sleep are needed, as well as eating healthy and organic food. Making time for anti-war activism must also remain a necessary element of self-care.

Findings in the present study suggest that activists must monitor their own stress levels, take breaks and set limits when necessary in order to avoid burnout, as found in previous activism literature (Maslach & Gomes, 2006). Perhaps many anti-war activists can be classified as codependent, always putting others first at the expense of their own needs. Training new activists to self-monitor and take time for themselves can be a vital tool in the effort to create many more long-term anti-war activists.

Activists must generate a deep understanding with a broad social, political, economic, or historical framework that matches the history of world events. Sloboda & Doherty (2007) recommend that activists develop an over-arching analysis of politics that stands the test of historical events. Schwebel (2008) advocates that activists develop an historical perspective. For many of the activists in the current study, having the correct political analysis of global events is the difference between long-term activism and burnout. As one of the participants noted,

> I believe the analysis that I cling to, is sound, and it has been vindicated. There have been political events in the past that have cast serious doubt. I've been able to resist it, and I've found company in people who have done the same. Over the last decade and a-half, [I have] seen vindication. When 9/11 came down, there were people who were flat out cynical. At first there was such enthusiasm because all the anti-globalization protests. Suddenly the 9/11 thing put a damper in the weak. Feeble minded [activists] easily vacillated, but not me. I found company in people who thought the same and had vision, strategic vision.

Inspiration ignites the flame of activism. Perhaps it is inspiration that first attracts people to engage in anti-war activism. Inspiration can be associated with political victories or progress in one's political goals, and inspiration can be infectious, drawing more people into the mass movement. Like re-kindling the flame of romance in a marriage, activists must seek out the inspiration in all their actions.

Belief in the inevitable success of the anti-war movement is an optimism that carries the momentum of the masses. Some of the activists call the optimism "revolutionary optimism" or "enthusiasm." Some of the activists call the optimism "faith" in God or in the Universe. Whatever the reason for the optimism, it is the firm belief in the positive outcome of the anti-war actions that

energizes the activists and organizers in the anti-war movement. There are many clinical implications for positive psychology (Cohrs et al., 2013; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) to facilitate long-term activism. As one of the participants reflected,

> Even if it's not in my lifetime, yes, it will happen. Yes, we will have a just world. Yes, there will be plenty for everybody. Yes, we will get rid of poverty. All those things, I would draw to that part of me, internal, in my belief. I believe in that.

Activists can turn the tension that they experience into passion for activism. Activists must also learn to expect tension with others in the anti-war community. It is an important part of tactical planning and the raising of consciousness to hash out ideas within the political left. Though this tension can be stressful, it is a vital tool to steer the anti-war movement. It was first attributed to Marx and Engels (1983) that arguments within the political left embody the techniques and arguments necessary to raise consciousness in the masses and forward the struggle for social justice. Learning how to negotiate one's truth, and stay the course no matter what the opposition, is an important clinical implication of this study.

## Implications for Future Research

The current study opens the door for future research on the experiences of long-term anti-war activists. One group of research questions that emerged from the current study is related to the differences between long-term anti-war activists and those who quit the movement. Why are long-term anti-war activists able to sustain their activism through periods of burnout better than those who quit activism? Are these qualities innate, or can they be learned? Are the activists'

unique experiences of burnout related to activists' ability to sustain themselves through periods of burnout? Are the activists' unique experiences of self-care related to activists' ability to sustain themselves through periods of burnout? What are the experiences of burnout and self-care of those who quit the anti-war movement?

A second group of research questions centers around the concept of work engagement. What does work engagement look like for the anti-war activist? What is the difference between work engagement and workaholism for the anti-war activist? Using concepts from organizational psychology, how can anti-war organizations better support volunteers to prevent burnout and stay engaged in activism?

Another group of research questions were generated from the final self-care suggestions of current study. Using the data from the current study, can self-care techniques be used to increase the average length of anti-war activists? Does understanding the purpose of inner discomfort and fighting within the political left facilitate long-term activism? Does monitoring stress levels, taking breaks and setting limits increase the length of activism of volunteers in the anti-war movement? Does attending a workshop on how to live a balanced life as an activist increase the length of activism of volunteers? Which broad social, political, or economic framework creates the most effective long-term activists? Can soul-enriching, loving and healing activities increase the length of activism? Does installing regular appreciation activities and celebrating small successes

increase the length of activism? How do activists find inspiration, stay enthusiastic and maintain optimism?

