

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

PHENOMENOLOGY AS A METHOD OF PSYCHOLOGICAL INQUIRY:
DEVELOPING FREEDOM FROM SUPPOSITIONS

BY

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DEVELOPING FREEDOM FROM SUPPOSITIONS**

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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Dedication

To my teachers...

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Where do I start....

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Abstract

Edmund Husserl developed phenomenology as a method to enrich a naturalistic-driven scientific inquiry by including the person of the researcher. Developing freedom from suppositions, or the practice of epoché, is a core concept in phenomenological research. This qualitative inquiry into the work of Husserl and Moustakas situates their notions of epoché in the Theravada tradition of mindfulness. Furthermore, this exploration includes a review of literature related to the clinician's presence with the client, parallel to the researcher's presence with a phenomenon. Author comes to the conclusion that an inner practice of cultivation of wisdom driven by an attitude of openness, curiosity and acceptance is an integral part of phenomenological method of psychological inquiry. The core of this practice can be summarized as *alteration of consciousness* and *psychological awareness of self*, supported by *intentionality, integrity, values, and intuition*; and evoking a sense of *relatedness, immediacy and depth, and feeling of joy*.

Keywords: Transcendental Phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, Clark Moustakas, Buddhism and Psychology, Mindfulness practice, Epoché, Clinician's presence, Carl Rogers.

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Phenomenology as a Method of Psychological Inquiry: Developing Freedom From Suppositions

Chapter I: Introduction

Developing a research proposal, I became fascinated with phenomenology as a method of inquiry, and my research interest has evolved around methodology – specifically, transcendental phenomenology developed by Edmund Husserl and adopted by Clark Moustakas for human science research. Edmund Husserl used the Greek word *epoché* to articulate the core of phenomenology – that is, engaging with a phenomenon on a different existential level, with the mind free of suppositions (Moustakas, 1994). Reading Moustakas (1994), I found a striking similarity between his interpretation of epoché and mindfulness practice. Following this analogy, I found close to a century-long history of noticing similarities between transcendental phenomenology and Buddhism, from a remark of Eugen Fink, Husserl’s collaborator (Hanna, 1995) to the First International Conference in 2016 on the topic¹.

Immerging into the discussion of similarities and differences between phenomenology and Buddhism, I arrived at the understanding that phenomenology is most often compared with the Theravada school (e.g., developing mindfulness) and with Zen (e.g., developing “beginner’s mind”). One of the examples of the complexity of the presented topic is that these two practices can be considered opposite in their nature. Development of *sati* (mindfulness) is fostered through *vipassana* (insight) meditation which is practiced within the Theravada school of Buddhism. The concept *shoshin* comes from Japan and is translated as “beginner’s mind” which is considered a core of Zen Buddhism practice (Suzuki, 2005).

¹ Buddhism and Phenomenology. *Institute of Philosophy, Russian Academy of Sciences & Tibetan Culture and Information Center in Moscow*, November 7-8, 2016

The discussion of *What Works in Therapy* (Hubble, Duncan, & Miller, 1999; Duncan, Miller, Wampold, & Hubble, 2010) led me to the discussion on Master Therapists (Crisp, 2014) and the legacy of Carl Rogers. David Brazier, who contributed to understanding the implication of mindfulness in psychology, argued that Rogers was an example of what developing mindfulness looks like in psychotherapy (Brazier, 2016).

Since mindfulness and therapeutic relationship are sometimes considered as techniques that can be implemented to boost therapeutic outcome, I looked for a deeper context that would include ethical and humanistic values – values underlying Roger’s legacy (Brazier, 2016). I found such context in the cultivation of wisdom (Walsh, 2015). Therefore, cultivation of wisdom became a main link between phenomenology as a method of inquiry and Buddhism. The link to Buddhism is significant as this framework offers both a descriptive practice (e.g., mindfulness meditation) and a philosophical view of human nature that relates to a transcendental aspect of phenomenology emphasized by Husserl. Furthermore, according to Hanna (1995), “Husserl correctly referred to Buddhism as a “means of seeing” which is quite the opposite of European observation. This was also a characteristic of his own phenomenology which was founded upon a radical method of seeing” (Hanna, 1995, p.369).

In this research study, I will explore the concept of epoché through the lens of cultivation of wisdom practice. Hence the practice of epoché will be described not in terms of mindfulness or Zen practice, but through a deeper understanding of what this practice entails (e.g., social-emotional aspects) based on the original work of Edmund Husserl and Clark Moustakas.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The goal of this literature review was first, to identify sources that review a connection between Buddhism and transcendental phenomenology developed by Edmund Husserl and

described by Clark Moustakas, especially the connection between meditation and epoché or developing mind free from suppositions; second, to review the current research discussing what works in therapy in relation to phenomenology as a method of inquiry; and third, to seek definitions of philosophical concepts used by Husserl, Moustakas, and Buddhist philosophy. As the result of this literature review, I developed a conceptual framework that helped me to organize my thoughts on the topic (Figure 1).

Husserl and Moustakas on Epoché

Husserl, Fink, and their epoch. Bruzina (2004) argued that Husserl's phenomenology should be considered in a historical context and especially in the light of his collaboration with Eugen Fink, one of his students and later his assistant. Fink first met Husserl in 1925 at Freiburg University.

Here, for example, Fink first heard discussion of the role of language in thought, of articulate consciousness explained as a pinnacle of self-aware wakefulness in the larger movement of one's mute, even brute living, of the intentionality of this whole life of consciousness, wakeful both in this full egoic sense as well as in those peripheral yet crucially important dimensions of one's being (Bruzina, 2004, p.6).

Bruzina (2004) described Fink as a "remarkably challenging cothinker" (p.9) when he became Husserl's assistant in 1928. Fink was an accomplished scholar with versatile interests in philosophy, history, germanistics, literature, political economy and journalism. Bruzina (2004) also argued that Fink took to heart the core teaching of phenomenology. Examining Fink's original notes of one of his first conversations with Husserl, Bruzina (2004) commented on the "striking" quality of this conversation – "the tone of selfless engagement with the issues in question" (p.7-8).

