



CYCLE OF RENEWAL: YOGA'S INFLUENCE ON THE PROFESSIONAL LIVES OF NOVICE TEACHERS

Item Type	dissertation
Authors	Day, Danette V
DOI	10.7275/tf6q-dh36
Download date	2025-01-23 05:17:03
Link to Item	https://hdl.handle.net/20.500.14394/19942

CYCLE OF RENEWAL: YOGA'S INFLUENCE ON THE PROFESSIONAL LIVES
OF NOVICE TEACHERS

A Dissertation Presented

by

DANETTE VERNA DAY

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

May 2014

College of Education

Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies

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DEDICATION

To my mother and father with deep love and tremendous gratitude.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation could not have been completed without the love, support, wisdom, and caring of so many people. Thank you all!

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of my dissertation committee, Dr. Linda Griffin, dissertation chair; Dr. Kysa Nygreen and Dr. Demetria Shabazz, committee members. Dr. Griffin taught me how to conduct trustworthy and ethical qualitative research. She patiently guided me as I navigated the uncharted waters of my dissertation journey. Dr. Nygreen freely gave her time and expertise to provide careful and critical consideration of my work. She shared thoughtful insights and posed challenging questions. Dr. Shabazz believed in my capacity to become a serious and respected social scientist. Leading by example, I learned from her the greatest way to find fulfillment is through service to one's community.

This journey would not have been possible without the encouragement I received from my family and friends. Throughout the entire journey I have felt the love and admiration of my mother and late father, my sisters and brothers (in-laws included), my nieces and nephews, and my aunts and uncle. I will be forever grateful for the support of my family and friends, many of whom on a daily basis listened to me talk about my research and encouraged me to 'work within the system' and to 'keep chipping away at it'.

Many years ago in a high school gymnasium, I was introduced to the practice of yoga. My first yoga teacher made yoga practice fun and memorable. Six years later, I enrolled in a teacher certification program, where I learned to teach yoga and I studied yoga philosophy from a disciplined yoga instructor. Most recently, I practiced yoga with a teacher who demonstrated that everyone can learn to access and benefit from the

transformative power of yoga. My yoga teachers' knowledge of, passion for, and dedication to yoga, prepared and inspired me to conduct this research study.

I would like to thank the many professors who transformed me from graduate student to research scholar. My professors believed in the importance of my research and encouraged me to follow my own path. I would like to thank the many co-workers and colleagues who inquired, then patiently listened as I explained various aspects of my journey. Your patience and kindness sustained me during difficult times. I have deep gratitude for the participants of my research study who agreed to practice yoga, and then share with me their experiences and perceptions of how yoga influenced their professional lives. The participants of my research study trusted me to interpret, to express and to reveal their experiences through candid, personal narratives.

I want to thank all the students I have had the pleasure to know and to teach, and whom have taught me. You are a reminder to me of the importance of life-long learning; and you inspire me to find ways to apply my research to improve your educational opportunities.

In closing, I give thanks for this amazing journey to the Divine Spirit that dwells within the hearts of all. May all sentient beings be free from suffering; may we feel content and pleased; may our bodies provide us comfort and strength; and may our lives unfold with grace and ease. Namaste.

ABSTRACT

CYCLE OF RENEWAL: YOGA'S INFLUENCE ON THE PROFESSIONAL LIVES OF NOVICE TEACHERS

MAY 2014

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Teachers must acquire the appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions to effectively meet the demands and challenges of the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2010; Shulman, 2000). There is considerable research about how someone perceives they can perform effectively as a teacher, and what constitutes effective teaching (Bandura, 1995, 1997; Ashton & Webb, 1986). Research suggests that novice teachers feel unprepared, unsupported and ineffective; and 50% of novice teachers leave the profession within the first few years of teaching (Levine, 2006; Kaufman, et al., 2002; Kelley, 2004; Maciejewski, 2007)

This study examined the question, "To what extent do novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives?" Yoga is a systematic process of self observation, self inquiry and self reflection (Iyengar, 1966/1979; Desikacher, 1995/1999). For the purpose of this study, a novice teacher is defined as a teacher who has been teaching less than 5 years.

The study was conducted at an urban school that services approximately 650 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 8. Five novice teachers were recruited using a network selection strategy. Formulation of the study utilized a variety of qualitative methods to gather rich, descriptive data. Strict adherence to Institutional Review Board (IRB) regulations were followed to insure that the participants' rights and well being were protected. Several methods (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam 1998; Rossman & Rallis, 2003) were implemented to establish trustworthiness. Data analysis included methods from grounded theory and thematic analysis.

Results indicated that the novice teachers who participated in yoga perceived an increase in energy, clarity of mind and flexibility. Teachers reported the practice of yoga influenced their ability to relax, to release negative thoughts and emotions, and to be mindful. Participants identified the influences yoga had on their teaching practice, as the ability to deescalate emotionally charged situations and to differentiate instruction. Novice teachers perceived the practice of yoga influenced their teaching efficacy in the following ways; mindful reflection, increased confidence, courage to take action, recognizing when to release control, and when to take time for renewal.

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CHAPTER I

RESEARCH AGENDA

A. Introduction

Teachers must acquire the appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions to effectively meet the demands and challenges of the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, Bransford and LePage, 2005, Darling-Hammond, 2006; Shulman, 1987, 2000). There is considerable research regarding the process by which individuals perceive they can perform effectively as a teacher, and what constitutes effective teaching (Bandura, 1995, 1997; Ashton & Webb, 1986). Research suggests that novice teachers feel unprepared, unsupported, and ineffective. Fifty percent of novice teachers leave the profession within the first few years of teaching (Levine, 2006; Kaufman, Johnson, Kardos, Lui and Peske, 2002; Kelley, 2004; Maciejewski, 2007; Mandel, 2006; Smith & Ingersol, 2004). This qualitative research study is an examination of how yoga practice influences novice teachers, half of whom prematurely leave the profession. The practice of yoga is a systematic process of self-observation, self-inquiry and self-reflection (Iyengar, 1966/1979; Desikacher, 1995/1999).

A qualitative research design provides researchers opportunities to explore and understand a phenomenon, a process, and/or perceptions along with the paradigms of the people experiencing the phenomenon and the process (Merriam, 1998). As a qualitative researcher I seek to discover answers to issues of importance in teacher education, to develop new concepts and theories, and as Merriam (1998) states, to demonstrate my interest in “producing knowledge about the world” (p. 3). Like most researchers, my study began with a question that piqued my interest.

Corbin and Strauss (1998) maintain that a good qualitative research question must be broad enough to allow flexibility and freedom to explore a phenomenon in depth, and narrow enough to provide a structured and focused exploration. My qualitative study closely examined the following research question:

- To what extent do novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives?

Also, I explored more broadly the following questions:

- How does the practice of yoga influence experiences and perceptions novice teachers have about their teaching practice?
- How does the practice of yoga influence the perceptions novice teachers have about their ability to be effective, also known as teaching efficacy?

In Chapter I, I give a brief overview of the process of teaching and highlight some of the challenges teachers face as professionals in Education. In the rationale, I explain the growing demand for teachers, and the response to prepare effective teachers. Also, I suggest the significance of my research study, the opportunity to consider yoga practice as part of teacher education, and the preparation of effective teachers.

In Chapter II, I summarize the literature related to yoga theory and philosophy, teacher preparation and teacher efficacy.

In Chapter III, I explain my research design and the methods I developed to conduct this dissertation research. Using a qualitative research design and methods, I introduced a program of yoga to five novice teachers, and examined their experiences and perceptions by analyzing data gathered from interviews, journal entries, and observations during their participation in the program.

In Chapter IV, I present the research findings developed based on data analysis that integrated aspects of grounded theory and thematic analysis. Research findings are presented as five personal narratives, and a conceptual frame was produced using the themes developed and identified through data analysis.

In Chapter V, I discuss the research findings of novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice, and how yoga practice influenced their professional lives. Also, I discuss the limitations of the research study, and future implications for the research.

In Chapter VI, I conclude with a review of the research process by reflecting on my dissertation journey and its meaning. Also, I reflect on the meaning of yoga, yoga's influence on the teaching profession, and what I learned from novice teachers' experiences with yoga.

B. Teaching: A Brief Overview

Teaching is a highly complex human endeavor where teachers are required to meet the various needs of all students in all classrooms. The task of promoting cognitive, affective, and psychomotor growth for 25 or more students simultaneously is challenging. No other professional works with as many clients at the same time. Imagine if doctors examined, diagnosed and treated 25 patients at once, or if CEO's met and conducted business with 25 clients at once (Nolan & Hoover, 2008). Classroom are marked by multidimensionality and simultaneity that require teachers to make hundreds of major decisions on a daily basis (Jackson, 1968). Darling-Hammond et al., (2005) assert when making major decisions teachers must do what is best for the children in their classrooms. Teachers need to focus on teaching the curriculum, and they must work to create dynamic

learning opportunities to increase the mental, physical and psycho-emotional growth of the diverse students who enter their classrooms daily, and learn in multiple ways.

Similar to the way a skillful conductor makes leading an orchestra appear effortless, the skillful teacher appears to effortlessly orchestrate the learning process. By reading and interpreting, and organizing and coordinating student performance, the skillful teacher promotes and facilitates the growth and development of individuals, and the group (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Daily, teachers orchestrate the learning environments in classrooms comprised of students who possess various levels of skill and talent. Additionally, teachers must adhere to and implement national and state mandated educational reforms requiring them to:

- 1) develop curriculum aligned to core academic standards,
- 2) prepare students to take and pass state-wide assessments to graduate,
- 3) participate in ongoing professional development to attain teaching licensure, &
- 4) maintain professional status.

The outside demands policy makers and members of the general public place on teachers and school districts, added to the complexity of the classroom, illustrate how the pressures to teach increase dramatically.

The challenge of an educator to teach, to adequately prepare students for the workplace, and more importantly for life, can be overwhelming at times. Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis, and Parker (2000) found teachers are exposed to similar stressors as the general population, and they must deal with many stressors directly related to teaching. To effectively meet the demands and challenges of teaching, teachers must acquire the appropriate knowledge, skills and dispositions.

C. Rationale: Demand for Effective Teachers

Before teachers enter the classroom they should be well prepared. Given the complexity of the classroom environment the training needed to prepare teachers should vary and be ongoing. According to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2007) by the year 2017, the hiring of teachers new to the profession, and the induction of teachers new to a school district will increase 28%, from 285,000 new hires to 364,000 new hires. The growing concerns are how best to prepare new teachers for the classrooms, and what are the skills teachers need to be most effective.

Teaching is a learned profession that requires its practitioners to build upon prior knowledge, often developed through entry into higher education. Teaching requires the attainment of skills specific to the profession. Upon entry into the teaching profession and throughout professional membership, practitioners are required to increase their teaching skills and expand their knowledge.

In 2005, the National Academy of Education's Committee on Teacher Education (NAEd-CTE) published *Preparing Teachers for a Changing World: What Teachers Should Learn and Be Able to Do*, a research volume to examine education, to inform teacher education and to increase teacher effectiveness. An overarching goal for the volume was to help launch the careers of new teachers by providing some "core ideas and broad understandings of teaching and learning" (Darling-Hammond and Baratz-Snowden, 2005, p. 3). The NAEd-CTE's (2005) findings revealed that decades of research on teacher education exist. While there is extensive knowledge available there is

great uncertainty about what, if any, aspects of the knowledge on teaching and learning teachers choose to access.

Multiple studies (Darling-Hammond, Baratz-Snowden, & National Academy of Education, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2010) indicate that nationally both traditional and nontraditional teacher preparation programs vary tremendously resulting in uneven preparation with significant gaps in teacher training. Darling-Hammond et al., (2005) and Darling-Hammond (2010) found students enrolled in teacher preparation programs report differences in their course content and curriculum requirements, teaching practicum requirements, and the required credentials for state teaching licensure. Consequently, teacher education graduates often enter classrooms with different levels of knowledge about education, experience teaching in classrooms, and feelings of preparedness.

This is not to suggest that all new teachers hired enter the classroom ill prepared; however, in a report that examined over 1,200 of the nation's university based education programs, Levine (2006) reported three out of five teacher education alumni felt unprepared for the realities of today's classrooms (p. 5). There is great demand for qualified teachers and before teachers enter classrooms they should be prepared, as well as, feel prepared. Given the complexity of the classroom environment professional training for teachers should be provided after teachers are hired, and continue for as long as teachers remain in the profession.

Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos (2009) drew upon data and findings from a multiyear research project that revealed well designed professional development can positively influence teacher practice and student

performance, and that “the United States is still far from providing the universal access to intensive mentoring, coaching, and job supports common in other Asian and European countries ” (p 46). Further, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) revealed that in the year 2008, only 22 states mandated new teachers to participate in a state funded induction program, and only 25 states required mentoring for new teachers.

With such high expectations and high demands placed on classroom teachers to spark, facilitate and oversee the psycho-social development and academic achievement of students, one might ask, why is there such minimal support for teacher development? How can we better prepare novice teachers to teach the diverse learners who populate the classrooms in which they teach? What kinds of knowledge and skills should novice teachers learn to help them teach effectively? What professional development programs can be introduced to support new teachers?

D. Response: Development of Effective, Reflective Teachers

Skillful teachers are developed, not born, and effective teaching is much more than an intuitive process (Bandura 1997; Saphier & Gower, 1997). To teach effectively, teachers should have comprehensive knowledge about the subject matter to be taught and theoretical knowledge about teaching and learning (Shulman, 1987; Noddings, 1998; Ball, 2000). Teachers must be able to create a safe, social and emotional climate in the classroom to promote the contributions of student’s thoughts and ideas. Moreover, as Ball (2000) suggests teachers should be able to “hear students flexibly, represent ideas in multiple ways, connect content to contexts effectively and think about things in ways other than their own” (p 243). It takes time, effort, instruction and practice to develop these important skills.

Teachers should possess and utilize a wide repertoire of teaching methods to facilitate student learning. Teachers must identify and seek to relinquish ineffective approaches and practices. When developing any new skill Langer (1997) posits, “does it make sense to freeze our understanding of the skill before we try it out in different contexts...and stick to what we first learned...when we were most naïve?” (p. 13). Langer (1997) maintains teachers should take a “mindful approach” to teaching and learning. She has suggested that a “mindful approach” to any activity has three characteristics: (1) the continuous creation of new knowledge; (2) openness to new information; and (3) an implicit awareness of more than one perspective (Langer, 1997, pg. 4). In order to create dynamic learning environments teachers should be open to a wide variety of ideas and the diverse ways that ideas can be presented. Additionally, teachers should reflect on and recognize various ways of knowing, and study the multiple meanings derived from new knowledge and experiences.

Additionally, teachers should exhibit attitudes and habits of the heart that foster learning and build genuine relationships with students (Noddings, 1998; Palmer, 1998/2008). The first important relationship that a teacher can develop and successfully build upon is a relationship with her/himself. Within a skillful teacher lies a well-spring of self knowledge and beliefs on which she/he bases perceptions, judgments and actions (Bandura, 1997; Palmer, 1998/2008). Tapping into this well spring takes a commitment of time and effort, and holds the potential to expand personal and professional knowledge (Palmer, 1998/2008; Goleman, 1995).

Darling-Hammond, Baratz-Snowden et al. (2005) assert that “teachers need to have command of critical ideas and skills, and equally important, the capacity to reflect

on, evaluate, and learn from their teaching so that it continually improves” (p. 3). Borko and Putnam (1996) identify, among other effective teacher training practices, the importance of allowing sufficient time for collaboration and reflection, as teachers build a deeper knowledge of both subject content and pedagogical content knowledge. Time invested in professional collaboration provides teachers the opportunity to share ideas and strategies; to build supportive, collegial relationships; and to lessen the feelings of separation, isolation and circular thinking often experienced while working in what Lortie (1975, p. 14) identified as the “cellular”, “egg crate” classroom configurations found within most school buildings.

Furthermore, reflective and collaborative time might also be used to explore questions about teaching experiences as a means to improve teaching practice. Schon (1992) found that reflective practice can effectively take place in the act of teaching, and after teaching occurs. This is an indication that when teachers engage in reflective practice, it involves personal choice. Teachers must choose when to reflect, how to reflect, and whether or not to reflect on their teaching practice. Ziechner and Liston (1987) emphasized the importance of reflective practice, and strongly suggested that it be taught in teacher education programs. To expand the research on reflective practice, Ziechner and Liston (1987) designed a teacher education program based on Van Manen’s (1990) three levels of reflectivity. Known as technical, practical, and critical; levels of reflectivity are designed “to help student teachers become more aware of themselves, and their environment, in a way that changes their perceptions of what is possible” (p.25). Too often, Schon (1992) explained “teachers are cut off... from the possibility of reflecting and building on their own know-how, and from the confusions that could serve

as springboards to new ways of seeing things” (p. 121). Ziechner and Liston (1987) noted that “much unlearning has to go on before most students are willing to accept the need for a more reflective approach to teaching” (p. 42). Research suggested that for many student teachers and their cooperating teachers, the time spent on inquiry and reflection appeared to be frivolous, and reduced the time that could be spent on the more important tasks of applying subject content knowledge and demonstrating teaching skills (Ziechner & Liston, 1987). Needless to say, a discussion of one’s application of subject content knowledge and the examination of one’s teaching skills requires some reflection.

Reflective practice takes a commitment of time and effort to develop, and requires patience and dedication to the process in order to experience its benefits. What does reflective practice look like in today’s teacher education and induction programs? What type of reflective skills should novice teachers develop? Within 21st century teacher education and induction programs, how can research on reflection be extended to include opportunities to explore and experience firsthand the underlying nature of the thoughts and attitudes upon which one reflects, and to unlearn the detrimental thoughts and attitudes? How might teacher education and induction programs introduce new methods, for example, the introduction of the practice of yoga to instruct teachers how to develop reflective skills and additional ways to know and to understand their attitudes and actions?

E. Significance: Yoga Practice and the Development of Effective, Reflective Teachers

Yoga practice involves self observation, self -inquiry and self reflection (Iyengar, 1966/1979; Desikacher, 1995/1999). For several decades the yoga philosophies and

practices of Indian masters have become a visible part of mainstream North America. A walk around local cities and towns reveals a studio on almost every corner each specializing in some variety of yoga practice. Upon arrival to the West the practice of yoga branched out into different styles from A to V, Ashtanga to Vinyasa. In spite of the many variations of yoga practice available their underlying philosophy and principles remain constant. The term yoga represents the vast body of teaching and techniques first developed in India approximately 5,000 years ago (Boccio, 2004). With its origin in Indian philosophy and its etymology in Sanskrit, yoga's root 'yui', means to yoke or to unite. Iyengar (1979) states, "yoga means, the disciplining of the intellect, the mind, the emotions, the will ... it means a poise of the soul which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly" (p. 19). Often the initial foundation for yoga practice is built on poses called asanas, breathing exercises known as pranayama, and meditation techniques or dhyana. Over time yoga practitioners develop an understanding of the yamas or social behaviors. The yamas are nonviolence, truth, no stealing, clarity about sexual activity, and no greed. Yoga practitioners also develop an understanding of the niyamas or individual behaviors. The niyamas are purity, contentment, consistency, study and devotion.

Yoga helps practitioners unite their body, mind and spirit. Through yoga practice the body becomes strong and vibrant, the mind becomes steady and clear, and the spirit reveals its wisdom and power. Yoga has been known to provide a means by which individuals can change their lives for the better. Through yoga practice the ability to pay attention to sensations in the body, thoughts of the mind and feelings in the heart can be developed and such attentiveness is quite advantageous. Desikacher (1995/1999) asserts

“when we are attentive to our actions we are not prisoners to our habits; we do not need to do something today simply because we did it yesterday” (p 6). Learning to rely on one’s ability to make decisions based on information gathered in the moment by the mind’s thoughts, through the body’s sensations and the spirit’s wisdom could possible lead to more skillful actions.

Might the attentiveness cultivated through yoga be beneficial to novice teachers whose work requires that they make constant decisions and act upon them immediately? Might this attentiveness help novice teachers to be more skillful in their actions? Should the knowledge of yoga philosophy and the skills required to practice yoga be introduced into teacher education and professional induction programs? To what extent might the practice of yoga influence novice teachers?

During the development of this study all of these questions arose; however, the primary question that guided my research was: *To what extent do novice teachers’ experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives?*

While I sought to discover answers to the aforementioned questions illuminated by the theoretical underpinnings that frame this research, I remained open to the experiences of the research participants. And as the study evolved, I attempted to not force data or my participant’s experiences into explicit answers to these questions. In the next section, I review the literature used to construct the strong, theoretical frame of my research that includes yoga theory and philosophy, teacher preparation and teacher efficacy.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Theoretical Framework

To frame this research, principles and theories from the broader field of psychology have been applied. From its Ancient Greek origins translated to mean the study of the breath, soul or spirit (Goodale & Goldberg, 1978, p. 9) and viewed through the lens of psychology, this research seeks to understand the extent to which the practice of yoga (union of the mind, body and spirit) influences the experiences and perceptions novice teachers have about their lives as teachers; e.g. with their teaching practices, and their self-efficacy. In this review of literature related to the study of yoga, the experiences and perceptions of novice teachers practicing yoga, and yoga's influence on their teaching practices and their self-efficacy; principles and theories of yoga philosophy, teacher education, social, cognitive and educational psychology come together.

First, the origins of the practice of yoga, yoga theory developed by the philosopher Patanjali, and a method of yoga practice developed by yogi master, B.K.S. Iyengar are examined. Iyengar (1966/1979) developed his style of yoga to include the systematic practice of hundreds of postures called asanas, a breathing method called pranayama, and meditation called dhyana. Moreover, the ancient Indian discipline of yoga created by Patanjali helps its practitioners develop many other skills, specifically mindfulness. The research literature on the practice of yoga, the effects of yoga practice, and mindfulness were critically reviewed.

Second, the complex nature of teaching and learning is examined through research on teacher education and preparation. This research identifies the professional knowledge base and professional standards that teaching practitioners who are about to enter, or who currently work in the teaching profession should acquire. The field of research on teacher education introduces and outlines research that provides insight into how best to prepare teachers for the profession. This research seeks to inform the curriculum for teacher education by considering how to use the current knowledge of teacher learning and teacher preparation, student learning and student growth to develop effective teaching and learning opportunities for novice teachers and their students.

Third, self efficacy, a social learning theory advanced by Albert Bandura provides part of the theoretical framework for this research. According to Bandura (1995/1997) efficacy beliefs influence how people think, feel, and behave. A close examination of Bandura's theory of self efficacy provides a lens through which to view this research study, and further exploration of the literature reveals a strong relationship of self efficacy to education.

B. Yoga Philosophy and Theory

A review of the literature by ancient yoga philosophers and yogi masters provides a close examination of the practice of yoga and how yoga practice affects its practitioners.

Yoga, an ancient philosophy developed by the Indian sage Patanjali, provides guidance and instruction on how to live life more fully. Patanjali, a physician, grammarian, and a scholar of Sanskrit (an Indo-European language) lived between 500 and 200 BC. Patanjali recorded his thoughts and knowledge of yoga into 195 maxims

called *The Yoga Sutras* (Iyengar, 1993). Comprised of four chapters, *The Yoga Sutras* illuminated Patanjali's explanations for the art, science and a philosophy of life. The Yoga Sutras highlight every aspect of human life, including human thoughts and actions, physical health and emotional well being, breathing and meditative practice, and human interpersonal relationships.

Today, practitioners around the world still follow Patanjali's instructions for how to develop honest speech, skillful action, a strong body and an enlightened mind. According to Iyengar (1966/1979, 1993) the core of Patanjali's Yoga Sutra is an eight limb path that teaches the practitioner how best to perceive and to integrate their internal and external worlds. The following are Patanjali's eight limbs of yoga; 1) yamas/social behaviors, 2) niyamas/personal behaviors, 3) asanas/body postures, 4) pranayama/breathing exercises, 5) pratyahara/control of the senses 6) dharana/concentration and cultivating inner awareness, 7) dhyana /meditation, 8) samadhi/union with the Divine Self. Like branches on a tree when provided the appropriate conditions, the limbs of yoga grow over time, intertwine and can often change one's perception.

Yoga can be practiced by adopting all of these basic principles and techniques, or adapting certain principles and techniques. There is no requirement of adherence to specific concepts of God for one to participate in yoga practice. According to Desikachar (1995/1999) yoga requires us to practice and to pay attention to our practice. Contrary to dualistic theory where the mind is viewed separately from the body, Yoga, 'yui' derived from the Sanskrit root, means 'to unite' and yoga practice seeks to unite the body, mind and spirit of the practitioner. The practice of Iyengar Yoga, a type of Hatha Yoga,

includes but is not limited to physical poses (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation (dhyana).

1. Mindfulness Practice

In the Yoga Sutras, Patanjali, describes Yoga as “chitta vritti nirodhah” or cessation of the fluctuations of the mind (Iyengar, 1993). Also known as, meditation in motion, yoga practice promotes sustained attention and concentration (Shapiro et al., 2007). Iyengar (1997) states, “Yoga is the method by which the restless mind is calmed and the energy redirected into constructive channels” (p. 20). The increased state of awareness cultivated through the practice of yoga is known as ‘mindfulness’, or the ability to pay attention to all things in the present moment without judgment (Hahn, 1998; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Langer, 1997). Langer (1997) describes mindfulness as being open to new information, capable of constructing new mindsets, and having an awareness of various perspectives. According to Thich Nhat Hanh, a Vietnamese Zen master, mindfulness is cultivated by adhering to a set of precepts referred to as the 14 guidelines of mindfulness (Hahn, 1998).

