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RESTORATIVE SUPERVISION: EXPERIENCES OF MID AND SENIOR-LEVEL PROFESSIONALS IN USING RESTORATIVE PRACTICES AS SUPERVISORS IN RESIDENTIAL LIFE

A Dissertation Presented

by

Brandin L. Howard

to

The Faculty of the Graduate College

of

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Specializing in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies

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ABSTRACT

Student affairs professionals often enter their first supervisory positions with little to no training on how to effectively supervise others (Calhoun & Nasser, 2012; Shupp & Arminio, 2012). As professionals advance to mid- and senior-level positions, they often inherit direct and indirect supervisory responsibilities over multiple levels of staff of which they must attend to the performance, development, and morale. How student affairs professionals supervise and build supervisory relationships is essential to the success of departments and can significantly impact the development, morale, and retention of student affairs professionals (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Davis & Cooper, 2017; Winston & Creamer, 1997). The goal of this three-article qualitative case-study dissertation was to understand how residential life staff experienced using restorative practices (RP) as part of their supervision style and the influence of RP on their supervision skill development. This study also explored the potential connections between restorative practices-based supervision and Winston and Creamer's (1997) synergistic supervision framework.

Study findings indicate the potential of RP to support supervision by providing a framework for proactively building supervisory relationships, fostering two-way communication, holding staff accountable and managing conflict, as well as balance their staff's emotions and feedback with the accomplishment of organizational goals. Findings also highlight several connections between the use of RP in a supervisory context and the synergistic supervision framework. Finally, the findings of this study highlighted several influences on the development of supervision competencies. These competencies included their communication skills, ability to hold staff accountable, self-reflection of their supervisory approaches, and increased emotional self-awareness and intelligence. This dissertation also outlines several implications for practice for administrators and staff considering incorporating RP into its organizational framework as well as recommendations for future research.

Keywords: *Restorative Practices, Supervision, Residential Life*

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DEDICATION

"But know this; the ones that love us never really leave us."

- **Sirius Black, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban**

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved family that may have left physically but truly haven't left me spiritually, especially on this doctoral journey:

My baby brother: Cameron Luke Crockett II
My Great-Grandmother "Nana": Verta Sue Jordan Howard
Aunt Romana "Puddin" Clark
Uncle: Capt. Andrew Donald Malloy
Uncle Ellis "Red" Moore
Lida "Seestah" Malloy

And to other family and friends no longer with us, that have played a role in helping me become the person I am today.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In student affairs, professionals often have to manage numerous relationships daily. These relations can include those with colleagues, supervisees, their supervisors, or campus partners. Supervisory relationships and the environments in which these relationships exist can impact a variety of different aspects of a professional's career from the motivation and passion they feel going into work each day to their overall career performance (Ferris et al., 2009). One of the essential relationships in the student affairs profession is the one between a supervisor and supervisee. Professionals should not underestimate the importance of effective supervision and supervisory relationships to the success of student affairs units as well as their staff. Although supervisory relationships play a significant role in the success of student affairs organizations, the question remains: how often do supervisors think about the intentionality in which they build and sustain these supervisory relationships, especially in residential life?

Residential Life departments can be one of the largest units at many institutions. Depending on the department or institution, there may be in-hall staff responsible for student wellbeing, programming, and conduct. Residential Life departments often house their business operations staff, who oversee finances or human resources operations, facilities who oversee the upkeep of the physical buildings, administrative support, and other functions that may fall under the residential experience umbrella (Fotis, 2013). Within these residential life functional areas, there are often multiple levels of supervision and oversight. For example, conventional structures for a residential life program include undergraduate and graduate-level paraprofessional staff (e.g., RAs, assistant hall directors), entry-level full-time staff (e.g., residence directors, hall

directors), mid-level (e.g., area coordinators, assistant directors, associate directors) and senior leadership (e.g., director, executive director) (Horvath & Stack, 2013).

Residential life, as a profession, may be seen as a microcosm for the overall student affairs profession and has been considered a gateway to student affairs for many professionals (Hoffman & Bresciani, 2012). Many of the competencies and roles developed through working in residential life often transfer to other student affairs administrative roles, which often makes residential life a 'training ground' for those seeking to progress in the field. Because residential life often serves as a starting point for many new student affairs professionals, examining the development of supervisory practices in residential life and the role restorative practices can play in enabling professionals to supervise synergistically may illuminate the applicability of a restorative approach to supervision and building supervisory relationships in other areas of student affairs.

How professional staff intentionally build and maintain supervisory relationships is vital to consider, especially in a relationship-oriented field like student affairs. A key element to the success of student affairs units in higher educational institutions is their ability to build and maintain strong professional working relationships with students, supervisees, colleagues, and supervisors (Ellis, 2009; Schwartz, 2017). Scholars such as Winston and Creamer (1997), Tull (2006), Shupp and Arminio (2012), among others, have produced scholarship denoting the importance of supervisory relationships in student affairs. Building supervisory relationships are so important that major student affairs national organizations, American College Personnel Association (ACPA) and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), have jointly

considered supervision as a function of the organizational and human resources (OHR) competency. Effective supervision and the OHR competency has been deemed as essential for student affairs practitioners to develop (ACPA & NASPA, 2015).

However, despite the importance of effective supervision and building professional relationships, student affairs professionals rarely receive training or intentional development on how to intentionally craft these relationships and how to effectively supervise others (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Tull, 2006). As professionals advance in their careers and assume different supervisory and leadership roles, departments seldom provide mid- and senior-level professionals with intentional training or development on effective approaches to supervising entry- and mid-level professionals or how to lead staff that may not be in their direct supervision line (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Mills 2000). A valuable outcome of professional development for many student affairs practitioners, especially those who seek to advance their careers in student affairs, is to develop their capacity as effective supervisors, while also building solid synergistic relationships in the process.

The synergistic supervision framework (Winston & Creamer, 1997), which is considered a model for effective supervision in student affairs, emphasizes jointly created relationships where supervisors and supervisees each have a responsibility for the development and success of the supervisory relationship. Jointly created supervisory relationships benefit employees and the overall organization. The synergistic supervision model is considered one of the most effective supervisory models in student affairs due to this emphasis on balancing organizational goals with the needs and goals of individual staff members (Davis & Cooper, 2017; Tull, 2006). Synergistic supervision also

highlights the importance of intentional supervisory relationship building through a holistic, systematic, and ongoing manner.

Building relationships with others, especially across supervisory lines, can be complicated, depending on the size of the institution. Smaller student affairs units such as student conduct may be able to foster strong working relationships within the unit more so than larger units. Smaller units might have an easier time creating strong working relationships due to office location proximity and more ongoing interactions with colleagues as opposed to larger units, such as residential life, where staff may be spread out among the different residence halls. A potential reason that larger units may struggle in building strong relationships across supervisory lines may be attributed to the fast-paced nature that can be present in a student affairs department such as residence life, which may present challenges in staff having time to concentrate on proactive relationship development. Additionally, the frequency of contact with other staff members, who are often spread around a college campus rather than consolidated into a single office area, can also be a contributing factor. Larger departments may also be more hierarchical with multiple layers than a smaller department. Within these various layers, the ability to work or interact closely and even daily with other staff members and supervisors across supervisory and sub-unit lines may be more limited than smaller departments.

Effective supervision is essential for the success of student affairs departments, including residential life. As the synergistic supervision model indicates, one critical component to effective supervision is a supervisor's ability to jointly build a strong, dual-focused, and holistic relationship with their supervisees (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, &

Chernow, 2000; Tull, 2006). Although the synergistic supervision model is a promising framework for helping supervisors balance institutional priorities with their staff's personal and professional goals, current literature does not fully outline the importance of the intentional consideration of inter-relational qualities, as well as the emotional aspects of supervision and leadership which can assist in building these critical relationships. Tangible guidance for implementing synergistic supervision practically is also missing. The restorative practices (RP) framework may be able to serve as a guide for applying the synergistic supervision model. RP and synergistic supervision share several parallels including a need for joint effort between supervisors and supervisees to build strong supervisory relationships, promoting two-way communication so that all parties can name affect and provide feedback, as well as being able to see staff holistically and consider their emotions and attitudes. RP is a framework where individuals can, proactively and responsively, engage with each other in order to build and capitalize on relationships to influence the behavior of others (Wachtel, 2015). Behavior is influenced when leaders are mindful about how to lead, building trust through inclusive decision-making practices, as well as creating an environment where individuals can name the impact that someone's actions may have on them and the resulting affect or emotions.

RP has already been introduced in some areas within the field of education. RP is primarily utilized and researched in elementary and secondary education, where it is used as a mechanism for classroom management as opposed to "zero-tolerance" policies to manage student behavior. (Bailie & Adamson, 2016). In higher education, restorative justice (RJ), which preceded and is now considered a subset of RP, is used primarily in student conduct and mediation processes at some institutions (Clark, 2014; Rinker &

Johnson, 2014; Wachtel 2013a). Outside of education, the criminal justice system in some locations has used RP and RJ to help bring victims and offenders together to help address the harm caused to victims by crime. In some cases, the judicial system may consider the outcome of restorative conversations during the sentencing phase (International Institute for Restorative Practices [IIRP] & Real Justice, 2005).

The nature of RP lends itself well to the supervisory and leadership aspects of residential life staff management and support because of its ability to be used both proactively and responsively (Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2016). RP circles and restorative questions, for example, can be used to both to build and maintain relationships as well as responsively when harm has occurred to a supervisory relationship due to expectations not being met. Beyond restorative circles (RP continuum), RP's three other components (social discipline window, fair process, understanding and managing emotions, and the RP continuum) may also be a useful mechanism for assisting mid- and senior-level professionals in developing their supervision and leadership skills by providing a solid framework for engaging and leading staff within their department. These supervisory skills can include engaging in collaborative decision-making processes to build trust with staff, developing a culture of two-way communication where staff feels the agency to provide honest feedback to supervisors when needed, and the ability to manage their emotions as well as emotions of their staff. The four components of RP will be explored in length in chapter two.

This qualitative case-study research seeks to add to the body of scholarship on supervisory practices in student affairs. Additionally, this study also seeks to contribute to the body of current research around the use of restorative practices in student affairs and

higher education, beyond student conduct and conflict mediation context. Although RP has valuable contributions and applications to other areas of student affairs and higher education, this study was based in a residential life context. Again, because residential life can sometimes be seen as a microcosm of the field of student affairs, the results of this study may also have transferability to other areas of the field.

The remainder of this introduction will further set the context of residential life departments in contemporary U.S. systems of higher education. Particular attention will be paid to the structural arrangements of personnel. The discussion of residential life organizations will precede a brief overview of restorative practices before outlining the research problem and the purpose of the study, which will include the guiding research questions. Chapter One will conclude with a discussion of the significance of this study.

1.1. Residence Life as an Organization

Residential life organizational structures can be complex, depending on the size of the department and institution. There is a massive difference in the residential life departmental structures between a small institution, such as the University of South Carolina (USC)-Beaufort, and a significantly larger institution, such as The Pennsylvania State University (PSU)- University Park. The University of South Carolina-Beaufort has approximately 1,025 beds on its campus. The staffing structure of USC-Beaufort residential life consists of a director, an associate director, two residence directors, and two coordinators for housing operations and scholars' programs (The University of South Carolina-Beaufort, N.D.). The organizational structure of USC-Beaufort is drastically different than PSU-University Park, which is a 14,500-bed operation. PSU residence life

leadership staff alone consists of three senior-level (director and senior associate directors) as well as ten mid-level professional staff members (assistant directors and area coordinators). These 13 individuals are joined by approximately 25 entry-level residential life coordinators, ten administrative services staff members, and one graduate assistant spread over four residential areas (The Pennsylvania State University, N.D.). The variance in how and why residential life departments are structured may be explained by the unique goals and needs of each department. Organizations have to be able to adapt their staffing and support structures to meet departmental and institutional goals (Bolman & Deal, 2013). Therefore, the oversight and management practices of the leaders who are responsible for the achievement of these goals become an essential component of organizational supervision and leadership.

At smaller institutions, the in-hall residence life staff (traditionally, residence directors/hall directors) may have collateral assignments in other offices on campus and report directly to the senior residential life or housing officer. Residence life staff will often report to another supervisor for their collateral assignment, who may be in a different department on campus (Fotis, 2013). Dual reporting structures can pose a challenge for staff, as they then have to build a robust supervisory relationship with multiple supervisors within a limited amount of time each week. At larger institutions, in-hall staff may report to a mid-level professional who has more years of full-time experience and an advanced degree. Their mid-level supervisors may also have a collateral assignment within the department. Regardless of size, residential life departments can be relatively vertical, so developing professional relationships across supervisory lines is important and worth studying further.

Mid- and senior-level staff designations may look different in an overall student affairs context than when narrowed down to residential life as a singular unit. In student affairs as a whole, mid-level professionals are often considered to be any position that is not entry-level or the senior student affairs officer (SSAO) (Young, 2007). In this definition, everyone from an assistant director to the director of a residential life department is technically considered a mid-level professional. However, for this study, the researcher used a narrowed focus on residential life staff positions. A modified version of the staffing model influenced by Horvath and Stack (2013) was utilized. This model classified supervisors who have supervisory responsibilities for entry-level professionals as well as oversight over a smaller functional area in residential life as "mid-level professionals." "Senior-level professionals" will be considered associate directors and directors within a residential life department who hold significantly higher levels of responsibility and oversight over a team or the department as well as supervise mid-level professionals.

1.2. Restorative Practices

Restorative practices (RP) is one potential vehicle for creating and maintaining relationships in an organizational context. RP is among other leadership theories such as the dyadic leadership model, which focuses on relationships through the scope of the level of reciprocity within those relationships (Drath, 2001; Sayles, 1964).). Another theory that RP parallels is the relational leadership theory which views leadership as a relational dialogue between leaders and individuals. Hosking (1988) and Dachler (1992) theories of relational constructionism has similarities to RP, in which these theories view

leadership as a process and not specific actions. Although RP may have areas of overlap with these models, it also has notable differences. Mainly, RP is predicated on the belief that strong relationships and communities are built by establishing trust, mutual goodwill, and communication between individuals (Wachtel, 2013a). Additionally, the RP model has several parallels to the synergistic supervision model due to its emphasis on a joint effort between individuals using consistent, two-way communication to make a relationship work (Winston & Creamer, 1997). The fundamental hypothesis of RP is that "human beings are happier, healthier, more productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when people in positions of authority do things with them rather than to them or for them" (Wachtel, 2005, p. 87). Where RP differs from synergistic supervision is its focus on the building of relationships and managing emotions as a function of leadership while synergistic supervision is more focused on organizational and departmental goals and how they balance with the needs and competency development of supervisees (Tull, 2006).

RP encourages individuals to consider how they lead, engage with others to develop trust, and understand the emotions and affect of those they are leading, as well as how their own emotions play a role within staff dynamics (Miller & Olstad, 2012). RP also provides various methods to apply these components professionally, which may prove useful for supervisors. The scholarship on restorative practices is still relatively limited, especially in higher educational contexts (Miller & Olstad, 2012; Pointer, 2018; Whitworth, 2016). A number of scholars have researched the use of RP in K-12 education, criminal justice, and social work (Bailie & Anderson, 2016; Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2015; Hopkins, 2011; Karp & Allena, 2004; McCluskey et

al., 2008; Zehr, 2005). Although the conceptualizations may be similar, each of these scholars has particular views or vernacular regarding how they discuss the use of RP and RJ. Although there are several RP scholars to examine further, this study will be based primarily on Wachtel's and the International Institute for Restorative Practices' (IIRP) conceptualization of restorative practices framework. The IIRP conceptualization of RP was selected as the foundational model for this study due to the institute's role in assisting Verdis University (VU) (pseudonym) residential life, which serves as the research site for this study, with their development and initial implementation of the restorative practices model as a department.

1.3. Research Problem

Residential life departments rely heavily on effective supervision to ensure their often vast and intricate organizational staffing structures can operate smoothly because of the multi-faceted missions of many residential life departments in the United States. There is a wealth of literature, in and outside of student affairs, that elude to the importance of supervisory relationships on multiple facets of organizational success, employee wellbeing and retention, and professional environment (Horrocks & Smaby, 2006; McGraw, 2011; McNair, 2011; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). Specifically, supervisory relationships can impact the interpersonal development of staff (full-time and paraprofessional), their morale, and the overall culture of an organization. However, despite the importance of supervision, professional staff in student affairs often assume supervisory positions with little intentional instruction, training, or guidance on how to supervise effectively (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). As

entry-level professionals advance in their careers and assume mid-level positions, they too seldom receive management training or intentional development in supervising entry-level professionals (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Mills 2000).

Consequently, the lack of attention on the intentional development of supervisory skills, as well as the belief that supervision is an intrinsic practice (Lamb, et al., 2017), can create organizational challenges. Without effective supervision, staff are not adequately managed, motived, or developed to achieve intuitional and departmental goals. Ineffective supervision also affects overall morale and the development of staff. One reason staff morale and development may be impacted is because while student affairs professionals are learning how to supervise their staff, they may not be as effective in their supervision approach and even potentially harmful as they experiment with various supervision approaches. Inadequate supervision has been known to present challenges to the retention of student affairs professionals (Davidson, 2012; Horrocks & Smaby, 2006).

1.4. Purpose of the Study

Through a qualitative case-study research design, this study examined the use of RP in the residential life department at Verdis University (VU). VU is a mid-sized public institution in the Northeastern part of the U.S. that has incorporated restorative practices into the core of how they navigate as a department since 2009 (Hiraldo & Howard, 2019). I was particularly interested in examining the use of RP as a part of how mid- and senior-level professionals supervise staff in residential life. This study was guided by one central

question: *How did mid- and senior-level professionals experience applying a restorative approach to their supervision style in residential life?* Three areas of focus were:

- How do mid- and senior-level residential life professionals conceptualize the role of and apply restorative practices as supervisors?
- What evidence of synergistic supervision exists in supervisors' utilization of restorative practices in residence life?
- What evidence of RP's impact on the supervisory skill development of mid- and senior-level supervisors emerges from the data that suggests that further study is warranted?

This study included a review of departmental documents that helped to contextualize, in part, how VU mid- and senior-level residential life professionals used RP as part of their supervisory approach. Individual semi-structured interviews with mid- and senior-level supervisors were conducted to obtain perspectives of staff members engaged in the use of RP. As VU university approaches the one-decade mark of RP as a part of the department's culture, this study presents an opportunity to reflect on the impact this framework has had in Residential Life.

1.5. Significance

Student affairs practitioners and scholars have noted the importance of effective supervision within the field. Supervision is especially important given the potential for interpersonal and professional development that exists when staff is supervised effectively. From an organizational standpoint, how supervisory relationships are built and the attitudes and feelings about one's work environment are just as important as the

work being done in the organization. Supervisory relationship plays a significant role in staff morale (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Winston & Creamer, 1997). Bolman and Deal (2013) theorized that when organizations are examined through a human resource lens, a synergistic relationship between balancing the needs of the organization and the individuals within the organization is essential to staff morale and retention. Specifically, they noted that "a good fit benefit both. Individuals find satisfying work, and organizations get the talent and energy they need to succeed" (p. 117). Therefore, it can be surmised that studying the use of RP in a supervisory context is important, as it may provide valuable insight and a robust framework for implementing effective supervision. This study’s findings may futuristically provide not only a foundational tool for effective supervision in student affairs but also a framework for training new professionals on how to supervise.

As indicated earlier, this study seeks to contribute to the body of scholarship around supervision as well as the use of restorative practices in student affairs. Again, the current literature around the use of restorative practices in higher education and student affairs is concentrated in the use of restorative justice, a subset of restorative practices (Wachtel, 2013a), and the scholarship around supervision in student affairs is also relatively limited. This study will be one of the few studies on the use of RP in residential life, joining previous studies by Whitworth (2016) and Pointer (2018), for example. Research on RP's potential application in student affairs is also timely for the field, given the increasing numbers of residential life departments beginning to incorporate the use of RP within their departments in various ways. Some notable examples of this, excluding the host institution, include the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, Hampshire

College, Vassar College, and the University of Michigan (University of Maryland Baltimore County Residential Life, n.d.; Hampshire College Residence Life and Housing, n.d.; Vassar College Office of Residence Life, n.d.; & University of Michigan Housing, n.d.).

Findings from this study can assist residential life and student affairs departments in understanding aspects of RP and how to leverage the RP framework to achieve many of the same outcomes as the synergistic supervision mode. The RP model may be able to serve as a framework for developing and training supervisors in proactively developing and maintaining trusting supervisory relationships. Additionally, these findings may also guide mid- and senior-level professionals in developing or tweaking their supervisory style, which could aid in their staff's retention and attrition into the field. Because supervision is vital at all levels, the findings of this study may also assist entry-level professionals in the development of their supervisory approach and philosophy. As many entry-level professionals advance into their first post-graduate school positions without formal supervision training, this study may give these individuals one potential guideline to develop their approach to supervision. It may also provide new supervisors with a way to articulate a synergistic supervisory philosophy, especially if their goal is to advance to mid- and senior-level positions in student affairs.

This dissertation study presents a review of relevant literature, including conceptual and theoretical frameworks, as well as an overview of the methodology used for this study. Findings are discussed in length through three journal articles written for submission to student affairs and higher education academic journals. These articles, which make up the basis of chapter four, outline findings centered around: how

professionals used RP as a part of their supervisory style; indicators of synergistic supervision present in participant accounts of how they supervised restoratively; and, evidence of RP's impact on the development of supervision skills. This dissertation then concludes with implications for research and practice in chapter five.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Residential life departments often rely on effective supervision, among other things, to attend to the motivation and productivity of their employees, which allows for the organization to be able to achieve its goals effectively and efficiently. The synergistic supervision framework highlights the importance of effective supervision and what it consists of but often leaves out how to tangibly achieve the desired outcomes. Restorative practices (RP) may be a mechanism that organizational leaders can leverage to foster staff buy-in and motivation while also ensuring the achievement of departmental goals. This study examined the residential life department at Verdis University (VU), a mid-sized public institution in the Northeastern United States. VU residential life has incorporated RP into the core of how they build and maintain residence hall communities as well as how they engage with each other as a department since the fall of 2009 (Hiraldo & Howard, 2019). The success of VU residential life's use of RP as a department has led to the incorporation of RP at the student affairs division level. Given VU residential life's highly developed restorative approaches to community development, supervision, and engagement, this study sought to understand the experiences of mid- and senior-level professionals in supervising restoratively.

The review of literature will delve into the historical and contemporary backgrounds of residential life as a field, as well as a discussion around various general organizational and staffing models. Next, I discuss middle- and senior-level positions in student affairs, including needed competencies and challenges of these positions. Afterward, I review the Restorative Practices framework at length, including the historical background of RP, as well as some ways in which RP is currently used in

student affairs and residential communities. I conclude with a conceptual framework that will serve as a roadmap for this case-study research.

2.1: Residential Life

Housing and Residential Life departments have been a part of the higher educational landscape since the late 19th century (Palmer, Broido, & Campbell, 2008). Residential life has played a pivotal role to students and in the accomplishment of institutional missions. In order to best understand the importance of supervision in residential life, scholars and practitioners must understand residential life as an entity. This section outlines the history of residential life in the higher educational landscape as well as modern-day residential life department mission, goals, and staffing patterns.

2.1.1: History of Residential Life

Residential life's presence in the United States higher education landscape extends for centuries, dating back to the colonial era. Having adopted a variation of the Oxford model of higher education (Boone, Davison, & Bauman, 2016), colleges and universities in the U.S. were focused on the character development and conduct of their students in addition to academic rigor. Higher educational institutions during this time were so concerned with student conduct that they established the 'in-loco parentis' philosophy to conduct, which in Latin means 'in the place of the parent.' With in-loco parentis, faculty at these higher educational institutions assumed a quasi-parental role for their students. Faculty had oversight and the authority to strictly manage student conduct, implement punishment for misbehavior, and ensure overall student health and wellbeing (Crowley, 1934; Long, 2012; Upcraft & Pilato, 1982).

Due to the institutional priorities around student conduct during this period, colleges and universities also established on-campus dormitories to allow the faculty to monitor student conduct in and outside of the classroom (Leonard, 1956; Long, 2012). Faculty members, in addition to teaching, often lived in the dormitories alongside the students, monitoring and addressing improper behavior consistently. Outside of policy enforcement, character development, and behavior monitoring perspectives, early colleges and universities viewed dormitories as an opportunity for interpersonal development. Around this time, Rudolph (1965) crafted what became known as the "dormitory rationale," which defended the concept of dormitories. The dormitory rationale cited that dorms on college campuses created a collective experience for White male college students, which enabled them to develop into men. Early dormitories provided an environment that fostered a sense of responsibility for young men, in part, because of evening conversations held with faculty geared towards promoting interpersonal and intellectual development. Over time, the 'dormitory rationale' continued to be the accepted perspective as early residential life programs continued to expand (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). Although the full potential of residential living may not have been fully realized at this time, the dormitory rationale may have provided much of the framework for many modern-day residential life departments' philosophies around staffing commitment to the halls' serving as an environment conducive to promoting interpersonal development for students.

Towards the turn of the 20th century, higher education continued to expand to include women, African American students, as well as an increased student veteran population due to the increase of G.I. Bill recipients (Schroeder & Mable, 1994; Upcraft

& Pilato, 1982). The increasing student enrollment, as well as overall changes in student demographics, created an increased need for on-campus residential facilities to house students while they were enrolled in school. As a result, there was also an increased need for staff who could devote time to monitor student behavior and development (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). As faculty began to move away from the role of monitoring student behavior, character development, and punishment to focus on their teaching and scholarship, institutions sought out professional staff to oversee the out-of-classroom residence hall experience. Early residence life staff members were often elderly housemothers, former football coaches, retired military personnel, and other staff who had a background in discipline and working with students (Hardee, 1964). These coaches and housemothers can be considered the beginning of the modern-day Resident Director position. We also begin to see more extensive use of students working in the halls with professional staff members to help supervise students as the first resident advisor type position, which began to take shape towards the 1960s (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982).

The 1960s saw a significant shift in on-campus housing philosophy at many colleges and universities. Students began to rebel against the concept of in-loco parentis and sought changes in how university staff treated them as students (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). University housing staff began to move away from strict policy enforcement and character development to incorporate a more considerable emphasis on initiatives that advanced the holistic development of students. The shift in residential philosophy and priorities also necessitated a different staffing model for housing systems. Universities moved away from hiring staff whose background and focus was in discipline and began to employ professional residence educators. Early residence educators helped to

coordinate programs and support services for students and had training in student affairs and services (Frederiksen, 1993; Upcraft & Pilato, 1982). The shift in student affairs philosophy to a focus on student learning and development helped to move residential life departments towards the model seen in contemporary residential life programs.

2.1.2: Contemporary Residential Life

Residential life departments have undergone a massive evolution since their establishment, especially in terms of departmental staffing patterns, departmental goals and priorities, as well as how they contribute to the overall mission of the institution. Although policy enforcement and behavior management (primarily within the halls) has remained a part of residential life's portfolio, residential life has become more of a robust critical element of the college student experience. Residential life departments, at a minimum, provide students with a place to sleep and feel safe outside of classes (Horvath & Stack, 2013). However, most residential life departments oversee their own facilities management to address the maintenance of student public and private space, provide for programming and community development activities (Blimling, 2010), and sometimes provide food and dining services.

Not only have residential life departments grown in their responsibilities for student development, comfort, and safety, they have also become a strategic partner for the broader university community. Outside of providing attractive programs and facilities for students, residential life departments also contribute to institutional student recruitment and retention goals. Residential life programs and the amenities, facilities, and community programs they offer have become one of the main points of consideration for prospective students when deciding which institution to attend (Grandner &

Glowacki, 2013). Residential life departments also play a critical role in student recruitment and retention through offering and guaranteeing on-campus housing for up to four years, which assist students in ensuring they have somewhere to live while in school. Additionally, many institutions provide updated, modern, and technologically enhanced facilities as a recruitment tool. Residential life also contributes to the retention of students through creating systems of support for students within the halls. Residential systems of support include connections with peers to serve in advising and mentorship capacities (e.g., Resident Advisors, Community Assistants), as well as assigning students in communities with their peers that hold similar academic or topical interests together to assist students in making meaningful connections with neighbors and peers (Grandner & Glowacki, 2013).

Beyond a recruitment and retention aid, modern residential life departments are a crucial partner for other departments on campus. The *Student Personnel Point of View* in 1937 and 1949 helped to solidify residential life's role and responsibility in helping to create collaborative relationships with other units, primarily those that most benefit students (Payne-Kirchmeier, 2013). Some of these critical partnerships include university police, environmental health and safety, student conduct, student health and counseling/wellness centers, student unions, dining services, faculty, academic units, human resources, career resource centers, and many more (Schmidt & Evans, 2013). Cross-campus collaborations often enable residential life programs to develop the resiliency to adapt to the ever-changing student population quickly by collaborating to connect residential students to campus partners instead of replicating services in-house.

Residential life's commitment to the interpersonal development of college

students have also increased from previous models of on-campus housing. Residence halls have moved from the dormitory model, which was geared towards student accountability and providing students a place to sleep and store their belongings to a model where residential life plays a crucial role in the out-of-classroom experience for students (Horvath & Stack, 2013). Residential programming, intentional community development, and conflict management all have many interpersonal development opportunities for undergraduate students (Blimling, 2010) and are all present in the contemporary residential experience. Because of these interpersonal development opportunities, the residence hall environment has become some of the most significant areas on-campus for students to continue to learn and grow regarding identity development, character growth, working with others, among other areas.

Seminal works around student assessment and learning, including *Learning Reconsidered*, and *Learning Reconsidered 2,* discuss at length student affairs staffs' role in the overall development of learning outcomes for students, often through a co-curricular model. Some of these potential learning outcomes can range from academic and cognitive outcomes such as "learning how to learn, how to distinguish good information from bad, and how to work with others" to interpersonal and independence outcomes like "living with others who are different, understanding their responsibility as being a part of a community, and practical life skills" (Grandner & Glowacki, 2013, p. 336). Since higher education has identified residence halls as one of the significant hubs of student development and retention, residential life staff should be prepared for these roles and the commitment required in providing these services. Furthermore, residential staff should be proficient in building a general sense of community for students, a skill

that staff develops through intentional training and guidance (Grandner & Glowacki, 2013; Horvath & Stack, 2013). Running a housing enterprise requires coordination of resources, staffing, and finances to maximize its positive impact on the student experience and the overall institution.

2.1.3: Residential Life Staffing

As residential life philosophies evolve, the human, financial, and resource capital needed to operate these large departments successfully must also develop. Residential life staff members have become significant contributors to the educational mission of their institutions. Due to the importance of their roles, residential life staff must be trained, supervised, and evaluated effectively to fulfill the departmental mission, which can often come at a substantial financial cost (Horvath & Stack, 2013). Although it is not the only factor, staffing costs play a considerable role in influencing staffing patterns of a department to ensure that students are safe in healthy and appropriately developed communities, which assist the institution in meeting its academic mission. The variations in staff availability, costs, and philosophies of individual departments create variances in residential life departmental structures, which are not consistent among institutions. However, there is a seemingly consistent staffing pattern among departments regarding the types of staff within the department (see Figure 1). Many departmental staff teams consist of their undergraduate and graduate student staff base, entry-level professionals, mid-level professionals, and senior-level professionals who often oversee large segments of the department or the department in its entirety.

Figure 1: Traditional staffing model of residential life departments. This figure highlights five basic levels of residential life staff (Horvath & Stack, 2013).

Undergraduate Student Staff/Resident Advisors. The largest group of residential life staff members in a department tends to be its undergraduate staff members. The undergraduate student group can include resident advisors and other comparable positions, as well as student desk workers, peer mentors, or programming assistants. Undergraduate students tend to be the largest staff group in most residential life departments but have the least responsibility or authority (Horvath & Stack, 2013; Wilson, 2017). Resident Advisor (RA) positions may be referred to by other names such as 'Resident Assistant' or 'Community Assistant/Advisor.' Depending on the department, the RAs' level of experience and length in the position may be factored into their roles where they advance into higher leadership roles, including 'Head Resident' or 'Senior Resident Advisor' positions (Horvath & Stack, 2013).

RA positions are traditionally held by undergraduate students who have been at their institution for at least one semester (Schaller & Wagner, 2007). RAs often have responsibilities to their residential communities for serving on a duty rotation for crisis management, student support, policy enforcement, serving as a referral agent,

programming responsibilities, mediating conflict, building community, and demonstrating helping skills (Benjamin & Davis, 2016; Blimling, 2010; Horvath & Stack, 2013). Over time, the RA position has become one of great importance regarding supporting the residential community and students. Due to the RA's positionality within the department, and their status as undergraduate students, the level of authority RAs hold is minimal. Through a lens of organizational theory, RAs are often responsible for carrying out the needs and goals of the department due to their more consistent and direct interface with their communities and residents and less responsible for giving directives to staff (Bolman & Deal, 2013; Horvath & Stack, 2013).

Graduate Student Staff. Graduate students are often advanced degree-seeking students who are pursuing degrees in higher education, student affairs, counseling, or other master's and doctoral programs. For many students who are graduate student staff, residential life positions are often considered an assistantship in which they work in residential life on a limited basis in positions that are either administrative or include teaching in exchange for room and board, stipend, or depending on the institution, full or partial tuition remission (Horvath & Stack, 2013; White & Nonnamaker, 2011). These residential life assistantships can have different variations, even within the same department.

In some departments, graduate assistants serve as full hall directors where they are responsible for RA supervision, oversee conduct adjudication for their communities, and serve on a duty rotation with other graduate students and professionals (Horvath & Stack, 2013). In the graduate hall director model, graduate students may oversee the entire building on their own and therefore get autonomous experience in managing a

residence hall. Another form of graduate role in residence life is assistant hall directors, where graduate students may work in larger communities or more complex communities but may not have complete oversight over the community and report to a master's level professional. In the assistant hall director role, the overall building administrative responsibilities may be split between the graduate and full-time profession, where the graduate student may oversee one or two functional areas or processes (e.g., programming initiatives, advising hall council). Other graduate assistant positions may encompass specialized areas within the department, such as RA training and development, RA recruitment and selection, or student leadership initiatives.

Entry-Level Professionals. Entry-level residential life positions are often an entry point into professional student affairs work for many graduates from student affairs and higher education programs. Entry-level residential life positions may be considered a general starting point for student affairs, in part, because of the versatility of the hall director/residence director-type positions to assist in developing transferrable skills that apply to other areas in the field (Frederiksen, 1993). Residence Directors (RDs), and other similarly named positions, are considered entry-level professional positions in residential life departments. The precise title can vary based on the institution, but in most cases, the responsibilities are comparable. The increasing complexity of the RD role has caused shifts in the various qualifications required for the position. At most institutions, the RD position typically requires candidates to obtain a master's degree in student affairs administration, higher education, counseling, or a similar field (Horvath & Stack, 2013). Many RDs enter the position as their first full-time position upon completion of a graduate program. However, a master's degree is not a requirement for

the RD position at all institutions. Some smaller colleges and universities may require RDs to hold only a bachelor's degree with a predetermined number of student affairs/residential life.

Traditionally, the RD position has responsibility for assisting in building and maintaining communities within their specific hall(s). Community maintenance is often performed through overseeing community development programming, advancing and promoting diversity and inclusion, as well as engaging with the students within their communities in a variety of ways such as one-on-one interactions or community meetings (Belch & Mueller, 2003). Elements of the role are also reminiscent of the earliest dorm mothers and faculty of the Colonial era (Horvath & Stack, 2013). For example, RDs are often responsible for serving as a referral agent, providing basic counseling services for students in distress, and connecting them to resources such as campus counseling and psychiatry or wellness offices. These responsibilities make collaborative relationships with campus partners a necessity (Horvath & Stack, 2013; Schmidt & Evans, 2013). Additionally, RDs often have responsibilities for assisting in enforcing residential and university policy by referring students to the student conduct process. RDs may also have some duties in adjudicating lower-level student conduct cases. The RD position is traditionally a live-in position with housing provided within area of responsibility and, similar to RAs, a requirement to serve on an on-call duty rotation (Belch & Mueller, 2003; Blimling, 2010; Horvath & Stack, 2013).