Epoché and meditation. In 1929 Husserl gave four lectures on Cartesian Meditations at the Sorbonne. These lectures were published in French translation two years later, titled *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*. In these lectures, Husserl (1982) described epoché as “being of the experienced world” (p.19), as an attitude, as a reduction of the natural human ego, and as the means to open up our “ego cogito” – the state of pure ego in its consciousness (p.21). However, Husserl used rather philosophical concepts to describe epoché itself and perhaps the external experience of being in a state of epoché without the affective qualities of this experience. In his lectures, he posed a question: “As one who is meditating in the Cartesian manner, what can I do with the transcendental ego philosophically?” (Husserl, 1982, p.27). “Being free from presuppositions” is perhaps the closest description to the internal experience of epoché, however, Husserl (1982) did not clarify how a researcher arrives at such a pure state of mind or what the meditation entails as he described transcendental experience: “Phenomenological epoché lays open (to me, the meditating philosopher) an infinite realm of being of a new kind, as the sphere of a new kind of experience: transcendental experience” (p.27). According to the translator, in the margins of his manuscript, Husserl also noted that “where there is a new experience, a new science must arise” (Husserl, 1982, p.27). Husserl (1982) referred to Cartesian meditations as a “famous and remarkable” method of doubt, however, he criticized Descartes for not being able to embrace the transcendental quality of his own method.

Moustakas (1994) further explained epoché as a way of looking and being. He also elaborated on the *practice* of epoché as “another dimension of the epoché process”, and explained that this practice

encourages an open perception is that of reflective-meditation, letting the preconceptions and prejudgments enter consciousness and leave freely, being just as receptive to them as I am to the unbiased looking and seeing. This meditative procedure is repeated until I experience an internal sense of closure. As I do, I label the prejudgments and write them out. I review the list until its hold on my consciousness is released, until I feel an internal readiness to enter freshly, encounter the situation, issue, or person directly, and receive whatever is offered and come to know it as such (Moustakas, 1994, p.89).

This description is significant because it connects different discussions I refer to later in my literature review. First, it provides a description of vipassana or insight meditation practice within Theravada school (not Zen) as the practitioners are instructed to *observe the mind* (in contrast, in Zen the practitioners are instructed to *clear the mind*). Second, Moustakas (1994) follows mindfulness practice with an investigation phase where he suggested writing out the prejudgments and reviewing them until their “hold on my consciousness is released” (p.89). Third, this investigation phase resembles a therapeutic process where the list of prejudgments can be compared to negative cognitions, and bringing them to awareness would facilitate therapeutic process which might lead to “internal sense of closure” (Moustakas, 1994, p.89). Fourth, this description opens another dimension, as this “release” of their hold on one’s consciousness can be considered as a transcendental experience. And finally, Moustakas (1994) sets out a way of being – “receive whatever is offered and come to know it as such” (p.89) which can also be linked to both Western and Buddhist philosophy.

“Selfless engagement with the issues in question”. Moustakas (1994) was aware that in 1982 John Sallis, a philosopher well known for his work in the tradition of phenomenology, compared a phenomenologist with a “perpetual beginner” (p.86). Such comparison

corresponded with the Zen teacher's Shunryu Suzuki (1970) book *Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind*. Even though Sallis (1982) did not have a reference to Buddhism, the comparison itself was in line with the definition of the "beginner's mind" (Suzuki, 1970, p.21), mind "open to everything" (p.21) with an attitude of studying at an advanced level just as a beginner in that subject would – the qualities that can be easily attributed to epoché.

Dorion Cairns, the English translator for *Cartesian Meditations*, made notes about the manuscript which echo Bruzina's (2004) comments about the discussions at Freiburg University on language and consciousness. Cairns noted that Husserl crossed out the word *unberührt* (German, translated as "untouched") when describing a meditative experience – "I, with my life, remain untouched in my existential status" (Husserl, 1982, p.25). This might be indicative of a couple of different things. First, the careful consideration Husserl gave to the use of language in his manuscripts; second, this was a work in progress even almost 20 years after the *Ideas* was published, which speaks to Bruzina's (2004) notion that transcendental phenomenology was refined in the discussions between Husserl and Fink from 1928 when Fink became Husserl's assistant until Husserl's death in 1938; and third, it perhaps demonstrates the difficulty to describe an experience that Husserl considered mystical (Hanna, 1995).

Phenomenology and Buddhism

According to Hanna (1995), it was Eugen Fink who first noted that the stages of Husserl's phenomenological method were essentially stages of Buddhist self-discipline. This by itself sparked my interest in finding out who Eugen Fink was and led to Bruzina's (2004) book about the fascinating collaboration between Husserl and Fink. Hanna (1995) examined parallels between the methods of transcendental phenomenology and Buddhism emphasizing that Husserl developed both the "philosophy and methodology to investigate consciousness and human

experience” (p.365) and that “virtually no one followed Husserl into the transcendental aspect of his philosophy” (p.366) – that is, transcendental reduction. Hanna (1995, p.366) noted that Husserl attributed mystical qualities to intuition, the core of such reduction, and spoke of the phenomenological reduction in “strikingly Asian” terms.

I came across this analysis of what Husserl knew and thought about Buddhism at the time when I was questioning the validity of my own observation about the striking similarities between phenomenology and Buddhism. Hanna (1995) saw significance in Fink’s remark in the fact that he was Husserl’s trusted collaborator who would have known that Husserl was trying to establish phenomenology as a “rigorous science” when he compared it with a “mystical Eastern discipline” (p.366). Bruzina (2004) did not specifically point to a connection between Buddhism and phenomenology, however, in 1925, before Husserl and Fink developed their collaborative relationship, Husserl wrote an introduction to some newly translated teachings of Buddha into German (Husserl, 1925). Hanna (1995) saw the significance of this text where Husserl acknowledged the transcendental quality of Buddhism – the quality that he found missing from Cartesian philosophy and often misunderstood in his own teaching. Hanna (1995) highlighted that the similarities between phenomenology and Buddhism were identified through the practice of a method – practice which requires self-discipline and self-responsibility.

Reflecting on the question “why did so few phenomenologists stop short of following Husserl into what was called his transcendental turn?”, Hanna (1995, p.371) argued that Husserl might have been exposed to experiences in his life that drew him closer to transcendental discoveries and that “there is more intensity and magnitude of experience intrinsic to the transcendental domain than previously suspected”. Hanna (1995) concluded that “a Buddhist context may be a way of solving the mystery of the transcendental reduction” (p.366).