Mindfulness is not just an action of the mind; it also includes an awareness of the body (Johnson 2000; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Langer, 1997; Lasater, 2007). As the mind becomes quiet the body is revealed (Bocci, 2004; Lasater, 2007). Johnson (2000) states “mindfulness is not so much a condition that we need to manufacture or create as it is a natural state of the body that has learned how to become more comfortably aligned, relaxed, and resilient” (p. 2). According to Johnson (2000) the body with help from the earth’s gravitational field, seeks to return to its natural vertical alignment with the head and neck stacked over the shoulders, the shoulders aligned with the hips, and the hips

evenly supported by the legs and feet. Improper posture creates misalignment and the body's muscular skeletal system becomes tense and numb. Misalignment closes off the vital flow of energy from oxygen, blood and other important bodily sensations.

Johnson (2000) further suggests a numb, non-reactive body opens the way for an overactive mind. "As the body becomes increasing numb, our mind becomes increasingly active, we lose ourselves once again in an apparently endless stream of involuntary thought" (p28). Being caught in the stream of involuntary thought hampers the state of mindfulness. Thus, through proper alignment (Johnson, 2000) and mindful attention to bodily sensations, referred to as "the thoughts of the body" (Lasater, 2000, 2009) information begins to surface.

The body communicates through its sensations, and the mind helps to make meaning of these messages. The thinking center or the neocortex located at the frontal lobe of the brain helps translate these messages (Chopra & Tanzi, 2012). Different messages are encoded in various physical sensations e.g. an increase in the physical sensations of muscular contractions and flow of gastric juices in the stomach, and the heightened sensitivity to smell and taste usually indicate hunger (Lasater, 2000, 2009; Bocci, 2004). The mind responds and works with the body to satisfy the sensation of hunger.

As pathways of communication between the body and the mind become unblocked perceived information flows easily in both directions; however, sometimes bodily sensations deny the mind's ability to make meaning, for example, in life or death experiences and/or gut reactions (Johnson, 2000; Choprak & Tanzi, 2012). At these times before the mind can process the bodies need to protect itself from danger (or the

perception of danger), bodily sensations manifest in the form of faster breathing (increased heart rate), surges of energy (adrenalin) and increased blood flow to muscles equipping the body to fight, flee, or freeze in an attempt to escape danger or the perception of danger.

These life or death reactions occur in what is known as the reptilian brain where the bodily sensations and its preparation to fight, flee, or freeze take place instinctually. The associated feelings of fear, thoughts of death etc., appear as after thoughts due to the slight delay in this type of informational processing performed by the limbic or emotional brain located in the mid brain region. Understanding the relationship between the brain, thoughts and emotions describes the undertakings of an emerging field of science known as contemplative neuroscience.

Contemplative neuroscience researchers Chopra and Tanzi (2012) define mindfulness as an act of paying attention that involves 1.) sensory awareness, 2.) bodily awareness, 3.) mental awareness, and 4.) social awareness. Chopra and Tanzi (2012) further suggests that paying attention, showing appreciation and sharing affection improves brain function, personal relationships and the quality of life. Additionally, Chopra and Tanzi (2012) suggest that being alert, awake and aware of the sensory, bodily, mental, and social aspects of mindfulness provides information for the brain that can improve memory, creativity, joy, and passion. Through exercise the brain regenerates neurons and rebuilds neural networks called neuroplasticity, and Chopra and Tanzi (2012) suggest enhanced brain function can create what they refer to as a 'Super Brain'. How might the movements in yoga impact neuroplasticity?

If according to Johnson (2000) proper body alignment decreases the numbness in the body and increases the energy and sensations that flow through the body, and according to Chopra and Tanzi (2012) exercise helps to attune the mind, increase awareness and skillful action; might teaching teachers the practice of yoga, a practice that instructs its participants how to carefully align and move one's body, produce similar influences?

2. Yoga Practice Benefits

Quantitative research studies on the practice of yoga as a complementary, alternative and mind-body medicine (Netz & Lidor, 2003, Shapiro, et al., 2007) have suggested that yoga has positive effects on practitioners, most significantly in the reduction of stress, anxiety, and depression. Kabat-Zinn (2003) founder of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program extensively documented the effects of yoga on stress reduction, depression, blood pressure, and disuse atrophy (muscle deterioration due to lack of activity) in patients.

Shapiro et al. (2007) conducted studies in the treatment of depressed patients and found that yoga, when used as a complement to their treatment of anti-depressant medications, produced beneficial emotional, psychological and biological effects. The meditative aspect of yoga practice can be “conceptualized as a family of complex emotional and attentional regulatory training regimes developed for various ends, including the cultivation of well-being and emotional balance” (Lutz, Slagter, Dunne and Davidson, 2001, p. 163). Goldstein and Kornfield (2001) assert that by practicing contemplative practice like yoga and meditation, practitioners can learn to open to awareness, develop the ability to fully experience each moment, and cultivate the

following foundations of mindfulness; awareness of the body, awareness of feelings, awareness of mental thoughts, and awareness of truths to help explain life experience.

According to Schiffmann (1996) yoga is practice that gradually teaches practitioners how to move into stillness. Schiffmann suggests,

Moving into stillness in order to experience your true nature is the primary theme of yoga simply because everything about your every thought, feeling, and emotion, as well as every aspect of your behavior, is predicated on the way you feel about yourself. The way you feel about yourself determines how you think, what you do, and how you interact with the world. (p. 4)

Of course, yoga practice is not the only way to develop the stillness Schiffmann (1996) states is required for self discovery and a means to cultivate mindfulness, but it is one way. Through yoga practice perceptions held in the mind and body are revealed, can be examined, and perhaps can gradually be changed. According to Bandura (1995, 1997) and Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk-Hoy, and Hoy (1998) such perceptions are known as self efficacy beliefs. In the mind of a teacher these perceptions are called teacher efficacy, and relate directly to a teacher's belief in their ability to perform the tasks and responsibilities required to engage students, to promote student learning, and advance student achievement.

3. Mindfulness in Teaching

Research (Darling-Hammond, Bransford et al., 2005; Jackson, 1968/1987; Shulman, 1987; Valli, 1997; Ziechner & Liston, 1987) reveals teaching is very complex and a hectic classroom environment makes it difficult for teachers to develop a reflective practice.

MacDonald and Shirley (2009) extended Langer's (1989/1997) "mindful approach" and explored "mindful teaching". Furthermore MacDonald and Shirley (2009) define mindful teaching as,

A form of teaching that is informed by contemplative practices and teacher inquiry that enables teachers to interrupt their harried lifestyles, come to themselves through participation in a collegial community of inquiry and practice, and attend to aspects of their classroom instruction and pupils' learning that ordinarily are overlooked in the press of events. (p.4)

A partnership between a district school teacher and university faculty professor, the research of Elizabeth MacDonald and Dennis Shirley (2009) involved urban public school teachers who over a span of four years participated in mindful seminars. During the mindful seminars teachers discussed common readings, practiced formal meditation, and collaboratively explored the dilemmas and delights of their teaching experiences. Research data (MacDonald & Shirley, 2009) suggested mindful teaching encompassed seven synergies providing a common lens through which teachers viewed and examined the challenges and opportunities presented by teaching. According to MacDonald and Shirley (2009) the seven synergies include open mindedness, caring, stopping, professional expertise, authentic alignment, integration and harmonization, and collective responsibilities; together the seven synergies provide a set of principles and practices that guide and inform mindful teaching.

How might the contemplative practice of yoga extend the definitions of mindfulness and mindful teaching? What teaching principles and practices might the practice of yoga influence? How might novice teachers participating in the practice of

yoga describe their teaching experiences? In what ways might the practice of yoga influence the teaching practices of novice teachers? I seek to explore these and other questions by researching to what extent do novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives?

C. Teacher Preparation

The foundation of teacher education includes core theories on teaching and learning, and the knowledge and the skills of teaching pedagogy. Teacher education theories help to explain the importance of subject content knowledge, and how subject content knowledge can be effectively developed. Many teacher education theorists propose an increased awareness of the learners, and/or the creation of transformative learning environments as essential skills and understandings to be developed by teachers.

Darling-Hammond (2006) contends that to help prepare teachers to best facilitate student learning within the complex social settings of their classrooms, they should formally prepare them in teacher education programs. Many traditional four-year undergraduate and two-year graduate education programs provide teacher training based on an apprenticeship model at colleges and universities leading to a bachelor's or master's degree in education and teacher licensure. Several non-profit organizations such as *Teach for America*, *The New Teacher Project*, and *Achievement First* offer non-traditional teacher training, and borrowing from the vernacular of medical training call their teacher training experience a teaching residency. Still other non-traditional pathways to teaching licensure condense the process of teacher preparation into one month of intensive summer institute training followed by full classroom immersion and teaching responsibilities in the fall of the ensuing year.

Each non-traditional program implements different training models, program content, and assessments to measure the acquisition of professional knowledge and skills. Darling-Hammond (2010) argues the inconsistencies in teacher training programs impacts the meaning of professionalism and dims the outlook of teaching as a professional career. Relative to the professionalism of teaching, approximately three decades ago Jackson (1968) discovered, “one of the most notable features of teacher talk is the absence of a technical vocabulary” (p 143). Jackson declared that the absence of technical terms and jargon in teacher’s language connoted “conceptual simplicity” (1968, p 144). He defined conceptual simplicity as having the following four components: 1) an uncomplicated view of causality; 2) an intuitive, rather than rational approach to classroom events; 3) an opinionated, as opposed to an open-minded stance when confronted with alternative teaching practices; and 4) a narrowness in the working definitions assigned to abstract terms (p. 144).

Lortie (1975) reported that the lack of a common technical language and culture among teachers affects their personal and professional status in two ways: it makes teachers less ready to assert their authority on educational matters, and less able to respond to demands from society. Membership in a particular profession requires the acquisition of a particular language and possession of knowledge regarded as socially valuable, and uncommon to laypeople, “Occupations with highly developed subcultures – that is, with rich, complex bodies of knowledge and technique –differentiate entrants from outsiders, laying the basis for a special sense of community among the initiated” (Lortie, p. 56). Entrants to the profession become insiders who readily communicate

using the professional jargon and whose knowledge and skills are deeply embedded in professional culture.

During the past century the language, knowledge, and techniques of teaching and learning have been researched, and have developed into a professional discipline (Cuban, 1984; Darling Hammond, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2010; Lortie, 1975; Shulman, 1987, 1998, 2000, 2004; Tyack & Cuban, 1995; and Zeichner & Liston, 1987). One goal of teacher education programs should be to ensure that the language of teachers, and the knowledge teachers possess, can no longer be conceptually simplistic (Jackson, 1968/1987; Shulman, 1987, 1998, 2000, 2004). Also, teacher education programs must introduce and initiate students to the culture of the teaching profession and provide them a sense of professionalism (Lortie, 1975; Darling-Hammond, 2003, 2005, 2009, 2010). The wide variation in training programs makes it a challenge to define what it means to be professional, and makes it difficult to measure the overall effectiveness of teacher preparation programs (Darling-Hammond, 2005).

The teaching profession, like other professions, requires that the practitioner commit to uphold professional ideals, ethics and standards (Palmer 1998/ 2008; Shulman, 1998). The challenge, of all professional learning, is striking an appropriate balance between time dedicated to learning the content knowledge of the discipline and relevant theory, and time devoted to engaging in practice. Gaining a clear understanding of the subject content, and theoretical knowledge base on which a profession is built, supports practice.

Another common support of practice found in all professional preparation is participation in a supervised clinical experience, such as student teaching, medical

residencies and, legal apprenticeships (Shulman, 1998). In the preparation of professionals, clinical supervision provides intensive supervision and coaching to students, allowing them to transition more easily into the field (Sergiovanni & Starrat, 2007). During these experiences students apply content knowledge and theoretical knowledge. Students hone and acquire skills, and supervisors ensure that students demonstrate appropriate behavior, manners, and uphold the values deemed important by members of the professional community.

Just as practice provides an opportunity to implement knowledge and to test theory, it can also lead to the development of new theory and to the construction of more knowledge to add to the professional base (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2005; Shulman, 1998). As a member of the professional community people notice and value what you think, what you say, and how you act. According to Shulman (1998) upon entering a profession, the acquisition of technical skills and theoretical knowledge must be grounded in a social and moral responsibility to engage in service to others.

Additionally, a professional commits to acquire the base of academic knowledge and scholarly expertise specific to their profession, and engages in life-long scholarship to stay current and to contribute to the research and evidence-based practices that inform their profession (Darling- Hammond et al., 2005; Shulman, 1998).

The professional practice of teaching derives evidence from various types of studies; e.g. experimental studies, field studies, action research or practitioner research studies that incorporate careful observation with the systematic collection and analysis of data, to inform individual professional practice and the practice of other professionals in the field of teaching. Darling-Hammond (2005) suggests,

Teaching as a profession will not move forward until we settle on some fundamentals about what teachers should have the opportunity to learn and how they should learn it—and until we reshape or create programs—no matter who runs them—so that they can do it well. (p. 39)

When building the foundation for teacher education programs whether traditional or non-traditional, emphasis should be placed on the knowledge of learners and learning theory, understanding curriculum content and goals, and understanding pedagogy (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). Research indicates there are four major sources for teaching knowledge that include, knowledge in content area and pedagogy (Shulman, 1987, 2000; Ball, 2000) knowledge of materials and the settings of educational institutions (Jackson, 1968/1987; Lortie, 1975), research on schooling (Cuban, 1984; Tyack & Cuban, 1995), and the wisdom gained through the practice of teaching (Borko & Putnan, 1996; Palmer, 1998/2008; Darling-Hammond, 2006).

Shulman (1987, 2000) examined the nature of pedagogical knowledge and subject content knowledge, and the ways to understand and unlock the complexities of pedagogical content knowledge. Examining sources, actions, and strategies, Shulman developed a framework for a knowledge base for teaching, and explored the processes of reasoning, also known as pedagogical reasoning that undergirds the science of teaching. Shulman (1987, 2000) contends that the complex and difficult task of teaching involves taking what a teacher knows and preparing it for effective instruction; for example, given a text, educational purpose, and set of ideas teachers move through a cycle of pedagogical reasoning and action that include comprehension, transformation, instruction, evaluation and reflection.

Comprehension involves understanding the meaning of ideas, and having the realization that a part of teaching is to convey that understanding to students. Teachers must learn to transform the content knowledge they possess into forms of instruction to meet the various needs of students. Transformation, a multi-step stage in the teaching cycle, involves the preparation of materials, decisions about how to present selected materials and how to adapt the materials for classroom instruction (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005; Shulman, 1987, 2000).

Like Shulman various researchers (Ziechner & Liston, 1987; Valli, 1997) agree that during the act of instruction perhaps the most crucial aspects of pedagogy transpire, for example, organizing and managing the classroom; presenting clear explanations and vivid descriptions; assigning and checking work; and interacting effectively with students through questions and probes, answers and reactions, and praise and criticism. Once a teacher comprehends content, attempts to transform it, presents it to students through instruction, and evaluates student understanding, time must be set aside to look back at the teaching and learning that has occurred.

Known as reflection, this time provides teachers an invitation to reconstruct, reenact, and recapture the events, the emotions, the challenges and the accomplishments that transpire in the classroom (Shulman, 1987; Ziechner & Liston, 1987; Valli, 1997). Reflection requires looking back on thoughts, assumptions, and beliefs to test whether they are reasonable, logical and evidence based. Additionally, reflection requires looking forward to appraise the effects and the consequences of particular actions. Dewey (1933) defined reflective thought as the “active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and further

conclusions to which it tends” (p. 9). To engage in reflection involves focusing effort and attention on present, past, and perhaps even future intention to deliberately increase more skillful action.

To recollect the teaching episodes to examine, teachers must first make time for reflection. The dedication of time and making space whether the space refers to the physical space such as a quiet room, the mental space such as open-mindedness, or the emotional space such as forgiveness and compassion, can be a challenge. Teaching demands that teachers be able to understand and respond to the dense, multifaceted nature of the classroom, and learn to juggle multiple academic and social goals that require moment-to-moment trade-offs (Jackson, 1968/1987).

Schon (1987, 1992) maintained that reflective practice is central to teaching because teachers must quickly make sense of unexpected events. He described reflective practice as being comprised of knowing-in-action, reflection-in-action, and reflective conversation with the situation. Schon (1983, 1987, 1992) coined the phrase knowing-in-action to refer to intuition, instinct or autonomic motor skills that involve a spontaneous awareness and understanding that guides seeing, thinking, and doing in familiar situations. Schon (1983, 1987, 1992) asserts the knowledge obtained through knowing-in-action is often difficult to describe and to explain and takes careful observation and reflection to accurately interpret. Further, Schon (1987, 1992) identifies reflection-in-action taking place in the midst of action, he labels it “action-present” and defines reflection-in-action as the ability to think about what one is doing, while doing it. Additionally, Schon (1987, 1992) describes back talk as part of a reflective conversation

about a teaching episode that momentarily interrupts a teacher's action. The teacher engages in self talk to better understand her/his actions.

Setting aside time and making space for reflection is an essential part of developing a professional teaching practice. Once teachers take the time and make space dedicated for reflection, the next step is cultivating the method and the capacity to examine one's practice. A teaching professional must carefully examination their teaching practice and make a concerted effort to learn from their experiences. This is true for individual professionals, and it is equally true for the entire professional community of practice. Learning from experience requires an examination of the knowledge acquired from formal educational coursework, and the pragmatic thoughts and skills used during practice.

Additionally, teachers must examine the perceptions about their ability to engage students and to foster student learning, known as their sense of teaching efficacy (Bandura 1977/1995, 1997; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Teachers develop thoughts and judgments based on information about the results of their actions which are added to their base of knowledge. This knowledge base includes theoretical and moral principles, general rules, and a variety of stories about their sense of teaching efficacy. What methods of reflection, both individual and in a professional community would provide novice teachers opportunities to carefully examine their increasing knowledge base? Through the practice of yoga, might novice teachers develop beneficial skills that increase their ability to reflect and to examine the perceptions, principles, and rules that guide the practices they employ to engage students and to foster student learning? What unexpected outcomes might the practice of yoga bring to novice teachers?

D. Teacher Efficacy

Bandura (1977) suggested that human beings exert control over and can be controlled by their psychological and emotional states, their social experiences, and the environment. One way to better understand teachers' psychosocial experiences is to examine their ability to organize and to carry out action plans required to accomplish various tasks related to teaching, otherwise known as their sense of efficacy or teacher efficacy (Bandura, 1995, 1997).

To extend the research on teacher efficacy and to integrate Bandura's theory of efficacy, Dembo and Gibson (1985) examined the relationship between general teaching efficacy (GTE), personal teaching efficacy (PTE), and student motivation. They developed a Likert scale of 30 items to measure GTE and PTE and found that teachers with both high GTE and high PTE tended to vary their instruction, provide more feedback, and encourage students to learn, indicating a correlation between high GTE and PTE and increased student motivation. Woolfolk & Hoy (1990) used a shortened instrument to measure teacher's efficacy on matters of classroom management, instructional practice and student engagement.

According to Bandura (1995) efficacy beliefs influence the amount of effort teacher's demonstrate, how long a teacher will persist in the face of obstacles, and how well teacher's cope and recover from stress. Furthermore Bandura (1977, 1995) suggested people develop efficacy beliefs in the following four ways: 1.) mastery experiences, 2.) vicarious experiences, 3.) social persuasion, and 4.) affective or physiological and emotional states.

1. Mastery Experiences.

The most effective means to develop a sense of personal efficacy is through mastery experiences (Bandura, 1977, 1995). Mastery experiences that produce success increase one's self efficacy while mastery experiences that result in failure diminishes one's self efficacy. More specifically, people engaged in mastery experiences that require great effort and result in success may increase their self efficacy; while engagement in effortless success may lead to a false sense of hard work, lack of determination and an inability to persevere when dealing with failure and adversity. Furthermore, mastery experiences that lead occasionally to failure may teach people how to persevere in spite of adversity, although experiencing continued failure may seriously decrease personal efficacy.

New teachers rarely experience successful mastery experiences within their first year or two of teaching. Kaufman et al. (2002) conducted interviews with fifty 1st and 2nd year teachers in Massachusetts during the 1999-2000 school year. In the interviews, teachers expressed grave concern about many issues. For example, teachers agreed that the development of state curriculum standards known as the state frameworks were, "inadequate to guide their decisions about what to teach and how to teach" (p. 288). Teachers felt frustrated by the lack of curriculum guides, adequate guidance, and resources needed to comply with the state standards and stated, "the frameworks and high-stakes test introduced pressure without proven pedagogy and a mandate without materials" (p. 289). The novice teachers in this study were exposed to high levels of demand without adequate levels of support, a combination that according to Evans (1998) produces stress. Kaufman et al. (2002) argued the curriculum void these novice teachers

experience was often exacerbated by the daily classroom tasks of delivering engaging instruction, assessing student work, maintaining discipline, communicating with parents, and learning how to negotiate the school bureaucracy.

In addition to the aforementioned concerns, Darling-Hammond (2006) found there are many contemporary dilemmas experienced by teachers in today's classrooms. Generally, teachers encounter the following contemporary issues:

At least 25% of students live in poverty, and many of them lack basic food, shelter, and health care; from 10% to 20% have identified learning differences; 15% speak a language other than English as their primary language and about 40% are members of racial/ethnic “‘minority’ groups” who have recently immigrated to the US. (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 301)

A novice teacher's lack of awareness, of the impact socio-economic status and cultural traits have on students and their ability to learn, may further impede novice teachers opportunities to experience master teaching.

2. Vicarious Experiences.

The second means by which people develop personal efficacy is through vicarious experiences. Bandura (1977, 1995) proposes that having an opportunity to witness someone perform an activity influences the observer's judgment of how well they would do performing similar activities. Watching someone perform an activity successfully strengthens the observer's efficacy beliefs, whereas watching someone fail at an activity diminishes their sense of efficacy and motivation (Bandura, 1977, 1995). The extent to which the observer identifies with the performer determines the impact of the vicarious experience. If the observer strongly identifies with the performer, the greater influence

the performance results will have on the observer. An observer, who strongly identifies with a performer who succeeds at an activity, experiences an increase in their personal efficacy, and the belief that they too can succeed at the activity. However, if the performer fails, and an observer with a strong connection to the performer witnesses the performer fail, the observer's personal efficacy beliefs can be negatively impacted and thoughts of failure might arise.

Most Americans at some time or another have been a student in a classroom, and that experience as a student influences their self efficacy beliefs about education. Very often the experience of merely being a student in a classroom can lead people to believe that they can easily become an effective teacher. This commonly held experience underlies the notion that anyone can teach. It undermines the teaching profession, and stifles the dedication of adequate time and the necessary resources for educational research and development (Lortie, 1975). Tyack and Cuban (1995) revealed that in all but a few schools the "grammar of schooling" has remained the same for centuries. In schools across America the basic instructional practices, the division of time and space, the categorization of grade levels and subjects, and the systems to evaluate learning comprise various aspects of the "grammar of schooling" (p.85).

Cuban (1984) gathered descriptions of more than 1,200 classrooms and compared teacher classroom practices in three cities and rural districts during the 1920's and 1930's, in two cities and one state between 1965 and 1975, and in one mid-sized school district in a metropolitan area between 1975 and 1981. Cuban (1984) examined how classroom space was arranged; the ratio of teacher talk to student talk; the manner of grouping the teacher used for instruction; the presence of learning centers used as part of

the school day; and how much physical movement students were allowed within the classroom. Cuban concluded, that schools of the 20th century were remarkably similar to the schools of the 19th century, “anyone familiar with a classroom knows the kaleidoscopic whirl that it is-although its pace, intensity, and complexity are often obscured by student compliance and by teacher-established routines” (Cuban, 1984, p.8).

The traditional structures and routines found in schools help to create some semblance of order in what otherwise is a frenzied place. Given the lack of change in classroom structure and school culture over the past two centuries, does the vicarious experience of having been a student in a classroom provide pre-service teachers enough experience to teach?

Classroom observations as part of clinical training provide teacher candidates opportunities to experience the classroom; however, very few teacher preparation programs require that teacher candidates participate in clinical training. Findings from the 2011 report conducted by the United States Department of Education, *Our Future, Our Teachers*, suggest that only 50% of the teacher candidates receive supervised clinical training (p. 5). Moreover, when novice teachers enter their new classrooms they seldom have opportunities to participate in classroom observations of their colleagues, or collaborate with their colleagues.

3. Social Persuasion.

Bandura (1977, 1995) states the third way people develop self-efficacy is through social persuasion. Encouragement in the form of verbal persuasion can boost people's efficacy beliefs. The increase in self-efficacy developed from external messages sent by

others is less effective than the increase in self-efficacy cultivated through internal, self-affirming messages.

People can, and often do, rely solely on the use of verbal persuasion to build a sense of efficacy in others; however, Bandura (1977, 1995) advises that coupling the use of positive messages with the creation of opportunities for others to achieve some modicum of success produces greater results. He suggests the most meaningful measures of success should be determined in terms of individual accomplishments, and not in terms of individual achievements over others. Furthermore, Bandura (1977/1995) asserts people who send messages to dissuade others and restrict their opportunities to achieve success demoralize themselves, and weaken their sense of efficacy.

In the United States the teaching profession holds a second class status to other professions, for example to the medical profession and the legal profession (Lortie, 1975). For years contradictory messages have been conveyed about the teaching profession. Lortie (1975) states, “teaching seems to have more than its share of status anomalies. It is honored and disdained, praised as “dedicated service” and lampooned as “easy work” (p. 10). The structures and practices integral to the “grammar of schooling” make teaching look easy and lead casual observers to believe that teaching is routine (Tyack & Cuban, 1984). The sentiment that teaching is easy work often fuels the debate over teacher effectiveness. The multifaceted work performed by teachers daily requires hard work and the development of various skills. Effective teaching requires the acquisition of subject content knowledge (curriculum), development of pedagogical skills (teaching methods), knowledge of human psychology (learners), and social theory (learning environments).