One of the significant roles of the RD position is the supervision of undergraduate and in some cases, graduate staff. Supervision includes overseeing RA programming, their overall performance, and ensuring that they fulfill the responsibilities of the position

while also providing adequate support (Horvath & Stack, 2013). Horvath and Stack (2013) noted “a residence director may supervise up to 30 paraprofessionals (resident assistants and additional student staff members (desk employees, diversity advocates, and academic peer mentors) who may report directly to the residence director” (p. 16).

Mid- and Senior-Level Professionals. Although they may be the smallest group in a traditional residential life structure, mid- and senior-level professionals often carry the most responsibility and influence over the general direction and leadership of the department. Because these positions are critical to the overall success of their units, the ability to supervise effectively is even more crucial for mid- and senior-level professionals. In residential life, mid-level professionals (e.g., assistant directors, area coordinators) often have responsibilities for supervising a segment of the residential campus (i.e., more than one building) and also manage other professional staff members (Fotis, 2013). Mid-level staff members also typically have a collateral assignment overseeing a specific task or function within the department. Some examples include managing professional or student staff recruitment and training, student conduct, residence hall association/hall council oversight, or residential curriculum and assessment. Senior-level professionals in residential life are often associate directors, directors, executive directors, or similarly named types of positions. Senior-level professionals traditionally have the most experience within the residential life organization and may have oversight over a critical component of the department, such as an entire team.

Because of their significant roles in setting the direction of the department and their overall supervisory responsibilities, mid- and senior-level residential life staff

members must demonstrate the ability to build relationships, work with a wide variety of staff, collaborate with campus partners, execute a budget, and navigate departmental as well as institutional politics (Fotis, 2013). Additionally, mid- and senior-level professionals have to be able to navigate working with a broader variety of staff within the department, even those beyond their direct reporting lines.

2.2: Student Affairs Mid- and Senior-level Staff

The definition of what “mid-level” and “senior-level professionals” are, as highlighted in Figure 1, is different than the conceptualizations of these roles in the broader student affairs context. Professionals in student affairs whose positions lie between the entry-level and the senior student affairs officer (SSAO) are considered to be ‘mid-level’ positions (Young, 2007). The term ‘mid-level’ can cover a wide range of roles each with different responsibilities, some of which include supervision of other mid-level professionals. To best understand how mid- and senior-level leaders create impact and hold varying levels of influence within their departments, it is important to understand the role of the middle manager, in and of itself.

Formally, mid-level professionals are defined as individuals who typically have direct oversight over at least one student affairs functional area or supervise at least one professional staff member (Tyrell, 2014). In residential life, this is traditionally assistant and associate directors (or similar roles) as well as the director or executive director. Because middle management spans a significant range of student affairs functions, there is not a consistent or precise understanding of the characteristics or needs that are special to mid-level professionals (Rosser, 2004; Tyrell, 2014). Chernow, Cooper, and Winston

(2003) identified two levels of middle management professionals in student affairs: middle and advanced mid-level professionals. Advanced mid-level professionals are thought of as individuals directly reporting to the SSAO, while middle mid-level professionals are typically one or more levels away from the SSAO, positionally. In this definition, a residential life director or executive director would be classified as an advanced mid-level position while the associate and assistant directors would be considered middle mid-level professionals.

2.2.1: Mid-Level Professionals

Because of the influential role that mid-level professionals play, these individuals must have specific competencies to navigate their roles successfully as well as influence positive change and staff performance. Saunders and Cooper (1999) conducted a survey of SSAOs on their perspectives on the crucial skills and traits successful mid-level professionals exhibit. These competencies included the ability to manage personnel, resolve interpersonal conflicts that arise, build cohesive working teams, the collaborate with others, effectively make decisions, and generate buy-in from staff. Staff management skills, while relevant and important for any supervisor in student affairs, are skills that were explicitly identified as being essential for mid-level professionals, who often play an advanced leadership role within the overall organization (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009).

However, while there are identified competencies that are important for mid-level professionals to possess, it is not guaranteed that new mid-level professionals will enter their role in firm possession of these skillsets. Individual mid-level professionals often begin their roles with varying levels of supervision experience, leadership experience, or

decision-making ability (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009). Depending on the planned or unplanned training and ongoing professional development opportunities presented to them in their entry-level roles, a professional staff member may be highly prepared for a new mid-level position while others may not. Current research and scholarship on mid-level professionals indicates that professionals often are offered very little in the way of orientation, intentional training, or development geared specifically for their roles and are often responsible for facilitating their professional development (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Mills 2000).

In the majority of current literature, mid-level positions tend to be complex to navigate in many student affairs departments. This complexity may be attributed to mid-level professionals' responsibility for translating and implementing organizational goals and directives from higher-level student affairs officers to front-line professionals. They are simultaneously responsible for supporting and supervising said front-line employees in their implementation of the organization's goals and directives, while also communicating front-line staff concerns and issues upwards and representing them to higher administration (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Wilson, Liddell, Hirschy, & Pasquesi, 2016). Given their role as a bridge between upper management and entry-level professionals, mid-level professionals can be highly influential within an organization in terms of promoting collaboration and organizational change (Wilson et al., 2016). Additionally, as Taylor (2007) noted, mid-level professionals have access to see many of the decision-making processes occurring above them while also being in touch with the ground level issues and perspectives. Although this is an important role, navigating

between frontline staff and higher administration can still be challenging for many mid-level professionals (Cooper & Boice-Pardee, 2011).

Another challenge many mid-level professionals can face is navigating the expectations around producing departmental and organizational results. Many individuals in this role are expected to get results from their staff or those they lead, without using authoritarian approaches or methods (Tyrell, 2014). As highlighted earlier, the ability to garner buy-in from those they are responsible for is essential. However, a barrier to being able to generate buy-in or holding supervisees accountable for outcomes is sometimes confusion or uncertainty around oversight and "authoritative reach" (Cooper & Boice-Pardee, 2011). The challenge sometimes lies in being responsible for producing results or managing staff without having clear boundaries or understanding around what decisions they have the authority to make, what are the boundaries of their administrative or supervisory oversight (i.e., to what extent can they give and enforce a directive before having to work with higher-level professionals), and how much autonomy they have over how those outcomes are achieved. Depending on where a mid-level professional may fall within the overall organizational structure, the autonomy to make decisions or hold staff accountable varies (e.g., does an assistant director have the autonomy to make an RA staffing decision without oversight from the associate director?).

2.2.2: Senior-Level Residence Life Professionals

Senior-level professionals in student affairs organizations have touchpoints in many areas within their department and can be influential in the department's overall success and accomplishment of its goals. Additionally, these professionals guide the department's direction in its mission to serve and support undergraduate students.

According to Fotis (2013), senior-level residential life staff members are individuals who typically oversee a more substantial area within the department or organization. This oversight can include significant responsibilities for the leadership and supervision of larger teams of staff in larger units of the department, such as residential education or facilities operations. This group of professionals also includes the individuals who oversee the department as a whole (e.g., Directors, Executive Directors) and have direct and indirect supervisory oversight of all staff within the department.

Many of the competencies needed by senior-level residence life professionals mirror those of mid- and entry-level professionals, except a higher proficiency is often required (Porter-Roberts, 2013). For example, the capacity needed to manage a single programming budget at the hall director level may not be as high as the capacity required for managing the whole departmental budget at the director level. Senior-level professionals have to not only be able to operate at a higher level to represent and manage their department, but they also have to be able to guide the training and development of their staff. In 1990, Dunkel and Schreiber developed a list of 57 competencies required of senior-level housing officers. These ranged from interpersonal communication skills to the ability to motivate staff. Porter (2005) organized these 57 competencies into five categories, which were ranked in order of importance for senior-level professionals: Operational, Administrative, Interpersonal, Leadership, and Conceptual competencies. Operational competency involves understanding the technical and procedural aspects of their roles (Sandwith, 1993), a professional's ability to do the job they have. Administrative competency refers to the ability to manage staff hiring, orientation, and training, through evaluation and discipline. Interpersonal competence is the ability to

manage the relational aspects of the work. Leaders must have proficiency in building relationships and interacting with a variety of staff, students, and parents. Leadership capacity refers to the ability to leverage administrative, operational, and interpersonal capabilities to be in service of the institution as well as students and includes the ability to motivate others, develop a culture of trust among staff and leaders, as well as to lead by example (Porter-Roberts, 2013; Sandwith, 1993). Finally, conceptual competencies involve a senior-level professional's ability to see the bigger picture and how different aspects of their department are interconnected. This ability allows senior-level professionals to understand how changes to one area, for example, may impact other areas of the department.

2.3: Synergistic Supervision and Other Supervisory Models

With myriad responsibilities, approaches, and implications to supervision, it may be challenging to determine a viable strategy for how to supervise. Given the prevalence of numerous individual supervision styles, it is understandable that supervision is something that is not adequately trained for or discussed (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013). Although there are numerous supervision models, I explore in depth the supervisory model identified by Winston and Creamer (1997) not only because of its similarities with the RP social discipline window (also explained later) but also because of synergistic supervision's emphasis on collaborative supervisory relationship building, attendance to the morale of staff, and promotion of effective supervisory communication which makes this framework a highly effective model for supervision in student affairs (Davis & Cooper, 2016; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). Winston and Creamer outlined four

supervisory approaches: authoritarian, laissez-faire, companionable, and synergistic supervision.

2.3.1: Authoritarian Supervision

The authoritarian supervision style is a highly rule-based, punitive, micro-managerial supervision approach that is very hierarchical. An underlying viewpoint of authoritarian supervisors is that they must maintain consistent oversight or management of their staff due to the staff's inability to carry out their roles or because they are untrustworthy and immature (Winston & Creamer, 1997). This supervision style is, according to Scheuermann (2011), power-based and tends to be what most individuals think about when asked to talk about supervision. Furthermore, individuals also tend to equate supervision to being held accountable for performance or behavioral issues, and thus supervision is seen as something done *to* staff members (Winston & Creamer, 1998). Many individuals may not automatically think of supervision as a collaborative activity or more than being held accountable for making sure their work is completed.

2.3.2: Laissez-faire

Laissez-faire approaches to supervision are often more hands-off than authoritarian supervision. Winston and Creamer (1997) discussed that supervisors who prescribe to this supervisory style prefer to “allow staff members the freedom to use their talents and skills in accomplishing job responsibilities” as well as “hire good people and then get out of their way” (p. 195). Barnes (2009) eluded to this supervision style as the preferred style of Generation Z students who desire an environment that provides them the autonomy to develop good ideas and give results without hands-on oversight from their supervisors. Again, with this supervisory style, direct supervision tends to be

reserved for accountability conversations to address behavioral or performance issues and creates an environment where supervisees try to avoid supervision (Winston & Creamer, 1998). This supervision style still often lacks the ongoing professional development, boundary setting, and continuing support of supervisees that are often needed for staff to persist and excel in the field.

2.3.3: Companionable Supervision

While authoritarian supervision relies on power and authority, companionable supervision is an entirely permissive form of supervision that concentrates on friendship and relationships over anything else. In this model, supervisors focus on being friends with supervisees and seek to avoid any form of conflict within the supervisory relationship (Winston & Creamer, 1997). Conflict avoidant behavior in supervision often means that supervisors avoid holding supervisees accountable. Conflict avoidant behavior can also mean a lack of active attention to their staffs' professional development because of the supervisor's preference of friendship with their supervisee outweighs their willingness to hold their staff accountable and have intentional developmental conversations. Although developing a strong relationship with supervisees is essential in the supervisory context, dynamics in which friendship is prioritized over supervision have proven to be detrimental to the development of supervisees. The detriment to staff development is due to its prohibitive effects on skill development through hard conversations and accountability (Barham & Winston, 2006).

2.3.4: Synergistic Supervision

Synergistic supervision is the fourth supervisory model outlined by Winston and Creamer (1997). Synergistic supervision is regarded as the most effective model in

student affairs because of its emphasis on supervisors and supervisees working to create a robust supervisory relationship (Davis & Cooper, 2016; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). This strong supervisory relationship includes dually focusing on the unit's goals as well as the supervisee's professional development, needs, and goals (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Winston & Creamer, 1998). Additionally, supervision in this model is seen as a joint effort and not as something “done to staff but rather a cooperative activity in which each party has an important contribution” (Winston & Creamer, 1997).

The strength of the supervisor-supervisee relationship is important to the professional development that effective supervision provides (Bryan & Schwartz, 1998). Shupp and Arminio (2012) defined synergistic supervision as “a process designed to support employees as they promote the goals of their organization and advance their leadership development” (p. 160). Synergistic supervision is less of a top-down authoritarian approach, but a collaborative approach between supervisors and supervisees. Synergistic supervision achieves a level of mutual benefit between the organization and its staff members through nine characteristics. I review of each of these below.

In synergistic supervision, supervisees and supervisors work together to create a supervisory relationship (*joint effort*) where organizational and personal needs and goals are prioritized (*dual focus*). Synergistic supervisors develop supervisees in areas of interpersonal development, professional competencies, and career goals (*holism*), focusing specifically on the development of skills and competencies required for supervisees to successfully navigate their current roles and departments (*focus on*

competence). Supervision is not solely about the accomplishment of tasks or achievement of a specific level of performance. Supervision is also about how supervisees are growing in their roles (*growth orientation*), which is facilitated through the establishment of goal markers that are reviewed periodically throughout the supervisory relationship (*goal-based*) (Winston & Creamer, 1997). In many ways, synergistic supervision can be viewed as a highly transformational supervisory approach. Transformational leadership or supervision can be viewed as a supervisory approach that helps to create trust, mutual goodwill, and higher morale (Burns, 1978). As indicated earlier, the synergistic supervision prompts supervisors to consider how they are attending to the morale and motivation of staff through collaboratively building supervisory relationships, focusing on staff professional development as well as the accomplishment of staffs' personal professional goals.

A synergistic supervisory relationship is accomplished through supervisors and supervisees, establishing methods for communicating with each other honestly and openly (*two-way communication).* Supervisees must be able to have vulnerable and honest conversations with their supervisor around their feedback on their supervisor's performance, the areas where their professional development needs are and are not being met and be able to engage in a reassessment of their professional goals. In order for the relationship to be built, supervisory touchpoints cannot be limited to accountability or random occurrences (*proactive, systematic, and ongoing*). Supervisory contact must be consistent and frequent, which helps supervisors proactively develop their supervisory relationships with supervisees as well as build the supervisee's professional competencies. It also allows supervisors to actively work with their staff to problem solve

and intervene on performance issues early before issues become more significant problems.

The synergistic supervision framework speaks to critical aspects of a supervisory relationship that promote interpersonal and professional development. A supervisor's ability to forge this type of relationship helps to create a working environment and culture that supports staff development and morale. One shortcoming of the synergistic supervision model is that while it includes specific components that should be incorporated in a supervisory relationship, it does not necessarily speak to what it means to serve as a leader at a departmental level. It also does not acknowledge or account for the role of shame and affect, even in professional environments. The restorative practices framework, while different from the synergistic supervision framework, has numerous similarities that may allow RP to be used in collaboration with synergistic supervision and can serve as a joint mechanism that attends to the professional, interpersonal, and emotional wellbeing of staff.

2.4: Restorative Practices

Restorative Practices (RP) is "an emerging social science that studies how to strengthen relationships between individuals as well as social connections within communities" (International Institute of Restorative Practices [IIRP], n.d.). Individuals have a natural need to establish strong relationships and a sense of connection with others to thrive (Cacioppo & Patrick, 2008). When an organization can create an environment where the wellbeing of employees is just as important as the accomplishment of overall departmental goals, it helps to create a symbiotic relationship that mutually benefits the

organization and the individual. Part of creating this type of organization is intentionally building and maintaining a sense of connection with other staff members within the department. How leaders develop and maintain supervisory relationships, as well as how they repair the harm to those connections when it arises, is essential to understand and consider.

Understanding the process of building relationships in general is important, especially when one thinks about the fact that human disconnection is becoming more of a norm than the exception in society (Rundell, 2007; Wachtel, 1999). For example, humans have lived in tight knit communities consisting of their families for centuries. Families often lived in neighborhoods where there was a familial sense of community, bringing to mind the old saying ‘it takes a village to raise a child.’ Many of the social norms that have governed societal behavior are continuously changing in light of advances in technology, which is believed to lead to increased disconnected between individuals (IIRP, 2020). The internet and social media allow people to engage with others across vast differences and often times leads to limited face-to-face interactions. The distance between individuals “makes it easier to ignore the feelings of the interaction partner” (Konrath, 2012, p. 13). It has become easier to avoid the consequences from a lack of empathy due to the limited face-to-face interactions many stemming from increased social media presence.

RP has been used in a variety of fields in and outside of education internationally. For instance, RP has applications in social work fields as well as the criminal justice system and has been implemented in legal cases for many years (Bailie & Adamson, 2016). However, the use of RP is most prevalent in K-12 education, where it has been

heralded as an alternative to traditional school disciplinary or 'zero-tolerance policies' practices (Bailie & Adamson, 2016; Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2016; Payne & Welch, 2015). Although the RP framework in its entirety may be relatively new, some of the components of RP go back centuries.

2.4.1: Restorative Foundations

The RP framework grew from what was initially considered Restorative Justice (RJ), a participatory framework where people who are involved in a crime have the opportunity to come together with those they have impacted in order to name affect and impact in order to potentially repair the harm and move forward (Gregory et al., 2016). RJ is considered a responsive mechanism for after harm has taken place. The RP framework, on the other hand, includes responsive and proactive uses. Through creating relationships and connections between individuals, RP is said to help prevent harm from happening in the first place, and it allows for intervention after harm has occurred to be more impactful.

RJ, specifically the use of peacemaking circles, has roots in many ancient Greek, Arabic, and Roman civilizations (Braithwaite, 1999). In many of these cultures, restorative justice practices were incorporated as a part of their judicial systems to resolve various crimes that took place within their communities. Additionally, Ancient Buddhist, Confucian, Taoist, German, and Indian Hindu cultures often held community gatherings to provide space for individuals to name their affect and to decide methods to repair the harm that occurred as a community. Furthermore, the use of restorative circles as a part of the RP model is derived from practices of indigenous peoples in Canada and New Zealand (Daly, 2002; van Alphen, 2014). Indigenous groups such as the Canadian

Aboriginals, Inuit, and native Indians of North and South America used circles for family group conferencing and hearings (Weitekamp, 1999). The use of circles was considered fundamental to their way of life and was a common way to resolve community issues (Living Justice Press, n.d.). In Canada, First Nations people taught the use of circles to non-native individuals in the 1990s, due to the mass incarceration of First Nations people. These incarcerations prompted First Nations people to teach circle practice to non-indigenous peoples as an alternative to the traditional judicial systems, which disproportionately incarcerated more significant numbers of individuals from First Nations tribes. Non-native individuals saw the positive impact of these circles and began to use them, which led to the expansion of RP (Living Justice Press, n.d; Weitekamp, 1999).

Restorative circles, as a part of RP, have incorporated a few aspects of indigenous people circles in its design. For example, circles held by indigenous people include the use of talking pieces, the establishment of a circle facilitator who provides the guidelines for the circles, and sometimes a group decision-making process (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). The goals of these circles were to allow participants to have an equal role in the public discussions that impact them while allowing participants to be authentic and engage in many storytelling activities. Later, these stories were used to address crime within the community. Circles are a vital part of restorative practices and are still being implemented in many areas of the globe (Wachtel, 2013). RP circles also often use talking pieces and are led by a group facilitator to guide the conversation as well.

2.4.2: The Four Components

When the RP framework is used effectively, it has the potential to promote strong communication across supervisory lines, build trust between leaders and staff, and help staff feel heard and valued. The hypothesis behind the RP framework is that when individuals in positions of authority or power do things with their staff versus for or to them, their staff are generally happier, healthier, and overall more productive overall (Wachtel, 2013a). Moreover, staff are also more apt to make positive changes to their behavior or continue positive actions when leaders are restorative. RP theorizes that positive behavior changes and improved staff morale is achieved through four elements:

- The **social discipline window** which outlines how someone leads;
- **Fair process** to build trust through collaborative decision making;
- **Understanding shame and affect** as a way to understand and manage the emotions that arise in any given situation.
- **RP Continuum** which are formal and informal circles used to facilitate conversations among parties (UVM Residential Life, 2018; Wachtel, 2013a).

Social Discipline Window. The social discipline window, as depicted in Figure 2, is a conceptual model that helps leaders think about their approach to leadership and how they put their authority into practice (Miller & Olstad, 2012). The social discipline window is based on high and low control, characterized by limit or expectation setting and accountability, and high and low support, characterized by the extent to which leaders are encouraging and nurturing (Bailie & Adamson, 2016). Various combinations

of these two principles create a four-point model in which leadership, supervision, and how individuals relate to one another can be viewed.

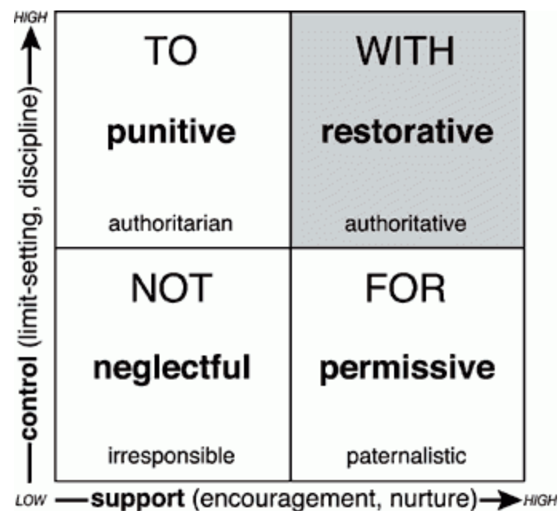

Figure 2: Social Discipline Window. This figure highlights the four methods of leadership and maintaining behavioral boundaries through varied uses of control and support (Wachtel & McCold, 2001).

Leaders operating in the ‘To’ box are those using high control and low support. Leadership from this quadrant is thought of as rigid, inflexible, and policy driven (Wachtel, 2013a). ‘To’ leaders may also concentrate on hierarchical structures and emphasize top-down management making decisions with very little input from those impacted by or having to carry out the decision (Kelly, 2014). ‘To’ box leadership is not inherently harmful, and there are instances where, especially in residential life, leading from the ‘to’ box is warranted. For example, during a crisis, a leader may need to operate out of this high control, low support area through giving explicit directives to staff in a quick manner (Rodriguez, personal communication, August 10, 2018). A leader cannot necessarily stop, invite group input, and ensure that everyone is feeling supported at the moment if, for example, a residence hall is on fire and the priority is student safety and emergency response. The ‘to box, in some regards, represents traditionally dominant views of supervision. “When one reflects on supervision and the role of a supervisor,

concepts such as power, authority, responsibility, efficiency, and teamwork come to mind" (Scheuermann, 2011, p. 9).

The 'for' box denotes high support, low control style of leadership. Van Alphen (2014) described this type of leadership as one where leaders give those they lead a high amount of support with minimal boundaries or accountability. An example of 'for' box leadership from a residential life context is an associate director's minimal use of challenge and accountability out of concern for potentially overwhelming or stressing the supervisee. Another example is the supervisor who notices that a supervisee consistently misses meeting deadlines and, instead of holding them accountable, does the work for them assuming they must be burdened with other responsibilities. One underlying assumption of this style of leadership is that supervisors do not believe in the competence of their staff and therefore delegate minor tasks, leaving the more complex functions to themselves. Another underlying assumption here is that supervisors view extra support as a way to help their staff succeed by lessening the challenges they face (Kelly, 2014). Again, there may be times where operating out of the 'for' box is acceptable in small doses. For example, if a supervisee experienced a death in their family, a supervisor's assistance with workload would be warranted. However, as Kelly (2014) pointed out, it is when the 'for' box becomes the primary mode of operation for a leader that performance or broader organizational issues can occur.

The 'not' box is an engagement style where a leader fails to demonstrate any level of control or support for those they lead. Van Alphen (2014) described the 'not' approach to leadership as "a failure in communication. Emotions are inadequately expressed, and expectations are low" (p. 191). Individuals who lead through the 'not' box are either not

present or do not care enough to provide guidance or expectations to their supervisees. Although not ideal, the 'to' box is preferable to the 'not' box because even when achieving departmental goals and enforcing policy in a top-down manner is prioritized, at least there is attention from the leader to establish boundaries to ensure success and fulfillment of responsibilities. Kelly (2014) indicated that the message given to those under this style of leadership is that no one cares about them or the work they do. The lack of concern demonstrated by a supervisor or leader can lead to individuals' feeling negative about their work. Supervisees operating under this style of leadership could ask, 'if my supervisor does not care, then why should I?'

With RP, the goal is to lead from the 'with' box as much as possible. 'With' leadership is seen as a beneficial yet delicate balance between high control and high support. 'With' box leadership can be described as approaching leadership through an authoritative (not authoritarian) lens where leaders are firm but fair, transparent, and participatory in decision making whenever possible (Kelly, 2014; Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). Leading from a place of "with" involves leaders being able to proactively build a strong relationship with those they lead through establishing strong two-way communication, which is used to hold staff members accountable while also providing support to achieve outcomes. In accountability conversations, all parties are heard and participate in the process of repairing any harm. Everyone also has a role in determining the next steps to move forward, which helps create a sense of mutual respect while also maintaining a sense of accountability and establishing boundaries (Kelly, 2014).

As highlighted above, there may be scenarios in which many of these methods of

leadership may be the ideal mode of operation. Leaders often have to fluctuate between the 'to,' 'for,' and 'with' box, depending on the situation. However, there would be very few, if any, situations in which the 'not' style of leadership is warranted or desired. 'With' leadership is considered the restorative approach that helps address harm or misconduct in a personable nature, reminds individuals to build relationships with those they lead proactively, and helps establish trust by involving others in decision-making processes together (Kelly, 2014).

Fair Process. Fair process is based on a human need to feel respected, valued, and that one's opinions and ideas are seriously considered (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). Fair process allows leaders to engage in decision-making processes while also developing a sense of trust within the relationship by being transparent. This feeling of trust promotes willing cooperation with management decisions, regardless of whether an individual perceives the final decision to be in alignment with what they personally were advocating for (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003; Rundell, 2007). Kim and Mauborgne (2003) studied 19 multinational corporations and found that senior-level managers who engaged in fair processes had a significant influence on the attitude and behaviors critical to high performance. Managers were also able to build trust with their teams, which promoted higher idea sharing among employees. Also, they found that the staff were more likely to cooperate with senior management decisions when they perceived fairness and transparency during the decision-making process.

Fair process involves three steps. First, a decision-maker engages their staff to gather feedback on a decision. A dialogue between decision-makers and those a decision will significantly impact allows others to agree or disagree with various ideas. Dialogue

between leaders and those they lead also communicates that decision-makers value the staff and their ideas (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). After the leader considers the feedback and makes a final decision, they explain the decision and the rationale behind the decision. Providing the rationale behind a decision helps provide transparency to the decision-making process. Leaders providing the rationales behind decisions also help staff feel that their ideas were considered, regardless of whether their individual's preferred outcome was met. (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003; Wachtel, 2013a). Additionally, this becomes a professional development opportunity for staff as they learn what their managers consider when making decisions. Finally, after explaining the final decision, managers provide expectation clarity. The leader ensures everyone understands the decision made, what individuals can expect moving forward, and what will be expected from them. Providing clarity about new expectations moving forward gives additional transparency to staff, thus contributing to the development of trust for staff.

When implementing fair process, supervisors and supervisees should have a clear understanding of what fair process is and is not. The goal behind fair process is not to engage in democratic decision-making process where everyone votes on the outcome, nor does it seek to make everyone happy about the decision made or garner support through compromise and accommodation (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). The authority to make the final decision still lies with the leader, and it does not mean they relinquish the power to make the final decision. The leader still has the prerogative to accept or reject any of their staff's ideas if it is in the best interest of all involved (Wachtel, 2013a). However, the key to the successful use of fair process is through engagement, explanation, and expectation clarity that communicates that, at a minimum, staff perspectives were considered.

Alternatively, leaders should not engage in fair process if they have a firm decision already made or if their staff's feedback will not be considered. Engaging staff in fair process when the feedback from the team will not change the decision can create more harm than good within the organization (UVM Residential Life, 2018).

Understanding Shame, Affect, and Emotions. Leaders who can understand shame, affect, and how these can manifest in themselves and others may be better poised to manage emotions when needed. Affect can be defined as a biological or visceral response to something which generates emotion along with the mental and physical representation of those emotions that occur (Tomkins, 1962; Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). Tomkins, the developer of Affect Script Theory, hypothesized that when individuals have the freedom to express affect or emotion, stronger relationships can develop, positive emotion can be maximized, and negative emotion can minimized. Tomkins (1962) postulated that there are nine innate affects that humans experience (Figure 3). Affects can range from positive such as excitement or enjoyment to negative such as fear, anger, or dissmell or a deep sense of loathing and repulsion. The nine affects can be thought of as the root of emotional responses that humans experience.

Sharing affect with others does not guarantee that relationships will be built or that healing will occur. It is the proactive building of relationships where individuals have the freedom to share their affect and can feel heard is where the healing lies, and this is one of the foundations of restorative processes (Shearer, 2016; Tomkins, 1962). Nathanson (1992) concurred, adding that community, as well as the emotional bonds between individuals, are developed when individuals can mutually share affect with others. In a leadership context, when leaders and those they lead build their relationship

proactively such that emotion can be freely shared or named when impact occurs, stronger interdepartmental relationships are possible.

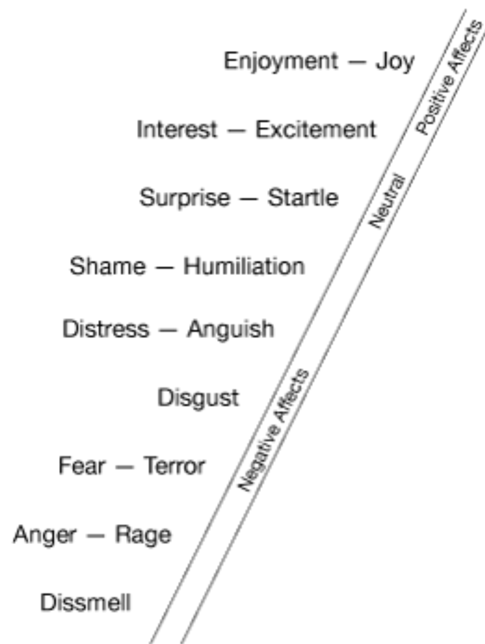

Figure 3: Nine innate affects. This describes the biological or otherwise visceral emotional responses to different stimuli natural to humans (Nathanson, 1992).

One of the nine innate affects, shame, is considered the interruption of positive affect (Tomkins, 1987; Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). Shame can often be a split-second change in emotion that prompts various reactions, depending on the individual and situation. Nathanson (1992) named that most individuals experience shame when positive affect is interrupted, regardless of their role. (Nathanson, 1992; Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). For example, an assistant director (AD) walks into the main office on Monday morning in high spirits when their supervisor asks to speak with them in their office. That initial pause in the positive affect of the assistant director is called shame. From there, depending on what is happening, the assistant director may experience distress-anguish or fear-terror or could return to experiencing a positive affect such as enjoyment-joy. During the conversation, the AD is told that a parent contacted the

supervisor indicating that the AD was rude in a conversation. At this moment, the supervisor and supervisee both experience shame because they are forced to engage in a conversation that neither would prefer to have. Through his "compass of shame," Nathanson (1992) postulated that there are four responses to shame (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Compass of shame. This describes the four typical human responses to the interruption of positive affect (Nathanson, 1992).

The first component of the compass of shame is withdrawal, which can include self-isolation, hiding, or distancing oneself. Using the example above, the assistant director could withdraw by avoiding their supervisor and the central office after their conversation. The second component of the compass, attack self, comes in the form of self-negative talk and put-down. For example, the assistant director, attacking self, might say, "You are right to be angry; I am not a very good AD after all". On the opposite end of 'attack self" is 'attack others.' Here, individuals attempt to shift blame to others through physical or verbal attacks. From the attacking others stance, the assistant director might say, "That parent was completely rude. If they had not started yelling at me, I would not have had to yell back." The final component is avoidance where individuals can avoid, deny, or engage in thrill-seeking behaviors as a distraction. Operating from this component, the assistant director might drink excessively to forget they were documented for their conduct (Nathanson 1992; Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012).

RP helps to provide a mechanism for individuals to name and share affect and express when they are in shame, which in turn allows emotions to become less intense (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). By focusing on the actions that caused the shame and impact, leaders can confront negative behavior without creating a dynamic that increases shame or where the individual feels isolated or unwanted in their work environment. Braithwaite (1989) stated that most people do not want to cause harm and negatively impact others, especially individuals that they care about, regardless of the mistakes they may have made. RP, as part of accountability conversations with staff, has the potential help both sides move past shame and other negative affects while continuing to build strong relationships. RP provides a framework for people to share how another's actions create an impact. However, RP is not able to repair harm directly. By building relationships proactively such that individuals can share how someone's actions may have impacted them, RP provides an opportunity to repair harm and further strengthen the relationship. Additionally, when there is an established relationship there is a higher investment on both sides to repair the harm that occurs. However, not all harm can be corrected. When there is not a willingness to participate in restorative approaches (lack of a positive relationship) or inability to heal or move on from the impact or change behavior, repairing harm and moving forward becomes more difficult (D. Depaul, personal communication, October 4, 2018).

RP Continuum. The RP continuum can be viewed as the mechanism used to operationalize the other components of RP. As Figure 4 outlines below, engagement in RP can range from day-to-day informal interactions to formal meetings and conferences (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). The RP continuum can be utilized in both proactive and

responsive scenarios, making it a viable mechanism for engaging different staff members within an organization.

Figure 5: Restorative Practices Continuum, which highlights different possible formal and information restorative interactions (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012).

Affective Statements and Questions. Affective statements are expressions of feeling. Individuals who share affect are able to identify and name for others the emotions that have arisen or how a particular behavior impacted them. Similarly, affective questions are designed to elicit an affective response (Wachtel, 2016). For example, a supervisor might ask their RAs, “What came up for you when you had your bulletin board vandalized?” The RA’s affective statement responses could range from “I was angry because I had to do the bulletin board over again” to “I was sad because I thought my community respected me enough not to do things like that.” The goal of affective statements is not a specific reaction, but an invitation for an individual to share how someone's actions impacted them, in hopes that it promotes future behavioral change or reinforce positive behaviors (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012).

When using affective questions, it is important to avoid the use of “why” questions. Why questions often result in an answer of ‘I do not know’ or in a defensive response (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). Responsive affective questions also avoid asking directly about emotion. Questions that probe how someone feels involves a level of vulnerability that someone may not be ready for when faced with someone who impacted

them, especially if a strong relationship has not been built (Van Alphen, 2014). Instead, questions should be tailored to ask individuals to share what they think about what happened or think in general. Asking about thoughts versus feelings is said to be less threatening to those engaging in the process. Table 1 outlines questions for responding to challenging behavior.

Table 1:

Restorative questions for responsive circles (International Institute for Restorative Practices [IIRP], n.d.)