Meditation as “the means” for investigation. Recently, there was a shift from seeing meditation (e.g., “transcendental meditation”) as a technique to elicit a “relaxation response” to combat stress (Benson, 1974, p.49) to distinguishing different types of meditation and exploring the essence of mindfulness (Dreyfus, 2011; Hanley, Abell, Osborn, Roehrig, & Canto, 2016) in the context of ethics and further investigation (Brazier, 2013). There is a growing body of literature comparing concepts and methods of Eastern Buddhism and Western psychotherapy (Holt & Austad, 2013) and the need to “distinguish between operational definitions intended for practical instructions and adequate theoretical descriptions” (Dreyfus, 2011, p.52).

International conference on Buddhism and Phenomenology. During this literature review I located and retrieved materials from the International Conference on Buddhism and Phenomenology, facilitating a conversation among phenomenologists, Buddhologists, and Buddhist scholars. One of the questions discussed at the conference was “Can Buddhism have any heuristic value for the development of phenomenology (Buddhist questions, problems, ideas relevant to phenomenological analysis)?”. The conference also featured a Round Table on the topic of *Buddhists Contemplative Practice and Phenomenological Epoché*.

Buddhist scholar and principal English translator to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Geshe Thupten Jinpa (2016) emphasized subjectivity, intentionality, and reflexivity as core features of consciousness in Buddhist thought. He pointed out that “there is something irreducible about the first-person dimension, what some philosophers characterize as ... “what it feels like” about our experience of mental states” (Jinpa, 2016, p.9). This helped me to articulate my interest in the subjective experience of Husserl and Moustakas practicing epoché. Jinpa (2016, p.17) argued that consciousness was “inherently reflexive”, and that “this reflexive self-awareness was an essential feature of our mental states” in a “non-dual (intransitive) manner.” Furthermore,

it's this reflexive feature of consciousness that allows us to have a sense of coherence and unity in our cognitive experience, as well as provide the basis for our sense of being the subject of our experiences of the world (Jinpa, 2016, p.17).

Zahavi (2016) focused on transcendental phenomenology, intentionality and subjectivity from a phenomenological perspective. He emphasized that even though Husserl explored the intentionality of consciousness as early as 1900-1901 in his *Logical Investigations*, "the question of how to define phenomenology remains contested even today" (Zahavi, 2016, p.3). He questioned if a technique that broadens our field of attention in such a way as to allow us to discover hitherto unreflected and unnoticed aspects and details of lived experience will make us better phenomenologists. He emphasized that, for Husserl, "the transcendental dimension of consciousness is something that realists and naturalists alike have failed to recognize" and that "phenomenology has to be appreciated as a form of transcendental philosophy and not as a kind of ... descriptive psychology" (Zahavi, 2016, p.9).

Gokhale (2016) offered a position of understanding Buddhism in phenomenological terms. He explained that concentration meditation (*Samathabhavana*) co-exists with insight meditation (*Vipassanabhavana*). *Vipassana* means insight into the true nature of things and therefore can be considered as the goal of meditation, not as a practice itself. He explained mindfulness meditation as a triangulation of understanding from teachers at the level of scriptural wisdom, rational examination, and meditation so that one can understand phenomena directly at the level of meditational wisdom. He emphasized that mindfulness is not a reflection or contemplation practice.

Specifically, there are four kinds of mindfulness in Buddhism: mindfulness of bodily objects, mindfulness of sensations, mindfulness of mind, and mindfulness of doctrinal factors.

Although there are different models of explaining the duality of mindfulness of mind, according to Gokhale (2016) most Buddhists accept the self-illumination model which is similar to Husserl's position "that in the case of consciousness of an external object the actual object is transcendent whereas in the consciousness of a mental state, the actual mental state is necessarily immanent" (p.19). Immanent is considered in this case as taking place within the mind and having no effect outside of it. However, he pointed out that the "succeeding awareness" model better explains emotions when we are practicing mindfulness of mind. For example, "if anger arises in my mind, immediately, which means at the very next moment, I should be aware that an angry mind has arisen" (Gokhale, 2016, p.20).

Gokhale (2016) differentiated three core features of mindfulness meditation: objectivity, realization of impermanence and other common characteristics, and dynamic, yet passive awareness. He argued that "the value neutral descriptive approach which is a core feature of a mindfulness meditation, is closely comparable with phenomenological approach of Husserlian phenomenology" (Gokhale, 2016, p.42), however, that there are both similarities and important differences between phenomenological and sati-meditational approach. The similarities include: intentionality of object-oriented consciousness, a concern with what is given to the consciousness; and the understanding of the nature of consciousness as judgmental or propositional and expressed in language which can demystify the experience. The existence of what is beyond consciousness is bracketed in both; sati-meditation is a part of Theravada Buddhism which is realistic in its world view; the world nature is challenged in both; and both are concerned with what is given to consciousness as immanent (not as transcendent). What is transcendent to consciousness is not denied but set aside or put into a bracket. Bracketing is distinguished from denying or doubting (Gokhale, 2016). Both can be considered as scientific

approaches to directly access reality. According to Gokhale (2016), Goenka, the founder of Vipassana International Academy, described the Buddha as a scientist, not as a religious leader nor a speculative philosopher. Furthermore, freedom from presuppositions is a core feature of both, Buddhism and phenomenology.

However, Gokhale (2016) also pointed out some fundamental differences in goals and the role of the essences, including, but not limited, to the following. First, the Buddhist goal is not essentially intellectual and the concept of transcendental ego is rejected. Second, the goal of phenomenological inquiry is the development of a rigorous science where the goal of sati-meditation is emancipation. Third, though anything that appears in consciousness can be called a phenomenon, in phenomenology the phenomena are the essences, however, the essences for the sati meditator are only tools of understanding the empirical and physical reality. Gokhale (2016) also questioned whether a phenomenologist can be truly free from presuppositions during the investigation as existence of essences, transcendental ego and intentionality of consciousness can be regarded as presuppositions.

Discussion on What Works in Therapy

In 1999, the American Psychological Association published a first edition of *The Heart and Soul of Change: What Works in Therapy* (Hubble et al., 1999). This publication summarized research findings on efficacy of therapy demonstrating that the method and techniques alone were not as effective as previously thought and comparable to a placebo. In contrast, common factors, which included therapeutic relationship, accounted for as much as 30% of the therapeutic outcome (Asay & Lambert, 1999). After a decade of discussions and research, in the second edition of the same publication (Duncan et al., 2010) scholars concluded that the “therapist is the

most robust predictor of outcome of any factor ever studied” (Hubble, Duncan, Miller, & Wampold, 2010, p.38). This finding sparked more conversation about Master Therapists.