The research needed on the experiences of anti-war activists is extensive. Some more questions that were generated from the current study include: Can an activist's sense of anti-war activism as a "calling" protect the activist from burnout? Is there a relationship between anger management and anti-war activism? Are there differences in the success rates of anger management clients who participate in activism verses those who do not? What are the experiences of psychology clients who participate in activism? What are the experiences of clients who are treated by psychologists who participate in activism? What are the experiences of psychologists who have entered into the political arena and taken a stand against institutionalized injustice? Do anti-war activists generally experience all three symptoms of burnout, or do the large majority of activists only experience exhaustion as the primary symptom? This list of questions is far from exhaustive, but opens the door to ideas for future research.

With regards to peace psychology, psychologists can take the information from the current study in order to support activists and suggest activism as a healing tool for clients who are suffering because of unjust social institutions. Adams (1995) proposes establishing a "new psychology" that opposes pathologizing the anger people feel against all the social and economic injustice in the world (p. 31). Like the "new psychology" touted by Adams (1995), clinicians can teach clients how to harness justifiable anger into activism. Psychologists can become activists themselves and facilitate their students to become activists.

Psychologists are needed to teach people why we need activists, help empower activists, and teach activists how to sustain themselves against overwhelming odds (Schwebel, 2008). Cohrs, Christie, White and Das (2013) state their hope that positive psychology can move away from individualism and nationalism and learn from peace psychology to work towards global well-being. Current findings support the idea in the literature that psychologists need to facilitate global well-being (Cohrs et al., 2013).

Like changing the dynamics of a dysfunctional family, psychologists need to step up and become openly political as part of their personal integration. Findings in the current study confirm the claim by Winter et al. (2001), that psychologists have a duty to apply their knowledge to confront and change unjust social institutions. Adams (1995) suggests that psychologists can play a central role in the restructuring of society by identifying and developing leaders within the anti-war movement. By confronting racism, sexism, homophobia, militarism, individualism, and all forms of institutionalized inequality, psychologists can facilitate peace and justice. It is imperative that psychologists confront the brainwashing of the media, which spreads lies and propaganda, and creates fear and inaction. Psychologists can "place the problems of personal integration squarely within the framework of commitment to action and affiliation for peace and justice" (Adams, 1995, p. 33). Findings in the current study make important clinical implications for anti-war psychologists.

## Conclusion

It is important for the field of psychology to study activists who are struggling to create a healthy, just and peaceful society. The current research is a benefit to psychology by contributing to the increasing literature on self-care and burnout as experienced by long-term anti-war activists, as well as proving to be a resource for all people in society who would like to reduce stress and burnout. The current study has generated significant findings within the domains of clinical psychology, positive psychology and peace psychology.

Findings demonstrate that burnout is experienced by these long-term anti-war activists as hopelessness, futility and feeling tired to the point of exhaustion. Burnout is an internal and external pressure to engage in anti-war activities. For the participants in the current research, activist passion for struggle against U.S. wars abroad can cause self-neglect, burnout or body shut-down. Burnout brings and sense of devastation, betrayal, depression and grief. In this study, bodily concerns and relationships are components to the experience of both burnout and self-care.

Findings show that self-care can consist of a healing and spiritual feeling, as well as a deep connection to all people on earth. Recognition and appreciation from others in the anti-war movement has been a necessary component to self-care for those in this sample. Activism and political organizing itself brings a tremendous amount of pleasure, and a huge sense of personal satisfaction. The tension of activism can cause burnout at times, but also ignites the passion of these activists. Self-care is made up of a certain sense of optimism and trust that

justice will prevail in the end. Self-care is comprised of understanding the context of world events, and enlisting a social, economic or political orientation that matches history. Self-care is experienced by these anti-war activists as keeping balance and maintaining mindfulness of personal needs.

Clinical implications for anti-war activists and organizations from the findings of the current study can be used to facilitate the reduction of burnout and the increase of self-care activities. For these co-researchers, experiences that fed the soul were energizing and enriching. Relationships with family, friends, partners, spouses and other activists in the movement were critical components of self-care for those in this study. Professional care from doctors, therapists, health practitioners, exercise coaches, or ceremony leaders was highly valued by these research participants. It was important for these activists to take time to reflect and celebrate accomplishments. Love and healing was being sought out in these co-researchers' personal lives. At the same time, healing was administered by these activists through anti-war actions. Mindfulness for these study participants was important to identify when to maintain functionality before the onset of burnout. These co-researchers found that they need to generate a deep understanding with a broad social, political, economic, or historical framework that matches the history of world events. Anti-war activists in the present research reported the need to live a balanced life, which involves social, spiritual, mental and physical care. These activists sought out the inspiration in all their actions. Learning how to negotiate one's truth, and stay the course no matter what the opposition, was an important self-care tool for these long-term activists.

Most of the findings in the current research are similar to findings in the psychology literature. For example, the causes of burnout for volunteer anti-war activists were similar to other paid professionals, including lack of resources, increased workload, time pressure, conflicts, a lack of control, lack of teamwork, little reward, unfairness, value conflicts, and societal factors. In addition, self-care activities of the current researchers were similar to activities found in the self-care literature, especially the following themes: satisfaction and celebration, awareness before burnout, care of one's body, healthy relationships, balance, care of one's soul, and professional help when necessary.