Responding to Challenging Behavior	To Help Those Harmed by Others
● What Happened? ● What were you thinking of at the time? ● What have you thought about since? ● Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way? ● What do you think you need to do to make things right?	● What did you think when you realized what had happened? ● What impact has this incident had on you and others? ● What has been the hardest thing for you? ● What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Small Impromptu Conferences. Small impromptu circles are informal, often unplanned, and can be held in a number of different situations at any time. These conferences situate a common practice of many student affairs staff within the framework of restorative practices, whenever they address behavior or check in with students or other staff (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). The goal of impromptu circles is to quickly address a smaller incident right when it occurs, either permanently or temporarily, until a more formal follow-up can occur (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). The ability to respond immediately and effectively is essential. When leaders notice problematic behavior or even positive performance, giving immediate feedback privately to the staff member

allows for the feedback to be more effective in reinforcing positive behavior or behavioral change (Winston & Creamer, 1998).

Group Process. Group process circles are more formal circles. As with the other aspects of RP, these circles can be used proactively or responsively. Proactively, they can be used to build community, establish communal or team expectations, or gather feedback from others (Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2016). For example, resident advisors at Verdis University (pseudonym) often utilize proactive restorative circles at the beginning of the school year with their residents to begin building community and establish community expectations for their floor (Miller & Wachtel, 2012). Circles can also be used responsively after an incident has occurred, allowing people to share how a situation has impacted them, develop a plan to repair the harm that has happened as a community, and discuss how to prevent the behavior from happening again. (Gregory et al., 2016; Pavelka, 2013). Responsive circles do not require the wrongdoer to be present for the community to come together. Present community members are still able to engage in a conversation around how they were impacted by an incident, what they need to make things right, and how they can contribute to building their community moving forward.

Group circles are usually led by a facilitator who asks a series of planned reflection questions. Depending on the nature of the circle, the facilitator might start a proactive circle with a fun question (e.g., “what's the first thing you would do if you hit the lottery”) to break the ice; or a serious question for a responsive circle (e.g., “what is coming up for folks as we enter this space today?”). Circle facilitators should choose the appropriate opening questions for their circle as it helps set the tone. Circles, especially in

formal meetings, provide a sense of equality, safety, and trust for all participants. Everyone has an equal role in building trust and safety and the ultimate success of the circle (Wachtel, 2013a).

Formal Conferences. Formal conferences are the most formal of circles on the RP continuum and are usually conducted by a trained RP facilitator (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). Formal conferences are highly structured and have specific requirements that must be met before one can take place. In formal conferences, the offender must be voluntarily present and have accepted responsibility for the harm or impact that they caused. Facilitators for the conference take time to contact everyone impacted by a situation by phone to invite them to the conference, tell them about what they can expect, and answer any questions they may have.

The preparation for a formal conference can be time-intensive, which is why they are usually reserved for larger situations and are generally responsive in nature (International Institute for Restorative Practices [IIRP] & Real Justice, 2005). The conference has a specific formula, including seating arrangements of the participants, the sequence of questions, the specific role the facilitators, and who gets asked what question. At the end of a formal conference, there is an opportunity for attendees to have refreshments and interact with each other, which is required to help to reintegrate the wrongdoer back into the community and for healing to continue in an informal capacity (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012).

2.4.3: Restorative Practices in Student Affairs

As previously stated, much of the known uses of RP in western cultures has been within social work and criminal justice sectors with a relatively more recent emergence in

K-12 classrooms, often used as an alternative to “zero-tolerance” policies (Bailie & Anderson, 2016; Gregory, A., Clawson, K., Davis, A., & Gerewitz, J., 2015; Hopkins, 2011). Although the framework as conceptualized by the IIRP has been around for over 10 years and is based on indigenous practices that have been in existence for centuries restorative practices is an emergent framework for some areas of student affairs in a limited capacity. Much of the use of RP in student affairs thus far are localized to student conduct departments with a slow expansion to residential life. The following section explores the current use of RP principles in student affairs, specifically in student conduct and residential life.

Student Conduct and Restorative Justice. Some student affairs areas are beginning to see RP as a positive alternative to traditional conduct and discipline in education. Restorative Justice (RJ) is sometimes used as part of the student conduct process in higher education at some institutions. Traditionally, the student conduct process tends to be an adversarial system of justice where students are asked to defend themselves against any conduct allegations and subsequently sanctioned if found responsible for a conduct violation. In these adversarial systems, conduct meetings are often focused on fact-finding and ‘who did what’ and less about how the conduct impacts the surrounding individuals, the offender, and their community. Traditional conduct processes often lead to different emotional outcomes for students, including feelings of resentment at being held accountable or feelings of isolation and the belief they have do not place in the campus community after being found responsible for misconduct (Gehring, 2001; Karp, 2005; Morrison & Vaandering, 2012).

After examining the criminal justice system, some institutions began to

acknowledge the need to move away from dominant views of rule-based compliance and findings of responsibility towards a system that also considers the needs of the community (Zehr, 2005). Although RJ is becoming increasingly popular in K-12 education, its popularity in student affairs is still relatively minimal, with approximately 8% of colleges and universities having any restorative program on their campus as of 2009 (Lipka, 2009; Meagher, 2009). However, in recent years, an increasing number colleges and universities are beginning to explore the use of restorative practices and restorative justice processes, especially in Title IX related incidents (Mangan, 2018). The office of Student Conflict Resolution (OSCR) at the University of Michigan is a notable example of RJ's prevalence in student conduct processes. OSCR incorporates RJ in many of its services, ranging from conflict mediation to the student conduct process (Landrum, n.d.). University of Michigan's Office of Student Conflict Resolution's website describes their philosophy around the use of RJ:

> For OSCR, this means that we work WITH students to develop ways to communicate and address harm. We do this by facilitating a variety of restorative practices for students, including Restorative Justice Circles. OSCR's most frequently used program is our evidenced-based process for addressing alcohol or other drug incidents on campus, which is infused with restorative principles.

Instead of being solely preoccupied with facts and punitive sanctions, RJ focuses on addressing behavior in a way that helps to humanize offenders, giving individuals a voice in helping to repair the harm within the community, and maximizing positive affect as much as possible (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). Clark (2014) added that RJ "does not deal with offenses by myopically determining punishment. Instead, the restorative

system views crime in a broader context. A crime is not a simple violation of the law" (p. 708).

RJ seeks to engage wrongdoers in a more relational system to help individuals understand that their behaviors impact others within their community. Through a restorative process, adverse effects of shame, isolation, and anger can be limited to help people reconnect to their communities (Morrison & Vaandering, 2012). Furthermore, Zehr (2005) indicated that the ultimate goal of RJ is the view of justice as a concept in which the 'inherent worth' of all individuals, including offenders, is understood and honored. In this same vein, helping students reconnect to their communities and avoiding alienation by allowing them to address the behavior while also assisting in maintaining their sense of belonging is important to the student's growth and wellbeing. This is important for students residing in on-campus residential environments, where their ability to leave or avoid a community is slightly more restricted.

When responsive restorative approaches are compared with punitive approaches, there are distinct differences between the two methods. When conduct is viewed punitively, individual behavior is perceived primarily as a breach of policy and focuses mostly on the individual as the offender. Disciplinary approaches in isolation also are mainly concerned with assigning blame and issuing sanctions. Ultimately, punitive actions in isolation lead to condemning the offender, which can result in stigmatization as a bad individual (San Francisco Unified School District, n.d.). Alternatively, with a restorative approach, there is an acknowledgment that behavior does not occur in a vacuum but also has an impact that spans beyond the individual. Reframing the behavior to focus on individual and community impact provides an opportunity for the offending

party not only to be challenged but also to reflect and learn. Restorative approaches connect accountability to repairing harm as well as condemning the behavior, which ultimately helps to separate the deed from the doer. Separating the deed from the doer helps limit stigmatization and allows the offender to maintain a level of connection with their community (San Francisco Unified School District, n.d.).

Use of RP in Residential Communities. The use of RP in residential communities is even newer than the use of RJ in the student conduct process, as "prior to 2010, RP was not being used on college campuses" (D. Depaul, personal communication, October 4, 2018). Verdis University (VU) became one of the first residential life departments to use RP as part of the community building framework in their residence halls. VU found that while RAs were being told to build a community, it was difficult for the RAs and their supervisors to describe how to build community in a tangible way (Miller & Wachtel, 2012). In collaboration with the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP), VU began to institute RP proactively to build community as well as responsively address negative behaviors, such as vandalism, bias, and general conduct issues.

VU found implementing an RP-based community development model allowed supervisors to train RAs in something that was difficult to explain explicitly, and it gave RAs a framework for how to build community effectively (Miller & Wachtel, 2012). Additionally, when significant incidents occurred within the residential community, VU was able to utilize RP in conjunction with punitive consequences to address issues. For example, in the event where a student was responsible for a sprinkler discharge within the

residence halls, in many cases, a student would move from the community and face punitive consequences behind the scenes. However, Miller and Wachtel (2012) noted:

> Although the student came forward to admit what he had done and his family's homeowners insurance reimbursed the losses, the young man was ashamed to face his peers. . . While the authorities did not plan to impose punitive sanctions, in the past, such an incident would have resulted in the young man moving to another residence hall in an effort to avoid the stigma. But since the advent of restorative practices at [VU (pseudonym)], the residential life staff now had a healthier and more effective way to deal with the emotional aftermath (p. 9).

RP is counter to many dominant paradigms regarding confronting and addressing negative behaviors. Often, residential life staff are trained to "'lay down the law' and simply stop the negative behavior" (Miller & Wachtel, 2012, p. 10) using power and authority to address negative behavior. With the RP framework, addressing behavior becomes less of a top-down response and more about leveraging preexisting relationships as part of the accountability process to help individuals understand their impact without alienating them in the process. The sharing of emotions can be an uncomfortable experience for those responsible for negative behavior and those addressing it (Miller & Wachtel, 2012).

2.5. Conceptual Framework

As cited earlier, scholars who have researched synergistic supervision consider it to be one of the most foundational and impactful supervisory models for student affairs (Davis & Cooper, 2016; Shupp & Arminio, 2012: Tull, 2006). The synergistic

supervision model primarily focuses on the balance of organizational priorities and goals with the interpersonal and professional goals and growth of staff, through a holistic joint effort between supervisor and supervisee. While the synergistic supervision framework attends to the professional wellbeing of staff members, it may not pay as much attention to the emotional aspects of professional life in the workplace. The framework outlined by Winston and Creamer (1997) also neglected to provide explicit guidance for supervisors on how to adapt and incorporate a synergistic supervisory style.

As Figure 5 illustrates, the RP framework may provide a framework that allows professionals to operationalize aspects of the synergistic supervision model, while also contributing to the emotional wellbeing of staff in the process. Fundamentally, each framework relies on the proactive development and building of relationships. Although synergistic supervision specifically addresses a supervisory context, both models express that building a proactive relationship in a supervisory or leadership context requires individuals to be considerate of their approaches to leading, supervising, or engaging with others (Tull, 2006; Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012). This relationship is forged through consistent interactions that can be formal or informal through the use of the RP continuum, which aligns with the synergistic model's requirement that supervision and thus the maintenance of the supervisory relationship not only must be proactive as well as responsive but also systematic and ongoing. In order to be successful in utilizing either approach, supervisory touchpoints and supervision in general must be consistent and used both proactively as well as responsively (Wachtel, 2013a; Winston & Creamer, 1997). When this communication is consistently implemented, a strong two-way communicative culture within the relationship is created. As such, supervisees have the ability to express

concerns or issues to their supervisor in an honest and open manner, which not only aids in increasing morale but also work performance (Gregory, Clawson, Davis & Gerewitz, 2016; Winston & Creamer, 1997).

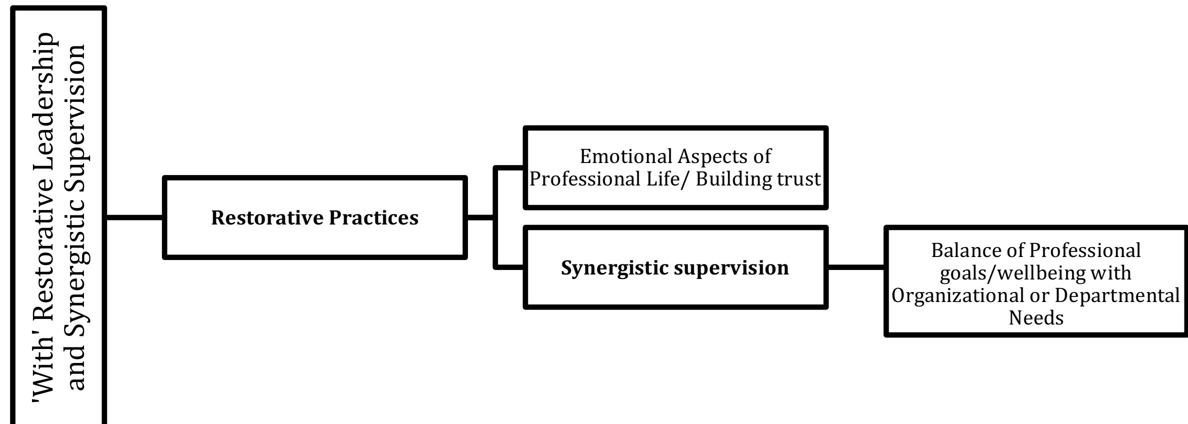

Figure 6: Conceptual framework demonstrating the linkages between the restorative practices framework and the synergistic supervision model.

When looking at both the RP framework and synergistic supervision frameworks more in depth, each framework offers elements that may prove beneficial to supervision. For example, the restorative practices framework emphasizes the building of trust and demonstrating listening skills to proactively build relationships, repairing harm to relationships when it occurs, understanding the affect and emotions of self and others as well as considering how to put supervisory or leadership authority into practice by working 'with' others (Miller & Olstad, 2012; Wachtel, 2013a). Identified effective supervision traits include being organized as well as conciseness but detailed in communicating with others and in the work that supervisors do. Effective supervisors are also often identified as those who demonstrate strong writing skills, setting deadlines, and

who encourage high performance from staff (Arminio & Creamer, 2001; Boehman, 2007; Calhoun & Nasser, 2013)

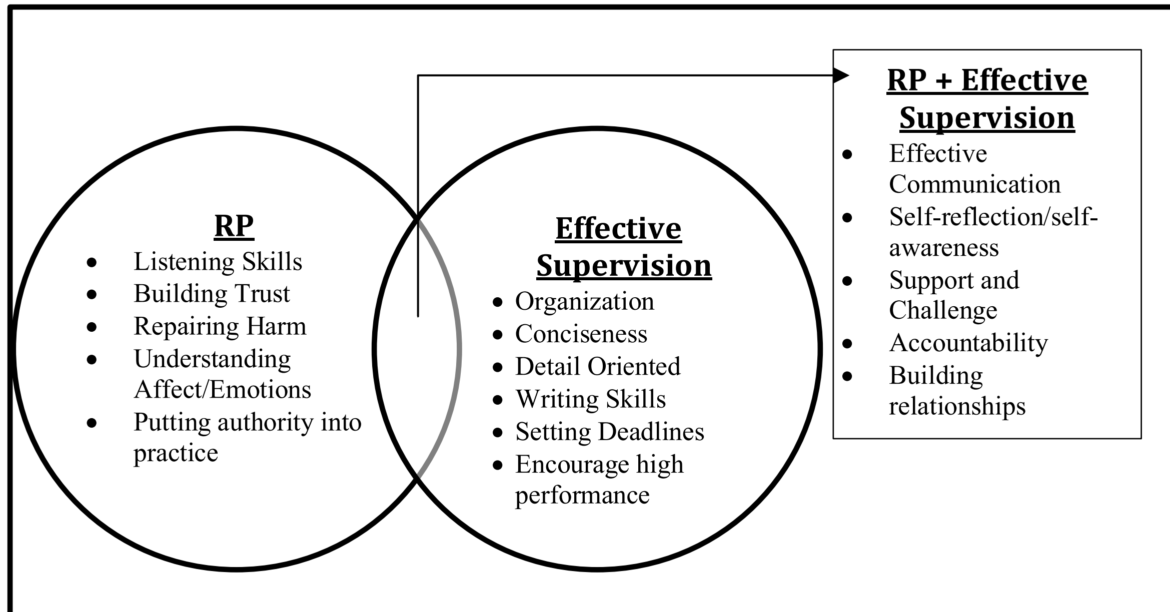

Figure 7: Conceptual framework of effective supervision skills and skills RP helps promote based on review of literature (Chapter 4.3)

As *figure 7* displays, there are several areas of overlap between RP and effective supervision. Both RP and effective supervision, as defined by the literature in chapter 4.3, include effectively communicating with others, and having self-awareness and being self-reflective. Both frameworks also highlight the importance of being highly supportive but also challenging others and holding them accountable. Perhaps most importantly, both frameworks emphasize the importance of proactively building supervisory relationships

These two frameworks served as the basis for this study by providing a foundation for individual interviews. As highlighted above, there are a number of similarities between the two frameworks, which may allow RP to operationalize synergistic supervision tangibly. This study focuses primarily on the use of RP as a function of supervision by mid- and senior-level professionals and examined how many

aspects of synergistic supervision arose in the narratives of participants as they recounted their experiences in utilizing restorative approaches as supervisors.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

In Chapters One and Two, I discussed the importance of effective supervision in the wellbeing, morale, motivation, and retention of staff, as well as to the successful accomplishment of organizational goals. Bolman and Deal (2013) cited the importance of departmental leadership's demonstration of an ethic of care for staff to the overall success of the organization. Supervisors play a pivotal role assisting their staff feel valued within the workplace which assists in high productivity. RP may provide a tangible blueprint for building supervisory skills with staff based on trust, commitment, and positive relationships within a professional context as well as operationalizing elements of synergistic supervision.

Although not currently widespread, there over 10 residential life departments that have begun to adopt RP as a core element of their organizational culture. Verdis University (VU) (pseudonym) is an early adopter of the use of the RP framework in a residential life department. The purpose of this study was to explore the implementation of RP in residential life at VU. Specifically, this study sought to understand: *How did mid- and senior-level professionals experience applying a restorative approach to their supervision style post-restorative practices training in residential life?* In order to explore this question, this study examined three focal areas:

- How do mid- and senior-level residential life professionals conceptualize the role of and apply restorative practices as supervisors?

- What evidence of synergistic supervision exists in supervisors' utilization of restorative practices in residence life?
- What evidence of RP's impact on the supervisory skill development of mid- and senior-level supervisors emerges from the data that suggests that further study is warranted?

Chapter Three provides an overview of case-study methodology, which served as the qualitative research approach for this study. I then discuss the primary researcher positionality and the experiences that I bring to this research. Next, I provide a thorough summary of the design of this study including an overview of the research site, potential participants, and sampling methods. Finally, I provide details about data collection, analysis methods, and the validity and trustworthiness of this study.

3.1: Case Study Research

This study was conducted using an embedded intrinsic case study research methodology. Although case study research methodology can be folded into other qualitative research methodologies, case study research as its own methodology is one that seeks to investigate a modern or ongoing event or phenomenon within an actual real-life scenario that is bounded by space and time (Yin, 2018). Researchers who employ case-study methodology are less concerned with the strategies used to solve a specific problem but more concerned with the limits or boundaries of the 'case' (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this study, the residential life department at one specific institution (Verdis University), as well as its use of RP as a function of supervision, served as the boundaries for this case. Additionally, this case was bounded by positionality and time, as it focused

on staff who were current mid- and senior-level professionals who currently work in VU Residential Life or were in such a role between August 2014 and when the study took place in June 2019.

According to Yin (2018), case study research tends to be best suited for exploring 'how' and 'why' questions in research. Rather than wanting to understand the 'what,' scope, or how many of a particular phenomenon, case study research helps scholars understand how something comes about or why. Although this study has elements of the 'what' of restorative supervision in residential life, my primary focus was to understand how mid- and senior-level professionals supervised their staff using RP and how they perceived the impact of RP on their supervisory capacity. In order to illuminate the 'how,' 'why,' and the individual experiences of supervisors using RP, a qualitative inquiry was deemed most appropriate. Case study research also allows researchers to uncover and examine sets of decisions and to explore what the impact of those decisions are over time (Sjoberg, Williams, Vaughan, & Sjoberg, 1991). Because cases are specific components bound by a specific activity and/or time, VU Residential Life served as the specific case for this study, bounded by its current use of restorative practices regarding departmental supervisory approaches and organizational culture. Qualitative case study research can also provide grounding for observations, concepts, actions, and structures of social behavior within the appropriate natural environment.

A single case may encompass an overall organization or entity, however, there may be smaller sub-units of analysis of particular interest. This is an opportunity for embedded case study research (Yin, 2018). I was particularly focused on examining the implementation of RP and how mid- and senior-level professionals used the four

components of RP within their supervisory approach. The concentration on this area of RP implementation in residential life versus the use of RP in residential life in its entirety (i.e., in the residence halls, with undergraduate staff, with graduate or entry level professionals, etc.) situated this research as an embedded case study. The sub-unit of analysis in this study was mid- and senior-level professionals.

This study is also as an intrinsic case study. Stake (1995) described an intrinsic case study as one where a researcher's main interest is understanding a particular case on a deeper level. The goal is not necessarily to argue for or against something, nor is the goal to be representative of other similar cases. Instead, an intrinsic case study seeks to understand the facets of a particular case. With an intrinsic case study, the results may or may not be transferable (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Unlike other research methodologies where there is the ability to follow the methods of a study to get the same or similar outcomes, in this particular research tradition, the results of this case study may not be able to be replicated by other researchers or in other contexts. Although there may be elements of transferability in this overall study, specifically around the use and implementation of RP in residential life, it is also important to understand replication of this study may not be possible.

3.2: Epistemological Lens

A constructivist epistemology formed the basis of this study. A constructivist epistemology considers that instead of truth being singular and absolute, it is instead created by people as they engage and interact with others (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). What is seen as true can be relative to the individual who is making sense of and constructing a

particular experience. Aligned with this constructivist viewpoint, the nature of supervision, leadership, and its effectiveness is determined by the interaction between two or more individuals. Therefore, there is not one way of leading nor can it be predicted how a single approach will work with each individual staff member or each individual department.

Through individual interviews, I sought to understand how mid- and senior-level staff members made meaning of their experiences using RP to build, maintain, and facilitate supervisory relationships. Lincoln and Guba (2013) stated "many aspects of constructions are frequently shared between individuals who hold similar values and beliefs" (p. 46). Relatedly, while each staff member may have experienced their positions comparably or have similar experiences or opinions with RP, they learned and developed as supervisors within their positions in unique ways. Participants may have divergent opinions around the best approaches or challenges in implementing restorative practices in a supervisory context. Despite these divergent opinions, there were some shared connections in how professionals constructed and made meaning of a RP-based supervision style. It is not necessary for the constructions to be identical in order for this research to construct a view of supervision in VU residential life. As Lincoln and Guba (2013) stated, the essence of an experience may include many other elements that may be different from others, based on the individual.

3.3: Researcher Positionality

I currently serve as an assistant dean for residence life at a private institution in the southeast United States. Prior to my current role, I served in a leadership capacity as

an assistant director in residential life at VU for four and a half years. This is where I became familiar with the use of RP in various contexts. In the assistant director role, I directly supervised and worked with entry-level and graduate-level professionals in their supervision of the resident advisor and graduate staff. I have over nine years of professional experience directly supervising a number of professional and graduate-level staff members as well as over 40 undergraduate resident advisors in two different residential life departments and institutions.

In my previous role at VU, I was also a member of residential life's leadership team, as such, I influenced the direction of the departmental culture through assisting in policy generation, role modeling restorative practices, and working across different teams and supervisory lines. In my experience at VU, I perceived a difference in the motivation and commitment of staff when operating within a leadership style based in restorative practices that took practiced intentional development of a supervisory relationship. Having adopted an authoritarian supervisory style early in my first supervisory experience out of graduate school, I observed the ineffectiveness of authoritarian supervision styles in student affairs. I noticed that this style fostered resent from my undergraduate staff members. They felt little to no investment in their positions and often had no problem with circumventing supervisory channels when issues arose. I believe this was due to the lack of a positive relationship between them and me, their supervisor.

I also have over four years of experience in intentionally supervising and serving as a leader in residential life using restorative practices. By experiencing RP-based supervision myself, I hypothesized that RP helps to increase the effectiveness of supervision and leadership in student affairs. As discussed above, Tomkin's (1962)

blueprint states that relationships are maximized, and people are happier when two individuals are able to freely express and share emotional affect.

Additionally, I observed instances in which RP was not effective in a supervisory situation. This was due to the nature of the supervisory conversation, a supervisory relationship that was not particularly strong, or when the supervisor did not fully commit to using RP in a particular moment. Because of my experience using different supervision styles as well as supervising and leading using RP, I am well positioned to explore and develop an in-depth understanding of participant experiences using RP as part of their supervisory ethos and uncover successful and challenging experiences using RP. Because of my positionality as a former VU residential life assistant director with experience in RP, I was especially aware of the potential for researcher bias. Methods I used to control for bias are highlighted in detail in the following section.

While my positionality may heighten the possibility of potential bias, it also benefited me as researcher. My experiences in using RP as a supervisor provided me with an insight to the participants experiences that an outside researcher may miss. My positionality presented me with an opportunity to home in on the supervisor's experiences and concentrate on them as opposed to also simultaneously trying to understand the context in which their experiences are situated. During data collection, I also noted that the level of familiarity I held with the participants aided in their feelings of comfort sharing their thoughts and experiences on the topic. Participants were animated, honest, and open with me during their interviews in a way that may not have been there as an outside researcher.

3.4: Trustworthiness and Subjectivity

I implemented three methods to provide for the validity of the study and to limit bias. First, I employed member checking to establish trustworthiness of the analysis, control for bias, and ensure the validity of the data. Creswell (2014) defined member checking as a method to "determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate" (p. 201). Participants were provided via email a copy of their transcribed interviews as well as an overview of the analysis and conclusions drawn from their interviews to offer an opportunity to verify accuracy. Member checking allowed the me to attend to potential bias in the analysis by giving participants the ability to agree with the analysis or clarify, modify, or disagree with findings before proceeding.

Secondly, I worked with a faculty advisor who was not intimately familiar with the study to cross-check the codes that were developed through intercoder agreement. Intercoder agreement is when a single researcher finds additional researchers to cross-check codes. Through this method, the agreement was reached when the other researcher agreed on the codes given to specific areas of the transcribed data. Finally, at the conclusion of the data analysis, I engaged in peer debriefing to add to the validity of this study. I recruited a peer researcher to ask questions about the study and analysis. I also debriefed my findings with a peer in order to trouble and account for potential bias in my data analysis.

3.5: Research Site and Participant Sampling Criteria

This section describes Verdis University (VU), which served as the primary host site and case for this study. As mentioned earlier, a goal of this study was to understand the use of RP in supervision in this specific residential life department. This study achieves this goal through exploring the narratives of 11 mid- and senior-level supervisors within VU residential life, who are also discussed in this section.

3.5.1. Research Site

Verdis University (VU) is a mid-sized, public institution located in the northeastern United States. The residential life department consists of six sub-units each overseeing residential services (e.g., mail, keys), facilities, business, assessment and special projects, living/learning programs, and residential education, which encompasses the in-hall staff (e.g., residence directors, assistant residence directors). VU Residential Life has incorporated restorative practices since the 2009-2010 academic school year as a different method for building relationships and developing community within the residential halls. Over time, the residential department incorporated RP into how they navigate and engage with each other as a department and is core to the departmental culture. The department employs over 60 professional and graduate staff members with over 200 undergraduate student employees. VU Residential Life was selected as the site for this study for two reasons both related to my positionality. My status as a former mid-level professional with VU Residential Life helped me access the research site and participants. This professional experience also allowed them to understand much of the institutional and departmental contexts of the participants' narratives.

VU Residential Life is one of the earliest adopters of RP. The department has been using RP as a mechanism for how they engage undergraduate students in residential communities as well as among professional and student staff for almost ten years. The success of VU Residential Life's restorative approach led to VU's division of student affairs implementing RP at a divisional level (The Division of Student Affairs, 2017). Under the leadership of its current director, VU Residential Life is preparing to intentionally begin refocusing the supervisory philosophy for its mid- and senior-level professionals to intentionally incorporate the use of RP to supervise synergistically. Because of VU Residential Life's success with RP in multiple contexts, its aspirations to begin using RP to supervise synergistically, as well as the my access to this site as a staff member, VU Residential Life was selected for this study.

3.5.2. Participant Sampling and Criteria

Participants for this study were recruited using purposeful sampling methods. Purposeful sampling is when a researcher selects participants for a study who meet specific criteria (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Randomly selecting participants in residential life may not have yielded specific results related to the experiences of mid and senior-level professionals because through a random selection, I could not guarantee that all participants would have met the needed criteria. Because this study examined a specific sub-set of staff members in a residential life department who have a specific role, participants had to be specifically recruited and selected in order to ensure they met the criterion based on the research questions.

Approximately 21 mid- and senior-level supervisors in VU Residential Life met the criteria for participation in this study. The original study design called for the

recruitment of approximately eight participants from the participant pool. As recruitment of participants concluded, 11 total participants had expressed interest in the study. I then decided to include all interested participants in the study to further increase the richness of the results. About 52% of eligible staff members participated in this study, allowing the pool to be a large enough sample to reach saturation and to collect a sufficient amount of data for analysis without making the study unmanageable. Participants were current and former mid- and senior-level professionals in residential life between 2014 and 2019 who also served on the department's leadership team in some capacity. A five-year period was selected, as it was more likely that former mid- and senior-level staff who were included in this study would be able to recall their experiences clearly.

In this study and mirroring VU Residential Life's context, mid-level professionals are defined either an assistant director or program director who had supervisory responsibilities for at least one full-time entry level staff member. Senior-level staff were either associate directors or someone who held the director position in the department and supervised at least one mid-level professional as a function of their roles, as well as directly oversaw one of the six teams within the department. Participant recruitment took place via email (Appendix B) once IRB approval was granted in early June 2019. Participants were emailed a copy of the consent to research protocol (Appendix A), a copy of the *Defining Restorative* article cited in this study, as well as a small demographic survey (Appendix C), which also included an opportunity for participants to explicitly consent to participate in the study. The demographic survey asked general information such as the type of role and how long they had been at the institution.

Additionally, participants were asked to indicate which residential life functional area they were supervisors in:

- **Residential Education**: In-hall staff such as Residence Directors, Assistant Residence directors, and program coordinators. Staff with some of the highest student contact.
- **Residential Services**: Customer service-oriented staff either in the halls or stationed in the main residential life office. This included staff overseeing office managers, information technology, and housing assignments.
- **Business Operations**: Considered non-student facing elements of the department including human resources, departmental project management, and residential life finances.
- **Facilities Operations**: Were considered staff primarily responsible for capital projects and the maintenance and repair of the physical residence halls. Facilities operations was not represented in the study.

From the participant pool, eight mid-level professionals and four senior-level professionals were selected for the study. The informational survey did not request information that could be used to directly identify participants. This informational survey also allowed participants to create a pseudonym and establish a meeting time for the first interview. Once participants had responded, I screened and selected final participants for the study. *Table 2* provides an overview of the participants in this study.

Table 2:

Description of Study Participants

Name	Professional Level	Functional Area	Years in the department	Status in department
Paloma	Mid-Level	Residential Education	2-3 years	Current staff
Helga	Mid-Level	Residential Education	4-6 years	Current staff
Michelle	Mid-Level	Residential Education	6+ years	Current staff
Zoe	Mid-Level	Residential Education	2-4 years	Current staff
Sue	Mid-Level	Residential Education	0-2 years	Current staff
Mary	Mid-Level	Residential Services	6+ years	Current staff
Alfredo	Mid-Level	Residential Education	6+ years	Former staff
Tahj	Senior Level	Business Operations	0-2 years	Current Staff
Leslie	Senior Level	Business Operations	6+ years	Current Staff
Terri	Senior Level	Residential Education	0-2 years	Former Staff
Steven	Senior Level	Residential Education	2-4 years	Former Staff

3.6: Data Collection

This qualitative case-study utilized two main data collection methods to explore the use of RP in supervision. Each supervisor participated in open-ended interviews, which were then supplemented by selected documents from the host department. This section outlines the processed I used to collect the data for this study.

3.6.1: Individual Interviews

I conducted two semi-structured interviews with each participant during the summer of 2019. Interview questions were open-ended in nature (Appendix D). Each interview, virtual or in-person at my campus, lasted no longer than 60 minutes. Interview data collection methods are best for developing an understanding of the professional staff member's experiences because interviews assist a researcher understand their subject's worldview on a particular topic (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The interview protocol did not include questions designed to collect personally

identifiable information such as name or birth date. Participants were asked to determine and identify themselves by a pseudonym at the beginning of the interview. All interviews were audio recorded using my personal smartphone and the Apple Voice Memos app and transcribed by a third-party transcription service verbatim for analysis.

3.6.2: Document Review

I also examined departmental documents to gain a fuller picture of how RP was implemented in VU Residential Life. As a former employee of this department, I had access to a wealth of documents that gave insight into the progression of RP in VU Residential Life. I also worked with senior departmental leaders to obtain permission to collect these documents for research purposes. These documents included: assistant and associate director for residential education position descriptions; VU residential life supervision charter; and, my own performance evaluations. The available documents that referenced the use of RP were limited to the residential education areas of the department. Residential education has been the primary user of RP within the host department since its initial implementation at VU. I was not able to obtain similar documents from teams outside of residential education. To align with the participant criteria outlined above, I requested and reviewed documents that were created or used within the last five years in VU residential life. As the department strives to be more intentional as a whole in its use of RP, using documents older than five years would not have painted as accurate of a picture of the current use of RP among mid- and senior-level professionals in the department. These documents supplemented data gained from interviews and provided a tangible example of the department's current uses of RP at the mid- and senior-professional levels (Biddix, 2018; Yin, 2018).

3.6.3: Data Privacy and Security

The privacy of participants and confidentiality of data were upheld to the maximum extent possible. Participants were asked to create a pseudonym to identify with during interviews. These pseudonyms were used to label all data and in all interview recordings. Direct identifiers that could be linked back to the participants were not kept with the data transcription data. The interviews were sorted by mid- and senior-level identifiers; however, specific titles were not used.

All data was kept on a personal, password- and thumbprint-protected computer which remained in my possession or locked in my private, personal residence. Recorded interviews were stored on a passcode- and face identification-protected smartphone until they were downloaded to the password-protected computer. The specific flash drive that was used to store the data was encrypted to prevent unauthorized use. As a basis for potential future work I will retain and store all data for at least five years following this study. Raw data was not shared with anyone other than the faculty advisor overseeing this dissertation research, who was named as another key researcher. Data was shared with this faculty advisor only for academic advising and trustworthiness review purposes.

3.7: Data Analysis

During the individual and focus group interview data collection phases, I maintained a memo of general thoughts, areas for future considerations, and initial interpretations. Memoing was important for me to not only track potential biases in the data but this memoing method also helped to form initial codes to base the data analysis off of. Memoing is often considered a valued and recommended process for qualitative

research as it allows researchers to form a closer connection to the data, clarify thinking, as well as helps bring to light assumptions that may be made during the data analysis in order to challenge them (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008). Memos were maintained on printed copies of the interview protocol as well as transcriptions of the interviews during analysis.

Analysis of the transcribed interview and document data began with an initial read-through of all data, where intentional memoing took place. Given that each of the sub-research questions explored the primary research question from a different angle, each interview was coded three times, based on each of the three research questions. To analyze the data for research questions one and three, interviews were coded utilizing "in vivo" coding methods. Saldaña (2016) defined this coding strategy as utilizing short phrases, sentences, or words directly from the data as the codes themselves. As Saldaña (2016) highlighted, this coding approach incorporates the participants' voices directly into the research and honors their experience. As a residential life supervisor hoping to utilize this study to provide a framework to assist student affairs practitioners in their growth and development as supervisors, I wanted to incorporate participant voices as much as possible in order to understand the experiences of staff. Random segments of the coded data were then member-checked by a faculty advisor to determine the level of intercoder agreement or convergence present in these first cycle codes. Saldaña (2016) noted that the percentage of agreement and divergence of codes is important to the analytical process.