Master therapists. A search of the Athabasca University (AU) library databases using the term “master therapists” led me to Carl Rogers and the discussion that a person-centered approach overlaps with complex and paradoxical characteristics of Master Therapists (Crisp, 2014). Among the similarities were *drive for mastery and a sense of not having fully arrived*, marked by constant reflection upon personal and professional experiences and modifying ways of being; *being able to deeply enter another’s world* which entails “intimacy, a profound sense of sharing, and requires knowledge and competence in understanding clients in their cultural contexts” (Crisp, 2014, p.56); and, on the other hand, *being comfortable with own solitude*. Crisp (2014) noted that, as a mature therapist, Rogers referred to ‘presence’ which he described as a state of “being absorbed, immersed, completely engaged with the client in a relational-experiential process” (p.56). Two other similarities include “the integration of professional and personal selves... and being open to receiving and learning from feedback” (Crisp, 2014, p.62). However, Crisp (2014) argued that Master Therapists “acted according to their assessment of the client’s readiness to be confronted by a painful and difficult experience and/or to implement change” (p.58), while person-centered therapy assumes a non-directive approach. Even though Crisp (2014) stayed within the person-centered approach, his work can be considered in a larger context of the discussion of what works in psychotherapy.

Back to basics: Carl Rogers. My first two searches of AU databases related to counselling did not include search terms such as “client-centered” or “person-centered”. In these initial searches I used “clinician’s presence” and “understanding in counselling” as search terms. Interestingly, this once again led me to Carl Rogers and a discussion about his legacy. This

discussion included a comparison of person-centered approach and Buddhism (Brazier, 2016; Hayes, 2016), which highlighted a remark made by Carl Rogers to Eugene Gendlin: “I didn’t want to find a client-centered way. I wanted to find a way to help people” (Gendlin, 2002, p.7).

Therapy. Biles (2016) examined the current state of person-centered therapy and the lack of connection to the original teachings of Carl Rogers. He developed a discussion along the following points: 1. The Rogerian approach is treated as dogma and not as a hypothesis to test; 2. There is a confusion with being vs. doing dichotomy; 3. The Rogerian approach has lost touch with mystery; 4. Therapists are trying to do at the beginning what comes at the end; 5. The Rogerian approach has lost touch with radical nature of Rogers’ ideas. Biles (2016) also saw a branding of the person-centered approach to therapy as problematic.

This deeply resonated with me as someone who completed a certification program based on person-centered approach struggling to grasp the empathic response. I finished the program with a sigh of relief. I did not think that 10 years later I would be eager to learn about Carl Rogers and his legacy, looking for new publications that would unveil mysterious qualities of his method. During this literature review I learned that not only was Carl Rogers an accomplished therapist, he was also an avid researcher, advocating for rigorous investigation and constantly looking for the ways for improvement.

Research. Bell (2014) discussed a tension within interpretive approaches, a tension Carl Rogers described in his work as a tension between the first and the second protagonist, one being a scientist striving for rigorous objectivity and the other being a therapist deeply aware of own subjectivity. This tension propelled Rogers into a year-long discussion with students, colleagues, and friends. Through this discussion, he came to realize the subjective nature of science that “exists only in people” (Rogers, 1955, p.274). Bell (2014) used this example of dialectics in the

context of thesis – antithesis – synthesis to draw attention to dialogical framework and its application within interpretive approaches to negotiate what she calls “with the person” and “about the person” tension. However, she also argued that only dialogically-*relationally* based approaches that promote dialogue in its true ‘Rogerian’ spirit lead to further development of our knowledge. Even though Bell (2014) acknowledged that Rogers did not develop his relational dialogism in the context of interpretive inquiry, she advocated that by following Rogers’ example, researchers can do an ethical narrative inquiry which would be both explanatory and respectful of the narrator’s story. While interpretive research is not the focus of this literature review, this article prompted me to reconsider the work of Husserl within historical context of his collaboration with Fink.

Legacy. The year 2017 marked 30 years since Carl Rogers’s death. Perhaps this has contributed to a spike in publications about his legacy. Perhaps there is a need to re-evaluate the path of modern psychology in the areas of therapeutic practice and research and to re-connect with its beginnings. David Brazier, whose earlier publications included a critical discussion about using mindfulness as a technique, recently published his reflections on Carl Rogers’s legacy (Brazier, 2013, 2016). Coming from a Buddhist psychology perspective, Brazier (2016) emphasized that mindfulness is a “primary dimension of enlightened wisdom” (p.215). Hence, in Buddhism, mindfulness does not stand alone and is indeed considered as the first out of Seven Factors of Enlightenment², followed by the investigation.

² Mindfulness (sati), keen investigation of the dhamma (dhammavicaya), energy (viriya), rapture or joy (pīti), calmness (passaddhi), concentration (samādhi), equanimity (upekkhā).

Merriam Webster's Dictionary (1995, p.740) defined mindful as "bearing in mind".

Brazier (2016) compared this original meaning in English to the meaning of sati (Pali) and smirti (Sanskrit) – to remember, and argued that

mindfulness is none other than the fact of one's mind being full of something, and the basic notion is that if one's mind is full of rubbish and corruption then there will be a corresponding result in one's manifestation in action in the world. This basic, easily understood notion is readily recognizable as central to the Buddha's teaching throughout his dispensation (Brazier, 2016, p.216).

In contrast, benefits of "utilitarian mindfulness" as a focused attention technique fall in line with "many other wholesome activities" (Brazier, 2016, p.216), such as going for a walk, eating healthy, or volunteering.

Brazier (2016) has drawn a parallel between "utilitarian mindfulness" and "utilitarian empathy" extracted from Rogers' work as a distinct style of therapist's response and argued that similar to "utilitarian mindfulness", "utilitarian empathy... is not necessarily grounded in the deeper wisdom and faith that motivated him" (p.216). For Rogers, empathy was only one of the prime subjects of his interest. However, even though Rogers did not use word "mindfulness", his life as therapist and investigator, according to Brazier (2016), embodied mindfulness in its pure state.

So, why compare Carl Rogers's work to Buddhist teachings? Brazier (2016) once again pointed out a dynamic nature of Buddhism which makes it a method for investigation rather than a doctrine to follow.