The continued debate over teacher effectiveness drives administrators, school boards, and legislative policy makers to frequently update and devise new measures to evaluate teacher effectiveness; for example using student grades, parent surveys, student scores on standardized tests such as SAT's or comprehensive state assessments. Another way to measure teacher effectiveness is to examine the perceptions of how effective teachers believe themselves to be, their self efficacy (Bandura, 1995, 1997). How might another measure of teacher effectiveness influence the perceptions of how effective teachers believe themselves to be, the measure of their teacher efficacy? What impact might the contradictory messages about the teaching profession, and the debate over teacher effectiveness have on teachers? What value, if any, do teachers place on these messages? To what extent do message like these impact teachers sense of efficacy? To what extent does the participation in yoga practice socially persuade novice teachers?

4. Affective States.

The fourth way people develop self efficacy beliefs is through the perception and interpretation of their affective (physiological and emotional) states. Bandura (1977, 1995) maintains that efficacy beliefs change based on responses people have to a variety of physical and emotional conditions such as stress, fatigue, and pain. When people feel stressed, fatigued and pained they doubt they have the physical and emotional energy and endurance to perform well. In order to enhance self efficacy, Bandura (1977, 1995) suggests that people should reduce unhealthy stress, build physical and emotional strength, and learn how to read and to respond to bodily feedback.

Bandura (1977, 1995) noted the perception and interpretation of various affective states impact people more than the intensity and duration of the physical and emotional

changes directly experienced. Bandura (1977, 1995) reported people who feel very efficacious consider affective conditions like stress, to be quite exhilarating; whereas people who feel less efficacious find affective conditions like stress, to be anxiety producing and debilitating.

Beach and Pearson (1998) identified four types of conflicts and tensions faced by student teachers. The first obstacle is curriculum and instruction, the second involves building interpersonal relationships, the third relates to the formulation of teacher identity, and the fourth is how to negotiate the disparity between their personal beliefs and attitudes with those of teacher education programs and partnering schools. As determined by Evans (1998) coping successfully with conflicts and tensions requires the development of skills and practices to decrease the severity of stress experienced by the organism. What type of skills and practices decrease stress? How can teacher preparation programs help student teachers develop these skills? To what extent does the practice of yoga decrease stress? To what extent does yoga influence a teacher's overall affective states?

Information about efficacy beliefs can be conveyed through mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and affective (physiological and emotional) states. Bandura (1995) asserts, people interpret and make meaning of this information using cognition. Through the process of cognition people choose, evaluate, and combine the information gathered to form their self-efficacy judgments, and these self-efficacy judgments inform the thoughts that produce actions. Close examination of self-efficacy beliefs could afford teachers the opportunity to reframe how they think about teaching and learning. The insight teachers gather from close examination of their self-efficacy

beliefs might produce more skillful actions, and might influence novice teachers' belief in their ability to construct meaningful classroom experiences that inspire and challenge their students to learn and achieve success.

Bandura (1995) demonstrated the importance of self-efficacy, how it developed, and how it influenced personal performance. Ashton & Webb (1986) suggested an increase in a teacher's self efficacy increased student achievement. Parkay, Greenwood, Olejnik & Proller, (1988) found an increase in teacher's self efficacy reduced stress among teachers. What methods and materials can be used in teacher preparation programs and teacher professional development programs to positively influence a teacher's sense of efficacy? To what extent would a program of yoga for student and novice teachers influence their self efficacy? How might the practice of yoga impact a teacher's ability to explore, examine, and perhaps even increase self-efficacy? What influence might an increase in teacher efficacy brought about by yoga practice have on teacher stress? How can the practice of yoga be integrated into teacher preparation and teacher professional development programs?

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Paradigms

For many years scientists have conducted research to understand and to explain the nature of reality, existence, and knowledge. Popkewitz (1984) claims political, social and educational issues require scientific solutions to make these issues more manageable and solvable. Scientific research occurs within communities of people committed to particular lines of reasoning and ways to verify knowledge (Popkewitz, 1984). Creswell (2009) explains scientific inquiry can be conducted using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approaches, and can be imagined as part of a continuum with degrees of difference. On one end of the continuum lies quantitative research with its empirical, analytical approach focused on fact finding, seeking universal truths and acquiring answers to hypotheses. On the other end of the continuum lies qualitative research with its symbolic, interpretive approach focused on gathering descriptive data, exploring various realities, and constructing emergent theory. In the middle of the continuum lies a mixed methods approach that includes aspects of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2009). Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods orientations provide standards for researchers that inform the types of research questions posed, and the research methods and procedures followed.

Researchers' worldviews, also known as paradigms guide and inform their scientific inquiry. Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest paradigms represent the most informed and refined views researchers can make in respond to three important questions; the ontological questions, e.g. "What is the nature of being, and the existence of reality?", the epistemological questions, e.g. "What does it mean to know and what is

the relationship between the knower, the potential knower, and what can be known?”, and the methodological question, e.g. “What methods relative to the ontological and epistemological questions best fit the scientific inquiry?” The search for answers to these questions provides researchers an opportunity to examine the theory, values, and attitudes that combine to form their paradigms.

Merriam (1998) suggests it is beneficial in the beginning phases of research for scientists to identify and to clarify the paradigms that guide their research. Further DeMarris and Lapan (2004) declare for a researcher the development and awareness of their personal paradigm is an essential first step to take in preparation for a thorough systematic examination of a phenomenon, or a problem that might contribute to an existing base of knowledge or establish a new base of knowledge. Perhaps, a researcher who is aware of their personal beliefs and tenets has a clearer sense of where and when their views might hinder or help the research study. Popewitz (1984) contends that “the potency of social science is not in the utility of its knowledge, but in its ability to expand and to liberate the consciousness of people into considering the possibilities of their human condition” (pg. 8). Although a praiseworthy intention, not all social science research aims to meet this ambition.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) qualitative and quantitative methods when applied appropriately can be used with any research paradigm. Lincoln and Guba remind us, “that paradigms, as sets of basic beliefs, are not open to proof in any conventional sense; there is no way to elevate one over another on the basis of ultimate, foundational criteria” (1985, pg. 108). Furthermore paradigms are constructed by humans, thus the answers to the questions and the analysis of the questions that derive

from humanly constructed paradigms are designed by the human mind and subject to human error (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Scientists are humans who develop research, and many aspects of the inquiry are directly influenced by their paradigms.

Knowledge about paradigms and the influence such worldviews have on the interpretive framework of ideas (ontology/theory), that lead to the questions (epistemology/methods) chosen by researchers for examination in distinctive ways (methodology/analysis), characterize the foundation of the qualitative research process (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) state, “all research is interpretive, guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied” (pg.13). They assert the four major interpretive paradigms that constitute qualitative research are 1) positivist and post-positivist, 2) constructive-interpretive, 3) critical and 4) feminist-post structural. Acting on the suggestions of several researchers (DeMarris & Lapan, 2004; Merriam, 1998) to carefully exam my personal paradigm, and taking the opportunity to compare my paradigm to the paradigms presented by Denzin & Lincoln (1994) was quite useful.

B. Researcher's Paradigm/Profile

For me, the paradigm of constructive-interpretive most closely describes my basic framework, set of principles, beliefs and assumptions about the world, my place in the world, and my relationship to the world and its inhabitants. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), “the constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and subject create understandings), and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures” (pgs. 13-14).

Qualitative research seeks to understand people and the experiences people have with a specific concept, topic, or event from the person's frame of reference (Bodgan & Taylor, 1975; Creswell, 2007). As a qualitative researcher, I have formulated a study and gathered data derived from surveys, interviews, journal entries, and observations. This study was an opportunity to share in, and to imagine the experience of yoga from the perspective of novice teachers, and to convey the meaning of how yoga influenced their teaching and their efficacy through a systematic analysis of the data. Bodgan and Taylor (1975) state the work of a qualitative methodologist, also referred to as a phenomenologist is "to capture the 'process' of interpretation . . . , and in order to grasp the meanings of a person's behavior the phenomenologist attempts to see things from that person's point of view" (pg. 14). To capture the process of interpretation, I relied on the research participants to inform me about their experience through interviews, in combination with data collected from journal entries, classroom observations, and surveys.

1. Educator/Yoga Practitioner

As a veteran educator, educational administrator, and educational researcher the study of teachers, learners, and teaching and learning matters deeply to me. Slavin (1988) argues, "the major focus of educational psychology is to investigate the process by which information, skills, values and attitudes are transmitted from teachers to students in the classroom" (p 3). The study of the psychological and social processes by which teachers develop the information, skills, values, and attitudes they impart to students in the classroom has improved teaching pedagogy, increased teacher effectiveness, and student learning (Darling Hammond, 2010; Schon 1992; Shulman, 2000). To generate

new knowledge for the next generation of educators, I chose from within the field of teacher education to research the introduction of the practice of yoga to novice teachers, and I explored to what extent novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influenced their professional lives.

Interest in this research emanated from the personal growth I have experienced through the practice of yoga, and fueled my desire to share the practice of yoga with novice teachers and to study their experience. For over fifteen years I have practiced yoga, and eventually I trained to teach yoga. I have experienced the transformative power of yoga, and it has increased my capacity to be more open-minded, resilient and compassionate. Thus, I sought to help novice teachers explore the practice of yoga and expand educational research with the study of their practice.

2. Social Scientist

The experiences of participants engaged in a study are essential to scientific inquiry. The belief that participants' lived experience when described and communicated by means of qualitative research builds knowledge and defines truth is a commonly held perspective among many social scientists (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Creswell, 2007; Mead, 1934). Social scientists understand that to generate shared meaning, knowledge must first grow from an individual's thoughts and actions performed within a broader social context in connection with other people (Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Mead, 1934). Through qualitative research these shared meanings can be illuminated and expressed. Over time these meanings might change to include new experiences that add new knowledge to reflect upon, and upon which to build further research (Popkewitz, 1984).

As the primary investigator, I conducted ethical research and I was sensitive to the emic (insider) perspective, voice, and needs of the research participants (Corbin & Strauss, 1998; Rossman & Rallis 2003). A preliminary investigation of my assumptions about the nature of knowledge, reality, and human agency revealed that for me the acquisition of knowledge and construction of reality require human interpretations of personal experience. Rossman and Rallis (2003) agreed that the understanding and knowledge constructed through the perceptions and interpretations of humans and their experience describes the truth of the humans experiencing the phenomenon, and does not seek to defend universal truth or construct universal reality. The ability to clearly identify, label, and understand thoughts and experiences from a personal perspective provides meaning that can be shared, and shared meaning can cultivate social reality. Social reality and its meaning are constructed by people who participate in the reality (Gall, J. P., Gall, M. D., & Borg, W. R., 1999). I place great trust in the human capacity to build knowledge directly from personal and shared experiences as a means to co-create social reality.

As the social scientist primarily responsible for designing the study, gathering, analyzing and interpreting the data I diligently worked to build participant trust. Additionally throughout the research study, I safeguarded the privacy and identify of my participants by using pseudonyms; and I upheld strong ethics and followed acceptable methods and standards of scientific inquiry for qualitative research by following Institutional Review Board guidelines. In this research study, the qualitative data analysis methods of grounded theory were used to develop insight about the experience

and perceptions of novice teachers who participated in the practice of yoga, and to explore how the practice of yoga influenced their lives as teachers.

Grounded theory means findings and assertions are grounded or rooted in the data collected and analyzed (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory is based on symbolic interaction theory. Mead (1934) developed the theory of symbolic interactionism and described it as one way people define reality. Mead (1934) maintained that reality is created through the meaning people attach to situations, and this meaning is conveyed using symbols like words, routines, rituals etc. Actions and interactions occur based upon these symbolic meanings and through socialization, symbolic meaning can be shared by group members (Mead, 1934).

According to Bogdan & Taylor (1975) “all social organizations consist of actors who develop definitions of a situation, or perspectives, through the process of interpretation and then who act in terms of these definitions” (pg. 15). The research to understand how the practice of yoga influenced the professional lives of novice teachers involved field work to identify how the research participants interpreted the experience, and how the experience of yoga symbolically emerged through the participant’s language and their social interactions. A careful examination of the meanings drawn and shared, by novice teachers about the practice of yoga, was achieved using interpretive, qualitative research methodology.

C. Research Design

A research design situates researchers in the empirical world and connects them to the specific sites, persons, groups, institutions, and bodies of relevant interpretive material, including documents and archives (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). A qualitative

research design was chosen for the study. The study was conducted within a school setting to closely examine the relationship between the practice of yoga and the teaching lives of novice teachers. Philosophically, qualitative data research is rooted in phenomenology, a genre of qualitative research that seeks to understand individual lived experience (Merriam, 1998, Rossman & Rallis, 2003).

The interpretive approach to qualitative research builds on the premise there is no single truth or reality, and to develop knowledge the researcher must engage directly with participants to understand and interpret the participant's experience (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975; Creswell, 2007; Mead, 1934). Qualitative researchers view knowledge as subjective realities or perceptions that change over time according to individuals within a specific context. Rossman and Rallis (2003) assert, "research findings as accumulated knowledge also serve to improve practice by enhancing understanding of that practice...accumulated knowledge can build practitioners' insight into principles behind their procedures" (p. 21). I, too, believe that knowledge helps to clarify the reasons we do what we do, and may increase our understanding of why we do what we do, and what we need to improve our actions. Belief in this assertion, and a sense that the knowledge accumulated from this study could improve my work as social science researcher, and could provide valuable insights for novice teachers, led me to design a qualitative study to discover and interpret the experience novice teachers had with the practice of yoga.

1. Research Site and Participants

The research for my dissertation was conducted in an urban school setting that services approximately 650 students in grades pre-kindergarten through 8. The school housed on a university campus, is part of a public school district comprised of

approximately 5,400 students located in Central New England. Throughout the study the following pseudonym is used when referring to the school, School For The Arts (SFTA). I received consent to access the research site from the Dean of Education at the university, and from the Principal of SFTA. Several conversations with both of them took place prior to conducting the research, and they pledged their full support. I prepared letters of consent, and I obtained their signatures before the research began in September of 2013 (APPENDICES C & D).

I attempted to recruit 10-12 participants for my research study through an invitation distributed via email throughout the school district (APPENDIX E). For the study, I sought to recruit novice teachers solely. Data from my pilot study revealed that veteran teachers had more mastery teaching experiences, and had a wider repertoire of teaching skills and practices to rely upon than novice teachers; thus the practice of yoga minimally influenced their teaching practices and their perceived sense of teaching efficacy. Novice teachers with limited mastery teaching experiences within the first few years of teaching (Kaufman, et al, 2002; Kelley, 2004; Maciejewski, 2007; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) had fewer tools as a part of their teaching repertoire.

Additionally, the recruitment of the research participants was made using a network selection strategy. DeMarris (2004) defines a network selection strategy as the ability of the researcher “to use personal contacts to locate other potential participants for the study” (pg. 60). Through contact with members of my local school network, I identified people to participate in this research study and recruited them. The recruitment process yielded five teachers who worked in the same school as I did. The following table provides demographic information for the participants of this research study.

Table 1.

Participant demographics for five novice teachers including their professional roles, gender, age, teaching and yoga experience.

Novice Teachers (NT) (Pseudonyms)	Grade & Subject Taught	Gender	Age	Teaching Experience	Prior Yoga Experience
NT 1 - Theresa Donahue	4 th Grade Teacher	Female	26	3 yrs.	1 hour session
NT 2 – Elisa Haynes	1 st & 2 nd Grade Special Ed Teacher	Female	27	3 yrs.	3 yrs. of yoga experience
NT 3 – Taylor Nelson	8 th Grade English Language Arts Teacher	Male	23	2 yrs.	No yoga experience
NT 4 – Bruce Powers	8 th Grade Math Teacher	Male	53	2 yrs.	No yoga experience
NT 5 - Sandra Tannenbaum	3 rd Grade Teacher	Female	46	3 yrs.	No yoga experience

As an instructional coach in the school, I had personal contact with educators and administrators throughout the building. I was aware that as a colleague of participants in the research study, and as the primary researcher in this study a power dynamic existed. However, I did not directly supervise the research participants, nor did I maintain a more powerful stance in the school community. From the beginning as part of the informed consent process, I ensured participants that they could without fear of penalty or consequence choose to withdraw from the study at any time. While conducting my research, I followed all professional methods and maintained the highest standards of ethics.

As a researcher, I believe my ethical position aligns with the model of contextual-consequentialist. House (1990) explains that within the framework of the contextual-

consequentialist model researchers and participants join together to form an open, collegial relationship, that is non coercive and non manipulative. In the contextual-consequentialist model it is believed that every research act implies moral and ethical decisions that are contextual, and every ethical decision affects others with immediate and long term consequences (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). While I believe researchers have the freedom to design research surrounding issues that pique their interest, stem from their experiences, and occur in the environments in which they work or inhabit; I also believe with such freedom comes great responsibility to insure that no known or potential harm is caused to participants.

2. Yoga Instruction

Qualified as a certified yoga instructor, I designed and taught the 8-session, 8-week yoga program for my pilot study. During my comprehensive exams members of the doctoral committee and I discussed making a change. It was suggested that by choosing to teach the yoga classes it could lessen the research credibility. For example, while teaching yoga classes I might mention personal experiences related to my teaching practice, or share examples of how yoga influenced me, predisposing the participants to my thinking, and thus biasing their thinking in unintended ways.

Also, as the yoga instructor I might stifle participants experience and prevent them being authentic in their expressions about their experiences, e.g. if a participant wanted to express negative aspects of the experience they might refrain, so as to remain in good favor with me. After considerable thought, I agreed that hiring a yoga instructor could increase research credibility by decreasing research bias. Additionally, I believed

this change could generate a deeper curiosity in me about the participant's yoga experience and might lead to more meaningful interviews.

Thus upon the committee members' suggestion, I hired a yoga instructor to teach the yoga classes to help create some distance between me (the instrument of data collection and interpretation) and the participants' experience of yoga practice (APPENDIX H). The yoga program included 8 classes taught once a week for 8 consecutive weeks. Prior to the start of the study, the yoga instructor and I met several times to discuss the research study, and how best to implement the yoga program.

To assure that the classes taught in the program could be documented and could maintain some consistency, the yoga instruction ran 60 minutes, and each class was built upon the sequence I developed incorporating the classic yoga postures by B.K.S. Iyengar (APPENDIX I). I provided the yoga instructor this sequence as a guide. Yet, I encouraged the addition of postures and the use of instructional methods that best fit the instructor's teaching style. Shapiro et al. (2007) maintained that yoga was well suited for use in research for the following reasons. First, yoga instructors undergo extensive training and must receive certification from a licensing organization. The yoga instructor I hired graduated from a 200 hour teacher training program, and she was a licensed therapist of yoga practice rooted in the Hatha Raja tradition. The instructor taught restorative, gentle hatha yoga incorporating breath work (pranayama) and meditation (dyhana) with asana (poses).

Second, in yoga the use of props makes yoga practice accessible to practitioners at all levels. For the yoga program the sequence of postures included sitting, standing, twisting, forward bends, and slightly inverting practitioner's bodies. During the yoga

classes, demonstrations were provided on how to move into the postures, and how to use various props as aids to accommodate the physical limitations of practitioners, e.g. example the use of a wall or a chair to help maintain balance.

Third, the practice and theory of yoga indicates that postures and sequences of postures (asanas) have therapeutic value for different physical and mental conditions (Iyengar, 1966/1979). Asanas produce effects in the body and shape mental attitudes. Perseverance is gained by stretching in various yoga postures for minutes at a time, while calmness comes with quiet, consistent breathing and the expansion of the lungs. (Iyengar, 1966/1979). Throughout each yoga session, breathing instruction (pranayama) was taught, and at the close of every practice session participants were guided through a meditation (dyhana).

3. Research Study Steps/Timeline

For the research study the following steps were followed:

- Developed research timeline. (APPENDIX A)
- Obtained institutional consent to conduct research and procured space to teach the yoga program at The School For The Arts. (APPENDICES B, C, and D)
- Recruited 5 novice teachers from the public school district to participate in the study. (APPENDIX E)
- Provided novice teachers a letter of consent to explain why the study was being conducted, and why they were invited to participate. The letter of consent described what participants needed to do to fully participate, and described any known risks. (APPENDIX F)
- Obtained the demographic information for novice teachers using a brief survey. (APPENDIX G)
- Required novice teachers to complete a self-efficacy scale before and after participation in the yoga sessions. (Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale: Retrieved from <http://people.ehe.osu.edu/ahoy/research/instruments/>)

- Hired a yoga instructor to teach the yoga program. (APPENDIX H)
- Provided the yoga instructor a yoga sequence to guide instruction. (APPENDIX I)
- Required novice teachers to provide written journal entries in response to eight prompts. (APPENDIX J)
- Scheduled and conducted interviews for novice teachers. (APPENDIX K)
- Observed by digitally recording novice teachers as they taught in their classroom at the midpoint of the yoga program.
- Created and maintained a research data inventory. (APPENDIX L)

4. Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of a study is the criterion for evaluating the study's integrity and merit. According to Lincoln and Guba, the notion of trustworthiness addresses the basic question: "How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?" (1985, p. 290). Lincoln & Guba (1985) maintain that a qualitative researcher in pursuit of trustworthiness must establish credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility in qualitative research can be compared to the construct of internal validity in quantitative methodology. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that credibility in a study can be achieved when the researcher designs and conducts her inquiry in a principled way, and when her analysis and interpretations are a valid representation of the phenomenon and the participant's experience of the phenomenon. In this research study, credibility was established through a process called member checking, where participants reviewed the transcriptions for accuracy and clarity. Additionally, as the researcher, I remained on site for an extended period of time, and conducted a review where peers commented on the research findings (Merriam, 1998).

Transferability in qualitative research relates to the constructs of external validity in quantitative methodology. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that transferability in a study must be the responsibility of the person seeking application elsewhere (pg. 298). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest researchers can accumulate empirical evidence to determine contextual similarities, and they advise conducting small pilot studies for verification. In this research study, transferability was established prior to this study by conducting a small pilot study using the comparable research design and methods. Additionally, Merriam (1998) suggests that researchers provide enough rich, descriptive data throughout their study to allow for a determination of transferability of the study design, methods or findings. Throughout this study, I provided rich, descriptive data to explain the research design, methods and findings.

Dependability and confirmability in qualitative research can be compared to the construct of internal reliability in quantitative methodology. Within quantitative research reliability is demonstrated by replication. Replication in qualitative research is not applicable because there is nothing unchanging about human experience. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain dependability takes into account factors of instability of the primary human instrument used in the qualitative research, and factors of phenomenal design and induced changes that occur when studying participants and natural settings. Merriam (1998) suggests reliability, what Lincoln and Guba (1985) label dependability, can be achieved through triangulation of data, generating an audit trail, and by carefully describing in full detail how the study was conducted and how the findings emerged from the data.

In this research study, I described in great detail and fully explained how the findings emerged from the data. Also, throughout the research process I generated a substantive audit trail. The audit trail included, but was not limited to, the following items:

- recorded interviews and journal entries
- transcripts of interviews and journal entries
- written field notes/research memos
- diagrams of codes
- research study documents
- schedules
- surveys
- results from efficacy scale

As the researcher and the primary instrument of data collection, it was essential that I established trustworthiness, and I used several methods to do so (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 1998; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). First, I shared transcriptions of the taped interviews with participants a method known as member checking. Members had the opportunity to review and check the transcriptions for clarity and accuracy. Second, my data collection included interviews, journal entries and observations, a method often referred to as the triangulation of data. Triangulation provided me a combination of data sources to analyze, and from which to draw meaning. Third, I developed a substantive audit trail to explain many aspects of the research methods and design. Also, the audit trail provided me opportunities to reflect, pose questions about research theory and to examine any perceptions, bias, and assumptions that evolved during the study.

Finally, I shared with members of my community of practice various aspects about the data analysis process. I discussed via email, for example, the themes and categories that emerged during data analysis, and discussed how best to present the analysis of data.

D. Data Collection

Data for this study were obtained through questionnaires, self rating efficacy scales, journal entries, interviews, and classroom observations.

1. Questionnaire and Survey

Participants completed a brief questionnaire to provide demographic data, for example, subject taught, years of teaching experience, and prior experience with yoga practice (APPENDIX G). After receiving permission to use the measurement instrument, participants completed the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) before and after the 8 week yoga program. The 24 item instrument was designed to better understand the work of teachers, and to identify issues teachers perceive cause them difficulty. The TSES scale provides an assessment of teacher's perceived capabilities in relation to instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management. The TSES (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) was used to guide the discussion during the participant's final interview session. Results of the scale were discussed during the final interview session to help illuminate the answer to the question, "how has the practice of yoga influenced your teaching efficacy?"

2. Interviews

The interviews were semi structured, and the list of questions was shared with the interviewees at the start of the interview (APPENDIX K). Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The interview questions sought to ascertain data about the participant's previous teaching experience, their previous experience with yoga, their perceptions of yoga, their direct experience with yoga; and yoga's influence on their professional lives, their teaching practices and their teaching efficacy.