Nvivo qualitative coding software was used for data analysis. To bring the data and in vivo codes into further focus, I also performed second cycle methods. Pattern

coding had been identified as the best method to categorize themes seen through the in vivo coding process to determine trends in the data. Categorizing the in vivo themes in this fashion aligns with Saldaña's (2016) definition of pattern coding as "pattern codes are explanatory or inferential codes, one that identifies an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation. They pull together material from first cycle coding into more meaningful and parsimonious units of analysis" (p. 236).

For interview two, interviews were coded using in vivo and a priori/emergent coding. Emergent coding is an analytical method where a researcher starts with prespecified codes that limit the analysis as opposed to allowing the data to drive the codes produced (Creswell, 2013). The goal of sub-question two was to determine whether there was evidence of synergistic supervision elements in how participants described supervising using RP. Given that this question was designed to match the data against an existing framework, analyzing from the synergistic supervision framework was determined to be the best approach. This helped to focus the data analysis on the synergistic supervision framework.

Once the analysis of the collected data was complete, I displayed the analysis utilizing a "composite description" format (Creswell & Poth, 2016, p. 201). Incorporating a general view of each major code and theme, this format helped to paint an overall narrative based on the collected data. The results of this study were incorporated into three journal articles presented in chapter four. Chapter 4.1 outlines how participants apply RP as part of their supervisory approach and challenges and successes participants communicated in incorporating RP into their supervisory approach. Chapter 4.2 is connected to how mid and senior-level professionals understand and conceptualize the

role of RP in supervision. Finally, indicators of the impact that RP has on participants ability to supervise synergistically is outlined in chapter 4.3.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

The main purpose of this chapter is to highlight the experiences of the mid and senior-level professionals in using restorative practices (RP) as a function of their supervision in residential life. The findings from this study are incorporated into three separate papers. Each are designed to highlight how participants apply RP as part of their supervisory approach and the impact of learning the framework. The focus of the first paper examine the conceptualization and use of RP as well as associated challenges and successes participants communicated in incorporating RP into their supervisory approach. The second paper examines the connections between the participant's use of RP in supervision and synergistic supervision principles. The final paper explores indicators of the impact that RP had on the development of supervisory skills and capacity. Each paper is formatted specifically for publication in student affairs-based academic journals.

4.1. Supervising Restoratively: Narratives of Applying Restorative Practices in Supervision in Residential Life

This paper is intended to highlight participant's experiences in incorporating restorative practices (RP) as part of their overall supervision style and factors participants perceived to have made such a supervisory approach successful or challenging. The findings of this article highlight the ways in which participants understood and defined RP's role in supervision overall and how they themselves applied RP as part of their supervision. This individual study directly connects to the first research sub question: "How do mid- and senior-level residential life professionals conceptualize the role of and apply restorative practices as supervisors?"

Supervising Restoratively: Narratives of Applying Restorative Practices in Supervision in Residential Life

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4.1.1. Abstract

The study engaged 11 residential life mid- and senior-level supervisors around their use of restorative practices (RP) as supervisors using a qualitative case-study methodology. Participants were from Verdis University (VU) (pseudonym) Residential Life, which is one of the first residential life departments to use RP on a department level in the United States. Major themes included conceptualizations of RP, applicability in supervision, and implementation challenges. Findings suggest that RP may serve as a viable guideline for new supervisors to strengthening skills in proactively developing supervisory relationships, balancing work priorities with staff emotions and feedback, and accountability and conflict management practices. Findings included several challenges to incorporating RP into supervision, including the nature of residence life work, the difference between residential education and business administration type departments, and the challenges posed to internal processors in communicating affect in restorative circles.

Keywords: restorative practices, supervision, residential life

Supervising Restoratively: Narratives of Applying Restorative Practices in Supervision in Residential Life

Supervision is a complex component of many professional roles in student affairs. Even though supervision is known to be an arduous task, student affairs professionals seldom receive intentional training, mentorship, or direction on how to supervise effectively (Calhoun & Nasser, 2012; Tull, 2006; Winston & Creamer, 1997). Other industries, such as psychology, counseling, or social work, have studied the concept of supervision more extensively and have developed models of what they consider effective supervision (Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003).

In student affairs, supervisors play a key role in creating an inclusive workplace environment that helps staff feel valued, grow as professionals, and contribute to the overall organization (Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003). Harned and Murphy (1998) said that no other relationship in student affairs could influence job satisfaction, professional development, and even how staff views themselves as professionals like the supervisory relationship. With the lack of intentional supervision training in onboarding processes for new student affairs staff (Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006), some supervisors struggle to understand the importance of developing and maintaining strong supervisory relationships. As professionals advance in their careers to mid- and senior-level positions, higher-level management training is often not an element of the onboarding into their new role (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Mills 2000).

Supervision and staff management have been identified as especially important for mid-level professionals (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Mills 2000). Supervision and staff management are especially important given the advanced leadership role within

the overall organization mid and senior-level professionals play as well as their ability to bridge the gap between entry-level and senior-level staff (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009). As such, many mid-level professionals supervise by emulate their supervisors or by trial and error, which can affect their staff. However, restorative practices (RP) may assist student affairs supervisors in creating and maintaining supervisory relationships.

The RP framework emphasizes leading *with* staff and prompts leaders to think critically about how they lead, engage in collaborative relationships, build trust among their teams, and manage emotions as a function of leadership (Wachtel, 2013b). RP hypothesizes that individuals are happier and more productive when leaders do things *with* them as opposed *to* them or *for* them (Wachtel, 2005). This may be important to student affairs supervision, given that a supervisor's ability to think critically about the overall process of leadership, and how they lead others, is one of the essential competencies for the student affairs profession as expressed by student affairs national organizations (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). The study is situated in a residential life context. Residential Life has often been viewed as a microcosm for the larger field of student affairs (Hoffman & Bresciani, 2012). As such, the findings may have transferability into the broader student affairs context.

Purpose of the study. The purpose of this study was to explore the applicability of the RP framework as a supervisory approach in student affairs. I examined RP-based supervision and how mid- and senior-level professionals in residential life understood and used RP as supervisors. Specifically, the study explored how mid- and senior-level residential life professionals describe the role of restorative practices in supervision and its application, as well as factors that influenced associated challenges and successes. As

such, this study is geared towards residential life and student affairs supervisors who are seeking a different approach to supervision and supervision skill development.

Significance of the Study. This study is significant as it is one of the first studies to explore the use of RP as a tool for effective supervision in student affairs. ACPA and NASPA have jointly identified the importance of growing and building new supervisory skills as an important competency for student affairs professionals (ACPA & NASPA, 2015). While the ACPA and NASPA competencies provide various outcomes for building supervisory competencies in student affairs, there is little guidance on how to achieve those outcomes, The results of this study may provide professionals with an innovative approach to holistic supervision within student affairs, a model to train new supervisors in effective supervisory practices, as well as new methods for managing workplace conflict.

Additionally, through the results of this work, supervisors may begin to conceptualize supervision from a social justice and inclusion (SJI) standpoint. The SJI competency "involves student affairs educators who have a sense of their own agency and social responsibility that includes others, their community, and the larger global context" (ACPA/NASPA, 2015, p. 14). RP may help move student affairs supervisory practices from a dominant, top-down approach to one that helps supervisors consider their own leadership and the impact of their supervision style on their staff. The research findings will provide supervisors with ideas for the potential implementation of RP in supervision and related challenges for consideration.

4.1.2. Theoretical Framework

Restorative practices are considered "a participatory response to wrongdoing, and

many other formal, informal, proactive, or responsive strategies in education, social work, counseling, criminal justice, and more" (Wachtel, 2015, p. 7). Given the flexibility of the framework, RP has the ability to assist leaders in cultivating strong relationships and developing trust by encouraging them to work with others, as opposed to doing things to or for them (Wachtel, 2013b). RP's four components include: the social discipline window, which encourages individuals to consider how they put into practice their authority and leadership; fair process, which can be viewed as a collaborative approach to decision making; understanding shame and affect, or the ability to understand the emotions of others as well as oneself; and, the RP continuum, which represents approaches to building and repairing relationships through the use of circles.

The social discipline window can conceptualize supervision based on high to low support (nurturing and care) and control (limits and accountability) (Wachtel & McCold, 2001). The premise behind the social discipline window is that a 'with' style of leadership is more effective than leading permissively or punitively. In many ways, the social discipline window helps leaders consider how they put their leadership and authority into practice. The RP framework also includes fair process, which is a collaborative decision-making process. Fair process involves engaging staff to gather their feedback on the decision. After the supervisor makes their decision, they explain how they arrived at their decision. Finally, the supervisor provides explanation clarity, where they provide staff with clear directions on what they can expect moving forward, thus building trust with staff (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003).

RP also includes an understanding of shame and affect, which helps individuals effectively understand and navigate the emotions of others. Tomkins defined affect as a

primarily biological response to a stimuli which can manifest itself in the form of facial or bodily reactions (The Tomkins Institute, n.d.). Often times, affect is conflated with 'feelings' which are considered the recognition of affect. Tomkins went on to say that when a feeling is combined with an associated memory, it is called 'emotion.' Tomkins (1962) postulated that when individuals can name their affect, especially with those who prompted the affective response, it helps to develop stronger relationships between individuals. In a supervisory context, when supervisors and supervisees can freely name their affect when positive or negative impacts occur within the supervisory relationship, it helps to strengthen the relationship. The RP continuum includes distinct types of circles ranging from informal affective statements and questions to name affect to more formal circles such as group circles and conferences. As circles move towards the formal end of the spectrum, they become more structured, involve more planning, and often more individuals participate (Wachtel, 2013a). Except for a formal conference, each circle can be used both proactively and responsively. The purpose of RP circles is to help facilitate relationships and community building among groups of individuals.

4.1.3. Literature Review

In student affairs, the role of a supervisor can be multifaceted and can encompass leadership, management, and coaching functions at multiple positional levels within a unit (Scheuermann, 2011). Student affairs practitioners often advance from supervising undergraduate and graduate student staff to supervising entry-, mid-, and other senior-level professionals (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013). How supervisees experience their supervisory relationship from onboarding to departure has a profound impact on their

development, morale, and persistence in the field (Shupp & Arminio; 2012; Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003; Tull, 2006).

Shupp and Arminio (2012) studied new professionals in student affairs to examine factors contributing to their retention. Out of the five factors of effective supervision Shupp and Arminio (2012) found in their study, supervisor accessibility, or the extent to which they felt their supervisors were approachable; and meaningful interactions with supervisors that "allowed them to vocalize what was needed in the supervisory relationship" (p. 165) were seen as important supervisor qualities. Institutional commitment to supervision, allowing staff to communicate supervisory needs, implementing formal evaluation processes, and ongoing professional development were effective practices that aided in staff retention. Building relationships, having open communication, and considering the staff's well-being were also consistently identified as crucial supervision elements (McGraw, 2011; Shupp & Arminio, 2012).

The ability to build relationships, communicate, and attend to staff morale is especially important for mid-level professionals in student affairs, especially given the influential role they play as a connector between the lower and upper staff areas of the organization. Saunders and Cooper (1999) studied senior student affair officers' (SSAOs) to learn about their thoughts on the needed skills for successful mid-level professionals. The ability to build cohesive working teams, manage staff, mediate interpersonal conflict, collaboration with internal and external departmental partners, effective decision making, and garnering buy-in from staff were among the most important skills identified by SSAOs in the study. Mid-level professionals often have to support their entry-level staff in accomplishing departmental goals while also representing their staff to higher-level

administrators (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Wilson, Liddell, Hirschy, & Pasquesi, 2016). Developing a strong supervisory relationship is essential for supervisors to successfully accomplish these tasks.

The supervisory relationship is also important to staff morale and, subsequently, staff retention. Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff (2001) studied the role of supervision styles in the development of the supervisory alliance in counseling. The supervisory alliance between supervisor and supervisees is a collaborative approach to supervision, which includes a mutual agreement on supervision goals, agreement on tasks needed to reach supervision goals, and an emotional bond. Supervisors who viewed themselves as warm and supportive had the perception of mutual trust between them and their staff. Additionally, supervisors felt their supervisees were more willing to disclose challenges to them, which aided in their staff's development. Overall, supervisors who were more approachable and had invested in the supervisory relationship were able to form more trusting relationships, and supervisees were more willing to be open with their supervisors, even in disciplinary and problem-solving conversations.

Most of the scholarship on RP in education focuses on the use of RP in K-12 classrooms as an alternative to zero-tolerance disciplinary policies. Gregory, Clawson, Davis, and Gerewitz (2016) studied 29 high school teachers and 412 students to understand the role of RP in developing teacher-student relationships. The study revealed that the more teachers used RP with their high school students, the more the students felt their teachers respected them, which led to a decrease in exclusionary discipline measures implemented by teachers. The correlation between perceived teacher respect and RP use spanned across multiple racial and ethnic groups.

From a school organization perspective, McCluskey, Lloyd, Kane, Riddell, Stead, and Weedon (2008) also found that schools were more successful in incorporating RP into their school's culture when they used RP in tandem with other frameworks, instead of RP becoming the sole model for developing teacher/student relationships and approaching discipline. McCluskey et al. (2008) also found compelling evidence of a shift in the school's overall culture, as noted by increased use of restorative language by students and teachers. Teachers also noted that staff morale had increased, the school atmosphere was recognizably calmer, and students felt more positively about their school experience, similar to Gregory et al. (2016). Although some teachers had trouble viewing RP as a substitute for traditional punitive accountability practices, especially in serious situations, teachers did see a benefit to using RP in daily student interactions. Overall, the use of RP had positive impacts on school discipline while simultaneously increasing student and staff morale in the process.

The literature around RP in higher education and student affairs is relatively limited. However, the scholarship around the use of RP in K-12 education indicates that there is a positive correlation between the use of RP and positive impacts on student/teacher relationships and how students and teachers experienced the school environment, especially when involved in accountability and disciplinary processes. Additionally, the literature and intentional training on effective supervisory practices in student affairs are limited, in comparison to other fields (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). Despite the lack of supervision research in student affairs, scholars who have studied supervision, in and outside of student affairs, agree that a positive supervisory relationship is impactful and critical to the success of an

organization (Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff (2001); Shupp & Arminio, 2012). Scholarship by Shupp and Arminio (2012) and Tull (2006) indicated that effective supervisory approaches led to higher job satisfaction and lower staff attrition rates. The current study may begin to fill a gap in both the student affairs supervision and restorative practices literature by exploring the use of RP as a supervision supplement in student affairs and higher education.

4.1.4. Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative case-study methodology to explore how mid- and senior-level residential life professionals understand the role of and apply restorative practices as supervisors. Case-study research is bounded by space and time and helps researchers explore the "what" and "how" of a case (Yin, 2018). Specifically, this case study is an embedded, intrinsic case-study. Embedded case-studies focus on a smaller sub-unit of an overall case that a researcher might be interested in. Entry-level supervisors were excluded from this case because this case sought to examine how mid- and senior-level residential life professionals used RP in supervision specifically. This case study is also intrinsic in that my interest lies more in understanding the case versus making an argument for or against the case (Stake, 1995). With intrinsic case studies, the ability to replicate the study in another environment and achieve comparable results may be limited (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

Research Site. This study was conducted in the Verdis University (VU) residential life department. VU is a mid-sized, public, four-year institution in the northeast United States. As a department, VU Residential Life employs over 80 professional staff and over 200 undergraduate and graduate student staff across six

distinct teams. VU Residential Life's teams are organized into four categories for the purposes of this study. Residential education areas included staff that are primarily responsible for student programming as well as the safety and wellbeing of students in the residence halls. Business operations included staff who were primarily responsible for business and human resources functions or assessment and special projects within the department. Residential services areas included staff who were responsible for transactional student services such as housing assignments and desk operations. Finally, facilities operations included staff members responsible for building maintenance and facility repairs.

VU Residential Life was selected as it is one of the first residential life departments to incorporate RP in its residential communities as well as at the staff supervision level. The host department has been using RP to build residential communities and address impact within its residential communities since 2009. RP was primarily used in the residential education area of the department until 2018 when VU Residential Life began to expand the implementation of RP across all teams within the department. The department now uses RP both proactively and responsively among its professional staff and it is an expected component of supervision within the department. Due to VU Residential Life's success in using RP as a unit, the Division of Student Affairs at VU has begun to incorporate RP at a divisional level.

Research Participants. For the purposes of the study, mid-level professionals were considered as individuals responsible for supervising at least one professional staff member. Senior-level staff were individuals who supervised at least one professional staff member and were also responsible for leading one of the six teams within residential life

and typically held Associate Director titles. Participants had to be a current former mid or senior-level supervisor in VU Residential Life between 2014 and 2019.

Purposeful sampling methods were utilized to ensure that participants who met the above criteria were selected (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Sampling methods had to ensure that participants who were selected for the study met the established criteria. Eleven supervisors out of 21 eligible individuals participated in the overall study. Of the participants, four were senior-level supervisors within the department, half of whom were formerly employed in the host department. Of the remaining seven mid-level participants, one was not employed in the department at the time of the study. Table 1 provides a brief overview of the participants. Furthermore, of the four categories of staff within the host department, only residential education, residential services, or business operations areas of the department were represented.

Table 1

Participant Information

Name	Professional Level	Functional Area	Years in the host department	Employment status in the department
Alfredo	Mid	Residential Education	6 +	Former staff
Helga	Mid	Residential Education	4-6	Current staff
Leslie	Senior	Business Operations	6 +	Current Staff
Mary	Mid	Residential Services	6 +	Current staff
Michelle	Mid	Residential Education	6+	Current staff
Paloma	Mid	Residential Education	2-3	Current staff
Steven	Senior	Residential Education	2-4	Former Staff
Sue	Mid	Residential Education	< 2	Current staff
Tahj	Senior	Business Operations	< 2	Current Staff
Terri	Senior	Residential Education	< 2	Former Staff
Zoe	Mid	Residential Education	2-4	Current staff

Data Collection. Each supervisor participated in two individual, semi-structured

interviews lasting no more than 60 minutes. Each participant created a pseudonym. The first interview engaged participants in exploring their conceptualization and application of RP in their supervisory approach. The interview protocol was split into two subsets of open-ended questions based on the participant's self-identified level of use of RP. Questions were modeled after the four components of RP and asked participants to think about their supervision via the social discipline window, their use of fair process, navigating shame and affect, and their use of RP circles. The second interview focused on the perceived impact of RP on their supervisory approach and asked participants to compare their supervision style before learning the RP model to their current supervision approach in the areas of effective communication, accountability and conflict management, and decision making.

In addition to interviews, a mix of publicly available data and private documents from VU residential life, such as position descriptions, training documents, and departmental memos regarding supervision, were analyzed. Documents referring to the use of RP in the department were mostly from the residential education areas because they are the primary driver of RP for the department. I was unsuccessful in obtaining documents, such as position descriptions, from other functional areas within the department. Regardless, the documents I did procure helped to contextualize the participants' narratives by providing a departmental perspective (Biddix, 2018).

Data Analysis. Individual interview data was analyzed using in vivo coding to highlight and elevate the voices of the participants (Saldaña, 2016). The in-vivo codes were then pattern coded to look for themes across all participants. It was essential to center participant voices in this study in order to provide as accurate a framework as

possible for assisting student affairs practitioners in adopting a restorative supervisory approach (Saldaña, 2016). Pattern coding helps to pull codes from first-cycle coding methods to bring meaning and clarity to the findings. Data was generally considered a theme based on whether it showed up across two or more participant interviews.

Researcher Positionality. I am a former VU Residential Life mid-level supervisor with over four years of service in the department. I supervised entry- and graduate-level staff members and was responsible for supervising using RP and role modeling RP's use for their staff members. Due to the researcher's positionality, additional steps were taken in the data analysis to control for bias. This included member checking (Creswell, 2013), as well as reaching an intercoder agreement on random segments of data to provide for more accuracy of the results.

My positionality also provided some benefits to the study as well. Given my role as a staff member at VU, I was better able to understand the contexts in which the participants' experiences were situated. I had a personal understanding of the departmental culture, the vernacular used, and even some of these specific situations that participants referenced. Additionally, my positionally assisted in the participants comfort with me as a researcher. During interviews, candidates appeared more at ease, candid about their experiences and demonstrated an openness that might not have been there had I been an outside researcher.

4.1.5. Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine at RP-based supervision through the lenses of mid and senior-level professionals in residential life to understand how they operationalized RP as supervisors. The majority of themes were considered based on

whether or not multiple participants shared the same perspective. The themes presented paint a picture about the role RP can play in assisting mid- and senior-level professionals to supervise effectively and illustrate the need for further study. These themes included: how participants conceptualized RP; how participants used RP in their supervisory approaches; and, participants' perceived associated challenges.

Conceptualization of RP. When asked to define restorative practices and the role they believed it played in supervision, the supervisors in this study each conceptualized RP similarly. One dominant conceptualization of RP was that it allowed individuals to name their affect and address any impact that occurs within a relationship. Michelle said, "…RP was a great way of being that brings in how everybody is, all of our feelings, all of our emotions, all of our skills and strengths, and all of our weaknesses, and really honors all of those." Similarly, Mary expressed:

> I would say restorative practices is a good way of supervising staff members. . . where we engage the supervisee and try to incorporate everything about that person, what's going on with them for the day, their feelings, their emotions, but also to help them get their work done and help me help them to get their work done.

Outside of utilizing RP to assist supervisors and supervisees in feeling heard holistically, several participants also spoke directly about the potential of RP as a guide for effective supervision. In sharing her perspective on using RP as a guide for supervision, Zoe expressed:

> I also think supervision is the thing that a lot of people don't get training or guidance around it. I think it [RP] does provide a framework which for some

people, that can be really reassuring and supportive to have a framework to be able to jump off of.

The transferability of the RP framework to a supervisory approach was echoed by Helga, who added that "RP offers not just a framework, but a language and steps. Not to say it's formulaic, but there are clear ways to engage in a restorative manner that is about repairing and at the same time holding folks accountable." As participants considered the role of RP in supervision, they often cited RP's use as a supervision guide, a way to hold staff accountable holistically, as well as promoting two-way communication.

RPs Application in Supervision. Mid- and senior-level professionals in VU Residential Life used RP due, in part, to the departmental culture around RP and the written expectation for professionals to supervise restoratively. For example, the Associate Director for Residential Education position description expects that a successful candidate "understand and communicate the departmental community development philosophy of restorative practices to the residential education team." This provided insight into VU's dedication to instilling a restorative culture within the residential life department, as they consider the potential ability to implement restorative approaches as part of the candidate review process for departmental leadership positions. When examining the application of RP from the supervisor's perspectives, three themes emerged: proactive development of supervisory relationships; balancing the emotions of staff and work priorities; and, accountability and conflict management.

Proactive development of supervisory relationships. Individually, several supervisors used RP to help them intentionally develop a positive supervisory

relationship with their supervisees. This appeared to be one of the more common uses of RP for participants. For Steven, RP involved:

> A fair amount of proactive and positive relationship building, being able to build up significant and clear social capital, or a framework of having a relationship in a work context with someone, with appropriate boundaries. Not being someone's best friend necessarily but being able to build a very positive personal work relationship.

One of the primary methods of intentionally developing supervisory relationships using RP was informal and formal circles. However, several supervisors discussed how they used the philosophy of the RP continuum and circles to build relationships without being in a circle format. For example, Paloma had a casual approach to using circles to foster supervisory relationships. She commented, “circles would be us going to lunch. You know like an impromptu proactive circle, let's go to lunch, and let's chat. How are things going? What's happening for you? And what are some things are you looking forward to?” Leslie also used proactive RP informally to check-in with her staff saying, “I always try to go down the hall and check-in and see if there's anything out of the ordinary, or he'll come in and check in with me if my day starts out with a bang.”

Helga discussed using RP circles formally to structure her weekly one-on-one supervisory meetings as a basis for developing and maintaining relationships with staff while also setting mutual expectations: “We both have expectations, right, so we know . . . even if it's a one on one, we're doing a circle. We're opening, asking questions. It's grounding, right, we know what to expect.” Another supervisor, Sue, viewed RP based one-on-one meetings as “conversation[s] that says, ‘Staff, how are things? How is this

between the two of us working?" Both participants indicated the use of RP to set a foundation for how supervisees can expect to engage with their supervisors and vice versa, as well as using circles to check in on their staff holistically, establish and maintain expectations, and foster consistent communication.

Balancing Emotions and Work Priorities. Supervisors in the study also used RP to understand and manage their staff's emotions as well as their own. Supervisors used RP to provide space for staff to name their affect, especially in times of frustration, which appeared to helped staff move forward on professional tasks. Tahj, for example, used affective questions and statements to check in with staff in moments when his staff were feeling negative at work:

> I do feel like I'm supportive and so if I'm checking in and making sure they're okay, I think that assists with the navigating the shame or reaching out sometimes with a little note and just saying 'I know this was a tough day, but this is how we can get past this if we do these steps and we actually stick to it.'

Michelle also noted:

> Allowing folks to name their frustration about it [work] has been really helpful, because we don't allow us to sit in that frustration, but we're like, 'Okay, this is what it is. We don't like that we have this directive, but we still have to do what we need to do.'

Steven expressed: "I think that engaging and allowing people to express shame and understand the role of shame is exactly what allows them to then pursue and achieve departmental goals and priorities." The use of RP to defuse tensions and frustrations was another strong theme that was consistent among participants. Supervisors noted the

effectiveness of providing space for staff to name frustrations in a controlled manner rather than allowing frustrations to build.

Accountability and Conflict Management. The use of RP to resolve workplace conflict and hold staff accountable was another theme that arose in the study data. Participants discussed using RP as a method for helping address the negative impacts that arose in the workplace and to repair relationships. For example, Steven talked about his experiences using RP to mediate conflict conversations between his direct reports and their staff:

> I would be able to step in as a facilitator and facilitate a responsive circle to allow them to be a part of the community, quote, unquote, and participate actively in a response circle as opposed to having to be the hold of the space as the facilitator and not a participant.

Supervisors also used RP to allow supervisees to name their affect during individual accountability conversations which appeared to be an area of importance for participants. Terri expressed it being important to her to "make space for supervisees to also show up vulnerably. To show up fully and authentically, and to also provide feedback to be starting those conversations, and not just the receiver of those conversations." Helga expressed a similar thought to Terri and added:

> Part of accountability is for the challenging discussion between supervisor and supervisee of just naming what is happening. Because until that's really named people are just going to spin around it and call it different things. And I don't feel like accountability can happen until clarity in naming what is happening occurs.

Helga suggested that understanding the core of an issue is important to resolve conflict and hold individuals accountable effectively. From there, Alfredo believed that it then becomes “my role as their supervisor to work with them to figure out how do you make things right whenever something hasn't worked out to how they thought it was going to work out.” Overall, participants discussed using RP to hold staff accountable by naming what was happening, what the impact was, and how they can move forward to make corrections in a collaborative sense.

Challenges to Using RP in Supervision. Although the RP framework had proven effective as a supervision tool for participants in this study, using RP was not without its challenges. The participants named several difficulties in using RP and two themes emerged: the nature of residential life work, the differences between residential education and business and administration roles as well as challenges for staff who were internal processors, or individuals who need time to process their thoughts or feedback before sharing with others.

Nature of Residential Life Work. Residential Life professionals often juggle many different priorities daily, whether it is supervision of staff, student issues, or crisis situations. Participants highlighted that supervising utilizing a restorative framework, while possible, can be challenging as a residential life professional. One challenge that was prevalent in the supervisor’s narratives was the intentionality and time required to proactively incorporate RP into a supervisory approach, especially in residence life. For example, Michelle expressed: “ResLife as a whole is a fairly responsive field. You have to really take a few steps back and slow down. And it’s hard when you’re in a fast-paced job, dealing with 2,500 different personalities and different needs.” Additionally, learning

RP in residential life's fast-paced environment proved challenging for some participants, especially those who were new to the department or in the more business-oriented areas of the department. Tahj, for example, expressed:

> I feel like if you don't understand or fully know RP, it's hard to say that you're using it or hard to practice it on a daily basis. And then it's easy to say, "Well, oh, you can time to look up these concepts." But when you have a schedule that's packed the way it is, it becomes much more tough.

Several supervisors also noted that RP is not a mechanism that is applicable in all situations in residential life work. For example, crisis management and response is a function of many of the mid- and senior-level positions for VU Residential Life staff members, based on departmental position descriptions for Assistant Director and Associate Director roles. Paloma discussed the lack of RP in crisis situations:

> During emergency situations, I tend not to use RP as often. Or I do, it's just I'm in the 'To' box. . .Yes, we would like to lead more from the 'With' box, but the 'To' box still has a role. It still has importance when we are in emergency EOG-emergency operations group mode. You are going to stick to what you've been told what to do. There is no fair process. . . Because whoever's leading has information and we need to just get to crossing the T's and dotting the I's and that's what it is, and that's a real big piece of the role.

Residential Education vs. Business and Administration. There also appeared to be a difference between student-facing and business or administrative positions in residential life in terms of how often supervisors were trained and used RP. Mary, discussing challenges in prioritizing restorative approaches in her work, noted "being a

part of the administrative team... RP isn't number one for us, of our priority. I know what my work is and I do it in the system. So, you kind of lose that, the personal contact." While most participants in the study are were in student-facing residential education positions, how supervisors in business-oriented areas used of RP also warranted attention.

Additionally, because staff in business-oriented roles in residential life may not prioritize using RP, maintaining their RP competency became a challenge for them. Leslie spoke to this point by expressing that in training, "things would click in my head that, "Oh, well, this is good. I can use that." And again though, if you're really not having situations like that all the time, the memory doesn't come right back and click." At VU Residential Life's current stage in establishing a restorative supervisory culture, RP training was expanded to their entire leadership team within the last two years. Although the residential education staff already had familiarity with the framework, non-residential education professionals were trained in RP for the first time.

Internal Processors. Another critique of the RP framework was that it does not necessarily account for internal processors who may need more time alone or in silence to gather their thoughts before being able or willing to share them with others or may experience difficulty or displeasure at having to voice their thoughts or give feedback in the moment, especially in circles. Paloma self-identified as an internal processor and spoke about her challenges with RP:

> The piece I struggle with restorative practices, oftentimes is it caters to the folks who are able to be able to name sh*t, come up with it, and be able to spit it out. And I'm not that person. Even in a circle. 'Oh yeah, I'm going to go left'…I'm the left person. And for me I'm still stressing about when that talking piece comes to

me, ‘what I'm going to say. Oh, better make some sh*t up.’ That's what it feels like sometimes. So, it does not lend itself to work well with internal processors. And I'm a big internal processor. For me to be able to bring something up, it'll take me three days.

While only one participant spoke to the experiences of internal processors, it was a point that is important to consider given varying levels of neurodivergence that may be present within workplace environments.

4.1.6. Discussion

The results of this study support various theories surrounding the use of restorative practices. As indicated earlier, RP is predicated on the belief that when supervisors lead with their staff versus do things to or for them, individuals are happier and more productive (Wachtel & McCold, 2001). Supervisors indicated an increased ability to navigate accountability and conflict management conversations, develop trust through collaborative decision making, as well as build, maintain, and repair supervisory relationships. The impacts of learning the RP framework on the development of supervisory competencies as well as the impact on those
that they supervise warrant further study.

Conceptualizations of RP. The narratives of the participants aligned with the element of RP that seeks to provide space for a holistic view of others and their emotions (Miller & Olstad, 2012). For the supervisors in this study, RP helped them see their staff not just by their role, but as individuals with goals, attitudes, strengths, weaknesses, and personality traits. Restorative justice also honors the role those factors play in how a person conducts themselves professionally, which can be beneficial to staff morale. RP

encouraged the supervisors in this study to take a vested interest in their staff's morale and balance that with supervisory support and accountability. Staff morale can have a significant impact on an organizations' ability to accomplish its goals (Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). Several supervisors considered RP as a way to see their staff holistically and support them as individuals and in the accomplishment of their responsibilities. This finding is important, as it has been noted that when staff feel connected to their work and feel valued as individuals, they are more apt to contribute more effectively and positively professionally and are retained in the field (Mullen, Malone, Denney, & Dietz, 2018).

Several supervisors in this study also considered RP as a framework to assist professionals in supervising effectively, especially in the absence of intentional supervisory training for student affairs professionals (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). The ability to build supervisory relationships, promote communication with staff, and holding staff accountable for performance while managing their emotions arose as prominent themes in the data. This aligns with many of the skills and competencies of successful mid-level staff members, as cited by Senior Student Affairs Officers (SSAOs) (Saunders & Cooper, 1999). Supervisors viewed RP as a mechanism that can provide new supervisors with an outline adaptable to supervisory contexts and a language that allows them to engage with their staff holistically with both accountability and support.

Application in Supervision. The primary goal of this study was to understand how mid- and senior-level supervisors in residential life applied restorative practices in their supervision approaches. The supervisors in this study illustrated the ways RP allowed them to develop supervisory relationships with their staff proactively. However,

as Steven illuminated in his interview, these relationships are not expected to be personal friendships and should include appropriate professional boundaries. Supervisors who seek to build friendships with staff over supervision, accountability, and directing their work, can be detrimental to the professional's development as well as organization (Winston & Creamer, 1997).

However, using RP to get to know and check in with staff proved beneficial for supervisors in this study. RP assisted these supervisors in being able to balance the emotions of staff while also holding them accountable for their performance. The ability to balance emotions and feedback of staff with the staff performance and organizational goal achievement is especially important for mid-level professionals given their need to liaise between entry level staff and upper administration (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009). The supervisors in this study indicated that their staff check-ins provided their staff with an opportunity to share their feedback and share emotions professionally about impactful decisions. Supervisors providing this opportunity for their staff was seen as helpful for them supervisees address their staff's frustrations and help them move forward on what needs to be accomplished. It also appears that RP can provide a guide for supervisors to engage in feedback and accountability conversations to help maintain staff work performance while also considering their staffs' perspectives and feedback. This may also increase staff investment to departmental initiatives and directives.

Finally, participants referenced the usefulness of RP in holding their staff accountable within the workplace. As mentioned earlier, two of the essential competencies of mid-level professionals include the ability to manage staff and mediate conflict (Saunders & Cooper, 1999). Supervisors referenced using RP to hold staff

accountable in a holistic manner through using restorative questions to address impact, repair relationships, and collaborate on the best way to move forward. What makes the use of RP in accountability different than traditional punitive measures is that individuals who are impacted by someone's actions get to share their affect, which then can be heard by the other party. RP believes that individuals are more apt to make a positive behavioral change when they are confronted with how their actions impact individuals with whom they have a relationship (Wachtel, 2015). The supervisor holds partial responsibility for creating an environment where naming affect in accountability conversations can happen. This helps accountability become a developmental experience (Winston & Creamer, 1997). Furthermore, similar to the findings in McCluskey et al., (2008), the restorative approach to addressing conflict and accountability may also positively impact morale within the organization as accountability does not become a top-down experience but one that is collaborative in nature by allowing staff to be heard and seen holistically.

Challenges of RP. This study's research findings also highlighted the potential challenges and flaws of the framework and obstacles to using RP in a supervisory context. The use of the RP framework may not be fully applicable to all aspects of residential life work, such as crisis management. For participants who may have roles in responding to crisis situations, restorative approaches may not necessarily have a place during an active crisis situation. Paloma eluded to the premise that in a crisis the priority is resolving the situation and following directives. Collaborative decision making and staff feelings are of secondary importance.