This reverence for deep quality was something shared by both these men [Buddha and Rogers], something they hoped to promote, foster, and cultivate in those around them and

that they each tried to present in ways tailored to the exigencies of the social climate in which they lived and worked (Brazier, 2016, p.219).

Describing what he found meaningful, Rogers used such words as “empathy”, “unconditional, positive regard”, and “congruence”. However, Brazier (2016) argued that he might have avoided such words as “faith”, “love”, and “sincerity” and have chosen “ethically neutral” terms to establish his theory. On the other hand, Brazier (2016) argued that these qualities (e.g., faith in people’s ability of self-actualization, love and sincerity) were “deeply internalized” by both Rogers and Buddha. Interestingly, Brazier (2016) also made the following remark about Carl Rogers:

We who were part of his circle did all believe that he had been touched in some significant way by Eastern thinking, since, after all, he did make a dramatic switch of career from theology to psychology after his undergraduate trip to China (Brazier, 2016, p.214).

Examining Carl Rogers’ (1957) six core conditions of therapeutic change in light of Buddhist philosophy and practice, Hayes (2016) defined congruence as the absence of “discrepancy between the actual experience and the self-picture of the individual” (p.253). She argued that Buddhist meditation practice (with the example of Zen practice) can foster congruent qualities in a therapist such a genuineness and authenticity. Furthermore, “Buddhist philosophy and practice of the Four Noble Truths, mindfulness, and compassion can enable a therapist to be empathic and have unconditional positive regard and enable therapeutic change within the client” (Hayes, 2016, p.253). This echoes Brazier’s (2016) ideas that both Rogers and Buddha basically came to the same path of liberation. What remains unclear is what kind of personal practice helped Rogers to anchor his interest in human nature.

“Magick”. At our weekly group supervision hour during my practicum in a clinical setting of the Child and Youth Mental Health, we often discussed *evidence-based practice* and *therapeutic presence* and were encouraged to use Session Rating Scale (Duncan et al., 2003) and Outcome Rating Scale (Miller, Duncan, Brown, Sparks, & Claud, 2003). After my practicum, my supervisor forwarded a newly published article *How Psychotherapy Lost Its Magick: The Art of Healing in an Age of Science* (Miller & Hubble, 2017). These authors edited both editions of *The Heart and Soul of Change*, which prompted me to deeply reflect on my practicum experience.

In the time following these publications the words *mystical* or *mystery* seemed to appear more frequently in scientific literature (Biles, 2016; Brazier, 2016). Perhaps this could be attributed to my new level of awareness with the subject. According to Merriam Webster’s Dictionary (1995, p. X), mystical can be defined as “having a spiritual meaning or reality that is neither apparent to the senses nor obvious to the intelligence”.

Cultivation of Wisdom

Discussions about the essence of mindfulness as a “primary dimension of enlightened wisdom” (Brazier, 2016, p.215) and the underlying morality led me to consider a broader context of cultivating wisdom and what this practice entails. In his integrative, cross-cultural, and cross-disciplinary analyses, Roger Walsh (2015) examined the concept of wisdom in relationship to Western and non-Western psychological and philosophical disciplines. In this context, the concept of wisdom embraces practical wisdom (e.g., responding to life’s issues) and epistemic wisdom (e.g., knowledge concerning life issues). Epistemic wisdom can be further subdivided into intuitive, conceptual (e.g., philosopher-sage), and transconceptual categories. According to Walsh (2015), the transconceptual wisdom is rooted in contemplative disciplines and non-

Western philosophies and offers insight into reality and identity. Walsh (2015) argued that the transconceptual wisdom is the least familiar to Western psychologists.

Based on the work of Edmund Husserl and Clark Moustakas, a phenomenological method of inquiry assumes deep and accurate insight into the researcher's self. This resonates with Walsh's (2015) notion that "self-knowledge – especially direct, experiential self-knowledge – is essential for wisdom" (p.284). Furthermore, Husserl's nihilation of personal ego to fully connect with "ego cogito" (Husserl, 1982, p.18) resonates with "recognition of and identification with a deeper transpersonal Self, a Self which is intimately linked to the Whole, and which can be known but is difficult to describe in words" (Walsh, 2015, p.284). According to Walsh (2015), this "recognition of and identification with a deeper transpersonal Self" (p.284) is found primarily in contemplative disciplines and therefore rooted in contemplative practice. Walsh (2015) concluded that

as we seek to better understand and define wisdom, it will be important to acknowledge that there may be developmentally deeper insights and understandings awaiting our discovery. The crucial implication – one explicitly suggested by multiple contemplative traditions – is that to fully grasp the profundity and meaning of wisdom, we need to cultivate it ourselves (p.290).

Research Questions

Linking transcendental phenomenology with transconceptual wisdom, I explored the question that guided my investigation – can we develop freedom from suppositions without engaging in a structured practice? This fueled my curiosity about the practice underlying the phenomenological method of inquiry helping to formulate the following research questions:

- What are the affective (i.e., social-emotional) qualities of this practice?

- What does this practice entail according to the original work of Edmund Husserl and Clark Moustakas?
- How might transcendental phenomenology be understood in the context of the practice of cultivation wisdom, practice similar to insight meditation in Theravada school of Buddhism?

Chapter III: Theoretical Framework

Conceptual Framework

Through the literature review and personal reflections, I connected to the legacy of Edmund Husserl, Clark Moustakas, and Carl Rogers, and gained a new appreciation for a phenomenological way of being. Furthermore, the recent discussions in the field of psychology on what works in therapy, which included both quantitative and qualitative studies, highlighted the way of being and the clinician's presence as essential to therapy.

Since 2005, I have been practicing mindfulness based on the teachings of the Buddha, participating in more than 50 non-residential and residential vipassana meditation retreats with the Westcoast Dharma Society teachers. Accordingly, I found great value in gaining insight through guided meditation practice and listening to the Dharma teachings. My literature review helped me to organize my understanding and knowledge of Buddhism and tune into its philosophical aspects, exploring similarities and differences with Western philosophical thought. I also realized that opening to a new context (e.g., Buddhism) to examine something as long-existing as phenomenology or person-centered approach brings to attention the aspects of the approach that might have been overlooked and could help to understand the qualities of a researcher or therapist being in that felt-sense of the experience.