Silverman (1997) states “interviewing provides a way of generating empirical data about the social world by asking people to talk about their lives” (pg. 113). Furthermore, understanding how the meaning making process unfolds in the interview is as important as capturing what is asked and shared (Silverman, 1997). In this research study in-depth interviews were conducted to fully capture the lived experience of how teachers made meaning of the impact yoga had on their professional lives. Siedman (2006) explains that the method of interviewing involves using the words of the participants to illuminate their experience. Qualitative research methods, more specifically interviewing, is a slow and labor intensive process that yields large amounts of data. The process of in-depth interviewing affords the researcher natural triangulation and involves conducting three interview sessions (Siedman, 2006). The first interview explored, “*How have novice teachers’ experiences and perceptions of the practice of yoga influenced their professional lives?*” The second interview examined, “*How have novice teachers’ experiences and perceptions of the practice of yoga influenced their teaching practices?*” Finally, the third interview examined, “*How have novice teachers’ experiences and perceptions of the practice of yoga influenced their sense of teaching efficacy?*” Throughout the process of interviewing I worked to maintain a critical perspective, to explore my assumptions about reality, and remain true to the research methodology of in-depth interviewing.

Van Manen (1990) describes conducting research as the act of caring and loving other human beings, and attaching oneself to the world. Through in-depth interviewing the researcher has an opportunity to make a genuine connection with the participants and must commit to ensure that participation in the research will not cause participants harm.

In addition to taking care to protect participants from misguided attachments to the research project and its outcome, I was very aware that personal information might be revealed during the interview process. I worked to build an honest open rapport with participants, to maintain mutual respect, and to safeguard the identity of participants. My research adhered to all the regulations set forth for behavioral research involving human subjects required by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Understanding and adhering to IRB guidelines throughout my research insured that the rights, and well being of my participants were protected.

3. Observations and Journal Entries

Classroom observations were conducted to examine whether aspects of yoga (asanas/postures, pranayama/breathing, dhyana/meditation) influenced and/or were integrated into the teaching practices of novice teachers. I digitally recorded one 30-minute, classroom observation for each novice teacher, and together we reviewed the observations during the second interview. The classroom observation footage was used to augment the second interview, designed to explore *“To what extent has the experience with the practice of yoga influenced your teaching practice?”*

Participants responded in writing to eight separate journal prompts (APPENDIX J). The journal prompts composed of several questions were given to the participants at the close of every yoga practice. The journal prompts were developed to gather data to examine participant’s direct experience and their immediate responses to yoga practice. Additionally, the data gathered, helped me to examine my primary research question, “To what extent do novice teachers’ experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives?” The following questions comprised the first journal prompt:

1. How has today's yoga practice influenced you?
2. How might today's yoga practice influence your teaching practice?
3. To what extent does yoga practice influence your perception, that you can effectively perform the duties and responsibilities required of a teacher.

Similar questions were asked on journal prompts 2-7. However, questions on the final journal prompt were more specific, and required participants to provide greater explanations and examples. The following questions comprised the eighth journal prompt:

1. After eight weeks of yoga classes, briefly describe what you now know about yoga practice?
2. One known benefit of practicing yoga is an increase in mindfulness. Briefly describe what you think it means to be mindful.
3. What personal benefits have you experienced as a participant in this research study?
4. What professional benefits have you experienced as a participant in this research study?
5. Describe one thing you learned during the yoga research that you now use in your teaching practice? Why do you do this?
6. Have you shared any aspect of yoga practice with your students? If yes, have you seen any changes in your students? If no, do you plan to do so?
7. Do you intend to continue practicing yoga? Why or why not?
8. Do you think it would be beneficial to teach yoga to student teachers? Why or why not?

After every yoga class in which the novice teacher participated they recorded and submitted their responses. On a few occasions, participants asked if they could take the questions with them to complete at a later time, and they submitted them the next day.

4. Field Notes/Research Memos

Throughout the research study detailed records of what participants said and how participants behaved were kept. At times these detailed records called field notes assisted me during my examination of this complex social phenomenon. According to Rossman and Rallis (2003), field notes when used in conjunction with interviews and observations might uncover subtleties in patterns of participant's speech and behavior that they may or may not be aware of, and may not be willing to discuss. Field notes come in various forms, e.g. handwritten notes, checklists, and diagrams.

In addition to digitally recording descriptive field notes, I digitally recorded personal thoughts and reactions to various aspects of the research process. Called research memos, these records encouraged analytic and reflective thinking (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). My research memos took many forms, I wrote emails to myself, flushed out ideas in a journal, and often spoke with members of my community of practice. Once recorded and collected, my field notes and research memos, just like participant interviews and other research data, were transcribed and analyzed.

E. Data Inventory

Research data were organized and safeguarded, a process sometimes referred to as tidying up the data (Lecompte, 1999). The first step I took was the development of a filing system to sort and label the data. The second step I took was to develop a master list of the labeled and filed data, sometimes referred as a research data inventory (APPENDIX L). The third step of the process was duplication of the data in both hard copy and digital formats. In the final step, I stored several copies of the data in more than

one place. I stored the data from my research study on an external hard drive, in an online folder, and on my computer at work.

F. Data Analysis

According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) researchers involved in the phenomenological analysis of data must remain open minded and focus on the development of themes to build meaningful theory. Throughout most of my dissertation research study, I have been involved in the analysis of data. I analyzed data as I recorded interviews, reviewed journal entries, and observed recordings of yoga practice and classroom teaching. I analyzed data as I reviewed my field notes, and while transcribing the audio taped interviews. This multi-step process allowed me opportunities to interpret meaning from patterns discovered in the data. Interview transcriptions yielded rich, descriptive data for analysis. I sifted through and sorted tremendous amounts of data to generate the categories I used to answer my research question. I believe that by analyzing data in the field, and while transcribing interviews, it prepared me to engage in a more significant aspect of data analysis, and to incorporate facets of grounded theory and thematic analysis.

1. Grounded Theory and Thematic Analysis

Both grounded theory and thematic analysis are research methods that include strategies and procedures for data collection, and analysis that researchers use to develop theory. Unlike hypothesis testing where a researcher speculates and make assumptions about certain ideas then proceeds to conduct research to confirm the assumptions; in grounded theory and thematic analysis the researcher interprets the data that emerges from the research to discover evidence that expands existent theory, or interprets data that

emerges to build new theory (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2007; Rossman & Rallis, 2003). According to Charmaz (2006) grounded theory helps to unearth the bones that when connected will create a skeletal outline on which the researcher builds her analysis.

During my pilot study, I implemented grounded theory methods to collect and to analyze my data, and I identified several categories. Charmaz (2005) explains, “grounded theory researchers can both gain thick description and foster theoretical development by listening closely to their respondents, attempting to learn the unstated or assumed meanings of their statement and shaping the emerging research question to obtain data that illuminate their theoretical categories” (p. 339). For my dissertation research, I applied what I learned from my pilot study, and made some changes that I believe strengthen the research process. The descriptive data I gathered from participants developed into categories, some of which I had prior interest in e.g. self-efficacy, yet others appeared organically e.g. self-renewal. Charmaz (2005) reminds researchers who implement grounded theory methods that it is natural that the researcher’s interests, proclivities, and paradigms will influence observations and the development of categories. Additionally, Charmaz (2005) advises the interests, proclivities and paradigms of grounded theorists should act as “points of departures for developing, rather than limiting their ideas”, and grounded theorists “do not force preconceived ideas and theories directly upon their data, rather they follow the leads they define in the data, or they design another way of collecting the data to try to follow their initial interests” (pg.337). I chose the latter approach, and redesigned some aspects of my interview, observations, and journal prompts. Instead of abandoning all the categories that were

developed from the data I gathered and analyzed from my pilot study, I designed methods to collect more meaningful data. For example, I replaced the interview prompt “*Explain your journey to become the teacher you are today*” with “*How has the practice of yoga (a phenomenon) influenced you (a novice teacher)?*” Although a more pointed question, it invites the participant to openly explore their yoga experience; and I believe the answers to this question produced thick, descriptive data for further analysis.

In addition to implementing data collection and data analysis methods from grounded theory, I analyzed the data using a blend of inductive and deductive analysis known as thematic analysis. Rossman and Rallis (2003) describe thematic analysis as an approach that emerges “from the deep familiarity with the data that comes from categorizing” (p. 282). According to Rossman and Rallis (2003) categories that develop through inductive analysis emerge from the data and seek to capture the participants view, also called the emic view. Rossman and Rallis (2003) suggest the words and phrases used by participants develop into indigenous categories that are discovered by researchers when analyzing the participant’s language, and these categories help to expand the initial categories.

Through deductive analysis, data might align with categories found in the research literature or categories expressed in the conceptual framework (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). Rossman and Rallis (2003) refer to the categories identified through literature reviews and within conceptual frameworks that represent the researcher’s view or etic view, as analyst-constructed categories. Rossman and Rallis (2003) assert qualitative research studies blend categories developed through analyst constructed and indigenous categories. As a qualitative researcher, I drew my research findings from the

blend of categories constructed through analyst-constructed (deductive analysis) and indigenous (inductive analysis) categories, and upon which I build themes.

Throughout the process of data analysis, whatever the blend of categories and whether the categories emerged from inductive analysis using participants language or deductive analysis using researcher constructs, the categories were redefined and rearranged based on the different properties and dimensions discovered through coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). The process of coding produces a wide variety of ways to describe the research data.

a. Open Coding

Coding data was an essential part of the research process. During the process, I worked to classify the data collected into meaningful categories. Open coding is a specific type of coding that is free and unleashed, and provided me the ability to move in and out of theory development with greater ease (Corbin & Strauss, 2007). Coding involves classification of data into categories using procedures, e.g. line by line coding or focus coding. “Line by line coding frees you from going native, or from becoming so immersed in your respondent’s categories or worldview that you fail to look at your data critically or analytically” (Charmaz, 2005, p. 343). Just as the words suggest, when coding takes places line-by-line, the researcher carefully examines the data collected one line at a time. This type of coding technique insures the categories upon which themes are built come from the data. While coding, I intimately engaged with the data to learn from the data, and I began the process of coding using a line-by-line technique.

As I anticipated, codes upon which I built the categories in my pilot study and upon which I based my conceptual framework reappeared. As the categories reappeared,

I turned to the technique of focused coding where the researcher applies line-by-line codes to larger amounts of related data. Chamaz (2005) states, “by the time you engage in focused coding, you have decided which of your earlier codes make the most analytic sense and categorize your data most accurately and completely” (p. 344). Once identified the categories become the focus of deeper analysis through an examination of the properties or the characteristics of the categories, and through an examination of the dimensions or the representation of the range/variation of each property. Throughout the entire process of analysis, I recorded my reflections, questions, and findings as research memos. All data, once analyzed, were synthesized and developed into the themes upon which I explained my findings and drew my conclusions.

In the next section, based on my findings I describe the experiences of five novice teachers who chose, through a process of self selection, to participate in the practice of yoga. The findings explain the influences the practice of yoga had on their professional lives, their teaching practice, and their sense of teaching efficacy.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

A. Overview

Data results are presented in this section to answer the research question, to what extent do novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives? Five novice teachers were recruited and participated in the study. To capture the experiences and perceptions the novice teachers had of yoga practice and to what extent yoga influenced their professional lives, five personal narratives were developed based upon categories and themes formed from analysis of research data. Data were analyzed using both a blend of inductive and deductive analysis known as thematic analysis, and data analysis methods from grounded theory.

In Section B, research findings are presented as five personal narratives. The stories of five novice teachers are portrayed through these personal narratives, each describing a novice teacher's experience with yoga and how the practice of yoga influenced her/his life as teacher, e.g. their teaching practices and their teaching efficacy beliefs.

In Section C, a visual representation of the conceptual frame, that was produced using the categories developed and identified through the analysis of data, is presented to explain further the research findings.

B. Personal Narratives

1. Narrative #1 - The break chair: pushing me to my limits.

Theresa Donahue, a pseudonym, was a twenty-six year old teacher who taught 4th grade for three years. In response to the question “Who or what inspired you to become a teacher?” Theresa shared, “I’ve always loved working with kids,” and that she decided to pursue teaching to, “have a positive effect on students who will impact society positively.”

a. Concerns about teaching.

As a novice teacher, Theresa had many concerns about the profession. Theresa felt challenged and unsupported by the unrealistic expectations placed on her. In the first interview Theresa expressed her concerns in the following way:

I don’t feel like teachers get enough support just in general from administration, the government, and parents. We don't have enough materials a lot of the time, and that goes under support too. So it's really just a lack of support all around. And it doesn't seem like the people who are telling us what to do really understand what they're asking us to do, because they're not in the classroom. So they don't see it the way we see it. They're not the people who are teaching these kids in the classroom, so they have these unrealistic expectations.

And yes, I have high expectations, but they don't see the children who are coming to me. They're telling me that my students need to be able to write a five-paragraph essay at the fourth-grade level and I have students coming in who are unable to spell their name. So, with an expectation that they can write a five-paragraph essay, yet they don't know how to spell their name yet, we have a big disconnect. So it's really tough.

According to research conducted by Kaufman, Johnson, Kardos et al (2002), Theresa’s experience was not uncommon. Kaufman, Johnson, Kardos et al (2002) revealed similar experiences by new teachers who felt frustrated by lack of curriculum, support, and the resources needed to comply with Massachusetts state standards.

In addition to being a novice teacher who felt disconnected from many of the constituents she served; Theresa was a novice yoga practitioner, and before participation in the study she practiced yoga for just one hour. When asked about her prior experience with yoga, Theresa described feeling bored and falling asleep. Theresa furthered explained she believed her boredom and lack of enthusiasm were more a by-product of a “teacher who didn’t know what she was doing,” and not directly related to the practice of yoga.

During the first interview conducted after three yoga sessions, Theresa stated she had initially misunderstood the purpose of yoga. Theresa reported that the experience to practice yoga as part of this research study provided her an opportunity to learn about the practice. Theresa shared these thoughts and perceptions:

I know a lot of people really enjoy it (yoga), because it helps them to relax and stay calm, and now I’m starting to see that...I’ve always been a high-impact person and I didn’t realize that was the purpose of it (yoga). But now that I’ve been doing it (yoga) as part of this (study), I’ve seen the difference and I’ve felt the difference in how it is to relax and work on your breathing, and I understand it a lot more now.

When asked to describe her experience with yoga practice Theresa reported the following, “sometimes my body starts to feel a little bit tired...but I try to ignore it...I squat down to where it’s not comfortable anymore and my legs start to scream at me...I did gymnastics for a long time. I was told to always work through it...so that’s my mindset...that’s how I’ve been trained.” Theresa’s prior training as a gymnast runs counter to the precepts Patanjali developed in the yoga philosophical framework known as the eight limbed path (Desikachar, 1995/1999; Iyengar, 1966/1979, 1993). The first limb of the framework called the yamas teaches practitioners how to deal with others and with attitudes toward one self. Patanjali described five characteristics embedded in

yamas that are meant to teach about compassion, truth, generosity, honesty, and peace. It is the yama known as ahimsa or non violence to self and others that Theresa violates when she ignores the discomfort caused by squatting, and the message sent by her screaming legs. For Theresa practicing the yoga postures called asanas that make up the third limb of Patanjali's eight limbed path brought back memories and experiences of gymnastics training. Theresa applied her prior knowledge to her current practice of yoga; however, in yoga practice the tenet of ahimsa dissuades practitioners from harming themselves and others.

b. Developing mindfulness.

After having direct yoga experience and the opportunity to practice the skills and techniques she learned, Theresa explained in the first interview how she practiced breathing to regulate her mind and her emotions.

I feel peaceful and I like to work on my breathing. Even when I am going to sleep now, I think about the breathing and how you have to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth slowly, and it just helps me to calm down because I'm a very uptight person. So, when I think of yoga now, I just think of relaxation and keeping calm.

Anchored by her body and her breath, Theresa stated "she is working to keep thoughts out of her busy brain," and learning how to stay in the moment. Theresa's awareness of the concept of staying in moment is the basis for a mindfulness practice. Lasater (2000) suggests the state where distraction and anxiety in the mind are resolved is yoga, and this state can be achieved through practice and detachment. According to Lasater (2000) to practice yoga means paying attention to all aspects of life, e.g. one's thoughts, bodily sensations, speech and actions.

Through yoga practice Theresa perceived mindfulness and an influence of her awareness of mindsets and bodily responses. Also, Theresa believed that yoga practice and the ability to stay in the moment influenced her ability to calm down, to think more clearly, and to control her anger while teaching.

c. Yoga's influence on teaching practice.

In the final interview following two months of practicing yoga, Theresa reported that several changes related to her teaching practice had occurred. Theresa explained, "I've become a lot calmer and I don't get frustrated as easily. Theresa described a frustrating situation she experienced in her classroom, and she explained how learning to breathe in yoga practice influenced the situation. Theresa stated:

I put myself in the break chair once last week because I was getting so flustered, and students were just crowding me, and I couldn't take it. So they know that if I am in the break chair, no one could talk to me, and I just had some space so I didn't lose it. Not that I think I would have, but I think it was an easier way for me to step back and breathe, and it was just about ten seconds where I was by myself, everyone knew they had to stay away from me, and after that I just focused on my breathing, I got up and I was fine.

The break chair that Theresa described in this situation was initially set up for her students. Theresa shared, "It's their (the students) break chair and I sat in it, and they know that when someone is in that chair, you don't talk to that person, you don't interrupt that person. You just let them be, because they'll come back when they're ready. So they (the students) gave me that time and when I was ready, I came back. And I think it gave them the chance to regroup too, to realize." While in the break chair, Theresa practiced yogic breathing, took time to feel the sensations of her body and consider her thoughts to regain self control before she resumed teaching. According to Lasater (2000) conflicts between what people feel, and what people think often results in loss of control.

When Theresa was asked, if she believed yoga practice had influenced her ability to emotionally be in control, she responded:

I do, because it (yoga) has helped me to think more clearly and to stay calm in stressful situations, so I'm not as quick to jump and be frustrated. I take a step back and I think well, why is this happening.

And I stay in the moment instead of thinking, 'oh, my gosh', if this happens someone is going to walk in and I'm going to get in trouble. I think more of this is what we're doing right now, and we're going to focus on this. I'm not going to worry about what we're doing five minutes from now, just right now, because I was always worried that if something didn't go right, in ten minutes administration would walk in, and they would be upset because they wouldn't see what I was supposed to be doing.

So, it always stressed me out, but I've kind of forgotten about that, because it's not what they think when they come in that is important. Even if we're a little bit behind I am doing what I'm supposed to be doing."

Theresa described that yoga helped her to manage the stress she felt, and kept her from worrying about what might happen in the future. Specifically, Theresa shared yoga helped her to forget about her fear that she might get in trouble with administration for doing something that she wasn't supposed to be doing. According to Iyengar (1966/1979), yoga cultivates *abhaya* or the freedom from fear that grips and paralyzes someone, making them afraid of the future, the unknown and the unseen. The cultivation of *abhaya* or freedom from fear requires a change of outlook on life and/or redirection of the mind (Iyengar, 1966/1979). Specifically, when asked whether Theresa perceived yoga influenced her teaching practice, and how the perceived influences might manifest in her teaching practice, she explained that her ability to remain calm and present in the classroom helped her to differentiate instruction to meet the varied needs of her students.

I'm staying more in the moment. My brain is usually 20 steps ahead of where I am, but I have learned in yoga practice how to stay in the moment, and when thoughts come in my mind to let them go. I think I am calmer in general...and I

think that affects my students because they know that it's not so stressful, because I'm calmer.

I think I've been better with differentiation too, because I've been able to stay in the moment and focus on one thing; and pay attention to what I'm doing for that moment for these students. Then I can move on to the next group, instead of thinking I have to get everything done for the next two weeks. So, I'm staying more on task with what I have to do, and I've done a lot more differentiation in here. I only focus on what needs to be done for those students in that day.

Next, Theresa described pressure to perform quickly while teaching, and how yoga influenced her thinking and her teaching. Theresa noted that by taking time to relax, remain calm, and to avoid rushing she was more effective at providing clearer explanations for her students.

I think I've just gotten better at taking time to do things more thoroughly because there's always such a rush. Do this, do this, and do this. It has to be done in this time, and if it's not? Well, I don't know what happens, but they never make it sound good. But now I'm taking the time that I need to make sure I'm explaining it because it's not all about the rush. It's about taking the time to really experience what's going on.

And I think yoga has helped me to understand that better. It gives me the chance to focus on my breathing and forget about everything else, so that I have a clear mind, and I know what I'm teaching. I need to have that clear mind when I'm teaching.

Theresa reported yoga clarified her thinking about several areas that impacted her ability to perform some of the tasks and duties related to teaching. Theresa stated she took more time to explain things, and to experience moments while teaching. Additionally, Theresa noted clarity of mind increased her understanding of the subject content she taught. Theresa described several stages in the cycle of pedagogical reasoning and action that relate to teaching. Shulman (1987, 2000) contends that as teachers take what they know, and prepare it for effective instruction, they pass through the cycle of comprehension, transformation, instruction, evaluation and reflection.

Theresa identified that yoga helped her to remain relaxed and calm, and remaining relaxed and calm helped her with clarity of mind. Theresa's clarity of mind influenced her teaching practice through better understanding (comprehension) of content, ability to differentiate (transform) content, and to explain content to her students (instruction). As a result of providing clearer explanations, Theresa believed her students understood the expectations, were less needy and more productive (evaluation and reflection). "I think the kids have a much better idea of what's expected, so they're not as needy, and they're able to get more done."

d. Sense of teaching efficacy.

During the second interview to examine Theresa's teaching efficacy, she viewed and responded to the pre and post efficacy data results in the areas of student engagement, classroom instruction and classroom management (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001). Upon review of the data Theresa stated:

Well, I noticed on questions 18-21, it (post-efficacy scores) went up. That's the variety of assessment strategies and keeping a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson. I've gotten a little better at that for the most part. Also, (the question about) alternative explanations and examples, I've been better with thinking clearly because there's not so much jumbled stuff in my head.

And managing defiant students, I have that one student who is very defiant and I've gotten better with—he will just tell me no, and he'll get really frustrated with me and yell and scream. I just look at him, I just let him do his thing. Before, I got angry, and I would tell him to go sit down, and that I was going to call his mother. But now, I let him do his thing and I wait. And then he's looks at me as if to say, aren't you going to do anything about this? I then say, are you done? Okay. Please sit down.

Theresa explained that the practice of yoga increased her ability to remain calm and to think clearly. Both influenced her sense of teaching efficacy also known as her

capacity to effectively perform the tasks and duties required to teach and to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of her students (Bandura, 1995, 1997).

e. Finding yoga beneficial.

Throughout the study, Theresa described the demands of teaching and the work required daily to meet the needs of her students as stressful and exhausting at times.

Theresa shared that yoga improved her ability to sleep, “Well, I’ve been sleeping better in general. I don’t wake up as much in the middle of the night. And it started around the third week of classes, because I would just focus on my breathing when I go to sleep and I think my mind was just clearer.” Additionally, Theresa reported an increase in energy, “I feel more energized and I feel better during the day. Furthermore, Theresa believed the ability to think more pointedly and worry less helped her conserve energy, “I’ve gotten better with not worrying so much about the broadness of everything, and I definitely have more energy because I’m not thinking about so many different things at once.” Theresa expressed that by practicing yoga, specifically yogic breathing (pranayama), she is able to calm her mind, to rest through the night, and to gather some her once scattered energy. Iyengar (1966/1979) explains “prana means breath, respiration, life, vitality, wind, energy, or strength. Pranayama is thus the science of breath. It is the hub round which the wheel of life revolves... the yogi masters the science of breath and by regulation and control of breath, he controls the mind and stills its constant movement” (pg. 43-44).

Before practicing yoga, Theresa described feeling a disconnect between others’ expectations and her own. For Theresa, yoga provided a bonding experience. Lortie (1975) suggested that time taken to build supportive, collegial connections lessen the feelings of separation, isolation and curricular thinking that teachers often experience.

Theresa shared, “well, we (novice teachers) got to do something together...and it was nice to get to know the other people better, and see where they’re coming from. It made me realize that I’m not the only person who can’t stay in the moment.” In the third interview after practicing yoga for two months, Theresa shared her appreciation and her perceptions of the influence yoga had on her professional life in the following way:

I think yoga was great for me, and it couldn’t have come at a better time with all the crazy things going on in this class, that are just pushing me to my limits. So, I took away some really great strategies for keeping calm and clear in my mind. I’m grateful that I got to do it (yoga) because I think it (yoga) made a big difference in the way I think, and the way I respond to students, especially when they’re pushing my buttons. Now, I have tools and I can just take a step back. Students are going to get mad, it’s what they do. And I’m going to get mad too, but if I can control it, it makes the situation a lot better.

Bandura (1995, 1997) argues that the most effective means to develop a sense of teaching efficacy is through mastery experiences. Research indicates that novice teachers rarely have mastery experiences. In this study the data revealed Theresa had several challenging experiences as she worked to build teaching mastery. She identified yoga as tool she used to regulate emotion, to clarify and focus her mind, to energize her body, and to better understand her students and colleagues. According to Lutz et al (2000) the meditative aspect of yoga practice can be “conceptualized as a family of complex emotional and attentional regulatory training regimes developed for various ends, including the cultivation of well being and emotional balance” (p.163).

2. Narrative #2 - In the same boat: a mini support group

Elisa Haynes, also a pseudonym, was a twenty-seven year old, special education teacher for 1st and 2nd grade students. Elisa was a novice teacher, who taught special education for three years. She defined teaching as “helping kids become functioning members of society by teaching them life skills”. As part of the first interview in

response to the question, “who or what inspired you to become a teacher? Elisa shared the following story:

Growing up, I had a cousin who was severely developmentally disabled. She's ten years younger than me, so she's 16 now. I was always drawn to her. When all my other cousins would be playing with each other, I would play with her. I mean, her parents would ask me to come and not babysit, but just kind of hang out with her for the day, because I had a connection with her. So, I just always had a connection with these kids, not that I don't like regular kids. I was never afraid of her. I mean, she had some pretty severe behavioral and, you know, aggressive behaviors, things like that, and I was never afraid of any of that. You know, some people are afraid. You know like when someone in the grocery store is a special needs person and they're bagging your groceries, it makes them uncomfortable. But I've never -- I don't know, I just never -- was afraid.

a. Concerns about teaching.