Furthermore, the use of RP seemed to vary based on the type of role the professionals held. Supervisors in student-facing, community building roles were more familiar with RP as well as had more opportunities to practice and hone their skills in using the framework. This contrasted with some of their professional counterparts in business and administrative focused areas where the opportunities to practice and prioritize RP or the training opportunities may not be as consistent. This finding appears accurate given that 2018 was one of the first times where departmental teams outside of residential education were trained to use RP since incorporating it as a departmental approach in 2009. Until 2018, the residential education areas of the department where the primary users of RP. Although the RP framework is not industry-specific, some participants did speak to the nature of different types of residential life work and indicated that certain types of residential life roles might lend themselves to the use of RP over others.

Additionally, while RP allows for individuals to feel as if their feedback or feelings are considered, RP circles may not naturally be accommodating for individuals who need processing time in order to communicate their thoughts with others. For example, RP circles may pose challenges for staff with various neurodivergence, such as autism or ADHD. Staff who have ADHD may become restless and unable to concentrate in circles (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2018), especially if they are held in locations with multiple distractions. The structure of RP circles may also be difficult for staff members with autism who may be non-verbal or sensitive to certain stimuli. Supervisors using elements of RP should be cognizant of potential

neurodivergence and seek ways to adapt RP circles to better account for potential neurodivergence.

4.1.7. Implications for Practice

There are several implications for student affairs supervisory practices that emerge from these findings. As indicated in earlier research (Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006), how a supervisor approaches supervision can have a profound impact on whether a staff member persists in the field. Job satisfaction and morale of student affairs staff are critical to the retention of high-quality staff. Participants in this study demonstrate the merit of using RP to supplement supervisory practices in student affairs. Similar to McCluskey et al.'s (2008) findings, supervisors should consider using RP in tandem with other supervisory practices to be successful. RP does not have the ability to fully support all essential aspects of supervision, such as providing professional development or formal evaluation, thus supervisors and departments considering this approach to supervision should consider how RP can be incorporated alongside other supervisory and departmental practices regarding supporting and supervising staff. RP may be incorporated alongside other effective practices for student affairs, institutional human resources policies and procedures for accountability, and professional development.

Ongoing development and training in RP are important to the success of maintaining a restorative supervision culture. As some participants eluded to, their ability to consistently supervise restoratively was limited because of a lack of ongoing development, training, and opportunities to engage in formal restorative practices. As such, staff should be trained to use the RP framework as supervisors and offered ongoing

development to assess, maintain, and enhance their RP skills. RP training should be extended to supervisors and supervisees so that both are partners in creating a restorative supervisory relationship and can collaborate on the establishment of restorative supervisory goals. The ability to collaborate on supervisory goals between supervisors and supervises has been proven as a core component of supervisory working alliances (Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff, 2001). Additionally, involving all staff in RP training allows everyone to have a consistent starting point and common language around RP resulting in more successful implementation. As shown in Scottish K-12 schools, RP was more successful because its implementation was viewed as a communal effort and was also facilitated by their colleagues (McCluskey et al., 2008). As staff turnover within the department, having experienced RP facilitators to conduct RP training for newer staff can aid buy-in, as staff are learning the framework from their colleagues and may also help further the RP capacity of more experienced practitioners.

Student affairs organizations should also consider the role that RP can play in accountability practices among professional and student staff. Although departmental accountability processes may be guided by institutional HR policies, as in Alfredo's case, there may be room to explore how RP can be integrated into these conversations. Studies in the K-12 arena demonstrate that when RP was used alongside formal accountability processes it assisted teachers in avoiding isolated punitive consequences for students, while also helping students feel respected and heard by their teachers (Gregory et al., 2016). Reframing supervisory accountability conversations to allow for staff to name affect and impact can help staff with feeling heard and respected while also holding them accountable for their performance. Supervisors new to using RP should take the time to

review restorative questions prior to accountability conversations and develop a conversation script to best use RP style questions while also directly addressing the impact or issues warranting an accountability conversation.

4.1.8. Conclusion

The RP framework holds promise as a supervision aid for professionals at various levels in residential life, specifically, and student affairs, in general. This study highlighted RP's ability to help supervisors proactively build individual supervisory relationships, work collaboratively with their staff, hold staff accountable in a holistic manner, and resolve conflict within the workplace. Overall, the participants in this study expressed positive views on using RP in conjunction with other approaches in their supervision. Similar to the findings in McCluskey et al. (2008), in which schools were more successful in incorporating RP in conjunction with other practices and policies, combining RP with another supervision framework could prove beneficial. The results from this study highlight the potential of the RP framework to provide a foundation for supervision in student affairs at various levels.

4.1.9. References

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4.2. Restorative Synergism: Connections between Restorative Practices and Synergistic Supervision in Residential Life.

The purpose of this second paper is to examine connections between restorative practices and the synergistic supervision framework. Findings highlight the potential of RP to serve as a supporting framework for achieving many of the same outcomes as synergistic supervision. This specific study connects to the second research question: "What evidence of synergistic supervision exists in supervisors' utilization of restorative practices in residence life?"

Restorative Synergism: Connections between Restorative Practices and Synergistic Supervision in Residential Life.

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4.2.1. Abstract

Synergistic supervision is considered one of the most effective practices for supervision in student affairs. Yet, the synergistic supervision framework does not provide explicit guidance on how to achieve its outcomes. Restorative Practices (RP) may have the capacity to support a synergistic supervision approach in student affairs. The goal of the overall study was to to understand the experiences of professionals at Verdis University (VU) (pseudonym) in using RP as supervisors. The researcher looked for an indication of the potential connection between RP and the synergistic supervision framework. Findings in the study indicate that may be used to support several aspects of the synergistic supervision framework. The findings also indicate a strong connection between the use of RP and the joint effort, dual focus, holism, two-way communication, and proactivity outcomes of Winston and Creamer's (1997) Synergistic Supervision framework.

Keywords: Synergistic supervision, restorative practices, residence life

Restorative Synergism: Connections between Restorative Practices and Synergistic Supervision in Residential Life

Student affairs scholars have described supervision as a critical yet complex component of many professional positions. Part of this complexity may be explained by the diversity of supervision approaches implemented by student affairs professionals (Winston & Creamer, 1997). Although student affairs researchers and practitioners have long realized that supervision is challenging, scholarship and research about effective supervisory practices for student affairs has not kept up with other fields (Davis & Cooper, 2017; Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003). There is evidence indicating that other industries have taken the concept of supervision more seriously in comparison to student affairs through establishing supervisory models for their fields, developing management training practices, and producing contemporary research on supervision. (Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003). For example, the psychology and counselor education field has researched and produced multiple conceptual models of supervision, which has led to the development of various supervisory frameworks and models (e.g., Campbell, 2013; Lenz & Smith, 2010; Stoltenberg, McNeill, & Delworth, 1998; Page & Wosket, 2013). The indication of effective supervisory practices does not mean that supervision is a one-size-fits-all activity or that there is one specific way to supervise staff. However, what other fields have determined is that there are some supervisory practices that have been shown to be more effective. In student affairs, Winston and Creamer's (1997) synergistic supervision framework is considered among the models for effective supervision (Davis & Cooper, 2017; Tull, 2006).

In student affairs, the ability to consider the act of leadership and how that

leadership is exercised in the supervision, evaluation, and motivational wellbeing of students and staff is considered an essential competency for all professionals to possess (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). Although synergistic supervision encourages supervisors to be holistic in their supervisory approach through outcomes of effective supervision, the framework does not provide explicit guidance on how to achieve those outcomes. Theoretically, both the synergistic supervision model and the restorative practices (RP) framework have several parallels with each other, which may demonstrate a symbiotic relationship between the two. Restorative practices are predicated on the belief that individuals are happier and are more likely to positively change behavior when individuals in leadership roles lead 'with' them as opposed to 'to' them or 'for' them. (Wachtel, 2015). Both the RP framework and synergistic supervision emphasize a collaborative approach to leadership and supervision, fostering two-way communication, and in considering how relationships are built between individuals.

Problem Statement: The effectiveness of supervision has a number of implications that can range from the ability of a department to achieve its outcomes to the professional development, morale, and retention of new entry-level professionals (Davis & Cooper, 2017). The retention of student affairs professionals is important to consider, given the attrition rate of new professionals within the first six years of their positions is approximately 20 to 40% (Tull, Hirt, & Saunders, 2009). Synergistic supervision is often seen as one of the more comprehensive and effective supervisory frameworks in student affairs due, in part, to its emphasis on developing dual-focused supervisory relationships that consider the holistic development and wellbeing of staff, which contributes to staff morale and retention (Tull, 2006). Although the synergistic supervision framework is

considered to be an effective approach for student affairs supervision, the framework does not provide explicit guidelines on how to achieve its intended outcomes. Furthermore, the synergistic supervision model focuses primarily on the professional development of supervisees. Synergistic supervision does not appear to consider the personalities, attitudes, or emotions of professional staff and how these emotions impact how staff conduct themselves at work (Davidson, 2012; McGraw, 2011).

Purpose of the study: This study was part of a larger research project that sought to understand how mid- and senior-level supervisors in residential life used RP as a part of their supervisory style. Given the number of theoretical parallels between the frameworks, RP may be able to serve as guide for achieving many of the same outcomes as synergistic supervision. This individual study explored the question '*what evidence of synergistic supervision exists in supervisors' utilization of restorative practices in residence life*?' This study is geared towards student affairs scholars and practitioners interested in continuing the conversation of synergistic supervisory practices and how the same outcomes may be achieved through using RP.

Significance: ACPA and NASPA jointly consider effective supervision as an essential competency that student affairs professionals should cultivate at multiple levels (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). As such, this study may provide student affairs supervisors with additional tools and resources to increase their supervisory capacity, especially for supervisors who may be new to supervision in the field. Through highlighting the similarities and differences between the RP and synergistic supervision frameworks, supervisors would have a better understanding of how the frameworks support each other in a supervisory context as well as how RP may be used to supervise synergistically. This

research also seeks to contribute to the literature on student affairs supervision and the near non-existent literature of the use of RP in student affairs.

4.2.2. Conceptual Framework of Restorative Practices and Synergistic Supervision

RP is based on a fundamental hypothesis that when individuals in positions of leadership do things *with* people rather than *to* or *for* them, individuals are more likely to make positive changes in their behavior and are generally more productive, happier, and healthier (Wachtel, 2015). Leading with people can be accomplished through a framework which brings together theory, research, and indigenous practices to help individuals lead in a way that provides high structure but also high support. Overall, RP as a framework consists of the social discipline window, fair process, understanding shame and affect, and the RP continuum.

The social discipline window represents four engagement styles based on a continuum of high to low support and control (expectation setting and boundaries). Using support and control to varying degrees can form the basis of several leadership or supervisory approaches. These can include authoritarian (high control, low support), permissive (high support, low control), and neglectful forms (low control and support) of supervision. Individuals who are familiar with RP emphasize leading from the *with* modality (high control and support) as much as possible (Miller & Olstad, 2012). Fair process is a collaborative decision-making process that speaks to the human need to feel respected and to have ideas considered within the workplace. Staff often desire transparency about the rationales behind the decisions their leaders make, especially decisions that impact them, which fair process helps promote (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). Fair process prompts supervisors to invite staff into decision-making processes and to

consider their feedback when making decisions and being transparent, including explaining how final decisions were made.

An understanding of shame and affect allows supervisors to be cognizant of how individuals, including themselves, engage with others in conflict (Wachtel, 2013a). Navigating through shame, which is a response to conflict, involves engaging in a responsive conversation where all impacted parties have the opportunity to share how someone's actions affected them, as well as participate in relationship repair efforts. These responsive conversations can help individuals move from shame to responsibility and enable them to better repair relationships. RP components such as using fair process or coming together to name impact is often facilitated through the use of circles, which are based on indigenous practices (van Alphen, 2015). The use of circles via the RP continuum can help build trust and promote two-way communication among groups. The RP continuum includes affective statements and questions, impromptu circles, formal and group circles, which can be adopted to be used proactively and responsively; and formal conferences which are generally only responsive in nature (Wachtel, 2013a).

Winston and Creamer (1997) perceived student affairs supervision beyond a top-down process, which was the dominant view of supervision in western culture (van Alphen, 2014). In the dominant view of supervision, supervisory touch points were often reserved for moments when staff were being held accountable or to problem solve and were rarely done proactively (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). Winston and Creamer (1997) conceptualized the synergistic supervision model as a framework that moved away from this top-down model to one where supervision is a collaborative, ongoing activity between a supervisor and their staff (Tull, 2006).

As part of the synergistic supervision framework, Winston and Creamer (1997) identified nine critical components they believed should be present in a supervisory relationship: (1) joint effort; (2) dual focus; (3) two-way communication; (4) holistic; (5) focus on competence; (6) goal-oriented; (7) growth orientation; (8) systematic and ongoing; and, (9) proactive. In the synergistic supervision model, the supervisory relationship is jointly developed between a supervisor and supervisee through mutual expectations and goal sharing. Additionally, ongoing, two-way communication where information and feedback are free flowing between parties is also important (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). A synergistic supervisory relationship not only focuses on the supervisee's work output or accomplishment of departmental goals, but also considers their professional and personal development, general wellbeing, and morale. Synergistic supervisory relationships are also proactive and do not occur only when there are problems. Supervisors are systematically and consistently checking in with staff and providing opportunities for professional development.

4.2.3. Review of Relevant Literature

Studies have recognized the impact a supervisory relationship can have for student affairs staff, especially entry level professionals. The synergistic supervision model considers the supervisee's goals, their professional and personal development, as well as the goals of the department or institution (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). When supervisors balance departmental priorities with their supervisee's needs and development, high-quality staff are more likely to be retained and the department is able to accomplish its outcomes. Tull (2006) surveyed 435 members of ACPA to understand the relationship between job satisfaction, intention to leave, and perceived level of

synergistic supervision received. The researcher found a significantly positive correlation between the perceived level of synergistic supervision that staff experienced and job satisfaction. Tull (2006) also found a significantly negative correlation between being supervised synergistically and intention to leave a position; the more an employee felt their supervisor was supervising them synergistically the less likely they were to consider leaving their position.

Similarly, Shupp and Arminio (2012) studied the supervision practices that new professionals who had recently completed their master's programs experienced. In their study, Shupp and Arminio (2012) identified five factors indicative of effective supervision for new professionals: meaningful supervisory interactions; supervisor accessibility; utilizing formal evaluations; providing unique supervision; and, prioritizing professional development in the supervisory relationship. These five elements closely parallel the synergic supervision model, especially in regard to supervisory collaboration, balancing organization goals with the staffs' personal and professional development, joint effort, and two-way communication. Combining those five factors helped to create a positive supervisory experience for new professionals in student affairs according to the study (Shupp & Arminio, 2012).

What both Tull (2006) and Shupp and Arminio, (2012) indicate is that supervisory relationships that are able to focus on both the supervisee's personal and professional development and the organizational goals is a critical aspect to supervision. Furthermore, strong supervisory relationships are ones in which both the supervisor and supervisee collaboratively defined the goals and nature of the relationship. Both this collaborative approach to supervision and the supervisor's and supervisee's ability to

communicate openly and freely with each other are important to staff development and retention. Additional parallels between synergistic supervision and RP include an emphasis on enabling strong two-way communication, viewing accountability as a developmental and humanizing experience, as well as promoting the need for a joint effort in building relationships. Many of these principles align with the RP framework, which emphasizes working *with* people versus doing things *to* or *for* them (Lohmeyer, 2017; Wachtel, 2013a). Synergistic supervision's emphasis on developing dual-focused relationships that are jointly created and include two-way communication overlap with the RP framework.

One method of developing dual-focused relationships and promoting two-way communication, especially in education, may be the restorative practices (RP) framework. Current studies about the use of RP and RP circles in education predominantly examine its use as a classroom management tool in K-12 education (Bailie & Anderson, 2016; Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2015; Hopkins, 2011). One study of RP in student affairs was conducted by Pointer (2018), who surveyed resident advisors (RA) and residence life professional staff at Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. The author sought to understand the progress the institution had made in implementing the RP framework in one residence hall as well as the impact of RP on the residential community as part of a pilot program. The study yielded positive results for the implementation of RP as noted by the residence life staff. RAs noted communication with their residents had improved, especially in instances where there was misconduct or conflict that occurred in the community. The RAs in the study felt that RP had given students a venue to come together to address conduct violations as opposed to addressing

conduct only punitively. Furthermore, students appreciated the opportunity to be heard in a way they perceived to be open, honest, and respectful. The professional staff also noted that the students who lived where RP was being piloted took responsibility for their actions at a higher rate compared to students in other residence halls. RA participants felt that the communication and accountability of students improved in part because of the commitment to build community using RP from the first day students moved on campus.

Although there have been some studies of the use of RP in residential life (Miller & Olstad, 2012; Pointer, 2018: Whitworth, 2016), these researchers focus primarily on using RP as a community development tool within residential communities. Other scholarship around RP in higher education is primarily focused in student conduct and judicial processes (Clark, 2014; Rinker & Johnson, 2014; Wachtel 2013a). Scholarship on student affairs supervision is also sparse. With the limited literature around supervision, especially synergistic supervision and restorative practices in student affairs, this study begins to address a gap within the literature through exploring the use of RP as a potential supportive framework for supervision.

4.2.4. Methodology

This study was a part of a more extensive research project exploring the experiences of mid- and senior-level professionals in using restorative practices as supervisors in residential life. This individual study is grounded by one research question: What evidence of synergistic supervision exists in supervisors' utilization of restorative practices in residential life? The goal of this individual study was to uncover empirical evidence of the connection between RP and synergistic supervision in the accounts of mid- and senior-level residential life professionals. This evidence might elude to the

viability of RP as a supporting framework for synergistic supervision, which could suggest further detailed study.

This study used qualitative case-study research methods which are bound by time and space. Case study methodology helps researchers explore the *what* and *how* of a particular case (Yin, 2018). This individual case study can be described as an embedded and intrinsic case-study. Embedded case studies explore a particular sub-unit of a case as opposed to a case in its entirety. This case specifically sought out indicators of synergistic supervision in how mid- and senior-level professionals described using RP, versus how RP was used by all levels of supervisors within the host department. The study was also intrinsic in nature, as the primary goal for this study was to better understand the use of RP in supervision overall, not necessarily to make an argument for or against its use. Therefore, as indicated by Baxter and Jack (2008), due to the intrinsic nature of this case study, the results may not be entirely replicable.

Study Site. Verdis University (VU) is a four-year, mid-sized public institution in the northeast United States. The study examined the use of RP by mid- and senior-level supervisors in the VU Office of Residential Life, which has incorporated RP into the culture of the department since 2009. VU Residential Life has six functional teams within the department, which for the purposes of this study have been organized into four categories: Residential Education (responsible for student safety, conduct, community development, and programming); Facilities Operations; Residential Services (transactional student services such as housing assignments, desk operations, key management); and, Business Operations (financial management, human resources, assessment). Since 2009, the residential education teams have been the primary users of

RP in the department until 2018 when other teams began to be trained on the RP framework. VU Residential Life was chosen as the research site, in part, because of the longevity and success of the department's use of RP. The success of VU Residential Life's departmental use of RP has led to the student affairs division at VU adopting RP as part of the division-wide culture.

Participants. Following institutional review approval, 11 mid- and senior-level professionals, out of a possible 21 participants, were recruited via email to participate in this study. Participants had to be a mid- or senior-level supervisor in the host department between 2014 and 2019. For the purposes of this study, mid-level professionals were considered staff who supervised at least one full-time professional staff member whereas senior-level staff were those who supervised at least one full-time mid-level professional and oversaw one of the six functional teams within the department or the department as a whole. Seven mid-level participants across residential education and residential services and four senior-level participants in residential education and business operations areas participated in the study. Each participant was asked to select a pseudonym for the purposes of the study. These which are highlighted in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Information

Name	Professional Level	Functional Area	Years in the host department	Employment status in the department
Alfredo	Mid	Residential Education	6 +	Former staff
Helga	Mid	Residential Education	4-6	Current staff
Leslie	Senior	Business Operations	6 +	Current Staff
Mary	Mid	Residential Services	6 +	Current staff
Michelle	Mid	Residential Education	6+	Current staff
Paloma	Mid	Residential Education	2-3	Current staff

Steven	Senior	Residential Education	2-4	Former Staff
Sue	Mid	Residential Education	< 2	Current staff
Tahj	Senior	Business Operations	< 2	Current Staff
Terri	Senior	Residential Education	< 2	Former Staff
Zoe	Mid	Residential Education	2-4	Current staff

Data Collection. Data collection included individual interviews and document review. Each supervisor participated in two open-ended, semi-structured interviews lasting no more than 60 minutes. The interview protocols used in this study were developed based primarily on the RP framework. Additionally, the interviews also encouraged supervisors to reflect on their overall supervision style and what they perceived to be the impact of RP on their supervisory development. Interview data was supplemented by selected departmental documents, such as position descriptions, training documents, and departmental memos. The review of departmental documents helped to contextualize the participants perspectives by providing a glimpse into the departmental lens in which participant experiences are situated (Biddix, 2018).

Data Analysis. The interview data for this individual study was coded primarily using a priori coding methods. Creswell (2013) defined a priori, or emergent codes, as those that are derived from literature or other sources and are not primarily derived from the data. As this particular study was specifically looking to determine whether there was evidence of synergistic supervision in how participants described their use of RP as supervisors, a priori codes were derived from Winston and Creamer's (1997) synergistic supervision framework. Themes were determined based on whether a trend appeared in at least two participants interviews. Analysis began with a priori coding methods and then were put into theme categories using pattern coding methods.

Researcher Positionality. I am a former mid-level professional from the host department where I supervised entry-level professional staff members for over four years. As a member of the department's leadership team, I participated in the development of RP competencies within the department. Furthermore, I was also a trained RP facilitator and assisted in the training of new staff on the RP framework. Because of my positionality, additional methods were used to challenge potential bias in the data analysis. Member checking as well as working with a collaborating researcher to review coded data though an intercoder agreement (Creswell, 2013) were instrumental in assisting the principle researcher in controlling for bias in the study analysis.

My positionality also served as a benefit during the data collection phase. As a former staff member having had many of the same experiences as the participants I was interviewing, I was better able to understand the context that their perspectives and narratives were situated in. Being able to approach interviews with an understanding of the context allowed me to better sit with and understand the participant's perspectives as opposed to trying to make meaning of experiences with a context I may not have understood. Additionally, given that the participants were all colleagues of mine at the time of the study, this familiarity assisted in the participant's willingness to be open with me in sharing their perspectives. An openness was demonstrated by participants which may not have been present with an outside researcher.

4.2.5. Findings

The purpose of this study was to uncover possible indicators of synergistic supervision in how supervisors described using RP as part of their supervisory approach. Although these findings do not reveal whether or not participants were cognizant of the

potential connections between RP and synergistic supervision, elements of the synergistic supervision framework were evident in the participants' accounts. Five of the nine components of synergistic supervision emerged in the data at varying degrees: dual focus, holism, two-way communication, joint effort, and proactivity. As such, the findings in this overview will concentrate on RP and dual focus*,* holism and seeing the whole person at work*,* two-way communication, accountability, and feedback, joint effort in supervision and decision making*,* and proactivity in supervision.

RP and Dual Focus. One of the main tenets of synergistic supervision is achieving a dual focus between the work performance and the professional and personal development of supervisees. For supervisors in VU Residential Life, RP enabled them to achieve a form of dual focus by considering their staff's opinions, feedback, and thoughts around departmental initiatives or goals. Several participants discussed using a combination of fair process to consider their supervisees' feedback as well as providing transparency in their decision-making processes. For example, Steven used RP, specifically fair process, "to hear from staff, to collect their ideas and thoughts and information, to then make a decision that really did impact them, explaining why we made a decision and explaining exactly what it meant for them moving forward."

Perhaps one of the strongest themes in the data regarding dual focus was the supervisors' understanding of shame and affect as well as the use of the RP continuum to better understand their staff's emotions in a professional context. The understanding of shame and affect was especially prevalent as participants discussed addressing emotions and concerns of staff when departmental directives were issued in order to challenge them to move forward productively. Supervisors valued that RP allowed them to honor

their staff members' perspectives and the emotional impact that can arise when departmental leaders make decisions, especially those they may not agree with, while also holding them accountable. Sue expressed:

> If the department is coming out with some new initiative, well, there should be time and space for my supervisee to explore their emotions on that particular subject. That would be my support. And then my challenge would be, what are you going to do with all of those emotions? I'm still going to have my expectations.

For Sue and other participants, dual focus appeared through the use of affective statements and questions, which is a part of the RP continuum to hear what staff are experiencing in their positions. Several participants also used RP and an understanding of shame and affect to hear the staff's affect and feedback and balanced them with accountability. Helga recounted an experience in navigating emotions of her staff, when her staff's individual priorities conflicted with departmental priorities:

> For me, it was honoring what was happening, the emotional content for some folks in the room, as well as what they felt were priorities for them. And being able to say, "I will work with you." Basically, "I'm not budging. These are our deadlines. . . I'll work with you to restructure what you are thinking are priorities so that we get everything done that you want to and that we need to as a department."

Holism and seeing the whole person at work. The supervisors in this study also discussed how RP had helped them see their staff holistically. Holism in synergistic supervision is an understanding that an individual's personal attitudes cannot always be

separated from their professional persona, so supervisors should assist staff to develop professionally and personally. Through an understanding of how shame and affect or a person's attitudes or beliefs could manifest in the workplace, supervisors expressed being able to work with staff to manage their emotions, especially in light of negative affects and within appropriate limits. For example, Sue said:

> I think you get to have thoughts and feelings, and then my job is to hold up a mirror that your thoughts and feelings that continue to be significantly negative, that's affecting performance . . . Attitude affects a team's engagement, morale. And so, I don't think shame and affect means you get to just verbally throw up on people. We still have to show up in a workspace, and so want to provide that opportunity.

The ability to help staff manage their emotions while also establishing professional boundaries and limits was important to several participants. Michelle discussed being able to use RP in times of conflict to help individuals feel heard and included:

> Because we have this framework of being, making people feel included, really listening to folks, being explicit in what we do when things [conflict] happen and when things arise, I think we're able to work them out or work through them more, because we've built this really cohesive-type bond.

Ultimately, RP appeared to help supervisors build relationships and engage the emotions of a wide variety of staff members. For example, Steven expressed, “I can name specifically, restorative practices being one of those things that helped me bridge the gap across different supervisees that had very different personalities, or leadership styles themselves, or identities.”

Two-way communication, accountability, and feedback. A synergistic approach to supervision promotes an environment where two-way communication is possible and staff as well as their supervisors are empowered to give each other open and honest feedback. Through the development of trust and the use of the RP continuum, RP also helped supervisors create an environment with their staff that promoted two-way communication. Several participants discussed this. For example, Terri expressed:

> I think when it's [RP] done well, I think both folks are empowered to take responsibility for the supervision relationship, and so it's not just the supervisor who is providing feedback or being vulnerable. They make space for supervisees to also show up vulnerably, to show up fully and authentically, and to also provide feedback to be starting those conversations, and not just the receiver of those conversations.

Michelle further spoke to this point:

> I think one of the things that's great about restorative practices when I do it well is that folks can share, "I didn't like that very much, Michelle. I really need to talk to you, talk that through." . . . I try hard to share my affective statements and to be receptive to people sharing theirs with me, so if I have an impact on them, I hope that I'm creating a culture where folks can share with me the way they feel about what I did and the impact.

Like dual focus, two-way communication was featured in participant accounts when discussing the RP continuum and understanding shame and affect as supervisors. Supervisors in the study expressed making an intentional effort to cultivate a supervisory

relationship with their staff that helped supervisees feel comfortable in giving affective feedback.

Joint effort in supervision and decision making. Joint effort in supervision is the belief that supervision should not be top-down but a collaborative activity between supervisor and supervisee. One of the key findings from the study was to use RP to invite staff members to play an active role in the development of the supervisory relationship. Supervisors in the study discussed using RP to jointly set a foundation for the supervisory relationship with their supervisees. For example, Helga expressed "it [RP] helps to set a framework. . . It's a foundation in which both supervisor and supervisee can operate from. So, I don't see RP as being one sided, definitely not a top down process."

Additionally, joint effort in supervision often manifested for participants through using fair process. Zoe, in discussing the use of fair process with her staff said:

> I was just talking to [supervisee name] about the structuring of our programming for the fall and at the end of the day, that's really her thing. Does it effect and relate to my role? For sure, but it's her area that she gets to play in, so it's a lot of fair process because here's the expectations, here's what we need to happen. You figure out what you think the best way is to get there and the end of the day, we'll come together, and I'll decide.

Joint effort in supervision also involved using RP in group accountability conversations within the team. Participants used RP as a means to help address group dynamics and conflict when they arose. Based on participant perspectives, a restorative culture helped to promote a shared responsibility for group dynamics where the onus to address group conflict was not just on the supervisor. In one capacity, Helga spoke to this

point in saying that "when conflict has erupted, the team is just off, like we're not on the same page or somebody says something, you know we can pause in that moment and have a circle, just unpack it." Similar to one-on-one touchpoints in synergistic supervision, where both the supervisor and supervisee were jointly responsible maintaining the relationship, RP also appeared to promote a sense of communal responsibility for resolving conflict that arises within the team, versus being the sole responsibility of the supervisor.

Proactivity in supervision. Both restorative practices and synergistic supervision refer to the importance of proactivity. In this study, proactivity means both intentionally building supervisory relationships and having ongoing supervisory touch points while also proactively identifying and collaboratively resolving problems that may arise. Participants expressed that RP encouraged them to proactively develop supervisory relationships with their staff. Steven said:

> Yeah. . .in many ways, I don't think supervisees identify "I was just asked an affective question." Questions that engage a new supervisee around "How was the transition?"; "How are they feeling?"; "How is it going for them?"; "What kinds of support do they need?"; "How do the feel about the job they are doing?" That's a pretty tangible example of using RP fairly proactively for me.

Participants placed a high value on proactively building relationships in the workplace and its importance in accomplishing departmental goals and efforts. Michelle said:

> You have to build a strong community, in order to do the work that you have to get done, and that people are happy and satisfied with that work. I think that's

> huge. . .I think restorative practices and its framework in supervision is really important and works well when we're able to respond and be responsive when things happen that don't feel good.

As both Steven and Michelle indicate, proactivity in the terms of RP connects to proactivity in synergistic supervision, despite both models having different conceptualizations of what being proactive means. The use of RP allowed supervisors to identify morale or performance concerns from staff early on as well as build supervisory relationships so that staff were more apt to share concerns with their supervisors when they arise.

4.2.6. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there were indicators of synergistic supervision present in how supervisors described using RP as a part of their supervision approach. The findings elude to the premise that in an implicit sense, many of the same outcomes of synergistic supervision can be achieved when supervising restoratively. The outcomes of synergistic supervision were especially present in regard to dual focus, holism, two-way communication, joint effort, and proactivity in supervision.

RP, Holism, and Dual Focus. The synergistic supervision model conceptualizes dual focus in a supervisory relationship where the personal and professional wellbeing of staff members are considered along with the accomplishment of departmental goals (Winston & Creamer, 1997). The synergistic supervision model also expresses that the supervisory relationship should be conducive to staff members' feeling that they have the ability to influence the development of their professional and departmental goals as well

as help create strategies to accomplish them. The belief is that when staff "perceive goals as being imposed on them, they are unlikely to make personal investments in the goals' achievement" (p. 197), which parallels the fundamental hypothesis of RP, as indicated in the theoretical framework. The use of fair process appeared to allow supervisors to make decisions while also acknowledging that their decisions impact their staff and thus invited their staff's input. This finding aligns with studies in corporate management environments conducted by Kim and Mauborgne (2003). Supervisors using fair process to communicate the rationale behind a decision and what staff can expect from the decision (explanation and expectation clarity) can help demonstrate a supervisor's commitment to understanding their staff and working *with* them as opposed to *for* them or *to* them (Lohmeyer, 2017). Supervisors demonstrate their commitment to staff opinions and feedback by being transparent in the decision-making process. The use of fair process helps to demonstrate to staff that the supervisor understands that their decisions impact them and their work and are committed to working with staff as opposed to doing things to or for them.

Another component of synergistic supervision is a focus on the personal and professional wellbeing of staff and working with staff holistically. When staff members perceive their supervisors as having a vested interest in them as individuals and a willingness to assist them in accomplishing personal objectives, they are more likely to be loyal to the institution and unit (Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). Furthermore, Cropanzano, James, and Citera (1992) stated that when staff needs and goals are aligned with organizational goals, intrinsic job satisfaction and motivation increase. The findings indicated that RP encouraged supervisors to consider their staff's wellbeing and morale

while also providing supervisors with a guide to address their staff's emotions and attitudes directly. However, given the professional context of student affairs work, the use of RP and the consideration of staff's emotions does not mean that work does not happen, as participants pointed out. RP does encourage supervisors to not solely focus on professional outcomes and to consider their staff's wellbeing, as seen in the data.

The premise behind a holistic approach to supervision, according to Winston and Creamer (1997), is that "it is impossible to separate people and their attitudes and beliefs from their professional positions" (p. 211). Individuals are not always able to completely leave their emotions, personalities, and beliefs behind when they come to work. Synergistic supervision purports that supervisors must take into consideration the whole person to help staff grow professionally and personally (Ober, Granello, & Henfield, 2009). RP had provided supervisors with a framework that assisted them in balancing their staff's emotions and their staff feeling heard with the accomplishment of institutional or departmental priorities. Additionally, RP also appeared to help supervisors engage with their staff around their attitudes and address how they show up in the workplace, especially attitudes that were consistently negative. A holistic approach to supervision encourages recognizing staff members as people in order to help staff remain productive and maintain high morale within their roles (Addison & Gladieux, 2018). Furthermore, RP may also have the capacity to assist supervisors in managing the different personalities of staff members while being a consistent aspect of supervision.

Two-Way Communication and Feedback. Another element of a synergistic supervisory relationship is free-flowing communication between a supervisor and supervisee. One of the tenets of synergistic supervision is that supervisees should feel that

they are able to give their supervisors honest and critical feedback, as freely as their supervisors give them feedback (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000). Feedback from staff could be about decisions that supervisors have made, overarching departmental initiatives and goals, as well as information about their supervisory relationship. Participants suggested restorative supervisory approaches helped them create a relationship where two-way communication could thrive through use of the RP continuum. A conversation between supervisor and supervisee where individuals can ask the question "What's coming up for you? What do you feel needs to happen to make things right?" (International Institute for Restorative Practices, n.d.) as part of the accountability conversation also provides an opportunity for both parties to jointly create solutions to resolve conflict and repair any harm.

Supervisors in the study also discussed using RP circles to communicate proactively and responsively with their supervisees. These circles were used to facilitate a wide range of conversations from casual check-in conversations to accountability and feedback sharing, which aligns with two-way communication principles in synergistic supervision (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000). When two-way communication with new professionals is ongoing, it allows not only supervisees to get continual feedback from their supervisors on their performance, but also supervisors to receive feedback about their effectiveness as a supervisor. Several participants used RP circles to actively empower their staff to share their feedback and affect which was then used as a diagnostic tool for their supervision style and allowed them to make appropriate changes, if needed.