In the present study, experiences of burnout for volunteer anti-war activists were largely similar to other paid professionals, despite the lack of financial reward. One contrast, however, between the current co-researchers and past research on worker burnout is the unavoidable political tension within the anti-war community. Eliminating this kind of fighting within the activist community in order to reduce burnout is a political impossibility. Findings in the present study demonstrate how long-term anti-war activists can cope with this necessary stressor. In fact, some co-researchers use this tension within the political left to fuel their passion for anti-war activism, thus overcoming feelings of burnout. The current research uncovered the compelling irony that while anti-war activism is a cause of burnout at times, this same activism is a necessary component of self-care. Many of the current co-researchers have an uncanny ability to maintain positive morale and focus only on the positive gains. This optimism and belief in the inevitable success of the anti-war movement is a

driving force for most of the participants in the current research and leads to important implications for positive psychology and peace psychology.

Research findings that support the activism of anti-war activists are important to the psychological community, as anti-war activists are a fundamental tool in promoting world peace. We need to learn more about the experiences of these community leaders in order to better support them and develop them in their goal to promote a global consciousness and global well-being. Long-term anti-war activists' experiences of burnout and self-care will increase the depth of the research that helps further the struggle to confront global injustice and promote the well-being of all humanity.

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## APPENDIX A: INFORMATION FLYER

Have you been an anti-war activist for 10 years or more?

Please distribute this flyer.

T.S. Chase is a doctoral level student in the Clinical Psychology Department at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. She is conducting a study for her dissertation with the title:

An Exploratory Study of Burnout and Self-Care as Experienced by Long-Term Anti-War Activists

The nature of this study is to explore the experience of burnout and self-care by long-term anti-war activists. Ms. Chase is looking to interview eight men and women activists.

Ms. Chase will conduct two interviews, the first one lasting one hour and the second one a maximum of one hour.

If you are interested or would like more information, please call: (415) 845-3693, or you can send an email to chase_tanya@yahoo.com

Thank you for your interest.

## APPENDIX B: RESEARCH PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

This study is being conducted for a Doctoral Dissertation in Clinical Psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies. This study is being conducted by Tanya Chase, a doctoral candidate at the California Institute of Integral Studies. The purpose of this study is to explore self-care and burnout as experienced by anti-war activists. It is the primary researcher's intent to contribute to the self-care and burnout literature as it applies to long-term anti-war activists. You are a suitable participant for this study, if you are at least 26 years of age and have been active in the anti-war movement for at least 10 years, whether consecutive years or not. You must not be suffering from severe psychiatric symptoms within the last year. Your role as co-researcher in this study is to answer the interview questions as honestly as possible. The questions are not meant to invade your privacy and you are free to answer them or not as you see fit. I am seeking a vivid, accurate and comprehensive portrayal of your experiences. The total time required for the first interview will be 60 minutes and approximately 30 minutes for the follow up interview. The initial interview will involve your description of your experiences of self-care and burnout. The second interview will provide you with an opportunity for feedback to refine the description. No prior preparation is required for any part of the interviews.

Confidentiality is guaranteed within the limits of the law. All data and consent forms, written, audio-taped or transcribed materials, will be kept in a locker to which only I, Tanya Chase, the primary researcher, have access. Your name will not be associated with your answers in any private or public report of

the results. All confidential material will be coded and identified by numbers only. All identifying information will be deleted when direct quotes are used in the dissertation. Access to tapes will be limited to the primary researcher, Tanya Chase, and the transcriber only. Neither your name, nor any other identifying information will be included in the dissertation. Your request to omit details that you specify to the primary researcher will be honored. The notes, tapes, transcriptions and any other written data materials will be destroyed after 7 years have elapsed from the completion of this dissertation. You may choose at anytime to withdraw your consent to participate in this study and discontinue your voluntary participation. There is no cost to you and no guaranteed benefits for being in this study. In the case that you should experience distress caused by your participation in this study, professional psychotherapeutic assistance will be offered at a reduced fee. There is no penalty for dropping out of this study.

If you have any concerns or unresolved questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a participant you may contact me at 415-845-3693. You may also contact the dissertation chair for this study, Dr. Janis Phelps, by calling 415-575-6243 to discuss any matters of concern. Furthermore, you may directly or anonymously write to the Human Research Review Committee Chair, CIIS, 1453 Mission Street, San Francisco, CA 94103. Thank you for your interest in participating in my dissertation research on the experiences of self-care and burnout in long-term anti-war activists. I value the unique contribution that you can make to my study and appreciate the possibility of your participation in it.