Elisa's past experiences with her cousin highlighted her strong connections and her feelings of ease working with people with special needs. Although Elisa's early exposure to her cousin provided opportunities to gain experience around people with special needs, it did not prepare her to teach special needs children in an urban school district. As a novice teacher of severely developmentally disabled students, Elisa had many concerns about her teaching practice, and at times she felt overwhelmed by her constituents' demands.

Elisa's goal was to insure that all her students were “as independent as possible and functioning members of society,” and she felt challenged by an increase in the size of her class and the severity of her student's needs. Daily, Elisa worked hard to strike a balance between teaching her students the life and social skills they needed, and meeting the legislative demand to include special needs students in academic classrooms. Darling-Hammond et al. (2005) found that the outside demands placed on teachers add to the

complexity of the classroom and add to the pressure teachers feel about teaching. In the first interview Elisa explained her challenge in this way:

There's such a competition between the inclusion part and the academic part, and the life skills part that they truly all need. I mean as a child you need to learn how to be safe in your environment, how not to talk to strangers, how to come home and make yourself a sandwich. But there's such a push on inclusion, inclusion, inclusion. I'm not saying I'm against inclusion by any means. I think there's been a lot of research that children perform better when they're included which I understand. But then they're lacking the social and life skills that they still really need. These kids truly need life skills, and I think we've moved away from that in society, and are focusing more on academics. And there's so many limitations put on me as a teacher, that I feel like I'm never going to give them what they need.

Jackson (1968/1987) found that teaching requires an ability to understand and to respond to a multifaceted classroom. Teachers must make moment-to-moment trade-offs that require juggling several academic and social goals. Elisa further explained the difficulties she felt given the challenges to meet the needs of students in her classroom, and the expectations of constituents. Elisa stated:

I mean, they want—when I say “they,” I guess I mean a broad society wants these kids to be included which is fine. Parents of course, they want to see their kids with general education kids, and clearly every kid wants to fit in. But when it comes down to the actual skills that they have, and like I said, I go into a second grade classroom they (students) are reading chapter books and my kids don't even know their letters yet. It's like you can modify, you can modify, you can modify and make all these accommodations, but when it comes down to it, you're doing a completely different thing.

Elisa described a common professional challenge. How does she meet the academic, physical, social and emotional needs she has identified for her students, as well as, the academic, physical, social and emotional needs outside constituents have identified for her students. Lortie (1975) maintains these issues relate to professional status of education. He suggests that teachers find it difficult to assert their authority on educational issues and respond to the demands of society due to a lack of common

technical knowledge and culture. Despite decades of time and effort devoted to building a common technical language, a theoretical knowledge base, and teaching pedagogy; education and educational professionals still maintain a second class professional status compared to other professionals e.g. the medical profession and the legal profession. (Lortie, 1975).

b. Developing mindfulness.

As a participant in the research study, Elisa was presented an opportunity to learn a different way to view her classroom and the students she taught. In the final interview, Elisa described her understanding and her experience with learning mindfulness during the yoga sessions.

I just try to be mindful, and I think part of what I do is... I mean, the type of classroom that I have, you always have to be mindful of why kids are doing what they're doing. For instance, I have some very aggressive kids that pull my hair and pull my earrings out. They would take this scarf and try to pull it off. That's why I'll take it off.

And so, I have to be mindful that when they do these things, whether it's throwing a chair or hitting another student, it's not because they're trying to hurt you or hurt somebody else. It's because they're trying to communicate. Like, the boy who pulls my hair and pulls my clothes, he's trying, he's non-verbal and he's trying to tell me something. So, although it's frustrating that he does this all day long, it's just I have to be mindful.

I know we worked a lot on mindfulness with Jane (yoga instructor), and learning to be mindful of where others are coming from, and not to take things personally. I've done yoga before, but I've done it to work out. This was a different kind of thing. It was more about our emotions and how you perceive yourself, and how you perceive others.

Elisa described a classroom filled with uncertainty and aggression. Elisa expressed that although she felt frustrated she worked to be mindful and tried not to take things personally. For Elisa mindfulness practice meant learning to be open-minded, forgiving, compassionate and patient. Elisa continued,

I just try to be more patient. I think I consider myself a very patient person with this population. Like I said, I mean, you just have to kind of go with it. I mean, you can't—if you get angry or you get upset every time something happens, every time someone, you know, is aggressive towards you or throws a chair or does that, then you would just be angry all the time.

c. Yoga's influence on teaching practice.

As Elisa shared her experience about learning to become more mindful, she reflected on her classroom experiences. Schon (1992) maintained that reflective practice is central to teaching because in the classroom teachers are required to make quick decisions about and respond to unexpected events. As Elisa explained, her classroom was a place filled with uncertainty and frustration. During the second interview, Elisa viewed digital recordings of her yoga practice and her teaching practice. When Elisa was presented the opportunity to view both recordings, she initially engaged in self criticism. Elisa shared:

I don't like the way I look. I'm just really self-conscious of the way I look. So, when I see like videos of myself, I think I sound awful or I look awful. I think just stupid stuff that doesn't matter.

In response to her teaching practice Elisa noted, "I think I have pretty good control over the students. I think they're in a really, good routine and I think part of that is because I'm in a really good routine.

When asked to reflect on how yoga influenced her teaching practice Elisa reported:

I think it (yoga) definitely has made me a little more flexible, but I think I'm just not a flexible person. But I hope that it (yoga) would help me to be more flexible and, you know, carry over to my teaching practice. I mean it's a good idea that I instill these routines in my kids, especially kids with special needs. They need that routine, but I'm like so routine, almost too routine, and I'm not a flexible person. I know I'm not.

I integrate movement in my classroom. We stretch and dance which I guess is kind of similar to yoga. It would be easier for me to integrate yoga because I already do a lot of movement especially after periods of work.

When asked how movement impacts her students Elisa shared, “It keeps them in a routine by defining a transition from one activity to the next. It helps them focus. They’re kids and they have a lot of energy, so it helps them to get out the energy so they can then sit down at a table, focus and do their work.” Furthermore, when asked if Elisa had a similar response to movement, for example yoga movement, she shared, “I think so yeah. I mean, I think I’m a really anxious person. I would say that’s my disability.” The awareness of both her students and herself that Elisa possessed was evident and she recognized areas of her teaching practice that needed some improvement. When asked if yoga practice had influenced any changes in these areas Elisa stated:

I’m trying to—I try to stay calm and I think, you know, maybe part of it is yoga, but I think also part of it is just—we’re in a routine and, you know, the kids are used to that routine and it’s just getting a little easier, which is good. I don’t know if you would physically see any evidence of yoga’s influence besides the movement I already mentioned. I would hope that you would see some mindfulness, I guess maybe a little more... watching me interact, you would see me, you know, just being patient and dealing with it.

d. Sense of teaching efficacy.

In the first interview, Elisa shared the sinking feeling that she may never be able to provide her students what they needed. She shared her frustration about conflicting demands and challenging students. Bandura (1995) found that as a form of social persuasion people who receive messages to dissuade and restrict their opportunities to achieve success feel demoralized and their sense of efficacy is weakened. Another aspect of social persuasion comes in the form of verbal encouragement that can boost people’s sense of efficacy.

Elisa felt practicing yoga with other novice teachers was beneficial. She stated, “we’re all in the same boat”. Elisa explained she found it helpful to talk to others about

school, and the difficulties she experienced with some of the yoga postures. Research (Borko & Putman, 1996; Schon, 1992) indicates that among other effective teaching practices allowing sufficient time for collaboration and reflection builds a deeper knowledge base, and collaboration and reflective practice can effectively take place in the act of and/or after teaching.

For Elisa, participation in yoga sessions provided the opportunity to collaborate and to reflect. “Although we teach vastly different things (subjects), we’re all kind of in the same boat when it comes to the stresses, and just the overwhelming feelings of being a new teacher,” remarked Elisa. She continued to describe how at the beginning of yoga sessions participants would enter the gym and immediately “unload” on each other. “Yeah, I mean, we would come in and right away and just be “Oh, this happened today and that happened today!” Just kind of unloading on each other, but we were kind of like, a mini support group.” Elisa perceived that group participation and conversation with colleagues before yoga practice provided her support.

e. Finding yoga beneficial.

Throughout the study Elisa described herself as being inflexible and anxiety stricken. In the final interview, Elisa shared that although she didn’t believe anxiety was the cause of it, she has a suppressed autoimmune system. As Elisa spoke she reflected on the final yoga session where she realized that everything is connected. Elisa stated,

I don’t think anxiety is the reason I’m sick all the time, but I think it does feed into it. I think just knowing that everything is connected and that sickness and anxiety are not two separate things, they’re intertwined. And learning just how I can manage that (anxiety), and not beat myself down when I get sick; and learning to listen to my body, take it easy and focus on overall well being.

Elisa described an awareness of the connections between her mind and her body, and a renewed spirit of acceptance and compassion toward both. It was the same spirit of acceptance and compassion that she displayed daily toward her students. Throughout this study, Elisa exhibited, toward others many attitudes and habits of heart necessary to promote the development of authentic relationships, and foster student learning (Noddings, 1998; Palmer, 1998/2008). As a result of yoga practice, Elisa gained new knowledge that she could apply to the development of self-acceptance, and the practice of self-compassion.

Narrative #3 - Recognizing what's inside: learning how not to lose touch with it

Taylor Nelson, a pseudonym, was a twenty-three year old, 8th grade English Language Arts (ELA). Taylor was a novice teacher who taught ELA for two years. Taylor defined teaching as “effectively passing on knowledge and skills to others to learn.” As part of the first interview, in response to the question “Who or what inspired you to become a teacher?” Taylor remarked that his karate teacher was his inspiration. Taylor shared he considered pursuing a career in television as a sports announcer; however, when he started to research colleges and learn about the field of communications he reconsidered. Taylor explained his decision in the following way:

So when I was looking for a college, I didn't really know exactly what I wanted to do. I was going into communications. That (communications) was the first thought for me. I wanted to be a TV announcer for sports games that was kind of my dream first. And I don't know. I guess at some point as it approached, I started to look at things more realistically.

Yeah, that's something I probably could do, but it's also—you know, it's competitive, and I was looking for more of a sure thing. Not that teaching is a sure thing, but I guess my experience at the karate school and teaching the kids there kind of led me to believe that I could—it's something that I could do. It's something I could see myself doing because I've kind of already done it.

Although not his first career choice, Taylor decided to pursue teaching. Very often the experience of merely being a student in a classroom can lead people to believe that they can easily become an effective teacher (Lortie, 1975). Taylor however, based his decision to teach, not on a naive thought that he could teach because he had been a student; Taylor based his decision to become a teacher upon careful consideration of career competitiveness, and on prior teaching experience that proved to him, he could teach. Bandura (1995, 1997) and Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) referred to the belief that one has the capacity to perform the tasks and responsibilities required of their job as their sense of self efficacy. Efficacy related to teaching performance has been identified as teaching efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990; Dembo & Gibson, 1985).

Bandura (1995) might suggest that Taylor's sense of teaching efficacy was strengthened vicariously by his positive experience with his karate teacher. The following description Taylor shared provides some evidence to support this perception.

I would say my karate teacher at the dojo was probably who inspired me because he was such a great teacher. He taught you the actual content, the karate, and he always had a way of making you feel really good, you know, through positive comments, positive reinforcement.

If you had an issue, you could always talk to him about it. He would take the time to work with you and to, you know, make sure that you were feeling good when you left, and that you felt good about yourself. So, I kind of wanted to make other people feel that way, and I think that was really the inspiration behind deciding to go into teaching rather than a different direction.

For Taylor his karate teacher was a role model, and he demonstrated what constituted good teaching and what dispositions good teachers possessed. Taylor's karate teacher understood the subject content and how to build self confidence in his students,

thus increasing his students, e.g. Taylor's sense of efficacy by positively increasing his affective states (Bandura, 1995, 1997).

a. Concerns about teaching.

In spite of the sense of teaching efficacy Taylor might have developed through prior teaching experience, and as a result of his karate teacher being a role model to emulate; Taylor still expressed many concerns about his teaching practice and about the teaching profession. As a novice teacher in his second year in the profession, Taylor shared that his major concern was "how to balance all of the requirements and the demands from different outside sources. During the first interview, Taylor identified his concern and unpacked its meaning.

We're an Innovation school at The School For The Arts (SFTA). We do some things that are different from the district, yet we're still held to the district requirements. Specifically, with the humanities curriculum, we're the only school in the district that teaches humanities. Yet, there's no humanities curriculum in the district, it is all English Language Arts curriculum. We (SFTA) also teach social studies at the same time. So it is hard to kind of balance that, and to figure out how to make that work.

Accurately labeled and presented as a major concern of his, the requirements and demands of outside sources that Taylor sought to balance were many and far reaching.

He further explained,

We're evaluated based on a state assessment system, (well) teachers are. So there's always thinking about how we're going to make sure that, that evaluation goes well. Then there's MCAS, so how are we going to make sure that students are ready to take that, and that, that evaluation goes well. And then there's just the day-in and day-out teaching of students and remembering that there are adolescents in front of you that need your support and need your help, and that's a lot of pressure.

Taylor summed up his major concern about teaching as one of balance. He stated, "So I would say the major concern is balance, wearing all those hats and kind of keeping

all those fires going at the same time. The pressure Taylor described as ‘wearing different hats’ was a reference to the multiple roles teachers play and based upon the role played, teachers must perform a variety of tasks. Additionally, Taylor shared that the pressure to ignite daily the fire needed to engage students in learning and to meet their many needs caused stress. Many people experience stress, and some stress can even be beneficial; however, the stress Taylor described directly related to the demands of teaching (Wilhelm et al, 2000) and must be addressed.

b. Developing mindfulness.

Prior to participation in this study, Taylor's only experience with yoga was watching a yoga class at the studio where he practiced Karate. He explained, "There was a yoga class, and I would watch the end of it, then take my karate class. But, I never did the yoga class, so this is the first time I've actually done it (yoga)."

Although a novice at yoga, and only having three yoga sessions to draw from his experience, in the second interview Taylor shared several perceptions about how yoga influenced him specifically, and influenced others in general. He stated:

I think it (yoga) is a great way of de-stressing from what I've been able to experience the past, you know, couple of weeks. It (yoga) clears your mind, and I think you're able to focus on yourself for a second, and your body, and your mind rather than all those other requirements we talked about earlier. And any time where you can take an hour out of your day and just focus on yourself, you know, and really just kind of block everything else out. I think it's great, and I think it's healthy. Just it's a healthy thing to do, to just remove yourself; whether it's for an hour or however long, and just be able to think about something else for a while.

Research indicates that as a part of their work teachers experience high levels of stress, due to conflicts and tensions involving curriculum, and instruction and the building of interpersonal relationships. As determined by Evans (1998) coping

successfully with conflicts and tensions requires the development of skills and practices to decrease the severity of stress experienced by the organism. As a result of stress, and as Taylor shared not taking any time, “to just block everything out or to just remove yourself”, teachers burn out and leave the profession.

After three yoga sessions, Taylor examined and shared his experience and perceptions of yoga's influence on him, and his professional life. Taylor described while in yoga practice he learned how to deal with thoughts that came to mind. He reported:

Most of my thoughts are trying to 'like the yoga instructor says', try to accept the thoughts about other things in your life as they enter your mind then just let them go. So out of class, I'm trying to do that. I'm trying to accept the thoughts that I'm having about, you know, everything else that's going on in my life and just kind of let it all go for a while, and sometimes that's hard.

According to the great yogi sage, Patanjali the experience Taylor described is known as “chitta vritti nirodhah” or cessation of the fluctuations of the mind (Iyengar, 1993). The increased state of awareness cultivated through the practice of yoga is known as ‘mindfulness’ and can be defined as the ability to pay attention to all things in the present moment without judgment (Hahn, 1998; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Langer, 1997). Mindfulness is a state of awareness that requires concentration known as dharana (Iyengar, 1993). According to Desikachar (1995/1999) yoga requires us to practice and to pay attention to our practice. As Taylor practiced yoga, he put forth mindful concentration and effort. He shared, "and so when I am able to do it, I'm kind of just trying to focus on exactly what it is that I'm doing, whether it's breathing or doing a certain pose. I just focus on that and try to leave everything else behind."

While practicing yoga or ‘yui’ derived from a Sanskrit root meaning ‘to unite’, the yoga practitioner seeks to unite the body, mind and spirit. The practice of yoga is

contrary to dualistic theory where the mind is viewed separately from the body. The practice of yoga includes but is not limited to physical poses (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation (dhyana). Next, Taylor described the influence the integration of body, mind and spirit had on his teaching practice.

c. Yoga's influence on teaching practice.

After experiencing three sessions of yoga practice, Taylor had his second interview. During the interview Taylor viewed digitally recorded sessions of himself both in yoga practice, and while teaching in his classroom. After viewing the recorded session of yoga practice, Taylor began to reflect on his thought process. The opportunity to view the recordings brought the past yoga experience to his conscious mind. Taylor began to remember what happened and what he thought at the time it was happening. Taylor began to mindfully reflect on yoga practice and think about how yoga had influenced his teaching practice.

To answer the question what influence Taylor perceived yoga had on his teaching practice, he used words like 'hopefully' and 'possibly'. These words elicit a sense of anticipation and promise. Taylor stated, "I think, hopefully what yoga class, what I see it possibly doing, is being able to give me a way to kind of center myself." Taylor continued to explain that, "being able to handle issues as they come up, being able to acknowledge them, and then let them go, let them pass."

To further illustrate his thinking Taylor shared an example:

Like today was a pretty frustrating day. A student refused to wear safety goggles for no other reason than he just didn't want to do what everyone else was doing. During our conversation as I was getting frustrated, I thought me getting frustrated is not going to help the situation. I realized the best solution at that point with a new class coming in, was to tell him, we still need to talk about this and we'll come back to it.

You know, I think that taking that (yoga) principle of letting issues come up, letting them pass, and moving on has been helpful, rather than trying to worry so much about fixing things on the spot that can't be fixed yet. You know, just that calmness to be able to let it go for now. I think that's definitely how yoga could possibly influence my teaching practice.

Taylor perceived that yoga could possibly influence his teaching practice because he believed yoga could help to center him. Additionally, Taylor perceived yoga had taught him how to handle frustrating situations, and he provided one example of how this occurred. In the example, Taylor described the situation and the frustration that arose. Taylor stated that he realized his emotional reaction was not helping the situation, and he chose to let go and to come back to it later. Taylor applied his experience and understanding of aspects of the mindfulness he learned in yoga practice to the situation he had with the student and concluded that yoga might influence his teaching practice. Although Taylor was not able to say with certainty that yoga had influenced the way he handled the situation, he made connections and considered the possibility.

Taylor continued to consider connections between yoga practice, his teaching practice, and his students. After participating in his fifth yoga class, Taylor reported this in his journal entry:

In today's yoga class, we were introduced to a couple of new postures that were difficult for me. This was a reminder that new material might be challenging for my students as well.

Taylor perceived that because of the difficulty he experienced learning new yoga postures; he could better understand his students experience when they learn new material. This yoga experience provided Taylor the opportunity to increase empathy for his students.

During his final interview and after his eighth yoga class, Taylor again examined the influence yoga had on his teaching practice and he stated:

I think most of the changes that I've made kind of relate to the mindfulness. A lot of what goes on behind the scenes of teaching, you just can't control. There's going to be an evaluation system and many other things that I just don't get a say in, but there are things that happen within my classroom every day that I do have control over.

I think with yoga and the eight classes we've had, it's about recognizing what is in your control. And so one of the main things in your control is yourself, and although you can't always control situations, you can control how you react to them. So, that's kind of what I transferred to my teaching practice. There are things that happen in the classroom every day that I can't control, but I can control my reactions to them.

Yoga increased Taylor's perception that he could more effectively handle emotionally charged situations, and he could choose when to let go of control. As a direct result, Taylor created classroom instruction that released his control and increased his student's control and responsibility. Taylor explained,

Now, what I'm finding is sometimes situations happen in the classroom that I didn't see coming ahead of time, and I'm able to recognize now. I need to step back and let them (students) try to figure it out. So, I'm better at detecting it now if I didn't plan for it. For example, there have been a couple times like when starting a writing assignment, I'll have several students not focused or asking questions or coming up to me for help. At those moments, I realize I can't help every single one of them, and it wouldn't help to run around like a chicken with my head cut off, or try to put out all those fires.

So, lately I am better at taking a step back, waiting for a minute, letting them work it out, and most of the students work it out. So, when those crazy moments tended to happen, I kind of thought back to yoga class, the feeling of walking into yoga class and leaving everything else behind. I just stepped out of myself or actually into myself, or out of the chaos for a few minutes, and that's what I tried to do in class. And usually doing that, it cuts in half the number of students who actually need help, and then it's more manageable to help the students that really need help.

d. Sense of teaching efficacy.

Taylor provided several examples to illustrate that the practice of yoga influenced his thinking about teaching, his reactions to students, and his classroom instruction. During the second interview, Taylor viewed digital recordings of his teaching and yoga practices. Given time to reflect on his classroom teaching and yoga practice, and to consider how yoga influenced his teaching practice, Taylor identified aspects of how the mindfulness cultivated through yoga influenced his teaching practices. Additionally, when asked to review the pre and post efficacy scales, Taylor stated:

I think I almost read the questions differently this time. This time (post), I was reading and thinking not what do I do, but what can I do. Whereas the first time I did it (pre), I was thinking about what have I done in the past to show that I've done these things. For example, I can get through to the most difficult students. But now I'm thinking of it as, what do I actually have the ability to do, and what my influence could be in these areas.

Taylor's explanation indicated a shift in his perspective and/or a change in his mindset. Taylor stated that his initial outlook when answering the questions on the teaching efficacy scale came from a past perspective. He considered and judged his performance on what he had already done to influence aspects of his teaching practice. Further, Taylor noted a change in the way he read the questions. He described making judgments about his teaching efficacy based on what he could do. Taylor noted and considered greater potential in his ability to do something to influence aspects of his teaching. Throughout Taylor's reflections, he provided several examples of his ability to integrate characteristics of mindfulness into his teaching, known as mindful teaching (Langer, 1997), e.g. openness to new information, capacity to construct new mindsets, and increased awareness of various perspectives.

e. Finding yoga beneficial

In the third interview, Taylor shared that due to yoga he felt empowered and more centered. Taylor stated:

I think my overall take on yoga is, it's a way of, I guess being inside of yourself and not losing touch with that, not losing touch with what you need. If you don't take care of yourself, then how are you going to take care of 68 kids?

Taylor perceived yoga helped him recognize his spirit, and connect to it, and taught him that he must care for himself, in order to be able to care for others. According to Collier (2005) the ethic of care fuels teaching efficacy. Noblit, Rogers & McCadden (1995) define caring as how we should relate to others. Caring teachers are committed to self improvement and are committed to helping their students to improve (Noblit et al., 1995). Caring creates connections between a teacher and students, that although does not guarantee learning will take place, does provide increased opportunities for learning to take place (Collier, 2005). Taylor shared that as result of yoga his balance increased, and that he found the courage to take his foot up higher during tree pose. Also, Taylor shared yoga increased his energy and endurance making it easier to teach four, eighty minute classes in a row.

Narrative #4 - An alternate way of living and thinking: some things I've learned about yoga

Bruce Powers, a pseudonym, was a fifty-two year old, 8th grade Mathematics teacher, who changed careers to pursue education. He was a novice teacher who taught 8th grade Math for two years. Bruce defined teaching as “guiding students in the learning process”. In the first interview, in response to the question “Who or what inspired you to

become a teacher?" Bruce shared, "Opportunity knocked a second time, and I love teaching people things," so he decided to pursue a career in education.

a. Concerns about teaching

As a novice teacher, Bruce had many concerns about his teaching practice. During the first interview when asked to share his concerns, Bruce's his first response came in the form of the following rhetorical questions, "How can you get more hours in the day? Because every day comes and goes, and there's so many things you want to get to, and you can't get to them all." Bruce expanded his thinking, he thought and shared aloud e.g. "How can I be a better – maybe make better use of my time? How can I stretch a day better to get more things done with the kids? Which could end up being, how can I manage classroom time better?" Through this line of questioning Bruce revealed a desire to improve his teaching, and to acquire more knowledge and skills about classroom instruction/management.

Research suggests Bruce's questions and the process of questioning are necessary for increasing professional knowledge related to one's profession (Darling-Hammond et al., 2008; Langer, 1997; MacDonald & Shirley, 2009; Schon, 1992; Shulman 1987). Often it is difficult for teachers to find time, the space and the mindset to reflect and build upon their understandings, and to clarify misunderstandings related to teaching.

The fact, that as a novice teacher Bruce participated in this process of reflection was beneficial. However, when asked if Bruce had a mentor teacher he could speak with and pose these questions, he responded "Not really." Bruce's experience underlines research (Darling-Hammond et al., 2008) that revealed new teachers hired in United States are not provided universal access to mentoring and/or coaching, and just over half

of the nation's states require new hires to participate in induction programs.

Furthermore, Bruce questioned his ability to perform the tasks and responsibilities required of a teacher. He asked, "Am I doing a good job, and how can I do it (teach) better? Bruce avoided the mindset of the casual observer who tends to believe teaching looks easy, and if one knows a little about a subject, with some hands on experience, one can readily learn to teach (Lortie, 1975; Darling-Hammond, 2006). As career changer Bruce had years of professional experience, and he was not naive enough to believe that teaching was easy, nor did he question that past experience in another professional field afforded him the benefit of the knowledge about teaching pedagogy. Bruce was aware that skill and expertise took time to develop. In fact, it might be due to his life experience that Bruce was aware of so many of the challenges surrounding him as a novice teacher, and willing to admit, "I am always striving to be better, and that means having to learn and think about how to get there."

b. Developing Mindfulness

After two yoga classes, Bruce felt the newness of both teaching and yoga practice. Bruce shared:

You know, since I've only had two chances at it (yoga), it's still pretty new. I'm just trying to get this year under wraps. I don't feel I'm doing very well with it yet. I still feel I'm sinking right now, and I haven't practiced (yoga) outside of that time, so I haven't incorporated it into any type of daily or weekly practice.