Joint effort in supervision and decision making. Synergistic supervision purports that supervision is something that should not be done *to* staff, rather it is a collaborative venture between the supervisor and supervisee (Tull, 2006; Shupp & Arminio, 2012), which is similar to RP's hypothesis as mentioned earlier. Both models recognize that both individuals within a relationship have valuable contributions and mutual responsibilities to the success of the relationship. The spirit of joint effort and fair process, as illustrated by supervisors in this study, is that a collaborative approach to supervising and decision making does not necessarily dilute a supervisor's authority or purview to make decisions. Instead, with appropriate boundaries, RP allows for supervision to be a collaborative activity that also helps staff feel valued and empowered to actively contribute to the direction of department beyond just carrying out directives (Lohmeyer, 2017). Staff who feel valued and appreciated by their department often have an increased investment in the achievement of departmental goals and overall success of the department (Tull, 2006; Winston & Hirt, 2003). As the findings eluded to, RP may have the capacity to help build a community and a higher level of investment in departmental goals from staff, however, this only occurs when supervisors prioritize the proactive development of supervisory relationships.

RP also appeared to have encouraged participants to have a vested interest in the success of the team including through the mediation of team conflict. Participants illustrated that when a restorative culture is established, the responsibility for resolving conflict and addressing harm within the workplace does not just rest with the supervisor alone. Instead, everyone in the organization has the agency to hold each other accountable and actively participate in conflict resolution efforts. The use of group circles

allows for the responsibility of resolving conflict and harm to be shared among staff, instead of conflict resolution relying on the leader.

Proactivity in Supervision. RP and synergistic supervision promote proactive relationship building to minimize problems and to maximize the success of the group, yet both frameworks view proactivity from different angles. For synergistic supervision, proactivity refers to supervisors and supervisees working together to identify performance issues and develop solutions before they become more significant problems later (Winston & Creamer, 1997). Additionally, "supervisory sessions should be used to inform supervisors about mistakes or incidents that have taken place" (p. 209), so that supervisors can assist in developing appropriate solutions. Although synergistic supervision does not speak explicitly about proactively building supervisory relationships with staff, the framework indicates that supervisory touchpoints should occur more than just when problems arise. Being able to use restorative questions allowed for supervisors to identify real concerns that may arise for staff, especially those new to their role, which brings this use of RP in alignment with synergistic supervision's view on proactivity in supervision. When supervisors can use guiding questions, RP has the potential to track potential performance and morale issues or concerns earlier. The ability to identify potential staff morale concerns earlier may assist supervisors in addressing such concerns sooner in the effort to retain staff.

Proactivity in RP refers to the importance of intentionally building relationships so responsive RP is more effective (Shearer, 2016). This proactive relationship building helps supervisors create an environment where staff feel comfortable approaching their supervisors with mistakes or concerns that a supervisor can then assist with, as indicated

by the supervisors in the study. Supervisors used RP to proactively build relationships by using RP circles, which provided supervisors with a series of questions to check-in and potentially identify performance, competency, morale, or retention issues with their staff.

4.2.7. Implications for Practice and Research

The findings from this study show that there is strong potential for supervisors to achieve many of the same outcomes of synergistic supervision through implementing RP within their supervision. However, the practice and scholarship of RP in higher education supervision is non-existent. The findings of this study can serve as a guides for supervisors and scholars eager to delve into a restorative approach to supervision. This study has several implications and recommendations for practice and research that scholars and practitioners should consider.

Implications for Practice: Practitioners who seek to use RP to supervise more synergistically should consider offering ongoing training and development on the RP framework. Some participants, especially those in non-residential education areas of the department named the lack of opportunities to train or use RP as a barrier to fully endorsing and effectively using the RP framework as supervisors. Ongoing training and professional development opportunities can include the incorporation of RP training in yearly departmental training, periodic reviewing of RP components during meetings throughout the year, and intermittent workshops held by more experienced RP users. Opportunities to review the RP framework and to learn about how to incorporate RP into their supervision from colleagues may prove effective in establishing a strong restorative foundation to base advanced skills on (McCluskey et al., 2008; Shupp & Arminio, 2012).

Although the findings demonstrate the potential of RP to serve as a supporting framework for synergistic supervision, they do not support the use of RP as the sole means for this supervision style. As the findings indicate, four components of synergistic supervision (focus on competence, growth orientation, systematic and ongoing, and goal-oriented) were not strongly present in participant accounts. The absence of these four synergistic supervision principles may indicate that RP is not able to support specific competency building efforts and professional development. Supervisors should also consider incorporating other supervisory processes to fill the gaps that RP may leave. Mechanisms to support the professional development of staff specifically can include discussions around long-term career goals, conference attendance, the consistent use of formal and informal performance appraisals, and encouraging staff to facilitate self-study (Saunders et al., 2000; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Winston & Creamer, 1998).

Shupp and Arminio (2012) recommended an institutional commitment to formal and structured supervision as a practice to retain new professionals in student affairs. They noted "senior student affairs officers must model a culture of supervision for the division and establish supervision expectations for their staff members (p. 169)." An approach to creating a restorative department, which can support synergistic supervision, should also be a departmental commitment. Senior leadership within the department should model the use of RP within their supervision as well as establish expectations and guidance for staff to do the same. Supervisors' modeling of RP can include discussing the use of RP during individual supervisory meetings, using RP as an evaluative measure on performance evaluations, and explicitly naming when they are using restorative approaches as a supervisor (e.g., when holding a restorative staff circle or when using fair

process). Miller (2016) stated that leaders should model RP by leading *with* their staff and providing high levels of support while also establishing and enforcing clear expectations around using RP to engage with their staff.

Recommendations for Future Research: This study sought to determine if there were indicators of synergistic supervision in how supervisors described using the RP model as a part of supervision. Although there were indicators of synergistic supervision present, these indicators appeared implicit and not intentionally woven into the supervision style. Further study is warranted to understand how RP can be explicitly used with the intention to supervise synergistically. Future studies should concentrate on what the use of RP as a synergistic supervision supplement could look like when participants are intentionally using RP to achieve the outcomes and operationalize the components of synergistic supervision. Studies around intentionally using RP to supervise synergistically may provide more useful data on the viability of the RP framework as a supervision aid.

Five of the nine elements of synergistic supervision were strongly present within the data. However, four of these elements (goal-oriented, systematic and ongoing, focus on competence, and growth orientation) were present minimally in the participant narratives around using RP as supervisors. This weak representation could suggest areas where the RP framework does not support synergistic supervision. It could also be due to the way participants described their experiences using RP or the individual supervisor's approach to using RP in supervision. Based on the findings of this study, RP does not appear to support the professional development functions essential to supervision. However, in order to better understand whether or not RP can support the full synergistic supervision framework, more study is needed to further understand how RP may be used

to achieve many of the same outcomes as the synergistic supervision model. Future study should involve cross training of both the RP and synergistic supervision frameworks for participants. Studies should concentrate on assessing whether participants used RP to supervise with synergistic supervision in mind as well as what connections participants are able to make between the use of RP in supervision and the synergistic supervision.

4.2.8. Conclusion

Supervision in student affairs is vital to the accomplishment of institutional missions as well as the retention of high-quality staff. Both the RP and synergistic supervision frameworks can help supervisors cultivate an environment that balances the institutional mission with the wellbeing of staff. When RP and synergistic supervision are combined as part of the supervisory relationship, the combination of the two frameworks may lead to stronger supervisory relationships that are conducive to high morale, professional and personal development, and accomplishment of personal, professional, and departmental goals.

Additionally, the RP framework provides both proactive and responsive methods to working with staff. Supervisors build and maintain a positive supervisory relationship such that when negative impacts arise RP allows both the supervisor and supervisee to come together to repair the relationship and hold each other accountable. Learning to supervise staff effectively can be a challenge for student affairs professionals. The use of the RP framework, which provides tangible steps to supervising synergistically, can serve as a viable guide to training experienced and new supervisors in student affairs. The concept of combining RP and synergistic supervision warrants further study in order for student affairs professionals to unlock the full potential of the two frameworks.

4.2.9. References

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4.3. Restorative influences: Examining restorative practices' impact on supervision skill development for mid and senior-level professionals in residential life.

This paper is intended to highlight the ways in which the restorative practices (RP) framework influenced the development of supervisory skills for mid and senior-level professionals. Special attention was paid to evidence indicating RP's contributions to the participants' ability to supervise synergistically in residential life. This paper connects to the third research sub-question: "What evidence of RP's impact on the supervisory skill development of mid- and senior-level supervisors emerges from the data that suggests that further study is warranted?"

Restorative influences: Examining restorative practices' impact on supervision skill development for mid and senior-level professionals in residential life

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4.3.1. Abstract

The following study examined the reflections of 11 residential life mid- and senior-level supervisors from Verdis University (VU) Residential Life about the impact of restorative practices (RP) on their supervision style. This study used a qualitative case-study approach. Four main themes emerged from the study regarding the influence of RP on supervisory skill development: developing emotional self-awareness; communication style; accountability and difficult conversations approaches; and, opportunities to reflect on their supervisory style.

Keywords: Restorative practices, supervision, residence life

The impact of restorative practices on supervision skill development in student affairs

Scholars and practitioners have often considered student affairs a relationship-oriented field in which building and maintaining relationships with colleagues, students, and shareholders are important (Schwartz, 2017). Because being able to work with others and establish working relationships is important to the success of student affairs, it stands to reason that how relationships are formed between staff and those they supervise is equally important, especially since supervision is and of itself people centered (McNair, 2011). As a person-centered activity, the effectiveness of the supervision that staff receive has an impact on the success and accomplishment of student affairs goals and priorities. Given that student affairs as a field relies on the effective supervision of staff, it is important for supervisors to understand how to communicate with others, build strong supervisory relationships, and hold their staff accountable in a developmental manner.

Despite the importance of supervision in student affairs, professional staff rarely have a strong understanding of how to effectively supervise others when they assume a supervisory role. The lack of intentional supervisory training in student affairs often contributes to this minimal understanding of effective supervision (Stock-Ward & Javorek, 2003). Lamb and colleagues (2017) found that new supervisors in student affairs often learn how to supervise through trial and error or observations of other supervisors where supervision skills are generally self-taught. Although there may be different supervision models that student affairs professionals can use to influence their supervisory style, very few discuss the importance of the supervisory relationship or how

to build and maintain said relationship. When looking outside of student affairs, the Restorative Practices (RP) framework may provide professionals with a guide for building strong supervisory affiliations while developing supervisory skills in the process.

RP hypothesizes that "human beings are happier, more productive, more cooperative, and are more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them" (Wachtel, 2005, p. 87). The RP framework indicates that collaborative and relational approaches to leadership, as opposed to punitive or permissive leadership styles, tend to be more effective when working with others. The RP framework also encourages leaders to strongly consider how they put their authority and leadership into practice when working with others (Miller & Olstad, 2012). When extended to the concept of supervision, RP can help encourage and guide student affairs supervisors in reflecting on their supervisory approaches.

Purpose of the Study. This study was part of an overarching study researching the use of RP by mid- and senior-level supervisors in residential life. The goal of this individual study was to critically examine the potential impacts of RP on the supervisory skill development of residential life supervisors, and what evidence may warrant further study. I geared this study towards student affairs supervisors and scholars who may be interested in restorative approaches to supervision. Ideally, this study will provide practitioners with evidence of how RP may support their development as supervisors, while also highlighting the importance of continued research on the application of RP in student affairs, especially in supervision.

Significance. Published student affairs competencies have emphasized the importance of intentionally developing strong supervision skills (ACPA/NASPA, 2015. The development of effective supervision skills is important given that current attrition rates of new student affairs professionals leaving the field range between 20% and 40% (David & Cooper, 2016; Tull, Hurt, & Saunders, 2009). This study may demonstrate the ability of the RP framework to guide the intentional development of supervisory competencies in student affairs. Ensuring that supervisors have frameworks that can help them intentionally develop as supervisors is critical to staff retention and to the success of student affairs departments. Such intentional development may contribute to the reduction of the attrition rates of professionals who leave student affairs, at least due to inadequate supervision.

This study is also one of the first to explore the use of RP as a function of supervision in student affairs. Current literature around RP primarily focuses on its use as an alternative to "zero-tolerance" policies in K-12 education (Buckley & Maxwell, 2007; Gregory, Clawson, Davis & Gerewitz, 2016). The literature on RP in student affairs often focuses on the use of restorative justice (RJ). RJ is considered a sub-unit of RP in student conduct adjudication and student mediation processes (Clark, 2014; Rinker & Jonason, 2014) or as a function of building residential communities in residence halls (Miller & Olstad, 2012; Pointer, 2017; Whitworth, 2016). This study begins to address the gap between supervision and RP in student affairs literature.

4.3.2. Review of Literature

Winston and Creamer (1997) stated that "supervision is one of the most complex activities that student affairs professionals are called upon to perform" (p. 187). The

complexity of student affairs supervision may be due, in part, to supervisory roles encompassing multiple functions. Supervisors often serve as leaders, role models, coaches, disciplinarians, and colleagues to their staff (Scheuermann, 2011). Although supervision has been considered a challenging function of my professional roles, student affairs professionals rarely receive intentional training on how to supervise others productively (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Winston & Creamer, 1997). Graduate-level students often complete student affairs masters' programs and step into entry-level positions where they are responsible for supporting and supervising undergraduate students, a role that they often feel unprepared for (Davis, 2004). As professionals advance in their careers and enter into mid- and senior-level roles, they still are rarely trained on how to effectively supervise professional-level staff (Lamb et al., 2017). As such, many mid- and senior-level professionals often step into supervisory roles with limited knowledge on how to develop their supervision skills.

Nichols and Baumgartner (2016) studied 20 mid-level professionals to examine their readiness for professional staff supervision and how they developed their supervisory skills. These researchers indicated that although the majority of participants held a master's degree from a student affairs, higher education, or comparable program, many participants felt they were unprepared for what professional supervision entailed. Additionally, the study found that there was a disconnect between the participants' prior supervision of undergraduate students and what they classified as supervision experience. Participants viewed undergraduate student supervision as 'working with students' and not as supervision. When participants assumed their first mid-level roles, it was the first time many of them experienced the challenges that came with supervision (Nichols &

Baumgartner, 2016). Supervision challenges were due, in part, to feelings of being unprepared to become a supervisor as well as not considering their prior supervision experiences as relevant. When describing how they developed their supervisory skills, participants expressed their development was often self-guided through reading books, talking with mentors, attending conference sessions, observing other supervisors, or just relying on their experience and intuition. These findings are similar to the conclusions of Calhoun and Nasser (2013) who found that one-way supervisory development occurred through the self-directed use of books and articles on supervision. Furthermore, Calhoun and Nasser (2013) also found that approximately 39% of their participants entered supervisory roles either because it was position dictated or because they took a leap of faith and applied for a position they may or may not have felt ready for.

Another challenging aspect of student affairs supervision, especially at the mid- and senior-level, is the changing expectations around what supervision should look like in student affairs. Mid- and senior-level supervisors are often expected to ensure that their staff are performing in their roles and get the best out of their staff without subscribing to authoritarian or strictly top-down supervisory approaches (Tyrell, 2014). Supervisors often have to work with staff and garner buy-in while holding them accountable in a developmental manner to ensure that staff are meeting departmental priorities. To push staff to higher levels of performance while also attending to the morale of staff, developing strong supervisory relationship is critical (Cooper & Boice-Pardee, 2011).

Calhoun and Nasser (2013) examined the nature of entry-level staff supervision by surveying over 500 ACPA and NASPA entry-level professionals and their supervisors. Participants indicated that two of the main indicators of a good supervisor

were that they had strong administrative skills and had a relational approach to supervision. Both entry-level professionals and their supervisors also highly valued supervisors who were caring and had a personal touch. Furthermore, having solid administrative skills referred to "organization, good communication skills, humor, concise in giving out information, detailed oriented, good writing skills, someone who self-reflects, someone who sets deadlines." (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013, p. 28). Many of these skills complement the findings of Boehman (2007) who asserted that effective supervisory relationships included open communication, a demonstrated value of professionals, and supervisors who were both supportive and challenging. Boehman also found that supervisors who were relational and were administratively strong, including in areas of communication and self-reflection, were deemed to be good supervisors by both entry-level staff and their supervisors. Overall, Calhoun and Nasser's (2013) study compliments the findings Arminio and Creamer (2001) who asserted that one element of quality supervision was a focus on human needs in supervision and the accomplishment of organizational priorities.

Additionally, quality supervisors gave feedback in a way that included providing opportunities for staff to process their conversations and tend to their emotional state and compose themselves. Furthermore, both Calhoun and Nasser (2013) and Arminio and Creamer (2001) emphasized the importance of building strong interdependent supervisory relationships. Both studies further support the findings from Saunders and Cooper (1999) who found that senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) expressed that building cohesive teams, communicating and collaborating with others, and resolving

interpersonal conflicts were among some of the critical competencies mid-level professionals.

Restorative practices (RP) is a community-building framework that uses a person's social capital to promote communication between individuals, build trust within organizations, and build and maintain strong relationships, including those where a power dynamic is involved (Wachtel, 2013a). The tenets of RP state that when individuals in leadership lead *with* those they lead as opposed to top-down approaches or are permissive, individuals are happier, more likely to make positive behavioral change, and are more productive in general (Miller & Olstad, 2012; Wachtel, 2013a). A restorative leadership approach uses circles to promote a communal sense of collaboration and communication. By using RP, leaders can create environments where individuals are more open to sharing ideas and feedback while also increasing feelings of being heard in the process. The ability to share ideas and be heard can increase goodwill within the organization (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003).

In a study of two middle schools, Brown (2017) examined the effects of a school-wide implementation of RP on the development of a listening culture between students, teachers, and school administrators. Brown (2017) found that RP had contributed to the development of an environment where approximately 50% of the students felt they had the opportunity to share their feedback about their school experience with their teachers. Similarly, teachers also felt they were able to provide feedback and express themselves to school administrators. One notable example was that teachers in the study expressed that they needed more training opportunities on RP to best utilize and implement the framework. Administrators considered their feedback and referred it to the school RP

facilitators to develop additional RP trainings for the teachers. A study by Kehoe, Bourke-Taylor, and Broderick (2017) found similar impacts to the school culture when there was a school-wide commitment to RP. Kehoe, Bourke-Taylor, and Broderick (2017) found that RP helped teachers develop listening skills, enhance their ability to respond to student behavior more calmly, and generally improve their communication skills overall. Furthermore, the consistent use of proactive and responsive circles helped students build a higher self-awareness about the effect of their behavior and were thus more willing to take responsibility for their actions. The reflective RP questions used in circles helped students understand the impact of their behavior and see their teacher's point of view while also feeling that their experiences and feedback were understood and heard by their teachers.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks. One conceptualization of restorative practices is as "a participatory response to wrongdoing, and many other formal, informal, proactive, or responsive strategies in education, social work, counseling, criminal justice, and more." (Wachtel, 2015, p. 7). The framework has been used in a variety of areas ranging from K-12 education to social work and the criminal justice system, primarily to bring individuals together to repair harm and rebuild relationships. The RP framework has four components: the social discipline window, fair process, understanding shame and affect, and the RP continuum.

The social discipline window consists of four approaches to leadership based on the different levels of control (boundary setting) and support that is used (Wachtel & McCold, 2001). The social discipline window can help leaders consider how they use the authority granted to them to lead others. One goal of restorative approaches is to lead

from the *with* modality (high control and support) as much as possible. Fair process is a collaborative approach to making decisions that helps to encourage investment in the organization, trust from staff, and transparency in decision making. Fair process includes engagement with staff before making a final decision. After considering their staff's feedback, the leader makes the decision and explains the rationale behind the decision and then provides clear guidelines about how to proceed in light of the decision (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003).

Understanding shame and affect in RP encourages leaders to be cognizant of the role shame plays in any given moment and how it can drive the behavior of self and others. Shame is one of nine innate affects that Tomkins (1967) hypothesized all humans express. When individuals can name affect, especially negative affects when there has been a negative impact, individuals can address impact while simultaneously building stronger relationships (Nathanson, 1992). An understanding of shame and affect includes knowledge of the compass of shame. The compass of shame is four typical reactions that humans have when shame occurs: withdrawal; attack self (self-put downs); denial; and, attack others (lashing out, displacing blame) (Wachtel, 2013a). The concept of shame is often central to the RP model because of the view of shame as "a regulator of human behavior" (Wachtel & Wachtel, 2012, p.27) Shame is thought to be any interruption to positive affect (Tomkins, 1987). Oftentimes, individuals come together to name affect and build relationships through the use of the RP continuum. The RP continuum includes the different variations of formal and informal restorative circles. RP circles can be used both proactively to build and maintain relationships or responsively to repair harm and address negative impact when it occurs (Wachtel, 2013a).

There are several areas of overlap between RP and effective supervision which may demonstrate the ability of RP to influence supervision training. As cited earlier, effective supervision involves several traits from being detail-oriented to being self-reflective and having the ability to build supervisory relationships. RP is also used to promote effective communication and listening and repair harm to relationships. Additionally, it has also been shown to promote self-reflection and enhance people's ability to build relationships. *Figure 8* highlights the various parallels between RP and effective supervision, as highlighted in the review of literature.

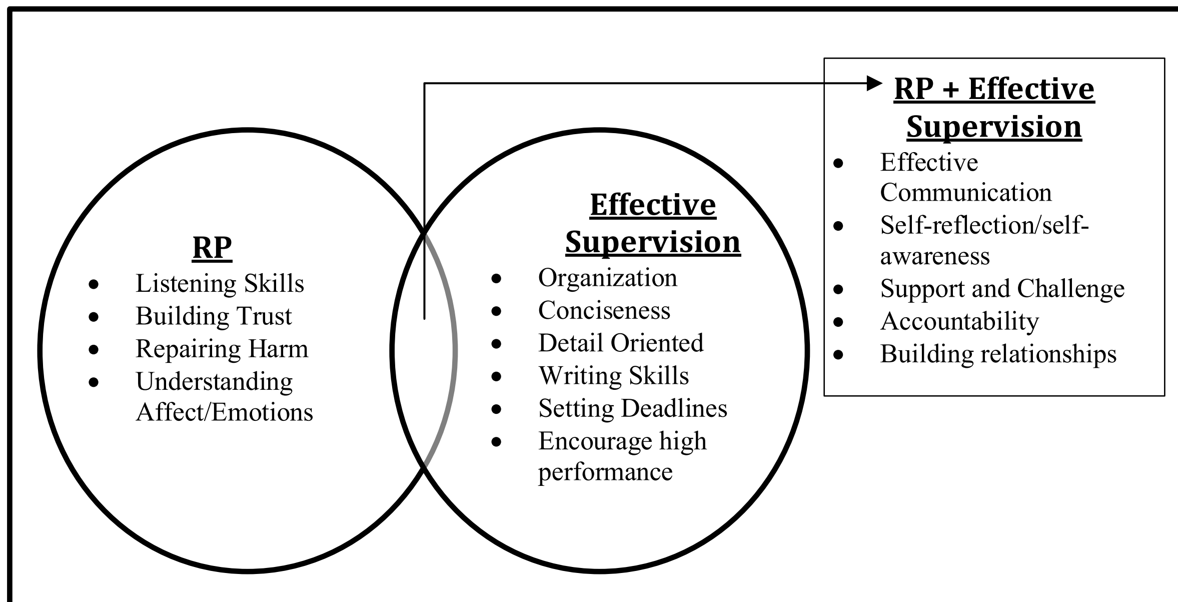

Figure 8: Conceptual framework of effective supervision skills and skills RP helps promote based on review of literature (4.3)

4.3.3. Methods

This qualitative case-study research sought to explore the role of RP in the supervision styles of mid- and senior-level professionals in residence life. For this study, I specifically examined the perceived impact RP had on the supervisory skill development of mid- and senior-level residential life supervisors. Given that case-study methodology traditionally seeks to understand the 'what' and 'how' of a particular case,

this methodology was the most appropriate for exploring this question (Yin, 2018). Specifically, this study is an intrinsic and embedded case-study. In the intrinsic case-study tradition, the goal of the study is to understand how RP can be used in supervision rather than to for or against its use. Because this case study is intrinsic in nature, the ability of scholars to replicate the study and discover the same findings may be limited (Baxter & Jack, 2008). I also considered how RP was used in supervision by mid- and senior-level professionals specifically as opposed to supervision in general, which makes this case study an embedded case-study (Yin, 2018).

Research Site. Verdis University (VU) is a four-year, public institution in the northeastern United States. VU's residential life department employs over 80 professional staff members across six individual sub-units. The six sub-units were organized into four categories for the study: residential education (e.g., in-hall programming, student conduct, and safety); residential services (e.g., housing assignments, key management); business and administration (e.g., human resources, finances, assessment, and strategic planning); and, facilities (building maintenance). VU residential life has incorporated RP into the culture of its department and how they build residential and professional community since 2009. RP was used primarily by the residential education areas of the department mainly as a mechanism to help build, maintain, and repair communities within the residence halls. Over time, the role of RP within VU residential life evolved to include methods of engaging professionally and team building for residential education. In 2018, VU residential life began to expand the use of RP across all teams within the department and is making strides to become a fully restorative residential life unit.

Participants. Following institutional review board (IRB) approval, purposeful sampling was used to ensure that selected participants met the established criterial (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Eleven total participants from 21 qualifying supervisors were recruited via email to participate in the study. Participants were either mid-level professionals who supervised at least one entry-level professional staff member in the department or a senior-level professional who supervised at least one mid-level professional and had oversight over one of the six sub-units within the department or the whole department itself. Participants also had to be either currently employed within the host department or a former employee between 2014 and 2019. As a part of the study, participants were required to select a pseudonym to protect their anonymity, as outlined in *Table 1.*

Table 1:
Participant Information

Name	Professional Level	Functional Area	Years in the host department	Employment status in the department
Alfredo	Mid	Residential Education	6 +	Former staff
Helga	Mid	Residential Education	4-6	Current staff
Leslie	Senior	Business Operations	6 +	Current Staff
Mary	Mid	Residential Services	6 +	Current staff
Michelle	Mid	Residential Education	6+	Current staff
Paloma	Mid	Residential Education	2-3	Current staff
Steven	Senior	Residential Education	2-4	Former Staff
Sue	Mid	Residential Education	≤ 2	Current staff
Tahj	Senior	Business Operations	≤ 2	Current Staff
Terri	Senior	Residential Education	≤ 2	Former Staff
Zoe	Mid	Residential Education	2-4	Current staff

Data Collection. Each supervisor participated in two individual open-ended interviews, each lasting no more than 60 minutes. Due to the lack of relevant studies involving the use of RP as a supervision aid and not solely as a mechanism for

accountability or disciplinary processes, I based the interview protocols on the RP framework itself. I asked participants questions about how they conceptualized their supervisory approach through the social discipline window, how they used fair process, how they facilitated conversations with staff through the use of circles, and how their understanding of shame and affect influenced how they understood their staff. Interview one also asked participants about how they conceptualized the role of RP as supervisors and challenges they may have experienced in using the framework. Interview two, which is of main interest to this individual study, focused on participants' perceptions of the impact that RP had on them and their development as a supervisor. Supervisors were asked to reflect on how their opinions and views as supervisors, as well as their current supervision, differed from their opinions and approaches before learning the RP model.

I supplemented participant accounts with selected departmental documents including position descriptions, training documents, and sample performance evaluations. Documents collected from VU helped to situate the participants' accounts in an overall departmental context (Biddix, 2018). The collected documents were primarily from the residential education areas of the department. The majority were from the residential education areas because these areas were the primary users of the RP framework. In addition, my position as a mid-level professional in this part of the department afforded me access to these documents. Although documents from other areas within the department were sought out, I was unable to obtain them for this study.

Data Analysis. I analyzed the interview data using first and second cycle qualitative coding methods. First, interviews were coded using in-vivo coding to best highlight and elevate the voices of the participants (Saldaña, 2016). Elevating the

participants' voices was important given this study's aims to support other practitioners in their supervisory development, thus having the voices of practitioners implementing RP as supervisors was important. The in-vivo codes were then pattern coded to help bring clarity and meaning by organizing them into themes. A theme was based on whether a trend was seen across two or more interviews. Because of the author's positionality, as discussed next, additional steps were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the analysis. To challenge any potential bias that may have been present during my analysis, I engaged another research colleague to review the codes that I developed (Creswell, 2013). Reaching intercoder agreement helped ensure trustworthiness of the research.

Researcher Positionality. I am a former mid-level supervisor in VU residential life, where I served in the department for almost five years. As a mid-level professional who also served on the department's leadership team, I was responsible for role modeling, supervising, and holding staff accountable while incorporating RP. During my career in VU residential life, I was also a trained RP facilitator. In this role, I helped facilitate various proactive and responsive RP circles as well as annually trained undergraduate students in the RP framework. My first-hand knowledge of the context, framework, and implementation of RP enabled me to more readily and thoroughly understand participants' experiences. Additionally, my positionality assisted in rapport building with participants. Given that the participants were also my colleagues within the host institution, I noted that participants were open, honest, and comfortable in sharing their perspectives with me.

4.3.4. Findings

The purpose of this individual study was to illuminate how understanding and use of the RP framework influenced the supervisory skill development of mid- and senior-level supervisors in residential life. Participants spoke at length about how they felt RP influenced who they were as supervisors and how they approached supervision of their staff. Four themes arose from the participants' perspectives: development of emotional self-awareness and intelligence; influences on supervisory communication style; their approaches to accountability conversations; and, how RP encourages them to reflect on their overall supervisory approach.

Developing emotional self-awareness and intelligence. One major finding of this study was that RP helped to promote the development of heightened self-awareness and emotional intelligence in supervisors. An understanding of shame and affect allowed participants to reflect on how emotion and shame arose for them in the workplace and to take appropriate steps to reflect and address the emotion. For example, Steven noted:

> For me, it took me some time to identify almost always when I feel that emotion on the inside, I then very quickly go to a place of 'hmm. That's me really wanting to withdraw and avoid, and that means I'm experiencing shame.'

Several participants expressed that understanding shame and typical reactions to shame allowed them to identify when they were experiencing that particular affect. For example, Helga indicated that if she is "...not talking about something, that's a huge red flag that I'm avoiding that, and why am I avoiding that? Typically, there's some emotional content around shame and it may not have anything to do with what I'm talking about." From there, participants took time for themselves, addressed the source of shame, and became

more critical of their behavior and actions moving forward to ensure their experiencing shame does not influence their response. Zoe indicated navigating the compass of shame was “literally just naming it for myself. Like ‘okay, clearly this happened, you’re clearly in attack others right now or attach yourself,’ whatever it might be, and then taking space for myself.”

Influences on Supervisory Communication. Another theme was the impact of RP on supervisory communication styles. A sample position description of an assistant director role in residential education states the need for professionals to be able to effectively communicate with others in and outside of the department to ensure that they can complete their required tasks. Several participants discussed using the RP framework to build a foundation for their supervisory relationships where staff can understand the expectations regarding communications between them and their supervisors. For example, Sue expressed:

> I think it [RP] gives both parties language to understand how this relationship is going to be based, right? We’re going to establish connections and build community and build relationships, and we’re going to do it through our informal and formal circles. We’re going to do that from affective statements. We’re going to engage in fair process, and these are how I’m going to supervise on most days.

Additionally, RP appeared to help remind supervisors about the importance of being intentional and explicit in their communication with others. Some participants felt that communication was not simply talking and listening but making sure that communication with their supervisees was explicit, so that their staff were able to fully comprehend the communicated message. Michelle provided more detail:

> Constantly thinking about restorative practices has made me be explicit, explicit in fair process, and explicit in the work that we do, explicit in my feelings and emotions, explicit in the impact that others have on me, and explicit on the impact that I have on others. That's really been enlightening for me. It's so important I think for me to have that.

Leslie also described how RP encouraged her to be more intentional in how she communicated with her staff when she needed to tell a supervisee to fix something:

> Knowing that I have to approach somebody and say this isn't right. . . I would feel uncomfortable knowing somebody so well and then explaining this is wrong and not knowing what kind of reaction I'm going to get. But I think adding RP to it, sometimes without even knowing it, I'll stop and think about what I'm going to say, to be thoughtful about what my explanation is.

Although several participants felt that their ability to communicate with their staff had improved as a result of learning RP, some participants did not experience major growth. Instead, RP served as an enhancement to preexisting high communication skills. Terri, for example, noted that "overall, I'm very communicative, and so I don't think that has changed. I feel the biggest change, again, has been the affect piece, and naming affect for me." In Terri's example, RP served as a supplement to her communication style more than it helped strengthen that skill.

Approaches to accountability conversations. Another notable finding was the impact that RP had on participants' ability to navigate accountability conversations with their staff, the confidence they felt in doing so, as well as their ability to listen to others. The structure RP provided appeared critical to holding accountability conversations for

several participants. Helga said, “I think it’s allowed me to be patient and listen and also have a framework to work within. I think in the past without a framework, it just felt loosey-goosey, and those conversations could easily get derailed, right?” Another example came from Zoe who explained:

> I’m not the kind of person who loves conflict or thrives off of it or something like that. But I think RP game me the language and the skills and the capacity to be able to hold folks accountable and do it in a way that felt good to me.

Although RP appeared to be helpful for supervisors at VU, one participant discussed the reality of transitioning to a new institution and how that transition influenced his ability to be restorative in accountability conversations. Alfredo, who transitioned to a higher-level role at another institution expressed:

> I think there was a previous culture of the department supervisors not holding their people responsible and ultimately that making its way back to HR or to other departments in the division. The VP of the division as well too. Honestly, a lot of our accountability processes are very directed by what HR kind of says to do. It doesn’t leave as much room to be restorative sometimes.

Opportunities to reflect on supervision. Finally, several supervisors discussed the ways in which the RP framework, specifically the social discipline window, helped them in their supervision style, their ideal supervisory approach, and the potential barriers could prevent them from achieving their ideal supervision style. Participants named stress and a lack of time as barriers to consistently supervising restoratively, which often precipitated a top-down approach. For example, Sue said, “I think the recognition that

under stress I move to the 'to' box. I think I knew that, but it was like whack smack in the head." Paloma also indicated:

> Depending on my stress level and where things are at, and other pieces that may be playing a big role, I'm going to go to the 'to' box. I'm going to call the AC [Area Coordinator] and tell them "okay, this is what I need you to do. I need to do this, and this is what I need from you"

Supervisors also expressed that the social discipline window helped them reconceptualize how to balance their control and authority as supervisors with support and care in supervision. Tahj, who was also new to supervision in his current role, used RP's social discipline window to consider how to best practice his leadership as a senior-level supervisor:

> Looking at the social discipline window, when you look at the four areas, you're kind of looking at the way in which you want to lead, and so it makes me kind of remember to remove myself from this friendly... I can be friendly, and I can be nice, and I can be kind, but I also can still have authority, in reference to the work and what we're doing. And I think prior to that, maybe I wouldn't have looked at it that way and it would have been "I don't want to be that mean supervisor."

Although Tahj expressed that the social discipline window helped him conceptualize how he could use his authority as a supervisor while also being friendly, Michelle discussed how the social discipline window reminded her to be collaborative in supervision; "restorative practices has helped me understand that when a person is only directive, other folks don't feel like they are all part of the team, that their expertise is valued, that they think that we don't have a voice."

4.3.5. Discussion

The findings gathered from the study were fruitful and highlight the potential of RP in supporting the development of different supervisory skills in student affairs. RP appeared to have allowed some participants to develop higher levels of emotional intelligence, conceptualize supervision differently than they may have in the past, and even gain confidence in holding staff accountable.

Emotional self-awareness. While it is not something traditionally included in the RP mode, there were some similarities in how participants described how their understanding of shame and affect allowed them to cope or alter their actions based on their emotions and definitions of emotional intelligence. Van Rooy and Viswesvaran (2004) defined emotional intelligence as "the set of abilities (verbal and non-verbal) that enable a person to generate, recognize, express, understand, and evaluate their own and others' emotions in order to guide thinking and action that successfully cope with environmental demands and pressures" (p. 72). Anecdotally, supervisors appeared to demonstrate emotional intelligence who indicated that RP enabled them to better recognize, understand, and express their emotions in supervisory contexts, especially when they experienced shame. Shame is considered the interruption of positive affect and can occur in individuals who cause harm or are affected by harm (Nathanson, 1997; Tomkins, 1987). In shame, individuals involved do not have to do anything to experience shame, but could be the recipient of an action that causes an interruption to their positive affect. By understanding the compass of shame, supervisors were able to recognize moments when they were experiencing shame because of an awareness of their wanting to attack others, attach self, or withdraw (Wachtel, 2013a).