Buddhism as a world view became a framework which informed my research questions as I saw a gap between elaborated philosophical grounds of the transcendental phenomenology developed by Edmund Husserl and the description of a phenomenological inquiry in human science research in the work of Clark Moustakas. As a decade long meditator, I felt like reading between the lines connecting to the transcendental nature of phenomenology. However, as a researcher, I felt a need for a structured and a methodical study of the original texts of Husserl and Moustakas to answer the question how both Husserl and Moustakas practiced freedom from suppositions that, according to my understanding of Buddhism, could be developed through a specific meditation practice and could not be assumed. Bracketing, according to Gokhale (2016), is not unique to phenomenology, and it seems that an affective description of practicing epoché would close this gap. It is interesting to note that the understanding of mindfulness, which could be regarded equivalent to epoché, has changed considerably in the last decade. The discussion on the legacy of Carl Rogers both enriched and informed my conceptual understanding of this topic as for years I regarded the person-centered approach as one of the many approaches to counselling. What strikes me as remarkable in both phenomenological inquiry and person-centered approach is striving for personal development of the researcher and the therapist. Cultivation of wisdom became a quality linking these two together.

Moustakas (1994) identified seven common qualities that can be attributed to scholars in human science research. These scholars recognize the value of such research, focus on the wholeness of experience, search for meanings and essences, obtain descriptions of experiences through first-person accounts, rely on the data of experience as a source for scientific investigation, are passionate about their research topic, and they view experience in a relational

context. These characteristics guided the initial stages of my investigation and helped to conceptualize my findings presented in Figure 1.

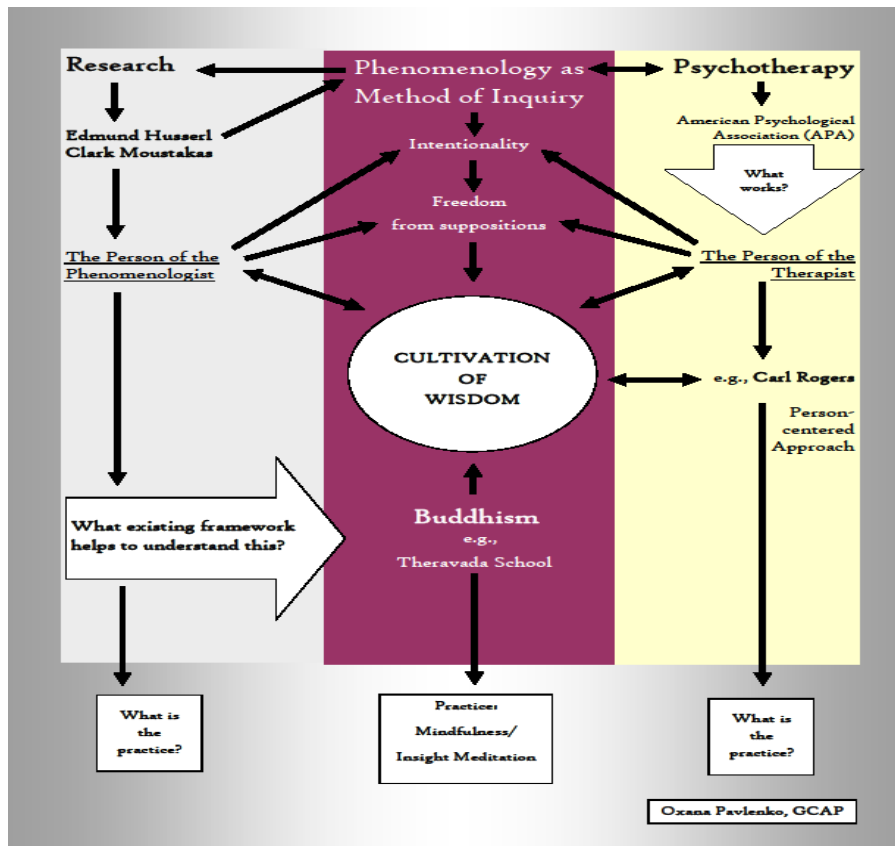


Figure 1, Conceptual Framework

Research Method

To identify some fundamental concepts, I needed a method of investigation that would allow me to integrate new information and develop a theory that I could test in my research. Analytic induction (Znaniecki, 1934) is such method, offering a systematic way to review existing literature in the development of a conceptual framework. Znaniecki (1934) described the method of analytic induction in the context of critique of enumerative induction – a method prevalent in research at that time. He explained that, in contrast to enumerative induction, analytic induction “abstracts from the given concrete case characters that are essential to it and generalizes them, presuming that in so far as essential, they must be similar in many cases”

(Znaniecki, 1934, p.251). He highlighted that “the ultimate significance of abstraction and generalization is that they lead to classification, that is, to a systematic knowledge of a certain field of reality as a whole” (Znaniecki, 1934, p.253). Hence, “no definition of the class precedes in analytic induction the selection of data to be studied as representatives of this class” (Znaniecki, 1934, p.249). Furthermore, Znaniecki (1934) described four steps of analytic induction:

- Consider fundamental qualities of the presented for investigation material;
- Abstract these qualities assuming that “the more essential are more general than the less essential, and must be found in a greater variety of classes” (Znaniecki, 1934, p.259-260);
- Following this assumption, examine these qualities in different contexts;
- Develop a theory which integrates generalizable as well as non-generalizable qualities.

While learning about this method of investigation, I developed the chart in Figure 1. Based on my literature review, I assumed the use of self in psychotherapy (Brown, 2012) and phenomenology (e.g., epoché) as more essential than techniques. I also assumed cultivation of wisdom (Walsh, 2015) as more essential than use of self within these systems. This conclusion was facilitated by the discussion on Carl Rogers’ legacy (Biles, 2016; Brazier, 2016; Crisp, 2014) and allowed me to establish a classification based on the interconnectedness of the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, of the Theravada school of Buddhism, and of psychotherapy.

However, another fundamental element in Buddhism is the meditation practice. So, if we assume that a phenomenological inquiry and therapy are in the same “class” as Buddhism (e.g., the Theravada school) as the method of investigation, then the *practice* of cultivating wisdom might be generalizable to phenomenology and psychotherapy. I would like to explore this

assumption through readings of the original texts of Edmund Husserl, Clark Moustakas, Carl Rogers, and selected Buddhist texts using the method of analytic induction.