Bruce questioned how to integrate the practice of yoga into his teaching. As he reflected on his yoga practice, Bruce shared, "It's more at the learning stage, am I doing this right, am I in the right pose, am I able to put my body in the position that's going to get me the maximum effectiveness." Bruce shared that during yoga practice "sometimes I also think, how can I take this, whatever we're doing here, and put that into the classroom."

Although Bruce intended to integrate yoga into his classroom, he wondered as he said, "where to slip it in and make good use of it in the classroom, you know, on a more regular basis".

In one of his journal entries Bruce reported, "Prior to giving a test in one of my classes, I had my students close their eyes and take a few deep breaths. I told them how well they were going to do, before I asked them to open their eyes and begin their test." Bruce continued, "I learned this technique in yoga and I felt really calm. I thought if I did it with students they might feel calm and do better on their test." Although, Bruce had no way of knowing if the yoga technique helped his students, his personal experience with yoga led him to believe it might.

c. Yoga's influence on teaching practice

Bruce introduced a few minutes of deep breathing and positive affirmations before his students took a test. Additionally, Bruce shared he had students stretch during their classes. Bruce explained:

So, I'll break in mid class and stretch for 3 to 5 minutes. For the students, it gives them a chance to get out their seats. They do some movement and joke around a little. This lightens up the class and when they settled down again, it (stretching) helps them to better focus.

As Bruce continued to talk about how yoga influenced his teaching, specifically the delivery of instruction and formative assessment of student learning, Bruce illustrated an ability to reflect on what he was doing, while in the act of teaching. This process is referred to as reflection-in action (Schon, 1992). Bruce reported:

When you see something that really isn't working and you're like okay, they're not getting this, how can I restate the question or change what I'm doing right now to make sure that everybody understands the concept that I'm teaching." You've got to read their faces. They're going to tell you. You know, when you get that deer-in-headlights look, you're like okay, and hopefully maybe one kid will get it

and you can build off of what they've got...or even reaching for something that a student presents that's a different way than you're teaching, stopping and saying how did you think of that, because there could be two or three other kids in the classroom right then, or in another class that thinks that way...and you need to cover it so everybody gets the concept.

Bruce described his ability to read student's responses, to pose clarifying questions, and to identify misconceptions which are all important teaching skills. Bruce explained his ability to connect content to the context of his classroom, one important facet of pedagogical content knowledge (Ball, 2000). Furthermore, Bruce shared after listening to how students respond; that he had worked to think in ways other than his own. He invited students to share their thoughts and thought processes, and in this way Bruce stated he learned from his students. Bruce's illustration is an approach to teaching that Langer (1989, 1997) characterized as teaching mindfully, or working to create new knowledge, being open to new information and having an awareness of more than one perspective. Bruce explained that the path that led him to become a teacher provided him the opportunity to learn math content, but he had no opportunity to learn pedagogical content knowledge. Bruce reported:

I learned from the kids because I never went to school to teach math. Yeah, I took a lot of math classes and I had a lot of math in physiology and in biomechanics...but I'm not a math teacher per se. So, it's more (important) for me (to develop) the skill in the classroom and apply it to math.

Bruce emphasized the need to acquire a blend of both formal pedagogical knowledge, and practical, hands-on experience when learning how to teach. Darling Hammond (2008) argues the inconsistent preparation of teachers new to the profession adds to lack of professionalism. Many teacher education programs focus on knowledge of learners and learning theory, understanding curriculum content and goals, and understanding of teaching pedagogy. Enrollment in teacher education programs provides

prospective teachers opportunities to learn how to transform the content knowledge she or he possesses, into forms of instruction to meet the learning needs of their students, an opportunity Bruce did not have before entering the classroom.

The fact that Bruce admitted to learning from his students indicated a strong sense of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1995; 1997). Bruce readily identified what he knew, what he needed to learn, and understood how he could learn more. Bruce described how he focused on students, read their faces, engaged them in the learning process, and invited students to explain their thought processes. According to Palmer (1998/2008) the methods Bruce employed would earn him a good teacher designation. Palmer (1998/2008) suggests that good teaching comes in a variety of forms, and that good teachers share common traits. Good teachers work to build strong connections among themselves, their subjects, and their students, so that students are prepared to learn themselves (Palmer, 1998/2008). To further illustrate the commitment Bruce made to connect to his students, I observed how Bruce worked to create a classroom where he was in close proximity to his students. While viewing the digital recording of his classroom instruction, Bruce noted the position of his computer projector. Bruce immediately realized that while he was working to set up the projector his back was to students, and he shared, “I don’t like the fact that my back is to the students.” During the next interview, I noticed Bruce had changed the position of the computer, so as he worked on the computer, his back would no longer be to his students. When I remarked about the computer, Bruce shared that he moved the computer the next day. Additionally, Bruce stated:

I set up my classroom in a way that I can be almost anywhere within a few steps. So, it does two things. It lets kids know that I am with them, that way they can't

get away with things; but also I think it's a comforting thing where they know if they have a question, I'll be right there as well.

d. Sense of teaching efficacy

When asked about his teaching performance Bruce stated, “I'm not good enough yet. I'm too new at this. I'm learning more as I get feedback from the students from last year that I did a good job. I didn't think I did.” Bandura (1977) suggests that humans learn to believe they can perform the duties and responsibilities required of their job or profession. This belief is called self-efficacy and it can be developed in four ways, through mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion and affective states.

As a novice teacher Bruce had not developed mastery, yet he felt an increase in self efficacy after receiving feedback from his former students. The encouragement of his former students known as social persuasion (Bandura, 1977) helped Bruce to develop the belief that he could perform the tasks and duties related the profession of teaching known as his teaching efficacy (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura 1995, 1997, Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

After the seventh session of yoga in response to the journal question, “How might today’s yoga practice influence your ability to perform the tasks and responsibilities related to your teaching practice, known as your teaching efficacy?” Bruce wrote:

Yoga practice influenced my ability to perform the tasks and responsibilities related to teaching by increasing my awareness about my thoughts, and my possible reactions, prior to me overreacting. It (yoga) helps give me tools to remain calm in situations where stress would illicit fight or flight.

The mindfulness developed during the practice of yoga provides opportunities for practitioners to learn how to notice thoughts and feelings that arise during stressful

situations (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Yoga teaches practitioners how to accept, rather than to avoid their feelings.

e. Finding yoga beneficial

Bruce perceived that yoga had influenced the release of stress he carried in his neck and upper back region. Bruce noted, “I know I carry a lot to stress in my neck and upper back region, and I think yoga has helped to release it. Bruce described yoga as having a three pronged approach:

It’s physical, it’s mind and it’s spiritual. I think it’s something that’s a manner of bringing peace in your body...the stress releaser of musculature with stretching; to peace with the mind through just being able to concentrate on like breathing, and letting things come in your mind and (go) out of your mind. Again, yoga practice is an ancient way of looking at the world. Yoga is a way to calm yourself, to grow and to become a better person. It is an alternative way of living and thinking.

Through the practice of yoga Bruce developed mindfulness that influenced his ability to remain calm, to alleviate stress while attending to challenging teaching situations, and to aid his students during the learning process.

Narrative #5 - Learning to surrender: checking it at the door once in a while

Sandra Tannenbaum, a pseudonym, was a paraprofessional, who after raising her family chose to pursue a full time career in education. Sandra was a 3rd grade teacher who had taught for three years. Sandra defined teaching as an opportunity to “get involved with children’s lives...being part of something bigger than myself...making a positive influence”. In response to the question, “Who or what inspired you to become a teacher?” Sandra stated that her parents strongly influenced her decision to become a teacher. Initially, Sandra wanted to become a psychologist; however, her mother advised against it, and suggested that Sandra consider doing something that “wouldn’t bring her

down”. Sandra continued, “So to me it (teaching) is something I’ve always wanted to do, and I’ve always wanted to be an influence in a good way.”

a. Concerns about teaching.

As a novice teacher, Sandra had many concerns about the teaching profession. In this excerpts, taken from the first interview, Sandra explained:

Well, I have concerns that we have too many people telling us that these assessments are a great thing for kids, and I find that we assess kids more than we teach kids. I feel that with the new teacher evaluation, we’re spending too much time trying to put on a dog-and-pony show instead of really getting down to the nitty-gritty, and finding ways to teach individual children.

In their professional lives teachers are required to develop cognitive, affective, and psychomotor growth opportunities for young people. Sandra captured her attempts to meet the demands, the duties, and the responsibilities of her professional career in the following way.

I mean I work from 7 o’clock in the morning until 12 o’clock at night on just finding things that would help kids. I find that some of that time, a lot of that time, I have to make my plans look just right and I have to make my boards look just right. All these things and gathering the data for evaluation evidence takes up so much time, and I think they’re (government) losing sight of the big picture. I think there are other things that would be more effective.

b. Developing mindfulness.

Teachers, too, must learn how to promote opportunities to develop cognitive, affective and psychomotor growth for themselves. Development of self knowledge holds the potential to expand personal and professional knowledge (Bandura, 1995, 1997; Goleman, 1995; Palmer, 1998/2008). In the first interview, Sandra shared some insight about her perceptions of yoga practice, and how yoga practice influenced her preparation to teach.

I guess I had the perception that I wasn't athletic enough to do yoga and come to find out, it's not just about athleticism. It's more you just have to kind of get into your own self, and your relaxation techniques and your relaxed state. And it's kind of funny because now every morning when I get up, I do some stretching and I feel more energized than I did before.

The development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor growth in teachers and students involves many difficult and complex tasks. In this passage taken from the third interview and after her participation in seven yoga classes, Sandra described a few of the benefits directly related to the practice of yoga that she experienced, e.g. developing self agency, learning how to be less reactive, and how to be more open minded.

I liked the way Jane (yoga instructor) described consciousness and I liked the way she described you can only control so much, and you have to be able to leave it and let it go. I think that leaving it and letting it go helped with some of those feelings (and thoughts) of "I can't change this, what am I doing wrong?" Instead, I now think "I can't change this right now, so I'm going to put it on hold and then think about it, so as not to react in the moment. I react over time, so that I'm reacting not so much from an (emotional) reaction, but from a cognizant reaction. I guess what I'm trying to say is... I'm just taking a step back, looking at all different sides and then reacting, and hopefully with a calmer more well balanced approach.

According to Langer (1989, 1997) the openness to learning new information and to seeing different points of view that Sandra experienced and attempted to convey is an important aspect of mindfulness. Through the practice of yoga and the cultivation of mindfulness Sandra learned how to explore, her own life and the lives of her students, moment-to-moment and less judgmentally. Even in times of doubt, yoga uplifted Sandra's spirit and moved her forward. In the first interview, Sandra explained her understanding and her experience of this process in greater detail:

I never felt that I could shut everything off, shut everything out and not think about what I'm supposed to be doing next. I have found that I can do that, if I make myself do that, and that was kind of empowering. Also, when I leave here why I don't sleep at night, it's because I'm thinking about the 20 kids – 24 kids that are in my care, and some of them are going through some really hard times.

You carry all that baggage with you all day long and it brings you down. Then when you get home and you're looking at your family and you're saying 'wow, we have so much!' It brings you down even more.

And then you start getting angry with systems and angry with others because it's like 'why, can't you do this?' I wasn't some fabulous person that came from money or anything like that, and I'm doing it. Why can't, you know, 'you pull yourself up?' And then it's like wait a minute. You have to stop, take yourself back, take stock and say they're doing the best they can, you've got to do the best you can, and now you've got to let it go at the door because you have a family that you have to take care of too, and you can't influence them by your moods. So I have learned that I can check it at the door once in a while.

I can't do it all the time, but I can say all right, now is my family time and I need to not think about school. It's tough, but it's able to be done, and I think that I found that when we were lying down at the end of the yoga. I'm not sure of the terminology, but whenever we were in that relaxation state. When we're sitting there, and she (Jane) told us to curl our toes up and let it go and then curl -- you know, when you unfold your toes, you're not going to be thinking about what you were thinking about before type of a thing.

The practice of yoga facilitated Sandra's control of her mind and emotions. Sandra found the power to control judgmental thoughts and anger.

c. Yoga's influence on teaching practice.

Yoga practice taught her to develop an ability to not only let go, but also to make connections. Goleman (2006) suggests that humans and other primates are hard wired for social connections. Some of the connections Sandra made with students were quite powerful, and could have long lasting effects. During the second interview, Sandra viewed digital recordings of her teaching practice and yoga practice. After viewing the recordings, Sandra explained:

I love when I can interact with the kids and we can...I can get down to their level and we can just discuss, reflect and talk. Also, I do believe kids need to relax more too. I think that it's important for them to come back to what's real and important. I teach that everybody comes for a different place, yet we can all work together.

Through the practice of yoga, Sandra developed the energy and power to continue the hard work of teaching, a highly complex human endeavor that over time has perplexed its participants and continues to intrigue scholars. Once the teacher comprehends content, attempts to transform it, presents it to students through instruction, and evaluates the students understanding, time must be set aside to look back at the teaching and learning that has occurred. In the first interview, Sandra reflected on and attempted to make meaning of her teaching experience, and how the practice of yoga influenced her as a teacher. In the following passage Sandra noted:

I can shut it off now, and I can shut off the things that I need to shut off in order to not be burned out or not be depressed or, you know, not be down. So it (yoga) has influenced me in that way. And like I said in the morning, I do have more energy through the stretching.

In my classroom, I've always given kids strategies on finding their own space and relaxing. I've always done that, so I don't know if yoga played a part in that. I think to actually do yoga in the classroom, it just takes too much time, but you can do certain stretches and deep breathing. I do that now, so, I will probably continue to incorporate it.

d. Sense of teaching efficacy.

For Sandra, participation in yoga practice turned into a beneficial activity, that revealed self knowledge and helped her to develop new understandings about the ideas, beliefs, and actions she held about herself and her life. In the third interview, Sandra expressed her experience in the following way:

I might be a little more perceptive now. I think that I'm trying to think clearly or clearer. Like, I'm not forgetting as many things in the morning. I'm able to think about what I need for the day, and not leave that piece of paper on the couch as I'm rushing out the door. So, I think it (yoga) has influenced that.

To examine how the practice of yoga influenced her teaching practice, Sandra was given the opportunity to reflect on the pre and post efficacy data taken from the

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran, M. & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001). Upon review of the data, Sandra responded,

So basically, I gave myself higher scores after the (yoga) experience that I did before, except for the some (areas) like critical thinking (increasing student's critical thinking) and creativity (fostering creativity). I think the reasons for those scores are because I have had my class longer and working on things I see they are not getting more creative or thinking more critically. But calming students (ability to calm) went from 4 to 8, so that was a big jump. I do believe that some of that is because of a student that I did have is no longer with us, and the whole room changed as a result. But, I think some of it too is I am calmer, if that makes sense.

e. Finding yoga beneficial

In the third interview, when asked specifically what meaning Sandra had drawn from for the overall experience of yoga practice; and what influence yoga had on her teaching practice and professional life, Sandra reported:

"I don't think it (yoga) made me a better teacher, I just think it make me maybe more open and mindful or myself. I think I am more aware of how I feel and why I feel the way I do. I am more aware that I have control over how I feel and probably how I react. As far as teaching goes, I think that I was always kind of mindful of what I was doing. I still don't find enough time always in the day to do everything I want to do, so I don't think it changed anything there."

Research suggests that the first, most important relationship that a teacher can develop and successfully build upon is a relationship with her/himself. Within a skillful teacher lies a well spring of self-knowledge, and beliefs upon which they base their perceptions, judgments and actions (Bandura, 1997; Palmer, 1998/ 2008). Participation in this research study provided each participant an opportunity to develop the self knowledge that led to more skillful actions in their professional lives.

C. Visual Representation of the Conceptual Frame - Cycle of Renewal

During data analysis several themes emerged. The following conceptual frame was developed using the data gathered from novice teachers' experiences and perceptions

as they explored the practice of yoga and examined to what extent the practice of yoga influenced their professional lives. This conceptual frame might be applied to future theory building; however, I do not present it as confirming and generalizable for all novice teachers.

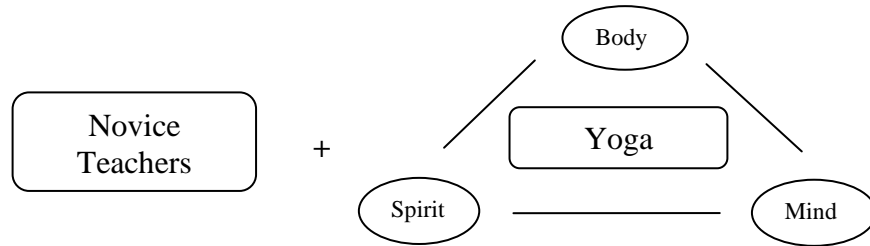


Figure 1.1. Novice teachers participated in yoga practice and observed their minds, bodies, and spirits.

Yoga or ‘yui’ in Sanskrit means to yoke or to unite (Iyengar, 1966/1979).

Participation in the practice of yoga provided novice teachers the opportunity to learn how to unite their minds, bodies, and spirits. During yoga practice novice teachers were taught how to notice their breath, and anchored by their breath, the yoga teacher invited them to become aware of the present moment. Next, novice teachers practiced yoga postures to develop the body, and to prepare the practitioner for meditation. The postures called asanas, were varied and designed to increase flexibility, strength, balance etc.

In meditation, the novice teachers learned how to relax. In this relaxed state, teachers released the stressors in their lives, and noticed the energy within them. It is common during such times for the practitioner’s mind to stream highlights of the day’s events. As the novice teachers reviewed the events of the day in their minds, the events elicited feelings and emotions that demanded their attention. During the practice of yoga,

novice teachers learned how to acknowledge the appearance of these thoughts, feelings, and emotions, without getting caught up in their ability to distract them.

Once the thoughts, feelings and emotions were released a sense of quiet, calm and relaxation began to fill the mind, body and spirit of the novice teachers. This entire process is referred to as learning how to become fully present or mindful, and it is the basis for development of mindfulness. After yoga practice novice teachers reported feeling peaceful, calm and relaxed.

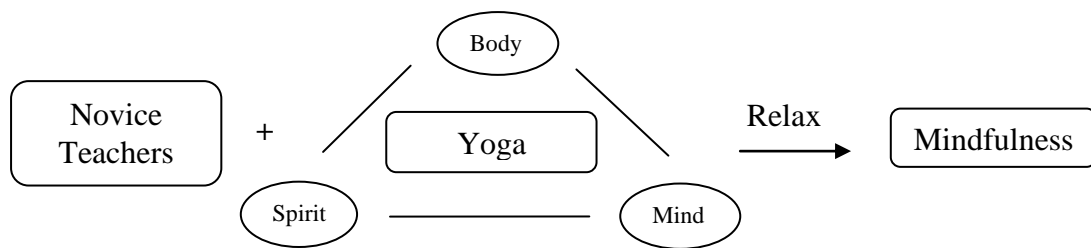


Figure 1.2. Novice teachers participated in yoga practice where they learned to relax and develop mindfulness.

As a part of their professional lives, novice teachers find themselves in classroom environments engaged daily in the teaching and learning process with their students. In this study data suggested that when novice teachers were exposed to the practice of yoga, they perceived changes in their professional lives. As novice teachers began to apply aspects of the mindfulness cultivated through yoga practice, to the situations they encountered in their classrooms; they recognized changes in their thoughts, feelings, reactions, and in the way they taught.

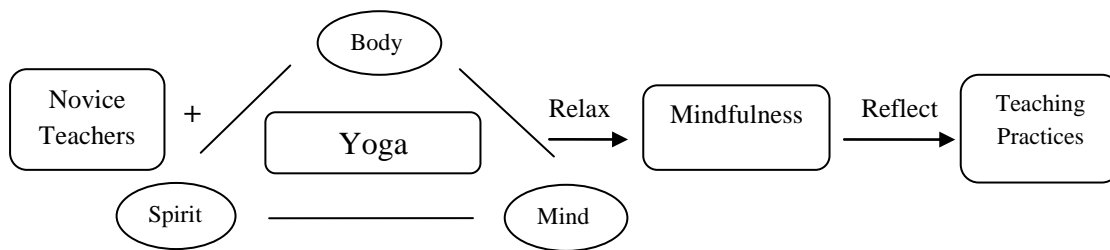


Figure 1.3. Novice teachers participated in yoga practice where they learned to relax and to develop mindfulness. Mindfulness prepared novice teachers to reflect on their teaching practices.

Research suggests that while in the process of teaching some teachers can reflect on what they think and how they act, and respond almost immediately. For other teachers, the act of reflection comes after the process of teaching. Schon (1992) refers to these patterns as reflection-in-action, or reflection-on-action. Langer (1989, 1997) refers to this process as mindful teaching. Through mindful reflection teachers learn to better understand their reactions, responses, and teaching practices.

During the first interview and after two yoga sessions, novice teachers were asked to reflect on their teaching practices. All of the novice teachers explained it was difficult to respond in the moment. They described needing additional time to reflect on their teaching practice. After time to reflect, novice teachers considered responses, and returned later to implement necessary changes. Novice teachers gave several reasons why they found it difficult to reflect, and to be mindful of their teaching in the moment. The most common reasons presented were that there was not enough time to manage the emotions involved in situations, whether the emotions were theirs or the emotions of their students. Also, there was concern that administrators would discipline them, if in the midst of implementing the mandated curriculum initiatives they took time to practice

mindfulness. After eight weeks of yoga practice, novice teachers shared examples of what they learned in yoga, and how what they learned in yoga helped them in their teaching practice, e.g. handling emotionally charged situations, balancing their concerns about time, and meeting constituents' demands. According to Bandura (1995, 1997) professional dilemmas impact novice teachers' perceptions of whether or not they can effectively perform the tasks, and assume the responsibilities of teaching, known as their teaching efficacy.

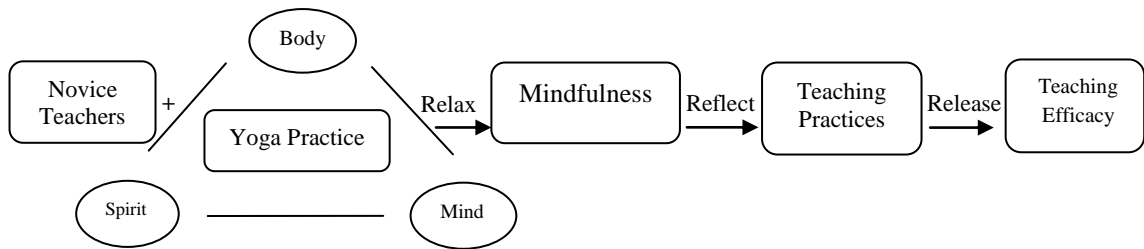


Figure 1.4. Novice teachers participated in yoga practice where they learned to relax, and to develop mindfulness. Mindfulness prepared novice teachers to reflect on their teaching practices. Novice teachers recognized their self agency and released control of aspects of their teaching practices.

In this study, five novice teachers perceived that through the practice of yoga they learned how to unite aspects of their minds, bodies, and spirits and their professional lives. Yoga practice taught the novice teachers how to relax and increased their mindfulness. As mindful novice teachers, they reflected on their teaching practice in a new way, and began to recognize what they could and could not control. The awareness of their self agency helped the novice teachers to, as they described, “step back” and “lift up” their challenges. By using this strategy, novice teachers noted a decrease in their stress, an increase in their ability to meet student needs, and less fear of administrative reprimand.

During and after school hours, teachers used yoga strategies to reset and reenergize themselves. Teachers reported they felt renewed, reenergized, and ready to engage their students in the process of teaching and learning once again. The potential for the process to continue moment-by-moment, and day-after-day is depicted in the following illustration, *Cycle of Renewal*.

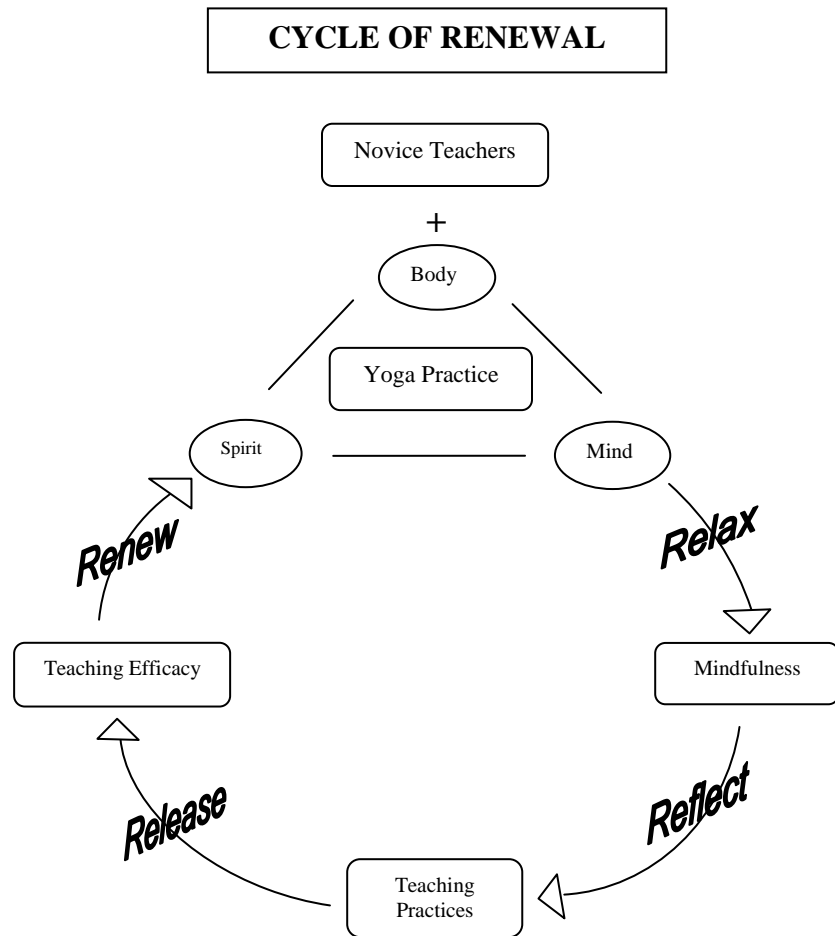


Figure 1.5. This visual representation illustrates how the practice of yoga influenced novice teachers' professional lives. Through the practice of yoga novice teachers increased various qualities of their minds, bodies and spirits e.g. relaxation and calm, thus promoting mindfulness.