The finding that supervisors were able to tune into their emotional state and reflect on their actions confirms finding from previous studies. As indicated earlier, the use of RP helped high school students develop a stronger self-awareness (Kehoe, Bourke-Taylor, & Broderick, 2017). Supervisors' understanding of shame and affect allowed them to track their emotions and take appropriate action to resolve them as opposed to potentially lashing out at a supervisee or withdrawing and creating additional negative impact and shame. Instead, supervisors were able to take time and prepare themselves to address the effect of their supervisee's actions through a restorative accountability conversation.

Communication Style. The ability to communicate effectively is crucial in almost any field, and student affairs is no exception (Boehman, 2007; Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Reynolds, 2017). ACPA-College Student Educators International and National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) (2015) have jointly identified the ability to communicate effectively as a base-level competency for all student affairs professionals. According to these organizations, student affairs professionals should be able to "communicate with others using effective verbal and non-verbal strategies appropriate to the situation in ways that the person(s) with whom you are engaged prefers" (p. 24). Participants discussed at length how RP helped them establish a common language with their staff. Establishing a common language through the use of RP helped supervisors explain to their supervisees what they should expect regarding communication within the supervisory relationship. Although new team members required a level of RP training in order to be able to understand the culture around restorative engagement so that both the supervisor and supervisees would have the same

foundational understanding, for supervisors such as Sue, RP appeared to give them and their teams a common language that served as a foundation for their work.

The RP framework also appeared to help participants consider the importance of intentional and explicit communication when engaging with their staff. Explicit communication helps to set individuals up for success as they can gain a clear understanding of what their responsibilities are and what is expected of them, while also reducing the errors that can be caused by implicit communication (Reynolds, 2017). For some supervisors, RP helped them communicate with their staff more explicitly and establish clear expectations using a common language. RP also seemed to encourage participants to slow down and be intentional about what they said and how they said it, which supervisors believed to be of benefit to staff.

Approaches to Accountability Conversations. The supervisors in this study discussed at length the impact that RP had on their ability to hold their staff accountable outside of traditional, punitive means. Accountability that is developmental for staff is important for the growth and morale of staff in student affairs (Winston & Creamer, 1997). RP emphasizes the use of restorative approaches in conjunction with punitive accountability as opposed to punitive sanctions in isolation (Morrison, 2003). The RP framework served as a reminder for some participants to exercise patience and be fully present in the conversation with staff members.

Supervisors also discussed how RP provided a structure that allowed them to focus their accountability conversations, which provided a source of guidance and comfort. The fluidity of the RP responsive questions can give supervisors a general script from which to craft these conversations. Supervisors' use of RP to facilitate

accountability conversations that engage supervisees in a conversation about their affect aligns with Arminio and Creamer's (2001) study that indicated that quality supervisors deliver feedback in a conversational manner that leaves room for supervisees to process their emotions and compose themselves versus simply delivering feedback and ending the conversation. Furthermore, supervisors' use of RP in accountability to provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on their behavior aligns with studies by Kehoe, Bourke-Taylor, and Broderick (2017). These authors found the use of RP helped teachers develop stronger listening skills and allowed them to approach student behavior more calmly.

As mentioned earlier, RP's structure can also provide a level of comfort for supervisors, especially those who may be conflict avoidant or become nervous during accountability conversations. Accountability conversations can be challenging due to a perceived adversarial nature as well as an inability to always anticipate how the other party will react. The perceived conflict and unpredictability of the other individual's responses to accountability conversations can cause some staff to avoid those types of interactions (Keehner, 2007). Individuals should not assume the RP framework is completely successful in all accountability conversations nor does it always make conversations exponentially easier, as all harm may not be able to be repaired (D. Depaul, personal communication, October 4, 2018). However, because the RP framework is designed to be a less adversarial approach to accountability and provides a structure to guide conversations, it may assist supervisors to feel confident or comfortable in navigating accountability conversations.

Opportunities to reflect on their supervisory approach. The ability to reflect and assess one's supervisory effectiveness and leadership practice is not only important

to the development of supervisory skills but is also an emphasized competency for student affairs professionals. According to ACPA and NASPA (2015), it is important for student affairs professionals to "identify one's own strengths and challenges as a leader and seek opportunities to develop leadership skills" (p, 27). As several participants indicated, supervising restoratively does take intentional commitment and time which can sometimes be challenging. Even when RP is heavily ingrained in a department's culture like at VU, supervising restoratively still requires time and intentionality on the part of supervisors. With multiple demands and priorities, supervisors can sometimes shift to their tangible work and away from being restorative, using fair process, or using affective statements and questions. The natural shift away from collaborative and restorative approaches when supervisors are busy or stressed makes sense, given that individuals are often socialized to resort to top-down approaches to leadership and supervision in western culture (Miller & Wachtel, 2012; van Alphen, 2014).

As mentioned earlier, the lack of supervision training in student affairs can often leave mid- and senior-level professionals feeling unprepared for what the role of a supervisor entails (Davis, 2004; Lamb et al., 2017; Nichols & Baumgartner, 2016). As such, new supervisors may imitate past or current supervisors or adopt a supervision style that is opposite of what they perceived to be ineffective. The social discipline window can help leaders conceptualize their leadership by presenting it in the context of challenge and support (Wachtel & McCold, 2001). As this study found, the social discipline window can also assist new supervisors in understanding how to best practice their leadership and understand that exercising their authority as supervisors does not automatically mean they are a mean supervisor. Enhancing the understanding of having

high control and support in supervision encourages supervisors to challenge themselves to improve their supervisory capacity, build new supervision skills, and grow as managers, important competencies in student affairs (ACPA/NASPA, 2015). RP also encourages supervisors to balance punitive or directive approaches to supervision with being supportive and collaborative at the same time (Miller & Olstad, 2012).

4.3.6. Implications and Recommendations

The findings from this study yield several recommendations for continued research and implications for practice regarding the impact of RP on the supervision skill development for supervisors. Scholars largely have yet to study the use of RP as a supervision aid and as a potential training tool for effective supervision. Further study is needed to fully understand how RP can assist in supervisor development and essential skills required for effective supervision.

Recommendations for future research. The scholarship on restorative practices in higher education is limited and there is much to understand about its use outside of a student conduct or K-12 educational context. The findings show RP's potential to enhance the ability of supervisors to communicate effectively with their staff, reflect on their supervisory approach, and hold staff accountable. Through the identification of practical supervision skills, future research should concentrate on exploring whether RP can serve as a viable framework in developing supervisory capacity in communication, collaborative decision making, and holding staff accountable among other areas of supervision. A comparative analysis using RP to train staff to supervise in environments where RP is not a core element of the departmental culture and in departments such as

VU residential life would be valuable in exploring the capacity of RP as a supervision development tool in student affairs.

Another recommendation for future research is to delve into the impact of restorative approaches on staff accountability processes. The participants discussed how learning the RP framework had assisted them in developing their competency and confidence navigating accountability conversations with their staff. Although supervisors noted the positive impact of RP on their ability to hold staff accountable, the findings from this study are one-sided and do not reflect the perspective of supervisees who are also involved in a restorative accountability style. Understanding the impact of RP in accountability in student affairs performance management from the supervisee perspective would provide a holistic picture of the potential of the RP framework in addressing workplace performance. The next stage for research is a comparative analysis of the professional and morale impact on supervisees when supervisors use RP in accountability conversations as opposed to traditional accountability practices.

Implications for Practice. The findings in this study demonstrate the potential of the RP framework to support the supervision skill development of supervisors in the areas of emotional intelligence, communication, accountability, and balancing challenge/control with support. The participants in the study were trained in the use of RP as part of the department's yearly onboarding process, according to departmental training documents. Training becomes an important aspect of learning RP that supervisors should consider when seeking to adopt RP as a supervisory framework or as part of the departmental culture. Professionals seeking to utilize RP should consider, at a minimum, ongoing training and developing their staff in the use of RP, if they can do so (Kimball,

2013). Training can include practicing the elements of the RP framework periodically throughout the year, observation opportunities, reviewing the RP framework during individual and staff meetings, and investing in having mid- and senior-level staff trained to facilitate and train on the RP model by organizations such as the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP). Investing in training for supervisors and supervisees will not only increase staff competency in RP but also provide supervisors and supervisees with a universal language and foundation to build their supervisory relationship.

Although RP generally approaches accountability in a way that is holistic in nature, Alfredo brought to light a caveat around utilizing restorative approaches, especially concerning accountability conversations. Aspirant RP adopters should have a thorough understanding of their institution's or departmental guidelines for holding accountability conversations. Some institutions may be more regimented in their expectations on how supervisors are expected to navigate accountability conversations, while other institutions may provide their supervisors with more autonomy in how they hold disciplinary conversations with their staff. Supervisors should review their departmental and institutional human resources policies governing accountability processes and expectations to best understand how, where, and if restorative approaches fit in.

4.3.7. Conclusion

Restorative practices provided the participants in this study with fruitful opportunities to reflect and intentionally craft their supervisory styles in a way that worked for them. Providing staff with a framework to reflect on their supervision style and how this can manifest at given moments seemed valuable to the supervisors in this

study. Furthermore, in some ways, the RP framework appeared to make accountability conversations less daunting because of the structure that RP provides, which helps focus the conversation while separating the person from the action. Although not a perfect framework, RP does appear to have promise in supporting supervisory skill development in student affairs professionals, especially as individuals conceptualize what supervision looks like for them and their teams.

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CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore how mid- and senior-level professionals used restorative practices (RP) as part of their supervision style in residential life. The primary research purpose was addressed by exploring three sub-research questions: how did supervisors conceptualize the role of and used RP as supervisors; what are the indicators of synergistic supervision outcomes through the use of RP in supervision; and what impact, if any, did RP have on supervisory skill development. The findings from this study provided a solid picture of the potential role RP in student affairs supervision. Chapter Five includes a summary of the study's findings followed by the discussion, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research, as well as final conclusions.

5.1. Summary of the Findings

Chapter Four presented the findings of this study through three individual journal articles. Each article addressed each of the sub-research questions outlined earlier in the study. The following paragraphs provide a general summary of the findings from each of the three sub-research questions.

5.1.1. Sub-Research Question 1: How do mid- and senior-level residential life professionals describe the role of and apply restorative practices in supervision, as well as factors that influenced associated challenges and successes?

Chapter 4.1 outlined several themes about how supervisors conceptualized and used RP in supervision. Participants described RP as a way to work with their staff

holistically, which included considering their staff's emotions and feedback in professional contexts. Several supervisors used RP to facilitate staff check-ins while also ensuring work completion and that problems were being resolved. Supervisors also discussed RP's potential to support supervision training for staff. Several participants felt that RPs' structure served as a guide for building supervisory relationships with their staff, holding staff accountable holistically and developmentally, as well as helped them promote open communication between themselves and their supervisees.

Participants used RP to proactively develop and maintain supervisory relationships with their supervisees. Supervisory relationships were developed primarily through using formal and informal proactive RP circles. The use of RP in their supervisory approaches also helped participants balance the acknowledgement of their staff's emotions with the accomplishment of departmental priorities and goals. Engaging in restorative circles, especially in light of negative responses to directives or decisions that were made, better enabled supervisors to address their staff's feedback and affect which helped their staff move forward. Finally, RP helped supervisors to structure accountability conversations with their supervisees in a way that allowed for affect to be named. Using RP helped to open space for both the supervisor and supervisee to jointly discuss ways to move forward rather than engaging in a top-down conversation.

Although participants discussed the positive aspects of using RP in supervision, they also highlighted several challenges. Supervisors shared the difficulty of maintaining restorative approaches at times when balancing multiple priorities due to the fast-paced nature of residential life work. One such element of residential life work where restorative approaches would be detrimental is during a crisis management situation.

Paloma expressed that when navigating a crisis situation, the priority is on resolving the situation and less on collaborating with staff or considering their emotions or feedback about the directives given.

Another challenge named by participants was the difference between residential and non-residential education roles. Supervisors in non-residential areas of the host department cited that their priority, development, or expectations of using RP were not the same as their residential education colleagues. Furthermore, due to the lack of training or development in RP, supervisors had difficulty retaining their knowledge around RP thus making it difficult to lead restoratively with their supervisees.

Finally, one participant discussed the aspect of RP that makes it difficult for staff who were internal processors. Participating in RP circles can be difficult due to the pressure that some individuals may feel to think of something to share in the moment. Additionally, participants take turns in sharing their feedback or answering a specific prompt in RP circles. Although some individuals are able to verbalize their thoughts immediately, others may require more time to gather and clarify their thoughts before being sharing them. While this perspective was brought up by one participant, it still highlights the importance of being able to consider the neurodiversity and the differences in how people process and share information as well as the importance for the RP, specifically circles, to be adaptable to be accessible for different individuals.

5.1.2. Sub-Research Question 2: What evidence of synergistic supervision exists in supervisors' utilization of restorative practices in residence life?

In Chapter 4.2: Restorative Synergism*,* several connections between the RP framework and Winston and Creamer's (1997) synergistic supervision framework were

discussed. The data led to findings highlighting connections between RP and five of the synergistic supervision elements (dual focus, holism, two-way communication, joint effort, and proactivity). RP helped supervisors to dually focus on their staff's feedback and development as well as work performance. Participants leveraged their understanding of shame and affect to address staff concerns and emotion while also holding them accountable for their work responsibilities. The connection between RP and dual focus paralleled with those between RP and holism in which supervisors using the RP framework considered their staff's personalities, attitude, and emotions in addition to their professional growth and skill development as part of their supervision approach.

The third connection was between the use of RP continuum circles and fostering two-way communication between supervisors and supervisees. Using RP, supervisors stated that their staff was able to name their affect and the impact of their supervisors' actions through the use of the RP continuum. The RP continuum also allowed supervisees and supervisors to jointly develop and strengthen their supervisory relationship through ongoing communication. Also, there was a connection between RP and joint effort in supervision in how supervisors used RP to invite their staff's input in decision making. Fair process provided supervisors with a framework for involving their staff in decision-making processes without diluting their authority.

The final connection between RP and synergistic supervision was using RP proactively in supervision. Although both synergistic supervision and RP have different definitions for what 'proactivity' entails, using RP in supervision appeared to serve supervisors in meeting both definitions of proactivity. By using the RP continuum and restorative questions, some supervisors were able to proactively identify performance or

morale issues with their staff. RP also reminded supervisors to be proactive in how they built their supervisory relationships with their teams and provided them a structure on how to build said relationships. Affective statements and questions were often used in formal meetings such as one-on-one and staff meetings or in informal venues such as during lunch with a staff member.

5.1.3. Sub-Research Question 3: What evidence of RP's impact on the supervisory skill development of mid- and senior-level supervisors does the case suggest that further study is warranted?

Chapter 4.3 Restorative Influences focused on RP's impact on how participants developed supervisory skills. The influence of RP on supervisors included the development of emotional self-awareness and intelligence, influences on their supervisory communication style, approaches to accountability conversations, and how RP encouraged them to reflect on their overall supervisory approach. Supervisors discussed how an understanding of shame and affect helped them self-assess their emotion in response to any negative impact in a work context. By having the self-awareness to understand how they were feeling at any given moment, supervisors were able to self-regulate their responses to shame. Supervisors were able use RP to name the impact that they may have experienced with their staff through the use of affective statements.

A knowledge and use of the RP framework also had a positive impact on how participants communicated with their staff. Several supervisors expressed that the RP framework provided guidelines to help them develop and explicitly relay their expectations around communication to their supervisees using a common language.

Although the study found that RP helped some participants develop or improve supervisory communication skills for most participants, some participants named that knowing the RP framework did not assist in their development around effectively communicating. A lack of growth was seen by professionals who viewed themselves as being already proficient in their communication skills with staff. For staff who viewed themselves as proficient communicators outside of the RP framework, they still noted that the RP framework still encouraged them to be more explicit about their affect and were, in some ways, still challenged to share more of their thoughts and affect to others. Overall, these individuals saw RP as an enhancement to their strong communication approaches as opposed to it serving as a framework that assisted in development.

The study indicated a positive impact of RP on how supervisors held their supervisory and accountability conversations with their supervisees. Participants discussed how RP's structure and guiding questions focused their accountability conversations in a way that felt good to them and increased their confidence in navigating accountability conversations. RP also prompted supervisors to reflect on their supervisory approach and barriers they may experience in becoming a fully restorative supervisor. Lack of time and stress were two elements named by participants as factors that lowered the likelihood that a supervisor would work *with* their staff but resort to a top-down approach. The recognition that stress and time were contributing factors to their defaulting to a top-down supervisory approach helped some participants be intentional in working with (as opposed to top-down) their staff. Generally, participants noted that the social discipline window helped them conceptualize the type of supervisor that they

wanted to be in regard to balancing control with support for staff, while also providing a guide on how to achieve their ideal supervisory style.

5.2. Discussion

The findings in this study related to the implementation of restorative practices as a part of student affairs supervision were promising. As discussed in Chapter Two, mid- and senior-level supervisors in student affairs often have responsibilities for ensuring the fulfillment of departmental priorities while supporting and developing their supervisees professionally. Essential skill sets of mid- and senior-level professionals include resolving team conflict, collaboration, effective communication, effective decision making, garnering buy-in, and managing personnel (Mather, Bryan, & Faulkner, 2009; Saunders, 1999). Based on study findings, there is strong evidence that the RP framework can support student affairs supervisors in developing and conceptualizing their supervision style, collaboratively making decisions, and holistically holding staff accountable.

5.2.1. Aligning Conceptualizations of RP with the Literature

Participants had two definitions of RP and its role in supervision. First, participants saw RP in supervision as a way to see their staff holistically. The participants' understanding of RP aligned with the RP goal to build and leverage social capital to build relationships and to better respond to wrongdoing when it occurs. An individual's social capital is built through fostering emotional bonds and a sense of connection by sharing emotions (Wachtel, 2016). Furthermore, Tomkins (1962) asserted that human relationships tend to be healthier when individuals are able to freely express

their emotion. Although supervisors noted that there were limits to how much they considered their staffs' emotional responses (e.g., in the case of persistent negative attitudes or emotional interference in work), they still saw the value of acknowledging their staffs' emotions and attitudes within a work context.

Supervisors also saw the RP framework as a guide for developing effective supervision skills, especially given the lack of formal training in student affairs (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Shupp & Arminio, 2012). The finding surrounding the improvement of effective supervision skills was interesting given that one of the hypotheses of this paper was that the RP framework was capable of achieving many of the same outcomes as synergistic supervision. RP appeared to become synonymous with effective supervision for the supervisors in the study. Participants felt that RP's structure guided their individual development in fostering open communication, building trust with their team, and navigating accountability conversations – important competencies identified in the synergistic supervision model (Wachtel, 2016; Winston & Creamer, 1998).

5.2.2. RP and Proactive Supervisory Relationship Development

Participants discussed how RP assisted them in proactively building supervisory relationships. Building these types of relationships is important in student affairs given that the supervisory relationship has the ability to impact the professional development and morale of professionals (Ladany, Walker, & Melincoff, 2001; McGraw, 2011; Shupp & Arminio, 2012). However, there should be boundaries to the supervisory relationship and the supervisor must maintain a high level of control and accountability. Supervisory relationships that primarily focus on building a supervisory friendship can be just as detrimental as traditional top-down supervision (Winston & Creamer, 1997).

Supervisors used RP to proactively build supervisory relationships and identify performance issues sooner rather than later. The use of RP to build supervisory relationships is important to the narrative of RP serving as a support for the synergistic supervision model, as proactive relationship building is an area of overlap. Both synergistic supervision and RP emphasize building relationships and resolving issues proactively to help prevent future issues (Shearer, 2016; Winston & Creamer, 1997). Where the two frameworks differ is the synergistic supervision model defines 'proactivity' as a supervisor's proactive fostering of their supervisory relationships with their staff so that staff will inform them of issues in a timely fashion so that an intervention can be developed and implemented before issues compound. RP's conceptualization of 'proactivity' differs suggesting that proactive relationship building helps make responsive RP circles to repair harm and address negative behavior more likely to be successful because each party has an invested interest in repairing the harm caused in the relationship. The restorative questions also helped supervisors proactively check in on their staff's performance or morale.

5.2.3. Navigating and Managing Emotions of Self and Others

The RP framework also appeared to help supervisors balance their supervisees' personal as well as professional goals and wellbeing with the accomplishment of departmental priorities. One way in which dual focus was facilitated by supervisors was through using fair processes to invite staff into decision-making processes, which helped their staff feel as if their feedback was heard and that they were valued as staff. A dual focus to supervision also included providing staff with the opportunity to process their feedback and encourage them to name their affect, especially when given a directive that

may have conflicted with their individual professional or personal priorities. Dual focus also meant that supervisors provided staff with the opportunity to share their emotional or professional feedback while simultaneously being held accountable for completing their work and asking what staff felt needed in order to move forward productively.

RP appeared to also enhance the emotional self-awareness and intelligence of the supervisors in the study. As noted in Chapter 4.3, emotional intelligence is defined as "the ability to recognize, understand, evaluate, and act upon their emotions to effectively cope with their surroundings" (Van Rooy & Viswesvaran, 2004, p. 72). The understanding of shame and affect assisted supervisors in identifying moments when they were experiencing shame and take steps to address the negative affects. Supervisors also bring their emotions and attitudes into work and may not always be able to leave their emotions at home (Ober, Granello, & Henfield, 2009). When supervisors have developed the supervisory relationship where they can share affect with their supervisees whenever their staff has had an impact (either positive or negative), it can allow supervisors to mitigate their shame response while simultaneously building a stronger relationship with their staff (Tomkins, 1987).

5.2.4. Staff Accountability and Conflict Mediation

Managing staff through holding them accountable and mediating conflict are among some of the essential competencies for mid- and senior-level professionals in student affairs (Saunders & Cooper, 1999). The findings indicate that the RP framework and restorative questions can provide a structure for supervisors to facilitate accountability and feedback conversations with their staff. RP's structure appeared to help supervisors feel more confident in navigating accountability conversations with their

staff, especially when there had been a strong supervisory relationship previously established. As mentioned in Chapter Four, RP differentiates itself from traditional punitive approaches by using restorative questions to facilitate a two-way accountability conversation as opposed to an adversarial and supervisor driven conversation. Using RP in accountability conversations involves a joint effort between the supervisor and supervisee given that the conversation and its outcomes are not only the responsibility of the supervisor but also of the supervisee (Winston & Creamer, 1997). The finding of RP's successful use as an accountability tool makes sense given RP's foundations in restorative justice, which is a participatory framework to address wrongdoing while seeking to repair harm within communities and reintegrate wrong doers, primarily in the context of the law (Zehr, 2002)

5.2.5. Fostering Communication through Circles

Explicit and open communication is an important competency for mid- and senior-level professionals and student affairs professionals in general to cultivate (ACPA/NASPA, 2015; Boehman, 2007). Explicit communication in a supervisory relationship helps ensure the success of staff by providing clear expectations for navigating their department and performing in their roles. As found in the data, the RP framework encouraged supervisors to be intentional about how they communicate with their supervisors and explicit. The finding around supervisors' being able to be more intentional about how they communicate with others makes sense given that the use of circles, especially affective statements and questions, are designed to help individuals slow down and understand their affect so that they can communicate it with others. Restorative questions such as "what is coming up for you" or "what do you feel needs to

happen to make things right? (International Institute for Restorative Practices [IIRP], n.d.) can help prompt reflection in supervisors. Participants indicated that RP helped them to slow down and be intentional and explicit in naming the impact of their staffs' actions and work with them to move forward successfully.

Similarly, the use of RP also assisted supervisors in developing a pattern of two-way communication with their supervisees. A synergistic approach to supervision includes open channels of communication between a supervisor and their staff. Winston and Creamer (1997) defined two-way communication in supervision as both supervisor and supervisee feeling equally free to be honest with the other when giving feedback (Saunders, Cooper, Winston, & Chernow, 2000). Study participants discussed using a variety of circles to facilitate different types of conversations with their staffs. The circles that supervisors facilitated with their staff included accountability conversations in individual supervisory meetings, conflict management circles, and opportunities for feedback to be shared back and forth. The circle processes that supervisors described align with the principles of two-way communication in the synergistic supervision model in which staff were provided opportunities to share their affect and feedback with their supervisors just as their supervisors are able to share with them.

5.2.6. Fair Process and Participatory Decision Making

Finally, fair process was used by supervisors to invite their staff to provide feedback whenever they had to make a decision that might impact their staff. Fair process appears to promote staff buy-in for several supervisors because supervisees had the opportunity to provide feedback that aided the supervisor in making their decision. The ability to be involved in decision-making processes theoretically promotes mutual

goodwill and investment in the overall success of the organization (Kim & Mauborgne, 2003). Although supervisors used fair process to collaborate with their supervisees in decision making, supervisors also highlighted the importance of explicit communication when doing so. Kim and Mauborgne (1997) expressed that in using fair process, the decision-making power is still with the supervisor and fair process does not mean decision making by consensus. Being able to be explicit about the goals and boundaries of fair process contributes to the transparency and subsequent trust that fair process helps to achieve. Supervisors had also noted that fair process often requires being explicit about what fair process is and is not in order to prevent inaccurate expectations of the outcome.

5.3. Implications for Practice

The data from this study suggest that being familiarized with the RP framework had a positive impact on the supervisory development of mid- and senior-level professionals. There are several implications and considerations for practice that student affairs supervisors should consider when seeking to adopt a restorative approach to supervision. Implications include the need for departmental/divisional commitment and role modeling, implications in adopting an RP model in supervision, training and development implications, power dynamics, implications for accountability and repairing harm, and person-specific implications. The following implications are intended for administrators considering incorporating RP into a student affairs department or division as well as implications for staff who may be tangibly using RP as supervisors.

5.3.1: Departmental/Divisional Commitment

An institutional commitment and dedication to advancing effective supervisory practices in a formal and structured manner is an important contribution to the retention

of student affairs staff, especially new professionals (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). Since one of the main ways student affairs professionals develop as supervisors is through observation (Calhoun & Nasser, 2013; Nichols & Baumgartner, 2016), it stands to reason that effective supervision should be role modeled from senior departmental and divisional leaders. Shupp and Arminio (2012) expressed that in order for departments to establish a culture where effective supervision is prioritized, senior student affairs officers (SSAOs) must establish expectations for supervision and model those expectations for their staff. Modeling supervision for others in the department demonstrates and emphasizes effective supervisory practices that should or may be expected.

The principle of senior leaders within a department in role modeling supervisory expectations also applies to those whose goal is to create a restorative department and establish restorative approaches to supervision. As indicated by Shupp and Arminio (2012), senior leadership within the department should be prepared to establish expectations and role model the use of RP as supervisors and utilize the RP framework as often as appropriate to build, maintain, and repair supervisory relationships. Miller's research concurs (2016) with Shupp and Arminio (2012) suggesting that in order for restorative supervisory approaches to be effective at a departmental level, leaders must role model using RP and leading 'with' their staffs, while also establishing department-wide expectations for supervisors at all levels to do the same. Role-modeling RP as supervisors can involve intentionally using RP elements such as fair process, where appropriate and when making decisions that impact staff. Additionally, facilitating individual supervisory and team meetings in circle format, using affective statements and questions to address positive and negative impact of staff behavior, and making the use of

RP an expectation outlined in position descriptions, and informal and formal evaluations, are other sound practices. Finally, being explicit in the use of RP and intentionally using RP language so that staff make the appropriate connections between supervisory practice and RP is important.

5.3.2: Adopting RP as a Model for Supervision

Scholars, including myself in this dissertation, have outlined at length the importance of effective supervision on the job performance, morale, and retention of student affairs professionals (Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Tull, 2006). Because supervision has such a vast impact, frameworks that can support the development of strong supervisory practices should be examined and considered further. Through sharing their experiences, the supervisors in this study highlight the potential of using RP to supplement supervisory practices in residential life. Again, as residential life is often considered the gateway to other areas of student affairs (Hoffman & Bresciani, 2012), it stands to reason that RP-based supervisory approaches may be replicable and beneficial to the broader student affairs division. Specifically, the findings from Chapter 4.2 highlight the potential of RP in achieving many of the same outcomes as the synergistic supervision model which has been outlined as one of the more effective models for student affairs supervision (Tull, 2006; Winston & Creamer, 1997). Although many of the principles of synergistic supervision appeared to have been achieved in supervision, based on the findings, it is not known whether professional development specific functions of supervision are fully supported by RP. Furthermore, data from one participant highlighted the difficulty of incorporating RP in supervision when there is a

lack of institutional commitment or when specific human resources policies, specifically around staff accountability and discipline, conflict with the RP framework.

Supervisors and departments considering adopting RP as a framework in supervision, should consider incorporating RP alongside other supervisory and departmental practices as opposed to using RP as the sole framework for working with staff. Studies in the K-12 education arena have shown that schools were more successful in incorporating RP into their culture when it was adopted to complement or work with other effective practices within the school (McCluskey et al., 2008). As such, residential life and other student affairs departments should be critical about what functions of supervision can and cannot be complemented and facilitated through RP. Although implications for accountability will be discussed in further detail later in this section, departments should examine whether there are established policies or procedures for holding accountability conversations and whether those policies are flexible enough to allow the incorporation of RP.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier, it is unclear whether RP has the ability to support specific professional development functions of the synergistic supervision framework based on the study findings. Although RP, specifically using circles, may be used to facilitate conversations around jointly developing the supervisory relationship, participants did not appear to use RP to do so. As such, supervisors using RP in supervision might consider separate supervisory practices to fulfill the professional development needs of their staff. Complementary supervisory practices might include conversations around their long-term career pathway, formal and informal evaluation

appraisals, staff self-study, and promoting staff attendance at conferences and workshops (Saunders et al., 2000; Shupp & Arminio, 2012; Winston & Creamer, 1998).

5.3.3. Adopting RP as a Model Outside of Supervision

Although this study primarily examined RP-based supervision in residential life, the findings from this study along with practices from the host institution can highlight ways in which RP can be used outside of a supervisory relationship. Participants discussed how RP could inform supervision training and address negative impacts and repair harm in the supervisory relationship. When examining the use of RP from a larger standpoint, the RP framework can be used to accomplish similar goals at a departmental or divisional level.

Staff Training. The findings from the study demonstrate the potential for student affairs professionals to use RP in a variety of other areas, such as staff training. The RP framework can provide a guide for training about effective supervisory practices as well as effective communication skills which staff can use with colleagues, supervisors, students, and other campus partners. Furthermore, the use of RP can assist in building community across an entire team or department during staff training. For example, VU residential life facilitates staff circles at various points during training. The opening circles helped to ground participants and smooth the transition into the training topic while closing circles served to also build community but also as an assessment tool. For example, the closing circle prompt from VU's RP training for staff is "Please share the following: one concept you really feel you understand and one concept you feel you are struggling with." Ending their training with the above closing circle not only allowed individuals to share their thoughts and feelings, which theoretically help to build

community (Tomkins, 1962), but allowed facilitators to get a sense of which elements of RP training individuals struggled with to inform them of areas they may need to cover in more detail and which areas that the group seemed to understand the most.

Repairing Harm Outside of a Supervisory Context. As highlighted in the study, RP provided support for supervisors in holding staff accountable in a holistic manner. However, RP can be used in a broader context to repair harm by engaging in conversation with others to address impact. According to a VU training PowerPoint, the residence life department uses RP to engage in "responsive team/community restoration" which "allows members to confront general on-going disruptive and impactful behavior and it provides the opportunity to address and understand how one has been impacted by behavior(s) in order to restore relationships and repair harm" ("Verdis University" Residential Life, 2018). Individuals in a restorative community, whether it be an individual team, department, or division, are able to address impactful behavior while giving voice to all individuals involved in a restorative manner.

Additionally, the use of RP circles can be used to allow space for staff to process critical events to help begin the healing process. In practice, the Division of Student Affairs at VU has facilitated division wide circles to bring staff members across the division to address an incident that may have impacted the university community. For example, when the institution president made the decision that had a negative impact on the student affairs staff, the VU Division of Student Affairs Community Response Team organized an optional community gathering for staff to attend. The goal was "an opportunity to connect with each other, share impact, and restore community" (VU Division of Student Affairs, Personal Communication, June 25, 2018). As part of the

invitation to the gathering, the organizers included the topic of the gathering, informed staff that there would be an opening circle which would focus on three questions: “What were you thinking about at the time? What impact has this incident had on you?” and “What do you think needs to happen to make things right?” Departments and divisions are able to utilize the RP circles to bring together staff and build community within the organization for incidents beyond accountability. Optional community gatherings and circles can be a space for staff to process their emotions and thoughts behind issues occurring at the institutional, local, state, or national level.

5.3.3. RP Training and Development

The importance of intentional development and training of staff should not be underestimated. The RP framework not only requires training but may also serve as a training guide for supervision practices. As departments consider incorporating RP, training and ongoing development should be extended to supervisors as well as all levels of staff within an organization. When all are trained in the theory and facilitation of RP, everyone is equipped with a foundational knowledge and universal language to structure supervisory relationships and conversations. As mentioned earlier, while supervisors and departmental leaders should consider facilitating initial RP training each year, ongoing development can be facilitated by a mixture of departmental leaders and staff. Ongoing development in RP is important in order to hone RP skills and help staff make corrective actions if needed (Kimball, 2013; Shupp & Arminio, 2012).

McCluskey et al. (2008) found that peer-to-peer training was more effective in training teachers the RP framework because it allowed the implementation of RP to be viewed as a communal effort as opposed to a top-down directive, which increased buy-in

from staff. Although all staff within the organization should be trained on how to use the RP framework in supervision, departments should consider a mix of entry-, mid-, and senior-level staff for advanced development sessions on how to facilitate RP training for their peers through what the International Institute of Restorative Practices [IIRP] (n.d.) considers 'Training of the Trainer." Having experienced staff assist in training their peers in RP can help bolster buy-in for new staff as staff turnover, while also increasing experienced staffs' competence in RP.

Additionally, establishing ongoing training and development sessions as part of the restorative culture is also critical, especially for staff who may not have as many opportunities to engage in RP. As demonstrated in the study, staff who were not in residential education areas of the host department experienced difficulty in maintaining their buy-in or competency in RP due to the lack of opportunities to engage in formal restorative practices, ongoing training, or developmental conversations around RP. Other methods of RP development can include reviewing how RP was used professionally during supervisory meetings, identification of opportunities to learn from more experienced colleagues around their use of RP, discussing elements of the RP framework as a developmental session during staff meetings, having opportunities to practice RP through the use of case studies, and investing in external trainers from RP related organizations, such as IIRP, to facilitate trainings and development for staff.

The RP framework also has the potential to assist supervisors conceptualize the style of leadership they may want to emulate as well as tangible methods for achieving it. Through the use of the social discipline window, participants help them consider how to best work 'with' their staff through balancing support and control, which is in alignment

with literature around RP (Lohmeyer, 2017). Fair process helped supervisors develop a collaborative approach to supervision through engaging with their staff on decisions that needed to be made while also maintaining their authority to make the final decision. The RP Continuum and the use of circles helped supervisors to proactively establish two-way communications with their staff through providing guiding questions that can be adapted to different scenarios.