Sincerely, Tanya Chase

## APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

1. Tanya S. Chase, a Psy.D. candidate in the clinical psychology department at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco, California, has requested my voluntary participation in a research study at this institution. The title of the research is: "An exploratory study of burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists."

2. I have been informed that the purpose of this research is to explore the experience of burnout and self-care as experienced by long-term anti-war activists.

3. I grant permission for the data that is collected during this study to be used in the process of completing a doctoral degree.

4. I understand that my participation will involve two interviews, the first one about 60 minutes and the second one about 30-60 minutes.

5. I grant permission for the interviews, in which I participate as a part of this study, to be audio-taped.

6. I understand that these audio-tapes will be used for educational purposes only.

7. I have been assured that all this information will be handled confidentially. I understand and am satisfied that the following safeguards have been taken to protect against the loss of confidentiality:

a) My name will not be associated with my answers in any private or public report on the results.

b) My name will be kept separate from any project records, tape-recordings, transcripts or discussion of data.

c) All identifying information will be deleted when direct quotes are used in the dissertation.

d) All confidential materials will be coded and identified by numbers only. Interview numbers will be used instead of names on all project records, tape-recordings, transcripts and in any discussion of data.

8. I have been assured that the findings will be confidential and that the goals of the interviews are not therapeutic in nature.

9. I have been informed that I will not be financially compensated for my participation. The potential benefits of the study are a better understanding of self-care as a method to avoid burnout in myself and those around me.

10. I understand that the results of the study may be published and that my name or identity will not be revealed.

11. I have been informed that any questions I have concerning the research study or my participation in it, before or after my consent, will be answered by Tanya Chase (415-845-3693 or chase_tanya@yahoo.com) or by the faculty sponsor of this research, Dr. Janis Phelps at CIIS (415-575-6243). Tanya Chase will also facilitate referrals to a therapist if such a need should arise. Two reduced fee clinicians include: John Calella, MFT, PhD, is located at 3 Madrona Ave. Mill Valley, CA 94941. His phone number is (415) 640-1908. Rochelle Suri, MFT, is located at 870 Market Street, Suite 753, San Francisco, CA, 94102. Her phone number is (415) 279-2131.

12. I understand that in case of injury, if I have questions about my rights as a participant in this research, or if I feel I have been placed at risk, I can contact the chair of the Human Research Review Committee, CIIS, 1453 Mission St. San Francisco, CA 94103.

13. I have read the above informed consent. The nature, demands and benefits of the project have been explained to me. I understand that I may withdraw my consent and discontinue participation at any time without any penalty or loss of benefit to myself. In signing this consent form, I am not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies. A copy of this consent will be given to me.

_____
Research Participant

_____
Date

I, Tanya Chase, the researcher, certify that I have explained to the above participant the nature, purpose and potential benefits associated with participation in this research study, and have answered all the questions that have been raised.

I have provided the participant with a copy of this signed consent form and the Participant Bill of Rights.

_____
Researcher

_____
Date

## APPENDIX D: CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

Your privacy with respect to information you disclose during participation in this study will be protected within the limits of the law. However, there are circumstances where a psychologist is required by law to reveal information, usually for the protection of a patient, research participant, or others. A report to the police department or to the appropriate protective agency is required in the following cases:

1. if, in the judgment of the psychologist, a patient or research participant becomes dangerous to himself or herself or others (or their property), and revealing the information is necessary to prevent the danger;
2. if there is suspected child abuse, in other words if a child under 16 has been a victim of crime or neglect;
3. if there is suspected elder abuse, in other words if a woman or man age 60 or older has been a victim of a crime or neglect.

If a report is required, the psychologist should discuss its contents and possible consequences with the patient or research participant.

I have read and understand the Confidentiality Statement:

_____ _____

Research Participant Date

_____ _____

Researcher Date

## APPENDIX E: BILL OF RIGHTS FOR PARTICIPANTS IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

As a participant in psychological research, you have the right to:

1. be treated with dignity and respect;
2. be given a clear description of the purpose of the study and what is expected of you as a participant;
3. be told of any benefits or risks to you that can be expected from participating in the study;
4. know the researcher's training and experience;
5. ask any questions you may have about the study;
6. decide to participate or not without any pressure from the researcher;
7. have your privacy protected within the limits of the law;
8. refuse to answer any research question, refuse to participate in any part of the study, or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative effects to you;
9. be given a description of the overall results of the study upon request, and
10. discuss any concerns or file a complaint about the study with the Human Research Review Committee, California Institute of Integral Studies, 1453 Mission St., San Francisco, CA, 94103.

I have read and understand the Bill of Rights for Participants in Psychological Research:

_____ _____

Research Participant Date

_____ _____

Researcher Date