The method of analytic induction was developed as an innovative method of scientific inquiry at the same time when Husserl was defining his phenomenology. Ironically, Znaniecki (1934) was critical of Husserl's logical reasoning (p.237) and thought that Husserl's school had "not utilized the results of the new developments in symbolic logic" (p. 319). However, Znaniecki (1934) also highlighted the need for a continuing critical methodological reflection on the method of analytic induction to ensure a steady improvement of its "exactness and reliability" (p.238).

Research Paradigm

Creswell (2013) emphasized that every researcher has certain philosophical assumptions that influence research and that being aware of these assumptions can help to evaluate the research process and the obtained results. Analysis of texts falls within *methodological* assumptions of social constructivism – the research paradigm I employ in this investigation. Within the *epistemological assumption* of this paradigm, knowledge is shaped in interaction. My special interest lies in examining the context in which phenomenology was developed, including Husserl's collaboration with Eugene Fink, and the feedback I receive through this research project. Within its *ontological assumptions*, I acknowledge multiple realities. Within its *axiological assumptions*, I acknowledge the influence of values and previous knowledge on data collection. I recognize that my life experiences of living in different countries and speaking different languages including German; immigration to Canada; my background in philosophy, including a degree from Moscow State University; and mindfulness I have been practicing since 2005, shape my interpretation of readings.

Study Description

As outlined in my research proposal, I made an eight-week commitment to read the four texts determined through a discussion with my supervisor – *Manual of Insight* (Sayadaw, 2016), *Ideas* (Husserl, 2012), *Loneliness* (Moustakas, 1961), and *A Way of Being* (Rogers, 1980) and was able to complete my readings within this timeline. The goal was to immerse myself into the readings, asking the outlined research questions, and, using the method of Analytic Induction, develop an understanding of phenomenology on a practical level. As I read the books, my focus was a description of the practice – the internal process of the investigator’s engagement in a phenomenological inquiry.

At the beginning of this project I attended a weekend-long non-residential vipassana retreat *Archeology of the Heart* with Steve Armstrong, who served as the Managing Editor at the Vipassana Metta Foundation Translation Committee which translated the *Manual of Insight* into English. See Appendix A for details regarding this retreat. In consultation with Steve Armstrong, I established a daily meditation practice for the duration of the project. My practice consisted of 20 – 30 minute sittings and listening to guided meditation recordings generously offered by Steven Armstrong through www.dharmaseed.org. I kept a journal where I recorded the times and pages of my readings, the times of sittings, and some reflections during this project.

My assumption was that even though phenomenology was originally thought out as philosophy that Edmund Husserl developed, Clark Moustakas understood his theory based on practices similar to mindfulness practice in Buddhism (e.g., insight meditation in the Theravada tradition) by following a path of cultivating wisdom. Following this assumption, I posed my research questions to four selected texts, searching for exceptions, revising my findings with

each exception, and drawing a conclusion at the end of my investigation. During this study I identified affective aspects (i.e., social-emotional experience) of qualitative phenomenological investigation for researchers and therapists who employ transcendental phenomenology as a method of inquiry.

Chapter IV: Research Results

Manual of Insight

As the title suggests, *Manual of Insight* provides a detailed map of insight meditation practice. I used this text primarily to deepen my understanding of Buddhist inquiry into mind, to develop a glossary of terms related to my investigation (Appendix B), and to establish my own regular non-retreat-based practice.

Mahasi Sayadaw (2016) discussed in detail different stages of insight knowledge which reflect one's insight meditation practice, possible hindrances to practice (e.g., defilements that arise out of ignorance), and the goal of insight meditation practice – reaching nibbana³. The progression through the stages of insight knowledge, facilitated by insight meditation practice, leads to purification of knowledge and vision which in turn, leads to purification of view (e.g., defilements become clearer). Purification of view leads through further practice to the purification of wisdom. Therefore, nibbana can be understood as the highest state of wisdom. This state is characterized by understanding of mind, freedom from defilements, and the ability to grasp human conditioning seeing beyond conditioned response. Therefore, nibbana is also referred to as *liberation*. Sayadaw (2016) argued that “if noting continues uninterruptedly, delusion will not have an opportunity to arise” (p.526). There are two essences that added to my framework presented in Figure 1 – attitude and integrity, the essences that I found relevant across

all three systems (i.e., Research, Buddhism, and Psychotherapy). I envision these two essences as watermarks on chart in Figure 1.

Attitude. Sayadaw (2016) noted that “the Buddha teaches us to be mindful of the senses by experiencing them, not by avoiding them” (p.163). Therefore, attitude plays an important role in how we approach a new experience. If we approach it with an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance, we can investigate its qualities, however, when we try to choose the experiences we want, we fall back into ignorance. Liberation is from a perception of the experience as being *personal* and the expectation that every experience must be perfect, just the way we want it to be. Alternatively, liberation is from the view that everything in the universe is permanent (Sayadaw, 2016).

Integrity. Sayadaw (2016) emphasized morality as “indispensable for realizing the path, fruition, and nibbana” (p.74). However, he argued that developing high morality is not enough to reach liberation and that insight is not accessible through learning and logical thought (Sayadaw, 2016). Moral conduct, concentration, and understanding are developed “hand in hand with the practice of insight meditation. Finally, this leads to moral conduct, concentration, and wisdom associated with path knowledge” (Sayadaw, 2016, p.155). Therefore, being on the path to liberation perpetuates morality, concentration and insight.

How did the *Manual of Insight* help me to understand Husserl’s *Ideas*? Reading *Manual of Insight* and engaging in a daily meditation practice created a context for understanding Husserl’s *Ideas*. It is also created context for understanding my own mind. I realized that *contemplation* was as important as the *practice* itself, however, the two were not merged together (as at one point I started to wonder if Husserl (2012) was talking about

³ Also known as nirvana

contemplation practice) and rather co-existed and completed each other. Figure 1 reflects my understanding of readings and represents the aspects of phenomenological insight identified by both Sayadaw (2016) and Husserl (2012). Contemplation is defined by Merriam Webster's Dictionary (1995, p.249-250) as "an act of considering with attention"⁴ and characterized by mental activity, and, based on my readings, practice is characterized by creating (inward) spaciousness and quietness so that one can observe one's personal own body and mind. Therefore, from now on I am going to refer to this practice as *inner practice*.