5.3.4: Supervision Dynamics

Although RP can be useful in promoting two-way communication, building relationships between supervisory lines and encouraging those in positions of authority to work *with* people, RP may not be able to completely negate the effects of power dynamics in supervisory relationships. Brown (2017) highlighted this point through the K-12 lens. In a survey of teachers and students, one question was "I allow students to share their perspectives more frequently." The premise that teachers 'allow' students to share their perspectives highlights a challenge to RP in that to a certain extent, a supervisor gives power to a supervisee's voice through providing them with the opportunity to name their affect-keywords 'provide and 'allow.' Advocates for the use of RP must ask the question 'can true restorative practices be accomplished when one side has the power to give or take the ability to safely name affect from another in a work context?' A supervisor as someone in a position of authority ultimately has the ability to ignore or not hear impact (Brown, 2017), thus leading to another question, "who actually gets to be restorative?" Terri spoke to this in her interview, by discussing the use of RP as a weapon where a supervisor names their affect and frustrations but does not provide the supervisee the ability to do the same, or vice versa. With a supervisor's ability to ignore a

supervisee's affect, it stands to reason that the success of a restorative approach to supervision is highly dependent on the supervisors' investment in fully embracing the RP framework and providing a safe environment for supervisees to do the same. Supervisors should remain cognizant of the power dynamics that are present within the supervisory relationship. Supervisees may be reluctant to share their affect or be fully transparent with their supervisors, especially in conversations where they are facing accountability or disciplinary action due to performance. In an accountability conversation, the supervisor is often the holder of positional power and should remain cognizant of their power and how they are or are or not creating space for supervisees to name affect, if they choose to.

Holding staff accountable for their conduct and work performance is one of the essential competencies of supervision and contributes to the ongoing development of staff as well as the accomplishment of institutional priorities (Shupp & Arminio, 2012). However, it is common that being held accountable is synonymous with discipline and consequences. The views of accountability as being associated with punitive discipline is not surprising given western viewpoints on punishment and accountability, which are often adversarial processes (Pavelka, 2013; Rundell, 2007). The goal of accountability in this viewpoint is to serve as a deterrent for continued infractions and not meant to be developmental.

Winston and Creamer (1997) viewed accountability in student affairs as an opportunity to addresses behavior that is educational in nature. Accountability should be a process in which both supervisors and supervisees are able to address behavioral or performance concerns and work to develop an action plan for improvement. The findings in this study demonstrate the capacity of RP to assist supervisors in navigating

accountability conversations where staff are able to name affect, have their feedback or thoughts heard, and dispel shame while also being held accountable. Staff participating in RP-based accountability conversations, as opposed to being subject to punitive sanctions only, may also reduce recidivism and influence positive behavioral change (Gregory et al., 2016; Pointer, 2018). To accomplish a restorative approach to accountability, supervisors should consider reviewing restorative questions (see Table 1) to form a script to navigate the accountability conversation. An example is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3:

Example of Tailoring RP Questions to a Supervisory Context

Restorative Questions to Address Behavior	Example: Staff Missing A Meeting
What happened?	What happened?
What were you thinking of at the time?	What were you thinking when you realized you missed this important meeting?
What have you thought about since?	What have you thought about since?
Who has been effected by what you have done? In what way?	By your not attending this meeting, in which you had key information, who do you think has been effected? How?
What do you think you need to do to make things right?	What do you think you need to do to make things right?

As stated earlier, RP is not meant to be the sole method of accountability but instead used in conjunction with other accountability practices (Miers, 2001). In some situations, a punitive sanction may still be required. However, the theory behind RP is that punitive sanctions in isolation are not as effective as a restorative approach to accountability. A common misconception of RP is that it is too soft on discipline, especially in more serious situations (Rundell, 2007). Supervisors may still introduce

punitive sanctions in a restorative manner. In the example outlined in Table 3, a supervisor might express that "*I think also to make things right and move on from here, I believe it is important to document this situation through a written warning. This written warning can serve as a reflection point so that this does not happen again. Now that I have said that, what is coming up for you?"* A punitive sanction is introduced (e.g., written warning) while also engaging in a restorative conversation. Supervisors should be intentional on crafting their outlines of accountability conversations using restorative questions, while also being responsive to what their supervisee is saying and able to ask different or additional questions, if needed. When punitive sanctions are being introduced, supervisors should also provide space for staff to share their affect afterwards.

5.3.5. When Harm Cannot Be Repaired

Although studies have shown that RP is able to help individuals address harm and repair relationships (Gregory et al., 2016, Miers, 2001), RP may not be able to repair all harm. RP's role is not necessarily to repair harm directly but to help proactively create an environment where individuals are invested in repairing harm when it occurs in the relationship. Supervisors should note that proactive relationship building is essential so that responsive RP is effective. If there is an unwillingness for individuals to participate in restorative approaches, supervisors must be prepared to still hold their staff accountable using traditional punitive approaches (D. Depaul, Personal Communication, October 4, 2018). Additionally, there may be moments where harm to a relationship is not able to be repaired because of the inability or unwillingness to move on from the harm or change behavior. It is in situations where individuals are unable or unwilling to

heal or correct behavior that supervisors must be willing to address continued behavior. Participants in the study highlighted the importance of being able to hold staff accountable for work performance or persistently negative attitudes that impact others in the workplace.

It is also important to note that there may be impacts to a supervisory relationship that may outweigh RP's ability to address it, especially in harms created by societal systems. Harm caused on the basis of bigotry and discriminatory views may not be able to be repaired by traditional RP methods (McCluskey, et al., 2008a). The success of RP relies on individuals' being invested in the relationship to make behavioral change. Harm caused by discriminatory actions and views require change in a belief system. Supervisors who are facing navigating situations in which discrimination or bigoty is a concern should strongly consider using RP to help address the impact to the victim while using institutional disciplinary practices for individuals creating such harm.

5.3.6: Person-Specific Elements

Supervisors who are interested in supervising restoratively should be cognizant of the differences in personalities and potential neurodivergence that may exist on their staff. The use of circles, for example, is highly dependent on individuals sharing outwardly to others, often verbally. Additionally, in circles, participants often have to be able to tap into their affect or share their responses in the moment, depending on the questions asked (van Alphen, 2014). As such, individuals who may be internal processors may struggle with RP circles more than those who are able to process externally. Paloma spoke to this during her interview in which she expressed not being able to name her affect or thoughts in the moment and often needed time to fully process her thoughts

before sharing with others. Paloma's experiences illuminate the fact that some individuals may need more time to fully form their thoughts about the circle question posed, sometimes after the circle is completed. Supervisors who use RP circles to address harm or to gather feedback from staff should provide space for internal processing staff members to share their thoughts after the fact, or intentionally follow up with circle participants a few days after a circle to gather any additional thoughts of feedback. Intentional follow-up with staff members following a restorative circle can help those staff members who may not have been able to fully process and share in the moment to still be included in the discussion.

Similarly, supervisors should remain cognizant of the neurodiversity that may be present on their staff when creating restorative spaces. Staff who may be neurodivergent may experience challenges in the use of group process circles. For example, individuals with ADHD may experience difficulty in concentrating on what is being said in a circle or may present as restless or bored (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2018). A staff member with autism may experience challenges with social communication (e.g., use of jargon, the ability to read other people, ability to pick up on social cues), may be non-verbal, or have variations of sensory sensitivity which may also influence their ability to fully participate in circles. Supervisors should be prepared to devise ways for participants who may be neurodivergent to be involved in responsive processes without being exclusionary. Potential methods may include facilitating a circle in a private areas with minimal distractions (i.e., not in a conference room with numerous windows in a high traffic area), avoiding the use of complex jargon, providing methods for non-verbal participants to write responses, and checking in with neurodivergent

individuals on their comfort level and ability to participate in a group process circle. Additionally, providing staff with the topic and planned questions for the circle beforehand may also give individuals more time to gather their thoughts prior to having to participate in a restorative conversation.

5.4. Recommendations for Future Research

Based on my current understanding and knowledge, this study is one of the first to examine the use of RP as a function of supervision in the student affairs area of residential life. These findings have the potential to influence a wide range of future studies involving supervision and RP. The overall study adds to the general canon of limited student affairs scholarship around supervision and offers a potentially new framework to study regarding the support of effective supervision practices. Furthermore, this also adds to the narrative around the use of RP in higher education and student affairs in general, and in some ways, advocates for expanding research and use within the field. This section will outline recommendations for future research for scholars of student affairs supervision or restorative practices: impact on supervisees; intentional use of RP to supervise synergistically; using RP outside of a residence life context; and, conducting internal organizational research.

5.4.1. Impact of Supervising Using RP on Supervisees

This study explored the use of the RP framework in the supervisory approaches of mid- and senior-level professionals in residential life. The next area of research that warrants further study is the impact of incorporating RP into a supervision framework on supervisees. Although some participants hypothesized what they believed to be the

impact of RP on their staff, this study did not examine the potential impact from the supervisee's perspective. Is staff morale and motivation impacted by their supervisor's use of RP? What are potential staff frustrations with this approach to supervision? How do supervisees navigate the power dynamics that may be at play when naming affect or providing feedback to their supervisor? How does a restorative approach to supervision influence personal and professional development for staff? Can this approach aid in staff retention? Although this study provided insight and data on the supervisor's experiences in using RP to help supervise staff, it does not encompass the supervisee's experience, which is also needed to fully assess this supervisory approach. Future research should concentrate on understanding the supervisee's perspective in order to paint a full picture of RP's promise as a supervision aide.

5.4.2. Intentionally Using RP to Supervise Synergistically

One of the primary goals of this study was to uncover evidence that the use of RP can support a synergistic approach to supervision, based on the perspectives of participants. The data from this study showed that five of the nine principles of synergistic supervision were strongly evident based on participant descriptions. Despite the strong evidence that RP supports the synergistic supervision framework, more detailed study on this aspect is warranted. It appears that the synergistic supervision aspects were highly implicit in nature, and participants did not discuss using RP to intentionally supervise synergistically. Therefore, another area for future research should seek to understand the impact of supervision when RP is used to intentionally supervise synergistically. Will the same five elements (two-way communication, dual focus, holistic, joint effort, proactive) emerge similarly? Does the RP framework support the

other four elements of synergistic supervision (focus on competence, growth orientation, systematic and ongoing, goal based) when used intentionally? What are the different ways in which supervisors can intentionally use RP to supervise synergistically? To fully understand whether RP can support supervisors in supervising synergistically, exploring the impact when the two models are intentionally intertwined, versus unintentionally will be an important addition to this scholarship.

5.4.3. Application of RP-based Supervision Outside of Residential Life

The use of RP in supervision through a residential life context was explored in this study. As cited earlier, residential life is often viewed as an entry-point into student affairs due to the number of transferable skills that are often developed in these roles. Although residential life might serve professionals in this capacity, it does not guarantee that a restorative approach to supervision will transfer to other student affairs areas equally. Although one might argue that supervision should look consistent regardless of functional area, the variance in the types of students affairs work might create nuances to supervision approaches which may impact the application of RP in a supervisory model. Would RP-based supervision in the human resources or business offices look the same for participants who work in comparable areas within this study described? Would the RP-based supervision approach look different for supervisors in student activities or student conduct? Future research around the use of RP in student affairs supervision should consider expanding the sample population to include supervisors in non-residential life units.

5.4.3. Restorative Practices and Emotional Intelligence

An understanding of shame and affect appeared to provide participants with an emotional intelligence to examine their affect, especially when feeling impacted by others, in order to reassess their next steps. Yet, the findings in the study were anecdotal and emotional intelligence of RP users was not formally measured. There are also limited studies that combine both the emotional intelligence model and RP. However, as a core element of RP is the sharing of affect and emotion, it seems that there might be a natural connection between the two models. Another recommended area of research is to examine whether a training and consistent use of RP contributes to the growth of emotional intelligence in professional life staff. One approach to this study might be through conducting a longitudinal study of professional staff members by issuing staff the Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQI) prior to training and use of RP and then again after a year of learning and consistent use of RP.

5.4.5. RP Implementation Process

This study was primarily centered around how RP was conceptualized and used by mid- and senior-level professionals. The supervisors were all in Verdis University Residential Life which began the process of incorporating RP into its culture in 2009 and as recently as 2019, began to expand the use of RP to areas in the department outside of the residential education. As such, this study did not go into how to begin the process of incorporating restorative practices into the culture of a department or division. While we can infer that the process of shifting to a restorative culture is a long-term process, another area of research or exploration is examining promising practices for beginning the process of shifting to an RP model. Important questions may include what external resources should be consulted, what are external policies that might support or hinder the

application of RP (i.e. human resources policies), what does training for the first time look like, as well as how does buy-in look like from senior student affairs officers?

5.4.6. Influence of Social Identities on Experiences Using RP

The study examined the experiences of mid- and senior-level supervisors primarily from the professional standpoint. However, professional staff members hold other salient social identities that influence how they supervise others as well influence how they experience the use of RP as supervisors and in general. For example, how do supervisors navigate the emotional aspects of acknowledging and sharing affect based on their gender or racial expressions? Are staff members who hold certain identities more likely to buy-in to the use of RP as opposed to others. Future research should consider the intersection of staff identity and the use of RP as a supervisor. Exploring RP as a function of social identity can also be multifaceted and intersect with research on the impact of RP on supervisees in order to explore how they perceive or interpret supervisors using RP with them based on either their own identities or the identities of their supervisor.

5.4.7. Conducting Research in an Environment with an Employment Relationship

As outlined in Chapter Three, I was a former assistant director in the host department for almost five years. Conducting this research in an environment in which I had an extensive employment relationship provided me with a unique insight into the participant perspectives as I may have lived many of those experiences personally. My relationship with the host institution allowed me to understand the context to the participants' stories that an outside researcher may not have been privy to. Although there are benefits to conducting research as an insider of an organization, there are some recommendations from my perspective for researchers considering internal research.

Conducting research within an organization in which the researcher has an employment relationship involves more intentionality in regard to compartmentalizing research data to protect the identities and privacy of the participants. I began my research by obtaining permission from my organization to conduct the research. As a part of providing an overview with my supervisors around my research project, it was important to me that they understood that I would not be able to share raw data or participant identities with them. Given that the research may have involved participants' sharing about their experiences with their supervisors, it was important to establish that boundary with the organization. Because my research involved working with colleagues in my department, ensuring their privacy to prevent any employment issues was a priority.

My study focused on mid- and senior-level professionals within the department. Because I am a mid-level professional recruiting other mid- and senior-level professionals, there was not a power differential that would inadvertently pressure individuals to participate in this study. When conducting research within the organization, researchers should be mindful of the power dynamics that may place undue pressure on staff members to participate in a study, especially when the researcher may hold a higher position within the department. My original research designed involved recruiting supervisors from all levels within residential life to understand how RP was operationalized in general. After reviewing institutional review board recommendations and thinking critically about organizational dynamics, I narrowed my research design to include just mid- and senior level professionals. Part of the reason this study's sample population was narrowed was to avoid a dynamic in which potential participants who I

may have held a supervisory or power dynamic over felt compelled to participate in the study due to my positionality.

In conducting interviews with participants, it is important to avoid projecting personal experiences, knowledge, or opinions. There were occasions during participant interviews where they may have used an incorrect term or told a story that I may have been knowledgeable of. It was important to separate from the individual who knows the context or the story that the participant was sharing and step into the role of the objective observer who is gathering the information to contribute to my research. In alignment with the constructivist viewpoint, truth is often subjective to the individual (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). In internal interviews, it is important to be critical of potential bias on the behalf of the researcher at all phases of the study and not just when the data is being analyzed.

5.5. Limitations

Although this study provided positive evidence to the effectiveness of the use of RP as a function of supervision, there were limitations to the study which may minimally influenced results. First, this study concentrates on the experiences of mid- and senior-level supervisors in VU residential life. The experiences of mid- and senior-level professionals in using RP as supervisors may be different from those who may be entry or graduate-level supervisors who are supervising paraprofessional staff, even within the same department. Furthermore, this study examined the experience of mid- and senior-level supervisors in a single department at one institution. Few residential life departments in higher education have woven RP into their departmental culture to the extent that VU has, thus limiting the potential sample size and departments with whom to

conduct research. However, this limitation proved to have minimal to no impact on this study as I sought to understand specifically the experiences of mid- and senior-level participants at VU University, per the embedded case-study methodology. Although this limitation may impact the ability of this study to be replicable in other venues, given the narrow scope of this study's aims, this limitation did not impact this individual study. Should this study be replicated or designed to represent supervision in residential life as a whole, scholars should consider expanding this study to include a more diverse range of supervisors (e.g., entry-level, graduate level) and departments, instead of intentionally limiting the scope to a specific subset, as this study did.

Another limitation to this study was the lack of pre-existing empirical studies on the use of RP in supervision, including supervision that took place in higher education and student affairs. As discussed in earlier chapters, scholarship around student affairs supervision is highly limited and the research around RP in student affairs is also almost non-existent. Furthermore, what scholarship on the use of RP in student affairs that is currently present is predominantly limited to the use of restorative justice in student conduct processes. Again, there have also been dissertation studies on the use of RP in residential life, but they are centered around using RP as a framework to build and maintain community among undergraduate students in the residence halls (Pointer, 2018; Whitworth, 2016). As such, there were no relevant or transferable studies to serve as a foundation for this individual study. Given this limitation, this study illuminates a gap in the student affairs supervision and RP literature, which merits further study. Although there is a lack of present studies to serve as a framework, this study was designed heavily using current scholarship around the synergistic supervision and restorative practices

frameworks. As this study is believed to be among the first of its kind, it may serve as guide for future studies, and as such, may be improved upon in the future.

The study used a qualitative case-study research methodology, which relied on self-reported data from participants. With self-reported data, there is always the potential for bias on behalf of participants. Some of these biases may include selective memory of relevant events, exaggeration of experiences, or attribution (Aguinis & Edwards, 2014; Brutus, Aguinis, & Wassmer, 2013; Senunyeme, 2007; Riet, Chesley, Gross, Siebeling, Muggensturm, Heller, Umbehr, Vollenweider, Yu, Akl, Brewster, Dekkers, Mühlhauser, Richter, Singh, Goodman, & Puhan, 2013). Given the constructivist epistemology that guided this study, the concept of 'truth' is subjective and based on the perspectives and experiences of the participants. Participant selective memory or bias provided minimal impact to the overall study given the focus on understanding participant experiences in using RP as supervisors. Furthermore, much of the participants perspectives were in alignment with departmental documents, which helped to contextualize their experiences. Additionally, the similarities in responses across participants may indicate actual generalizable patterns in the data regarding RP in supervision.

5.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the evidence gathered in this study shows great promise for the use of restorative practices to support effective supervision in student affairs. Supervision is not an easy task to master, especially given the continued lack of intentional supervision development in student affairs. The perspectives that the mid- and senior-level participants provided were rich in nature and will truly benefit practitioners seeking to

adopt a restorative approach to supervision. The restorative practices framework can potentially provide a structure to help make supervision somewhat easier to navigate for different levels of supervisors in student affairs. RP's potential as a supervision aid was demonstrated by participants as they recounted their experiences in providing space for staff to feel heard, engaging in collaborative decision-making processes, and holding staff accountable. Although there is a need to continue the research on this use of RP in student affairs, the research and scholarship opportunities are plentiful and would serve the field well. From theoretical and practical standpoints, restorative supervision may one day be considered one of the most highly viable approaches to student affairs supervision.

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APPENDIX A: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Research Project: Restorative Supervision: Experiences Of Mid And Senior-Level Professionals In Restorative Approaches To Supervision In Residential Life

Principal Investigator: Brandin L. Howard

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jason C. Garvey

IRB Protocol: CHRBSS (Behavioral): STUDY00000300

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in this research study because you have been identified as mid-level or senior-level professional who has also served as a member of the departmental leadership team in Residential Life at the University of Vermont, or have served in such a capacity within the last five years. This study is being conducted by the University of Vermont.

We encourage you to ask questions and take the opportunity to discuss the study with anybody you think can help you make this decision.

Key Information to Help You Decide Whether or Not This Study Is Right for You

The purpose of this research study is to learn about how mid and senior level professionals in residential life use restorative practices as part of your supervisory approach and your experiences in using this framework. As a participant, you will participate in two individual interviews, each lasting up to one hour to be scheduled during the Fall 2019 semester. During the research phase, I will also conduct a focus group based on current or former role (i.e. assistant director group and associate director and director group). You can expect up to five hours of your time outside of your typical workday for interviews.

The greatest risks of this study include any discomfort that may arise during your reflection of your use of restorative practices and potential loss of confidentiality.

The information above is only a brief summary of the study. If you are interested in learning more, it is important to read the following pages for additional detailed information about the study. If you decide to take part in the research, you will be asked to provide written consent at the end of this document.

Why is This Research Study Being Conducted?
The purpose of this study is a part of my dissertation studies for the Doctor of Philosophy. The goal of this research study is to learn about how mid and senior level

professionals in residential life use restorative practices as part of their supervisory approach, the opportunities and challenges they see in using this approach and the perceived impacts on their overall supervisory style.

How Many People Will Take Part In The Study?
About 10 people will take part in this study.

What Is Involved In The Study?
Study participation will take a total of up to five hours of your time.

Between the months of August and September, I will schedule a 1.5-hour interview that will concentrate on your use of the RP framework in general.

After the first interview, I will conduct focus groups divided by positionality. For current mid and senior level professionals of the host department, positionality will be based on your designation (assistant directors OR associate director/director). If you are no longer a mid or senior level professional in the host department, you will be in the group corresponding to your role during your time as a mid or senior level professional

In late September/ early October after the focus groups have been completed, I will schedule a final 1.5-hour interview with you. This interview will concentrate on your experiences using restorative practices, including benefits and challenges as well as on your role as a departmental leader in contributing to a restorative culture in residential life.

Some example questions you can expect include: 1. How often do you use or attempt to use fair processes when making decisions? 2. What is your approach to facilitating proactive circles with your team? 3. What do you find most difficult about using RP in your current role?

All study procedures will take place at an on-campus location mutually agreed upon by the researcher and you as the participant. If you are not currently at UVM, a face to face interview via skype or facetime will be scheduled. If you decide to participate in this study, we will include the answers that we collected from your interview in your research record.

What Are The Benefits of Participating In The Study?
There is no direct benefit to you anticipated from participating in this study. However, it is hoped that the information gained from the study will help other professionals in residential life and in student affairs in exploring the incorporation of restorative practices in their unique departmental culture. Indirectly, you may experience the benefit from the opportunity to reflect on your leadership role within residential life and your use of RP thus leading to a better understanding of yourself as a mid or senior level professional.

What Are The Risks and Discomforts Of The Study?

Your participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to you beyond that of everyday life.

What Other Options Are There?
There are no other options for participation, other than what is highlighted above.

Are There Any Costs?
There are no costs of participation in this study

What Is the Compensation?
You will not be paid to participate in this study.

Can You Withdraw or Be Withdrawn from This Study?
You may discontinue your participation in this study at any time. Any data collected prior to your withdrawal will be removed from the study and destroyed. The researcher may also discontinue your participation in this study at any time. If the researcher decided to discontinue your participation in this study, the researcher will contact you via email or phone to inform you that your participation is no longer required and answer any questions you may have.

What About Confidentiality?
Your study data will be handled as confidentially as possible. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used.

To minimize the risks to confidentiality, participants will be asked to create a pseudonym to identify with during interviews. Direct identifiers that can be linked back to the participants will not be kept with the data transcription data. The interviews will be sorted by mid-level and senior-level identifiers; however, specific titles will not be used. All data will be kept on a personal, password and thumbprint protected computer which will either remain in the researcher's possession or locked in their private personal residence. The specific flash drive that will be used to store the data will be encrypted to prevent unauthorized use.

Only the primary researcher and their faculty advisor will have access to the raw data collected in this study. The Institutional Review Board and regulatory authorities will also be granted direct access to your original research records for verification of research procedures and/or data.

Please note that email communication is neither private nor secure. Though we are taking precautions to protect your privacy, you should be aware that information sent through e-mail could be read by a third party. We will keep your study data as confidential as possible, with the exception of certain information that we must report for legal or ethical reasons, such as child abuse, elder abuse, title IX violations, or intent to harm yourself or others.

When the research is completed, our research team may save the interview recordings and transcripts as well as observation notes for use in future research done by myself or others. We will retain this study information for up to 5 years after the study is over. The same measures described above will be taken to protect confidentiality of the data.

Contact Information
You may contact Brandin Howard, the Investigator in charge of this study, at 412-354-8020, for more information about this study. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in a research project or for more information on how to proceed should you believe that you have been harmed as a result of your participation in this study you should contact the Director of the Research Protections Office at the University of Vermont at 802-656-5040.

Statement of Consent
You have been given and have read or have had read to you a summary of this research study. Should you have any further questions about the research, you may contact the person conducting the study at the address and telephone number given below. Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or prejudice.

You agree to participate in this study, and you understand that you will receive a signed copy of this form.

____ ____________
Signature of Subject Date

____
Name of Subject Printed

____ ____________
Signature of Principal Investigator or Designee Date

____
Name of Principal Investigator or Designee Printed

Name of Principal Investigator: Brandin L. Howard
Address: 406 S. Prospect Street, Burlington, VT 05405
Telephone Number: 412-354-8020
Name of Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Jason Garvey
Address: 210B Mann Hall, University of Vermont
Telephone Number: 802-656-5107

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT EMAIL SOLICITATION

Dear [insert name],

My name is Brandin Howard and I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies program at the University of Vermont. I am writing to invite you to participate in my research study about the experiences of mid and senior level professionals in supervising synergistically in residential life using restorative practices (RP). You're eligible to be in this study because you are either a current mid or senior level professional in the residential life department at the host institution or have been in such a role in host institution's residential life within the last five years.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will participate in two 1 ½ hour long interviews that will take place during the fall 2019 semester. I would like to audio/video record your interviews and then we'll use the information to determine trends in how mid and senior level professionals, such as yourself, use RP and how you experience contributing to the development of a restorative culture. There will also be a focus group based on your role (assistant director or associate director/director) in which we discuss opportunities and challenges in supervising using RP. The anticipated time commitment will be up to five hours of your time.

Remember, this is completely voluntary. You may choose to be in the study or not, and should you choose to participate, you may withdraw from this study at any time. Please read the attached consent to participate form and if you are willing to participate, please complete a brief informational survey at: **INSERT LINK.** If you'd like to participate or have any questions about the study, please email or contact me at blhoward@uvm.edu.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Brandin Howard
Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Program
University of Vermont

APPENDIX C: INFORMATIONAL SURVEY

Instructions: This brief informational survey is designed to collect non-identifiable information geared to contribute to the study. Completing this study will also serve as your consent to participate. Please read the full consent to participate attachment in the original email before completing.

(**Logic Question**): After reading the consent to participate sent to you via email, please indicate whether or not you consent to participate in this study: YES I Consent to Participate/ NO I Do Not Consent to Participate

IF YES
What is your current employment status as a mid-level or senior-level professional in Residential Life at UVM?

* For the purposes of this study, a "mid-level professional" will be considered a staff member holding the Assistant Director title in Residential Life and has supervisory responsibilities of at least one professional staff member.
"Senior-level professional" is considered someone holding either an Associate Director or Director title and has supervisory/management responsibilities for an entire team within residential life or the department as a whole.

- Currently a mid-level professional
- Currently a senior-level professional
- Former mid-level professional (within the last five years)
- Former senior-level professional (within the last five years)

Please indicate the length of time you have been or were in a mid-and/or senior level professional in residential life at UVM

- 0-2 Years
- 3-4 Years
- 5-6 Years
- 6+ Years

(**Open Ended**) Please briefly discuss the ways you see this research study potentially benefitting you as a supervisor. If you don't see this serving as a potential benefit, please speak to that as well.

Please indicate all available times you are ready for the first interview: **INSERT TIME OPTIONS**

Contact Email (For the purposes of confirming and scheduling the first email only)

IF NO: Thank you for responding and for considering participating in this study. As you have indicated that you do not consent to participate in research, you will no longer receive any correspondence regarding this research study!

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview 1: How do mid and senior-level residential life professionals describe and understand the role of restorative practices in supervision? (Sub-Research Questions 1)

Read: Thank you for taking the time to participate in my study around mid and senior level professional's experiences in using RP and contributing to a restorative culture in residential life. This study is for my dissertation as part of the Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies program at UVM. The goal of this study is to better understand how other mid and senior level professionals use RP as part of a synergistic supervisory approach and conceptualize their role in contributing to the development of a restorative culture in residential life. Today's interview focuses more on your use of RP and the situations/scenarios in which you use RP.

Today, you'll be participating in an individual interview, which should take no more than 90 minutes of your time. Please know that your participation is completely voluntary, and you may stop participating at any time, should you no longer wish to participate with no consequence to you. Additionally, you may choose to not answer any question in my study, while remaining a participant.

Your responses are completely anonymous and will not be linked back to you in any way. Because I am recording this interview, I will ask you to select a pseudonym to identify with as part of this study. Additionally, you will have an opportunity to review my analysis of your interview before it is incorporated into my study. The results of my studies will be presented in a summary format for my dissertation and will consist of information gleaned from the responses gleaned from all participants. Dr. Jason Garvey, who serves as my advisor will be the only other individual who will review this data for the purposes of this dissertation. The results or data will not be released to any other individual other than my faculty advisor, and that includes residential life. Do you understand?

If you have concerns about this project, you are able to contact my advisor or the Institutional Research office, which I can provide you the contact information for. To confirm, do you consent to participating in this interview? At the end of this interview, we will go ahead and schedule the second interview to occur within a month. Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. Please introduce yourself using a pseudonym, and a little about your supervisory role in residential life. (i.e. Do you supervise, how many staff do you supervise? What type of staff- grad, undergrad, etc.)
2. How would you define/explain restorative practices? What does RP mean to you?
3. Given what you know about the restorative practices framework, what role in supervising others do you believe this framework can play?

a. ***Potential follow-up:* What does RP look like when it is done well in supervising and when it is not done well?**

4. In your role, how much would you say you use restorative practices in how you supervise others?

High to Moderate Use Questions

1. Thinking about the social discipline window, how would you describe your overall supervision style?
2. Please speak to whether or not there times you are more likely to use RP as a part of your supervisory approach? Why or why not?
3. How often would you say you intentionally use fair process to invite your staff into decision making? What are the types of decisions where you would or would not use fair process? (*Joint Effort*)
    a. **Potential follow-up: What does fake fair process look like for you?**
4. What do you feel your supervisees learn from your use of fair process? (*Growth Orientation*)
5. How do you balance shame and affect/emotions of your supervisees with departmental goals and priorities (*dual focus*)?
    a. ***NOTE*:** When your supervisees feel impacted about a decision made, how do you reconcile that?
6. How have you used RP to gather feedback from your staff or hold them accountable? (*Two-way communication*)
7. What does navigating the compass of shame look like for you as a supervisor?
8. How have you used circles proactively and responsively with supervisees? Can you talk about a time in which you've done this? (*Proactive)*
    a. ***NOTE:*** *This can either be a conflict they were involved in or one in which they are just the mediator*
9. In what ways would you say the RP continuum (use of circles, affective statements/questions) promotes two-way communication between you and your supervisees? (*Two-way communication*)

Low to No Use Questions

1. Please speak a little more about why you may not use RP as part of your supervision.
2. Please describe your approach to building relationships with your supervisees.
3. How would you describe your overall supervisory style? What would you say are your supervisory characteristics?
4. Walk me through your general decision-making process? How do you make decisions within the team you supervise?
5. How do you approach accountability or difficult conversations with staff under your supervision?
6. Please talk about your experiences in leading and/or participating in circles (responsive or proactive) in the department.
7. How do you navigate emotions in the work place when they arise?

    8. How do you develop a pattern of communication with your supervisees? What does on-going communication look like?

5. Is there anything else you would like to share about how you use RP as part of
6. your leadership in residential life?

Interview 2: Perceived impact of RP on the supervisory approaches of mid and senior level professionals.

(Sub-Research Question 2)

Read: Thank you for taking the time to participate in the 2nd interview around mid and senior level professional's experiences in using RP and contributing to a restorative culture in residential life. Today's interview focuses on your perceptions of the impact that RP has had on your supervisory style.

Today, you'll be participating in an individual interview, which should take no more than 90 minutes of your time. As a friendly reminder, your participation is completely voluntary, and you may stop participating at any time, should you no longer wish to participate with no consequence to you. Additionally, you may choose to not answer any question in my study, while remaining a participant.

I also want to remind you that your responses are completely anonymous and will not be linked back to you in any way. Because I am recording this interview, I will ask you to select a pseudonym to identify with as part of this study. Please use the same pseudonym that you used during the 1st interview. I can remind you of that pseudonym if you need me to. Additionally, you will have an opportunity to review my analysis of your interview before it is incorporated into my study. The results of my studies will be presented in a summary format for my dissertation and will consist of information gleaned from the responses gleaned from all participants. Do you understand?

If you have concerns about this project, you are able to contact my advisor or the Institutional Research office, which I can provide you the contact information for. To confirm, do you consent to participating in this interview? At the end of this interview, we will go ahead and schedule the second interview to occur within a month. Do you have any questions before we begin?

1. For the recording, please introduce yourself for me.
2. **In your opinion, what does effective supervision look like to you?**
3. From your recollection, has your opinion on what effective supervision looks like shifted since learning the RP framework?
    a. If so, how? If not, why not?
4. Thinking back about your supervision style prior to working at the host institution, in what ways do you think your supervision style has changed as a result of learning the RP model, if any?
    a. *Helping questions: Was there a shift? Do you think about your supervision differently since learning the RP model?*
5. Would you be able to talk to me about the ways in which your communication style with supervisees may or may not have been influenced as a result of knowing RP?

6. This may be similar to a previous question from Interview 1, but can you talk to me about how you feel RP may have influenced your skills/capacity in holding your staff accountable?
7. Outside of accountability, do you feel that RP has impacted how you hear and address feedback from your staff? Why or why not?
8. In what ways, if any, do you feel learning fair process has changed how you approach decision making in your supervisory role.
9. Do you feel there is a difference between supervising restoratively with supervisees versus employing/using RP with supervisors? (Supervising up)
10. Are there any other ways you feel that RP is impacted your skill development as a supervisor? As a student affairs practitioner?
11. What would you say is the impact of a restorative approach to supervision has on those you supervise?
12. Overall, how would you describe the extent to which you support or buy-in to the use of restorative practices in general? What about as a function of supervision?
13. Is there anything else you want to add around how RP influenced your supervision style or development?

APPENDIX E: TIMELINE

May 3, 2019: Dissertation Proposal Defense
May 10, 2019: Proposal edits due to advisor for approval; IRB forms due to advisor for review
May 9, 2019: IRB submitted
May 31, 2019: IRB exemption granted
May 31, 2019: Began participant outreach and recruitment
June 2019: Individual interviews with participants
October 2019: Focus groups with participants
November 5, 2019: First sets of coding complete, member check of codes with advisor
December 1, 2019: First draft of Chapter 4 due to Advisor for initial review
December 14, 2019: Draft feedback needed from advisor
January 10, 2020: Full dissertation draft to advisor for review (2nd draft of Chapter 4 plus Chapter 5)
January 24, 2020: Feedback needed from advisor, meet with advisor for feedback, apply for graduation
January 31, 2020: Full dissertation to committee for feedback (transmittal note- deep read on chapters 4 and 5), get approval to schedule dissertation defense, reserve defense location with Roman
February 14, 2020: Feedback from committee requested on dissertation
February 17, 2020: Format checking with Graduate College; Send abstract and defense notification form to Roman and Graduate College (if greenlighted by advisor)
February 21, 2020: Defendable copy of dissertation to committee for review
March 6, 2020: Meet with advisor
February 21, 2020: Dissertation Defense Day
March 20, 2020: Any edits to dissertation after defense due to advisor for review
April 10, 2020 (Tentative): Final submission to Graduate College with embargo
May 16, 2020: Graduation