The development of mindfulness led novice teachers to reflect on aspects of their teaching practice. Novice teachers recognized what was within their control, and began to release the desire to control every aspect of their teaching practice.

After releasing the need to control every aspect of their teaching practice, novice teachers focused on aspects they could control and reported an increase in teaching efficacy. At the beginning, throughout, and at the close of their work day novice teachers used yoga strategies to reenergize, reset and renew their minds, bodies and spirits.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

A. Overview

This dissertation research study required the development of a systematic process to introduce yoga practice to novice teachers. The process was developed and the study was conducted to capture the essence of novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice, and to examine how yoga practice influenced their professional lives, how it influenced their teaching practices and their sense of teacher efficacy.

Yoga, an ancient Indian philosophical system that dates back 5,000 years, involves traditional physical and mental discipline. The word yoga, 'yui' derived from the Sanskrit root means 'to unite', and yoga practitioners seek to unite the body (physical), mind (mental), and spirit (emotional) to deepen their life experience. In this research study, five novice teachers participated in the practice of yoga for two months.

Daily the novice teachers in this study were asked to develop instructional materials, and to create classroom environments that fostered opportunities for their students to learn how to problem solve, and to learn positive behaviors, attitudes, and virtues that would prepare them to participate fully as citizens in a democratic society (Borko & Putnam, 1996). This is a tall order for all teachers, especially novice teachers, and it required a tremendous amount of experience, time, hard work, and dedication.

The novice teachers in this study had high expectations and realistic goals for their students. Although professionally prepared to work at achieving their goals, they experienced a great deal of internal conflict when attempting to balance maintaining high expectations and reaching student learning targets, while also working to meet the

demands placed upon them by outside constituents. Kaufman et al., (2002) found new teachers rarely experience successful mastery experiences within their first year or two of teaching. Kaufman et al. (2002) argued the curriculum void that novice teachers experience is often exacerbated by the daily classroom tasks of delivering engaging instruction, assessing student work, maintaining discipline, communicating with parents, and learning how to negotiate the school bureaucracy.

While the need for effective teachers continues to grow, research indicates that up to 50% of all new teachers leave teaching within the first five years of entering the profession, and approximately 30% leave within the first three years (Kelly, 2004; Maciejewski, 2007; Mandel, 2006; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

Data from this study revealed some of the influences that the practice of yoga had on five novice teachers. During interviews the novice teachers were asked to reflect on the influences the practice of yoga had on their professional lives, their teaching practice, and their teaching efficacy.

1. Yoga influenced novice teachers' professional lives

After three yoga sessions, participants identified some of their physical restrictions, e.g. inflexibility, lack of balance, and pain from injury. After eight yoga sessions, participants reported an awareness of greater flexibility, increased balance, and the ability to move through the pain from old injury.

After three yoga sessions, participants identified several difficult emotional states; the most common were stress, frustration, and some depression. After eight yoga sessions, participants reported different emotional states e.g. relaxed, calm, and energized.

Yoga participants described their mental states as confusion, impatience, and fearfulness after three yoga sessions. Participants identified increases in mental functions, such as the ability to focus, more patience, and less apprehension after eight yoga sessions.

An increased awareness in sensory perception, observation of mental thoughts and emotional states has been referred to as being mindful. Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally (Langer, 1989, 1997). This kind of attention nurtures greater awareness, clarity, and acceptance of present-moment reality.

According to Kabat Zinn (1994), “mindfulness provides a simple but powerful route for getting unstuck, and back in touch with personal wisdom and vitality...One path to this awareness lies at the root of Yoga” (p. 5). For the participants in the study findings revealed the mindfulness created from the practice of yoga produced calmness and the clarity needed to recognize what instruction was necessary, what issues were important to focus on, and how to de-stress when teaching their students.

2. Yoga influenced novice teachers’ teaching practices

Data from the research revealed that participants saw clear connections between the practice of yoga and their teaching practice. In the study teachers recognized the practice of yoga as influential in their ability to regulate their emotions, and the emotions of their students. Participants identified the influences yoga had on their teaching practice, as the ability to pay attention and to differentiate instruction. Participants felt more assured in their teaching practice, and they talked about feeling more confident even fearless enough to take action and to readjust in challenging situations. Participants

explained how yoga influenced their ability to release control in the classroom, and to release the fear of administrative reprimand.

Experiencing fear in the classroom happens to all teachers and many of us struggle to understand it. Often fearful experiences, whether real or perceived, generate harsh words and unskillful actions that reveal our weaknesses and make us feel vulnerable. For teachers, especially novice teachers, experiencing fear in the classroom is a common occurrence, and it is important to reflect upon such experiences. Regarding fear, Palmer (1998, 2008) writes:

As a young teacher, I yearned for the day when I would know my craft so well, be so competent, so experienced, and so powerful, that I could walk into any classroom without feeling afraid. But now, in my late fifties, I know that day will never come. I will always have fears, but I need not be my fear—for there are other places in my inner landscape from which I can speak and act.

Through the practice of yoga novice teachers became aware of, managed and released their emotions, including an emotion as strong as fear.

3. Yoga influenced novice teachers' sense of teaching efficacy

The participants in this study reported that yoga practice and the mindfulness created by practicing yoga helped to center them. Participants believed yoga helped them to maintain better balance when working to meet the demands of teaching, and the sometimes unrealistic expectations from outside constituents. Like Taylor described, as teachers learn “to recognize what’s inside and not lose touch with it” or as Palmer (1998, 2008) described “to access their inner landscape,” novice teachers acted and spoke more

skillfully in their classrooms. Additionally, novice teachers perceived their actions influenced the actions, and reactions of their students.

The ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of one's profession is known as self efficacy. Self efficacy related to teaching is called teaching efficacy. After practicing yoga, participants in the study reported increased ability to meet the academic, physical, social and emotional needs of their students. Some participants perceived increased teaching efficacy directly related to the yoga practice, and others perceived increased teaching efficacy due to a change in classroom dynamics or the development of classroom routines. For whatever reason the novice teacher perceived their teaching efficacy increased, research suggests an increase in teaching efficacy brings about beneficial results for students (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Tschannen-Moran, et. al, 1998).

My dissertation study required conducting research with a group of five novice teachers to examine their experience with the practice of yoga. In the introduction of this study, I demonstrated the need for this research. I introduced and explained how I carried out the research study, gathered, and analyzed the data generated from the study. I illustrated the issues that arose during the pilot phase of my research, and I explained the adjustments that were made when conducting the research for my dissertation. I shared that although I worked to discover answers to the question, "To what extent do novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives?", I remained open to the experiences of the participants.

To realize the full potential of qualitative research, I created and I implemented an iterative research design and process to explore my research study as it evolved. According to Srivastava (2009),

The role of iteration, not as a repetitive mechanical task but as a deeply reflexive process, is key to sparking insight and developing meaning. Reflexive iteration is at the heart of visiting and revisiting the data and connecting them with emerging insights, progressively leading to refined focus and understandings.

Thus, I committed fully to the process, and dedicated the required time and effort to analyze the research findings, and synthesize the findings to develop new knowledge based on the participant's experiences and when possible expressed in their words.

B. Limitations

This research study was widely advertised across the school district. The five participants in this study were self selected, and on their own accord chose to take part in this study. No novice teachers were turned away, and all the participants that started the research study completed the research study. However, the many demands placed on novice teachers made it difficult for more than five teachers to set aside time to participate in this research study, thus the small number of research participants. Many novice teachers spend an inordinate amount of time to develop their curriculum, to plan instruction, to develop assessments. Often within the first year or two of employment, novice teachers are required to obtain their master's degrees, and to participate in other state mandated professional development courses.

Gladwell (2008) informed us that true expertise is attainable after an initial investment of 10,000 hours of practice. All, but one participant, missed one yoga session, two participants missed two yoga sessions, and one participant missed three yoga sessions.

At the very most, after only, eight hours of yoga instruction, these novice teachers needed many more hours to gain a modicum of proficiency with yoga. Although, I think because these novice teachers were developing expertise in teaching practice, they may have been more willing to apply new tools and techniques such as the practice of yoga to supplement their teaching practice.

Often the atmosphere in school buildings is loud, fast paced and sometimes chaotic. Throughout the study there were many interruptions during interviews, making it difficult at times for teachers to regain their focus. On several occasions interruptions changed the momentum and the topic during the interview. Although it was convenient to interview teachers at school, it may not have been conducive to maintaining focus and momentum.

C. Future Implications

This research provided me the opportunity to learn how the practice of yoga influenced novice teachers' belief that they can be effective teachers, and how yoga influenced their teaching practices. As the researcher, I found it fascinating to learn who or what inspired my participants to become teachers, and to learn about their concerns as teacher. Also, I appreciated the opportunity to examine and to depict their experiences and perceptions of the influence yoga had on their professional lives.

I plan to build on the findings from this study, and to conduct research to further examine the varied influences on the practice of teaching, e.g. differentiation and wait time that resulted from the practice of yoga. I plan to present the practice of yoga as a skill or technique for teachers to acquire early in their teaching careers, and use to meet the varied demands of teaching throughout their professional careers. I hope to encourage

the introduction of the practice of yoga into teacher education programs, teacher induction programs, and teacher professional development programs, to provide teachers the opportunity to cultivate a new way of knowing and being in the world. Yasou (1987) posits:

True knowledge cannot be obtained simply by means of theoretical thinking, but only through ‘bodily recognition of realization’...through the utilization of one’s total mind and body. Simply stated, this is to “learn with the body,” not the brain. Cultivation is practice that attempts, so to speak, to achieve true knowledge by means of one’s total mind and body.

Ideally, I would like to develop a longitudinal study to examine the teaching practices and teaching efficacy of teachers who practice yoga over extended periods of time yoga.

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) indicated the following induction practices and supports have a positive effect on the retention of teachers; a mentor from the same subject area, collaborative planning time with teachers from the same grade level and subject area, common and consistent planning with other teachers, and participation in networking activities with other beginning teachers. For participants in this research study getting to know one another during yoga, and learning that everyone had challenging experiences in both yoga and their teaching practices helped them to bond. Novice teachers in this study began to talk with one another more often, about their issues and their challenges, because as one of the participants stated, ‘we are all in the same boat’.

As part of their induction to the profession, might the opportunity for novice teachers to learn yoga practice lead to relaxation, mindful awareness, and knowledge of how to identify and implement useful teaching practices? Might the opportunity to learn how to release stress, fear, and concern about issues beyond their control promote the

well being of novice teachers, and increase their retention? How might a novice teacher practicing yoga and experiencing the cycle of renewal influence their students and their student's learning? How might participation in communities of yoga practice, and opportunities for teacher candidates to discuss and share their inner landscapes better prepare them to teach? Answers to these and other questions related to yoga and its influence on novice teachers will certainly provide many future research studies, that could impact the way novice teachers are prepared nationwide.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

A. My Dissertation Journey

In my professional roles as a classroom teacher and an instructional coach, I have supported the professional growth and development of teachers. As an educational administrator, I have been assigned the task to evaluate the professional performance of teachers. Upon reflection, I believe I successfully performed these professional duties and responsibilities. Although at times, I wished I could have done more.

When I first left the classroom and transitioned into administration, I truly missed teaching students. I remember speaking about this with one of my professional mentors, and she shared “if you take care of the teachers, they will take care of the students”. I began to believe that as an administrator, I could reach students by supporting and caring for their teachers. For several years as an educational administrator, I worked diligently to support teachers. In fact, my desire to do more for teachers inspired me to earn a doctorate degree in teacher education.

As a doctoral candidate in the teacher education program, I learned that I was required to generate knowledge to fill a gap, in an area of research, in which I had an interest. My personal interest and experience with yoga led me to envision ways, to combine my mission to support teachers with the practice of yoga. I realized that a great deal of my knowledge about yoga, and its influences, resulted from my yoga practice. Over time, I recognized in order to combine my interests; I must develop a method to study both. Although I was not sure exactly how to do this, I understood I needed to provide teachers the opportunity to experience the practice of yoga.

Two years into my dissertation journey, one of my professors asked me, “Why do you believe the practice of yoga might benefit teachers?” My immediate response was because as a teacher and an administrator, I had benefitted from yoga. The question my professor posed moved me to think beyond my initial reasoning; that because I had personally benefitted from yoga, others too, might benefit from yoga. It led me to develop research that would provide teachers opportunities to experience yoga first hand, and to identify how, and why yoga had benefitted them.

B. The Practice of Yoga

While ancient yogi sages and modern yogi gurus share wisdom and provide guidance; as most teachers know, students must acquire their own understanding, and through experience build their own knowledge base. Yoga philosophy is based on precepts that instruct practitioners how to develop, examine and apply personal knowledge and wisdom that when applied can transform their lives.

Through the practice of yoga practitioners observe themselves, and explore what is happening in their minds, their bodies, and their spirits. Practitioners of yoga develop self awareness, and by practicing yoga they are provided opportunities to unite mind, body and spirit. Yoga integrates the language of the body. Body language is often unconscious and through yoga, the practitioner can learn the language of their body. The body of every practitioner has a unique story to tell (Bocci, 2004; Lasater, 2000). While practicing yoga, practitioners can hear, and must learn to listen to the stories their bodies tell them. Practitioners can develop the ability to discern the meaning of these stories, and decide to accept or reject the stories’ meanings. The experiential nature of yoga requires practice, and through practice personal awareness, understanding, and knowledge can be

discovered and increased. When given the opportunity to reflect on their yoga practice, practitioners are often reminded about various aspects of themselves they may have forgotten, and/or they discover something new about themselves.

C. Understanding the Yoga Experience of Novice Teachers

The five novice teachers who participated in this research study shared their self discoveries through journal entries, in interviews, and when reflecting upon their yoga and teaching practices. Despite the variety in the demographics of the novice teachers, common themes developed based on careful analysis of the participants' experiences. The themes were often expressed using the exact words of the participants. The individual accounts of the novice teachers in the study, and my interpretation of the meanings of their discoveries were captured in personal narratives, and illustrated in the cycle of renewal.

For the novice teachers who participated in this study the scope and versatility of yoga practice delivered new experiences and unique learning opportunities. Although the ability to hear, to listen, and to discern the meaning of their bodies' language was not specifically identified, with continued yoga practice it might be cultivated. However, through yoga practice and upon reflection, novice teachers in this study became aware of and identified some of yoga's influences. Whether the influences were mental clarity, release of physical stress, or added confidence; these influences were experienced by practicing yoga.

Additionally, yoga practitioners developed attentiveness known as mindfulness. Through yoga novice teachers cultivated mindfulness that taught them how to gather, to understand, and to trust the information presented moment-by-moment in the mind's

thoughts, through the body's sensations, and from the spirit's wisdom. Participants reported that after yoga practice they felt relaxed, more aware and could think clearly. What they described, was that their minds were at ease, and yogis suggest this is the mind's natural state (Iyengar 1966/1979; Desikacher, 1995/1999). People might misconstrue the understanding of a mind at ease, and infer that in this state, the mind is dull, void of ideas and disconnected from conscious thoughts. In fact, the mind at ease is more alert, receptive to a range of thoughts, and highly connected to sensory input both conscious and unconscious.

In their professional lives, teachers must have comprehensive knowledge about their subject matter and theoretical knowledge about teaching and learning. Teachers must create a safe, social and emotional climate in the classroom to promote student growth and development. Throughout the process of teaching and learning, teachers make constant decisions and act upon them immediately. In this research study, novice teachers developed mindfulness by practicing yoga. When novice teachers applied mindfulness to the teaching and learning process, novice teachers developed trust in their ability to make decisions, and they acted more skillfully.

D. Yoga Practice and Mindfulness as Professional Standards

For many years, teaching competence has been measured using professional standards. Some professional standards are developed locally by school districts, many professional standards are developed at the state level, and other professional standards are developed by the *National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)*. Teacher performance evaluation systems require practitioners to gather evidence to support each standard that measures their professional competence. Imagine as part of a

‘new’ teacher performance evaluation, or to meet a ‘new’ national ‘mindfulness’ standard for professional competence, teachers were asked to develop mindfulness and gather evidence of their mindfulness?

Novice teachers work countless hours to meet the standards of the teaching profession. Novice teachers often feel overwhelmed and unsure about their ability to perform the tasks and responsibilities of teaching, and many leave the profession prematurely. In their professional lives, teachers must possess and utilize a wide repertoire of teaching methods to facilitate student learning. Teachers must identify and seek to relinquish ineffective approaches and practices. Langer (1997) suggested that teachers could approach teaching and learning mindfully through (1) the continuous creation of new knowledge; (2) openness to new information; and (3) an implicit awareness of more than one perspective (Langer, 1997, pg. 4). I suggest the experience of yoga practice would benefit all teachers, most especially novice teachers. Also, I suggest that through the practice of yoga, teachers could learn how to (1) reflect mindfully and develop a relaxed, integrated state of mind, body and spirit; (2) reflect openly and non-judgmentally on teaching practices; (3) identify aspects of their teaching practices that can be relinquished and/or replaced by more skillful practice; (4) apply yoga strategies and techniques after, before and throughout the school day that increase their well being.

E. Learning from Novice Teachers

After eight weeks of yoga practice, novice teachers in this study learned how to relax. When in this state of relaxation, novice teachers reflected openly about their teaching practice. They differentiated instruction, released fear of administrative

reprimand, and allowed students to control various aspects of the learning process. Also, teachers experienced rested, felt renewed and returned to teaching ready to begin again.

At some point in our lives, everyone has had to start at the beginning. Although the memory may be vague, we all have been beginners. Remember, how it was being a beginner? We asked questions to get clarification, because we did not know all the answers. As a beginner, we were expected to make mistakes, because we did not possess the expertise. Remember at times as a beginner, we became discouraged when our progress was slow. In those times, we turned to veteran teachers or coaches to clarify our questions, to help us problem solve, and for encouragement; because as a beginner we felt unsure. What would it have been like, in times as a beginner, if we believed the answers to our questions could come from within us? Might the practice of yoga and the development of mindful reflection help to cultivate this confidence?

Also, consider for a moment that there was great freedom being a beginner. As a beginner, we highly anticipated experiences, unknown possibilities, and the learning that takes place at the beginning of a new process. Yes, there is also the fear and trepidation that beginners experience. However, the freedom we felt may have come from accepting that we could not know all the answers; and it was all right that we did not know, because we were at the beginning. Is this sense of freedom compromised, or perhaps sacrificed in an attempt to become professional? What might become of the freedom afforded by a novice's mind, a mind at the beginning, if we learn to foster it? Can it produce greater creativity, empathy, and compassion? What did the great yoga masters know, understand and teach about beginner's mind? Might novice teachers intuitively know something more about beginner's mind that they can teach us?

Very often beginner's minds are open, their bodies are alert, and their spirits are eager. These are a few of the qualities associated with beginner's mind. Can the practice of yoga help cultivate and sustain these beneficial qualities? This question, and the other questions I have posed, might guide future research involving student teachers and the practice of yoga. Student teachers are training to begin careers in teaching. How might student teachers benefit from exploring the practice of yoga, and the phenomenon of mindfulness as part of their undergraduate program of study?

In my dissertation research, I have integrated my life experience, my pilot study research, and the research I referenced in my review of literature. I have developed a qualitative study to examine, and to record the experiences of five, self-selected novice teachers who participated in yoga practice. Through this dissertation research study, I have provided the five novice teachers the opportunity to gain a little knowledge and understanding about the ancient practice of yoga; a practice that for thousands of years has transformed the way people live their lives both personally and professionally. I have begun to answer the questions how and why yoga practice influences novice teachers' professional lives. The findings might be applied to future theory building; however, I do not present them as confirming and generalizable for all novice teachers. Additionally, I have generated new questions to guide future research about the practice of yoga, and its influence on teaching and learning. Finally, I have contributed to the thinking about the benefits of introducing the knowledge of yoga philosophy, and the practice of yoga into teacher education and professional induction programs, and I hope I have promoted this endeavor as an important and viable prospect.

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH TIMELINE

These were the steps, dates included, that were followed to conduct the research study.

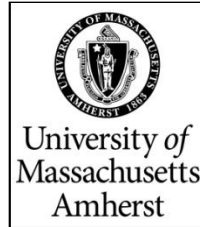
Research Steps	Completion Dates	Completion Dates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtained institutional consent to conduct research and procured space to teach the yoga program at the School of the Arts. (APPENDICES B, C, D) 	School Principal Friday – 9/13/13	University Dean Tuesday – 9/24/13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited 5 novice teachers from the public school district to participate in the study. (APPENDIX E) 	Monday, 9/16/13 Thru Thursday, 9/26/13	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided novice teachers a letter of consent to explain why the study was being conducted, and why they were invited to participate. The letter of consent described what participants needed to do to fully participate, and described any known risks (APPENDIX F). 	Thursday, 9/19/13 & Thursday, 9/26/13	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtained the demographic information using a brief survey. (APPENDIX G). 	Thursday, 9/19/13 & Thursday, 9/26/13	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required novice teachers to complete a self-efficacy scale before and after participation in the yoga sessions. 	<u>Self-efficacy scale Pre-classes:</u> Thursday, 9/19/13 & Thursday, 9/26/13	<u>Self-efficacy scale Post-classes:</u> Thursday, Nov. 14, 2013

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hired a yoga instructor to teach yoga program consisting of 8 classes. (APPENDIX H) 	<p>Saturday, 9/14/13</p>	<p><u>Classes were taught on</u> <u>Thursdays:</u> 9/26, 10/3, 10/10, 10/17, 10/24, 10/31, 11/7, and 11/14</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided the yoga instructor a yoga sequence to guide instruction for 8 classes, each class ran approximately 60 mins. (APPENDIX I). 	<p>Saturday, 9/14/13</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required novice teachers to provide written or audio taped journal entries in response to eight prompts. (APPENDIX J) 	<p><u>1st Entry:</u> Thursday, 9/19/13 & Thursday, 9/26/13 <u>2nd Entry:</u> Wednesday, 10/2/13 <u>3rd Entry:</u> Thursday, 10/10/13 <u>4th Entry:</u> Thursday, 10/17/13</p>	<p><u>5th Entry</u> Thursday, 10/24/13 <u>6th Entry</u> Thursday, 10/31/13 <u>7th Entry</u> Thursday, 11/7/13 <u>8th Entry</u> Thursday, 11/14/13</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled and conducted interviews for novice teachers. Each Interview session lasted approximately 45 minutes in length. (Appendix K) 	<p><u>1st Interviews</u> Monday, 9/30/13 Thru Friday, 10/11/13</p>	<p><u>2nd Interviews</u> Monday, 10/21/13 Thru Friday, 11/1/13 <u>3rd Interviews</u> Tuesday, 11/12/13 Thru Friday, 11/22/13</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled and digitally recorded classroom observations of novice teachers. Observations ran approximately 30 minutes in length. 	<p>Friday, 10/11/13 thru Monday, 10/21/13</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created and maintained a research data inventory. (APPENDIX L) 	<p>Beginning Thursday, 9/19/13</p>	<p>Ending Friday, 10/21/13</p>

APPENDIX B

DISSERTATION RESEARCH REQUEST

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers



Danette V. Day
Doctoral Candidate
School of Education
University of Massachusetts Amherst

September 13, 2013

Dr. Pamela K. Hill
Dean of Education
Fitchburg State University
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Dear Dr. Hill,

First, let me formally introduce myself to you. My name is Danette Day and I am a doctoral candidate in the Teacher Education and School Improvement program at The University of Massachusetts Amherst under the guidance of Dr. Linda Griffin, Associate Dean of Education. The purpose of this letter is to request your assistance with my dissertation research, and to acquire institutional permission and student access.

Upon completion of my comprehensive examinations and the approval of my dissertation proposal, I want to formally request permission to access your institution and solicit your help to identify several recent graduates to participate in my dissertation research. As an alumna of Fitchburg State University's Class of 1986 and Class of 2006, it is with tremendous pride that I ask to conduct my dissertation research at Fitchburg State University.

Aligned with Fitchburg State University's Department of Education's motto *Educator as Reflective Leader*, my research examines the introduction of yoga practice into teacher education and examines the new knowledge and skills that might be developed through the practice of yoga. The practice of yoga influences every aspect of human life, including the thoughts and actions that comprise reflective practice, physical health, emotional well being and interpersonal relationships. The 21st century classrooms pose

tremendous social, emotional and academic challenges that must be met by effective teachers equipped with a wide array of useful skills. My research will introduce teacher candidates and novice teachers to the practice of yoga, and explore to what extent the practice of yoga influences the development of novice teachers, their teaching practices, and their teaching efficacy.

To maintain confidentiality the institution will not be mentioned by name in the study, nor will the names of any individuals associated with the university. Pseudonyms will be used as identifiers. I would like to conduct my research in the following five phases:

1. **Participant identification:** Review of matriculation records will provide information recent teacher graduates. Identification of participants (10-12) and their contact information will be used to recruit research participants for my research.
2. **Recruitment:** Initial contact with novice teachers will be made via email to explain the research, participant requirements and informed consent forms. Also, a follow up visit to participant's respective schools will take place in early September to clarify their questions.
3. **Data collection:** Various methods of data collection will be used, e.g. questionnaires, classroom observations, self efficacy scales (pre/post yoga intervention), in depth interviews and journal entries. Upon our first meeting in early September, all participants will be asked to complete a short demographic questionnaire and a pre, self efficacy scale. By the end of September and before yoga classes begin, classroom observations of participants will occur and participants will be interviewed for the first time.
4. **Yoga classes (8 weeks) and in depth interviews (after 4th week):** Throughout the months of October and November participants will attend 8 weeks of yoga classes. After four yoga classes are taught, participants will be interviewed in depth for the second time.
5. **Data collection:** When yoga classes end the final data set will be collected. Classroom observations of participants will occur at the midpoint of their participation in the yoga program. Also, at the end of yoga classes participants will complete a post, self efficacy scale, and participants will be interviewed for the third and final time.

Enclosed is a copy of the Institutional Consent Form that grants permission for me to carry out my research at the McKay Teacher Center on the campus of Fitchburg State University. Please review this form. I will set up a meeting to discuss my research and address any concerns.

If you have any questions or concerns before we meet, feel free to contact me at dayd@educ.umass.edu or (978) 413-8447. Also you may contact my dissertation advisor Dr. Linda Griffin, Associate Dean, Office of Academic Affairs, College of Education, University of Massachusetts Amherst at lgriffin@educ.umass.edu or (413) 545-6985.

In closing, I want to thank you for your consideration and your help with my dissertation research. Throughout this important process, I will continue to update you on my progress. Upon completion of my research, I will provide a copy of my dissertation for your files.

Sincerely,

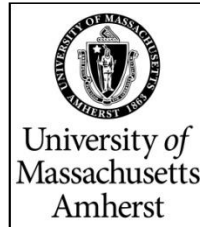
Danette V. Day

Enclosures

APPENDIX C

INSTITUTIONAL CONSENT: DEAN OF EDUCATION

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers



Project: Dissertation Research

Title: A Qualitative Study: The Practice of Yoga, Its Influence on Novice Teachers

Researcher: Danette V. Day, Doctoral Candidate, The University of Massachusetts Amherst, dayd@educ.umass.edu, 978-413-8447

Participant Institution: McKay Teacher Center at Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA

The Fitchburg State University Department of Education (FSU-DOE) grants permission to Danette V. Day, a doctoral candidate in the University of Massachusetts School of Education's Teacher Education and School Improvement program, to engage in dissertation research that utilizes the Fitchburg State University McKay Teacher Center as the primary setting for the research and recent teacher graduates from the FSU-DOE as research participants.

Dr. Pamela K. Hill, Dean of Education at Fitchburg State University (FSU) grants permission for Danette V. Day to use the McKay Teacher Center at FSU to gather research data for her dissertation, for subsequent research articles and future publications.

The nature of the research involves the analysis of data collected from questionnaires, classroom observations, self efficacy scales, and in depth interviews of novice teachers who participate in an 8 week yoga program. The research explores to what extent the practice of yoga influences the development of novice teachers, their teaching practices, and their teaching efficacy.

Individual subjects will be treated anonymously and will not be revealed in the dissertation or in any subsequent publication of the research. The research is expected to end in December 2013.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dr. Pamela K. Hill
Dean of Education
Fitchburg State University

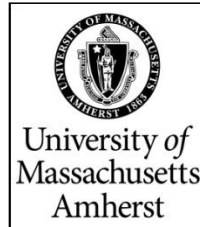
Signature: _____ Date: _____

Danette V. Day
Doctoral Candidate
University of Massachusetts Amherst

APPENDIX D

INSTITUTIONAL CONSENT FORM: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers



Project: Dissertation Research

Title: A Qualitative Study: The Practice of Yoga, Its Influence on Novice Teachers

Researcher: Danette V. Day, Doctoral Candidate, The University of Massachusetts Amherst, dayd@educ.umass.edu, 978-413-8447

Participant Institution: McKay Arts Academy at the McKay Teacher Center, Fitchburg, MA

The principal administrator of the McKay Arts Academy grants permission to Danette V. Day, a doctoral candidate in the University of Massachusetts, College of Education's Teacher Education and School Improvement program, to engage in dissertation research that utilizes the Fitchburg State University McKay Teacher Center as the primary setting for the research.

Mr. Daniel J. Hanneken, McKay Arts Academy Principal/Associate Dean of Education at Fitchburg State University (FSU) grants permission for Danette V. Day to use the McKay Arts Academy setting to gather research data for her dissertation, for subsequent research articles and future publications.

The nature of the research involves the analysis of data collected from questionnaires, classroom observations, self efficacy scales, and in depth interviews of novice teachers who participate in an 8 week yoga program. The research explores to what extent the practice of yoga influences the development of novice teachers, their teaching practices, and their teaching efficacy.

Individual subjects will be treated anonymously and will not be revealed in the dissertation or in any subsequent publication of the research. The research is expected to end in December 2013.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mr. Daniel J. Hanneken
McKay Arts Academy Principal/
Associate Dean of Education
Fitchburg State University

Signature: _____ Date: _____

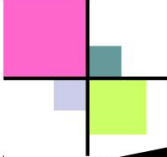
Danette V. Day
Doctoral Candidate
University of Massachusetts Amherst

APPENDIX E

RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers

Research recruitment flyer disseminated throughout the school district.



Novice Teachers Needed for Educational Research


Free Yoga Classes

Have you been teaching for 5 years or less? If you answered yes, you qualify.
It's that easy!

Research Question: "To what extent do novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their professional lives?"

Researcher: Danette Day, Doctoral Candidate, UMASS Amherst

Learn physical poses called asanas, breathing and meditation techniques while participating in cutting-edge, educational research free of charge!



Sukhasana – Easy Pose

Virabhadrasana I – Warrior I


Tadasana – Mountain Pose

Research shows the practice of yoga develops flexibility, strength, and balance of the mind, body and spirit. How might yoga practice influence you and your teaching practice? Join me to examine this phenomenon!

Dates: Thursdays, September 19th - November 14th, 2013
Time: After school: 3:00 - 4:15 p.m. (8 sessions)
Place: SFTA School Gym

Interested?
Email me at dday@educ.umass.edu

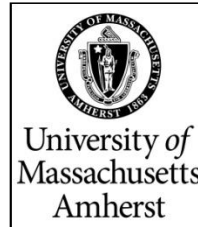
Bring Your Yoga Mat and Wear Comfortable Clothes



APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers



September 2013

Dear Participants,

My name is Danette Day, and I am a doctoral student at the University of Massachusetts Amherst in the Teacher Education and School Improvement Program. This letter is an invitation to participate in an educational research study. This fall as part of my dissertation, I will research teacher candidates and novice teachers who participate in an 8 week yoga program.

In the research, the following questions will be explored:

- To what extent do novice teachers' experiences and perceptions of yoga practice influence their lives as teachers?
- How does the practice of yoga influence experiences and perceptions novice teachers' have about their teaching practice?
- How does the practice of yoga influence the perceptions novice teachers have about their ability to be effective, known as their teaching efficacy?

To gather research data I will use:

- demographic questionnaires,
- self-efficacy scales,
- digitally recorded interviews,
- written field notes,
- journal entries,
- digitally recorded classroom observation.

The information I gather may be used in the following ways:

- my doctoral dissertation,
- journals articles,

- books,
- national conference presentations,
- multi-media presentations.

To protect your confidentiality I will use pseudonyms for the school, and for all participants. Also, I will be happy to share my published work with you, if you are interested. Participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to discontinue or refuse to participate at any time without penalty or prejudice. The risks from participating in this research are minimal. There will be no costs to you, other than the time you invest as a participant in the project. There is no direct benefit to you, other than an opportunity to learn about the practice of yoga. Also, I hope the research will benefit students and the culture of schools by encouraging teachers to establish new methods of inquiry that develop both ‘habits of mind’ and ‘habits of heart’.

You have been given two copies of this informed consent both must be signed if you are willing to participate. One copy should be retained for your records and the other will be retained for my records. Your signature below indicates that you:

- a. have read and understand the information provided,
- b. willing agree to participate,
- c. understand you may withdraw your consent at any time.

After my research is complete, I may save all materials to use in future research with your permission. However, the same confidentiality guarantees given here will apply to future storage and use of the materials. If you have any further questions about this study or your participation in it, please feel free to contact me:

Danette Day
dayd@educ.umass.edu
(978) 413-8447

You may also contact my Dissertation Committee Chair:

Dr. Linda Griffin, Associate Dean
lgriffin@educ.umass.edu
(413) 545-6985

If you have any questions about the informed consent process or your rights as a research subject, please contact the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, College of Education Office of Academic Affairs’ Associate Dean, Dr. Linda Griffin at [413-545-6985](tel:413-545-6985).

Sincerely,

Danette Day

Participant's Signed Consent:

1. I have read this consent form and agree to take part in the research.

_____ *Date* _____
Participant's Signature

2. I agree to participate in audio/videotaping of interviews.

_____ *Date* _____
Participant's Signature

3. I agree to allow information collected on me to be used in future studies.

- ☐ Yes, I agree to allow data collected about me to be used in future research studies.
☐ No, I do not wish to have data collected about me to be used in future research studies.

Investigator's Signed Confirmation:

I certify that the research study has been explained to the above individual to include the purpose of the study as well as the procedures, risks, and benefits associated with participation. Any questions have been addressed to the subject's satisfaction.

_____ *Date* _____
Researcher's Signature

APPENDIX G

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone # _____

Email address _____

1. Where do you teach? _____

2. What subject(s) do you teach? _____

3. How many years have you been teaching? _____

4. Please indicate your gender.

___ Female

___ Male

5. How old are you? _____

6. Have you taken yoga classes before?

___ Yes

If, yes, how long did you practice yoga? _____

___ No

7. What do you currently know about the practice of yoga?

8. What would you like to learn about yoga?

APPENDIX H

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT YOGA INSTRUCTION

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers

CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT

Yoga Instruction

Danette V. Day, a doctoral student seeks to conduct educational research and to employ a highly qualified yoga instructor to teach yoga classes based on the attached yoga sequence as provided. Both Danette V. Day (hereinafter called the Researcher) and the Yoga Instructor (hereinafter called the Instructor) are committed to maintain strong personal ethics and principles, and to follow the standards and guidelines developed by the Institutional Review Board throughout the research study.

The RESEACHER and INSTRUCTOR agree to the following conditions of employment.

1. The term of this agreement is September 2013 until November 2013.
2. The INSTRUCTOR agrees to serve the RESEACHER for 8 yoga classes and to attend meetings to prepare and to debrief. The INSTRUCTOR will provide all necessary yoga equipment, e.g. mats, straps, blocks etc. The INSTRUCTOR agrees to work cooperatively with the staff, faculty and administration at the research site.
3. The INSTRUCTOR may be discharged by the RESEARCHER only for good cause. It is specifically understood that good cause for discharge shall include but not be limited to: inadequacy of teaching, misconduct, neglect of duty, physical or mental incapacity, and violation of the terms of this agreement.
4. The RESEARCH employs the INSTRUCTOR as an employee at a rate of \$100.00 per class. Payment shall begin after the first yoga class, and continue until the end of the eighth yoga class.
5. It is agreed that the conditions of this contract shall only be changed by mutual written agreement of the RESEARCHER and the INSTRUCTOR. This is the sole agreement between the parties and no other representations, be they oral or written, are binding between the parties.

(Signature of INSTRUCTOR)

(Date)

(Signature of RESEARCHER)

(Date)

MA Law shall govern this agreement in its performance and interpretation.

APPENDIX I

YOGA INSTRUCTION SEQUENCE

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers

1. Sukhasana – Easy Pose
 1. Sit and know that you're seated
 2. Bring attention to the breath
 3. Scan the body (scalp to toes) release any holding and tension
 4. Notice the state of your mind
 5. Begin to wake up the body with shoulder shrugs and circles, head movements (tilt ear to shoulder, look side-to-side, front and back, circles and diagonal stretch)
2. Tadasana – Mountain Pose (Standing)
 1. Legs are straight
 2. Trunk is vertically extended
 3. Arms are parallel to the body with the palms by the side of the thighs
 - Four points of the foot, ground feet keeping head centered and lifted
 - Lift upper chest while drawing the skin of the shoulders toward the shoulder blades
3. Urdhva Hastasana - Upward Hand Pose (EXTEND)
 1. Legs are straight
 2. Torso is erect
 3. Arms are extended overhead palms facing forward
 - Four points of foot root into the earth and reach through your fingers
 - Squeeze your arms close to your ears
4. Uttanasana - Forward Fold (BEND) Modify with chair or wall.
 1. Legs are straight with weight evenly distributed on both feet spread shoulder width apart
 2. Torso bends forward, the pelvis rotates at the hip over the femur bones
 - Keep the hips and buttocks level
 - Keep the abdomen relaxed and toward the chest
5. Vrksasana – Tree Pose (BALANCE) Modify with chair or wall.
 1. One leg is straight the other is bent to the side with its foot resting on the inner thigh of the straight leg
 2. Torso is stretched upward
 3. Arms extend straight overhead with palms joined
 - Keep the big toe and inner edge of the foot grounded while stretching the arms and fingers vertically
 - Relax the shoulders and breathe. Find balance and joy in these poses.

6. Utkatasana –Powerful Pose

1. Legs are bent as if you were about to sit down
 2. Torso is stretched upward
 3. Arms are stretched forward and up toward the heavens
- Keep the heels down and stretch the armpits up
 - Fully extend the arms, bend the ankles, knees and hips. Breathe.

7. Virabhadrasana I –Warrior I - Modify by keeping hands on hips.

1. One leg is straight and extended medially the other leg is bent at an angle
2. Torso is erect
3. Arms are stretched up overhead with the hands and fingers reaching toward the heavens

8. Parsvakonasana –Extended Side Angle - Modify by keeping top arm on hip and use the wall. Also, modify with hand on hip and rest elbow on upper thigh. If you aren't using any modifications this pose is almost like Virabhadrasana 1. However, one arm and hand rests on the outside of the foot and the other arm stretches overhead alongside the ear, while you look under your arm pit.

9. Trikonasana - Extended Triangle Pose - Modify by placing hand any where on the leg except the knee and use the wall. Remember his pose is like Parsvakonasana. However, your leg is straighten, your hand is placed anywhere of the leg and your arms are perpendicular to the floor while you turn your head to look up at your thumb.

10. Savasana – Corpse Pose

Savasana is also known as Corpse Pose. Lie on your back in a supine posture with your face looking at the ceiling. Gently close your eyes. Extend your arms by your sides that your palms face up. Straighten your legs fully and relax them. Allow the floor the fully support the weight of your body.

Guided Meditation:

Bring attention to your breath. On an inhale watch the chest rise and on an exhale watch the chest fall. Notice the quality of your breath and whether or not the breath is short and shallow. Even out the breath by making the inhale as long as the exhale. Now take a few more breaths that are longer and deeper.

Notice the state of your mind. Invite the mind to be fully present in this moment. Try not to lean into the future, nor to fall back into the past. Imagine that your thoughts are like puffy white clouds in a bright blue sky. Moving gently by without a trace left behind. As your thoughts continue to move through your mind bring greater attention to your body.

Scan the body. Observe where you might be still holding any tension, or any tightness from muscle strain. Begin from the crown of you head and relax your scalp.

Move down to your forehead, temples and eyebrows and release any tension that might still exist there. Relax your nose, mouth, teeth, and tongue. Relax your jaw by dropping the tongue away from the roof of your mouth and slightly parting your teeth. Draw your gaze downward and in toward your heart. Allow your throat, shoulders, arms, hands, chest, abdomen, hips, tops of your thighs, knees caps, shins, and your feet to sink into the floor. Relax and trust that you are fully supported by the earth.

Start to transition. Wiggle your fingers and toes. Move your arms and legs. Gently bend your knees and roll onto your right side in a fetal position. Take a few breaths here. Now, use your right arm to push yourself up. Come to a seated position.

APPENDIX J

JOURNAL PROMPTS

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers
Session #1 – September 18, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. Briefly describe your past experience with the practice of yoga.

2. What are your perceptions of the practice of yoga?

Have you practiced yoga in the past? If the answer is yes, then answer question #3. If the answer is no, skip question #3 and answer question #4.

3. To what extent do you perceive the practice of yoga has influenced your professional?

4. To what extent do you perceive the practice of yoga might influence your professional?

Journal Prompts

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers Session #2 – October 2, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. To what extent did last week's yoga practice influence your teaching practice this week? Is there one example you can provide?

2. How did you physically feel when you practiced yoga today? Provide one example of a moment in today's yoga class when you remember how you physically felt and briefly describe it.

3. What was the quality of your thoughts when you practiced yoga today? Provide one example of a moment in today's yoga class in which you can remember what you were thinking and briefly describe it?

4. Describe how the physical sensations and your thoughts during today's yoga practice made you feel?

5. How might today's yoga practice influence tomorrow's teaching practice?

Journal Prompts

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers
Session #3 – October 10, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. Briefly describe how you physically feel.

2. Briefly describe the quality of your mind.

3. Is there anything you've learned in yoga practice that resonates with you and your life as a teacher? Please explain.

4. Is there anything you experienced today in yoga practice that you perceive can be applied to your teaching practice? Please explain.

Journal Prompts

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers
Session #4 – October 17, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. Briefly describe your teaching practice today.

2. Briefly describe your yoga practice today.

3. What similarities are there between your teaching and your yoga practices?

4. What are the differences between your teaching and your yoga practices?

5. Is there anything you experienced today in yoga practice that you can apply to your teaching practice? Or vice versa, is there anything you experienced today in your teaching practice that you can apply to your yoga practice? Please briefly explain.

Journal Prompts

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers
Session #5 – October 24, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. Think about the past four days of teaching. Describe one thought you've had about yoga while teaching.

2. Describe one way you have integrated or plan to integrate yoga into your teaching.

3. Have you practiced any of the yoga postures/asanas, breathing or meditation outside of your formal class?

4. What do you find to be the most beneficial aspect of your yoga practice?

5. Do you have any questions about your yoga practice, your teaching practice or how your yoga practice might influence your teaching practice?

Journal Prompts

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers
Session #6 – October 31, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. The practice of yoga is a systematic process of self observation, self inquiry and self reflection (Iyengar, 1979; Desikacher, 1995). Reflect on your yoga practice today and describe what you observed and learned about yourself.

2. Describe one way you plan to integrate what you learned today in yoga practice into tomorrow's teaching practice.

3. Before you integrate yoga into your teaching practice. What aspect of yoga practice do you think you will integrate and why?

4. What might prevent you from integrating yoga into your teaching practice?

Journal Prompts

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers
Session #7 – November 7, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. Describe one thing you learned or one thing that was reinforced today during yoga practice that you could use in your teaching practice?

2. How did you physically feel when you practiced yoga today? Provide one example of a moment in today's yoga class when you remember how you physically felt and briefly describe it.

3. What was the quality of your thoughts when you practiced yoga today? Provide one example of a moment in today's yoga class in which you can remember what you were thinking and briefly describe it?

4. Describe how the physical sensations and your thoughts during today's yoga practice made you feel?

5. How might today's yoga practice influence your ability to perform the tasks and responsibilities related to teaching also known as teaching efficacy? Please explain.

Journal Prompts

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers
Session #8 – November 14, 2013

Directions: Please respond to the following questions after today's information session. Responses can be word processed or recorded on a digital recording device. Send your response via email to dday@educ.umass.edu.

Name:

Date:

1. After eight weeks of yoga classes, briefly describe what you now know about yoga practice?

2. One known benefit of practicing yoga is an increase in mindfulness. Briefly describe what you think it means to be mindful.

3. What personal benefits have you experienced as a participant in this research study?

4. What professional benefits have you experienced as a participant in this research study?

5. Describe one thing you learned during the yoga research that you now use in your teaching practice? Why do you do this?

6. Have you shared any aspect of yoga practice with your students? If yes, have you seen any changes in your students? If no, do you plan to do so?

7. Do you intend to continue practicing yoga? Why or why not?

8. Do you think it would be beneficial to teach yoga to student teachers? Why or why not?

APPENDIX K

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers

In this research study in-depth interviews will be conducted to fully capture the lived experience of how teachers made meaning of the impact yoga has on their lives as teachers. Siedman (2006) explains that the method of in-depth interviewing involves using the words of the participants to illuminate their experience.

Qualitative research methods more specifically interviewing is a slow and labor-intensive process that yields large amounts of data. The process of in-depth interviewing affords the researcher natural triangulation and involves conducting three interview sessions (Siedman, 2006).

The first interview seeks to identify *“To what extent do the experiences and perceptions novice teachers have of the practice of yoga influence their professional lives?”* The second interview will explore *“To what extent has experiencing the practice of yoga influenced the teaching practice of novice teachers?”* Finally, the third interview will examine *“To what extent has the phenomenon, the practice of yoga, influenced the novice teacher's sense of teaching efficacy?”*

Introduction for 1st Interview:

Hello, my name is Danette and I am here with “Novice Teacher”. I want to thank you in advance for participating in this research project and for allowing me to interview you.

As you know, I am interested in understanding to what extent your experience and your perceptions of yoga practice have influenced your life as a teacher. Additionally, I'd like to examine how the practice of yoga influences the experiences and perceptions novice teachers' have about their teaching practice and their ability to be effective, known as their teaching efficacy.

If at any time during the interview you feel uncomfortable and you want to stop, please let me know and I will pause the tape. Are you ready? Let's begin.

Today's date is _____, and I am interviewing _____.

Questions for 1st Interview:

1. What does it mean to you to teach?
2. What inspired you to become a teacher?
3. What questions and concerns do you have about teaching?
4. What thoughts come to mind when you teach about your performance?
 - a. How do these thoughts make you feel?
5. Describe how you respond to these thoughts?
6. Describe how you physically feel when you teach? Give me an example of a teaching event in which you can remember how you were feeling?
 - a. Example of a good feeling
 - b. Example of a bad feeling
7. Before this program what was your experience with yoga?
8. What perceptions do you have about the practice of yoga and the influence yoga practice can have on its practitioners?
9. What thoughts come to mind when you practice yoga?
 - a. How do these thoughts make you feel?
10. Describe how you respond to these thoughts?
11. Describe how you physically feel when you practice yoga?
12. Give me an example of a moment in yoga class in which you can remember how you were feeling?

- a. Example of a good feeling
 - b. Example of a bad feeling
13. Have there been any benefits as a result of the practice of yoga? (What benefits do teachers perceive from their practice of yoga)
 14. To what extent has yoga practice influenced you as a teacher?
 15. How has the practice of yoga influenced your classroom teaching? Have you noticed changes in their patience, creativity, intuitiveness, energy, flexibility, ability to direct students, perceptiveness etc. (What influence do teachers perceive the practice of yoga can have on their teaching practice?)
 16. Is there anything you would like to share?

Questions for 2nd Interview (Review the footage of classroom observation together as part of interview)

1. Describe your current experience with yoga practice.
2. To what extent has the practice of yoga influenced your teaching practice?
3. Let's examine your teaching practice by viewing the videotape of your classroom.
4. Is there any time in this recording that you perceive the practice of yoga influenced your teaching?
5. Briefly describe your thoughts and actions during the times you perceive yoga influenced your teaching.
6. Is there anything you would like to share?

Questions for 3rd Interview (Review the pre and post efficacy scale results together as part of interview)

1. Given your overall experience with yoga practice to date, what influence do you perceive yoga has had on you as a teacher?
2. To what extent has yoga practice influenced your perception that you can be effective as a teacher?
3. Let's examine your pre and post efficacy scale. Can you share any perceptions about the changes in your efficacy scale and what these changes mean?
4. To what extent do you think yoga influenced these changes?
5. Can you provide specific examples of how yoga influenced these changes?
6. Is there anything you would like to share?

APPENDIX L

RESEARCH DATA INVENTORY

Cycle of Renewal: Yoga's Influence on the Professional Lives of Novice Teachers

ID:	Participant Name:	Journal Prompts:									Classroom Observation:	Interviews:			Self Efficacy Scale:	
		9/19	9/26	10/2	10/10	10/17	10/24	10/31	11/7	11/14		1st	2nd	3rd	Pre	Post
T1	Donahue, Theresa	X	X	X	X	X	A	X	A	X	10/2/13, 10:39 am	10/11/13, 3:24 pm	11/6/13, 2:45 pm	11/26/13, 3:15	9/19/13	11/14/13
T2	Haynes, Elisa	X	X	A	X	X	X	A	A	X	10/8/13, 10:05 am	10/8/13, 2:49 pm	11/6/13, 7:50 am	11/20/13, 7:35 am	9/19/13	11/14/13
T3	Nelson, Taylor	X	X	X	A	X	A	X	X	X	10/3/13, 11:16 am	10/11/13, 2:44 pm	10/30/13, 2:37 pm	11/26/13, 3:40 pm	9/26/13	11/14/13
T4	Powers, Bruce	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A	9/30/13, 11:32 am	10/4/13, 3:01 pm	11/1/13, 3:30 pm	12/1/13, 3:30 pm	9/19/13	12/1/13
T5	Tannebaum, Sandra	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10/8/13, 11:23 am	10/9/13, 7:55 am	11/5/13, 7:55 am	11/21/13, 7:45 am	9/26/13	11/14/13

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