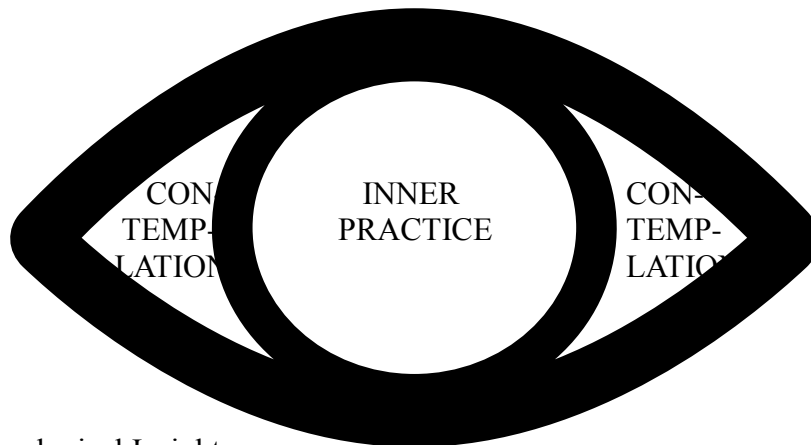


Figure 2, Phenomenological Insight

Ideas

Husserl was 54-years-old when the first edition of *Ideas* was published in 1913. What stands out is that he was still developing his ideas about phenomenology, emphasizing that it was a "science *in its beginnings*" (p.203). What makes *Ideas* readable is a conversational tone as if Husserl was lecturing on the topic with an attempt to engage the reader in the discussion. Furthermore, responding to the critique of his earlier work helped Husserl crystallize some of his

⁴ This is one of the definitions that I adopted as the most neutral.

ideas including fluidity of experience, alteration of consciousness, and psychological awareness of self.

Fluidity of experience. At times, it was difficult to follow the text. While reading through pages 72-76, I had a visual image of being in a fast-moving river, being in its stream. And the next moment – being on the river bank, watching the river flowing by, then, making my way back into the river again and feeling moving with the stream. A few pages later, I came across of this passage:

Even an experience is not, and never is, perceived in its completeness, it cannot be grasped adequately in its full unity, it is essentially something that flows, and starting from the present moment we can swim after it, our gaze reflectively turned towards it, whilst the stretches we leave in our wake are lost to our perception. Only in the form of retention or in the form of retrospective remembrance have we any consciousness of what has immediately flowed past us. And in the last resort the whole stream of my experience is a unity of experience, of which it is in principle impossible “swimming with it” to obtain a complete perceptual grasp (Husserl, 2012, p. 84).

Husserl (2012) highlighted fluidity of experience, the flow that we become a part of through the phenomenological inquiry, alternating between zooming in and attuning to ourselves. Through my vivid image and this passage, I gained a new understanding of contemplation and practice dichotomy. This understanding led me to the visual image of phenomenological insight (Figure 1) as I was able to experience it, and to a reflection on my attitude, as my first impulse was to label this experience as day dreaming and get back to the reading (i.e., to disconnect). I recognized an attitude of curiosity for a true meaning of Husserl’s ideas on phenomenology,

openness to a new way of processing the information (e.g., through imagery⁵) and acceptance of my own experience. So, to grasp the fluidity of experience, I needed a deeper connection with myself – the connection that I have developed through insight meditation practice.

Alteration of consciousness. According to Husserl himself, he proposed, not a new technique or a method of inquiry, he proposed a “new science – the science of phenomenology” (Husserl, 2012, p. 63). In the preface to the first English edition published in 1931, Husserl also called phenomenology a science of “transcendental subjectivity”. This subjectivity is presented in Husserl’s *Ideas* as alteration of consciousness and the ability to expand the usual (habitual) perception, which allows to connect with the fluidity of experience:

The mere shifting of the standpoint, the mere effecting of the phenomenological reduction, does not suffice to bring such a thing as phenomenology out of pure logic... On the contrary, there lie concealed here the most difficult problems of all, the meaning of which is naturally hidden from all those who have not as yet any inkling of the basic distinctions upon which all the others depend. As a matter of fact... it is a long and thorny way that leads from the insights of pure logic, from those of the theory of meaning, from ontological and noetical insights, and likewise from the current normative and psychological theory of knowledge, to the apprehension of immanent-psychological and then phenomenological data, and lastly to all the essential connexions which make the transcendental relations intelligible a priori (Husserl, 2012, p.183).

⁵ Emphasizing imagery as an integral part of phenomenology, Husserl (2012) referred to phenomenology as “eidetic psychology” (p. 162).

This perhaps explains why Husserl opposed a reduction of phenomenology to descriptive psychology even though he called new knowledge derived through a phenomenological inquiry a “descriptive knowledge” (2012, p.XXXVI).

Husserl (2012) called this altered state of consciousness “pure consciousness” and highlighted that “the field of pure consciousness... is not a portion of nature itself” (p.97). The question which came up for me was whether this state of consciousness was substance induced. However, Husserl’s description of the “long and thorny way” (p.183) pointed toward an inner practice.

I am sure of this, that at a time not so very far distant it will have become a commonly accepted conviction that phenomenology (or eidetic psychology) is, methodologically, the basic science for empirical psychology... The old ontological doctrine, *that the knowledge of “possibilities” must precede that of actualities...* is, in my opinion, in so far as it is rightly understood and properly utilized, a really great truth (Husserl, 2012, p.162).

Psychological awareness of self. Husserl (2012) argued that one needs to look “inwards” before looking “outwards” (p.71). To see things as they are, I need first to “apprehend myself... as the human being that I am” (Husserl, 2012, p.163). Therefore, the essence of an inner practice is a psychological awareness of self. According to Husserl (2012), this awareness includes cognitive awareness (e.g., of thoughts, judgments, daydreams) and awareness of affect (i.e., emotions):

When observing, I perceive something; similarly in recollection I am often “busied” with something; again, observing in a sense, I follow in imaginative fancy what goes on in the world of fancy. Or I meditate, draw inferences; I revoke a judgment, “refrain” if need be

from judging at all. I approve or disapprove, I am glad or grieved, I wish, or I will and do; or again, I “refrain” from being glad, from wishing, willing, and action. In all such acts I am present, *actually* present. In reflection I apprehend myself herein as the human being that I am (p.163).

In this quote, I stumbled upon the word “meditate”. Comparing the English translation to the original text⁶ I realized that Husserl (1950) used the word “nachdenken” (German) which would be translated into English as “thinking” or “contemplating”. It is interesting to note, how the translator perhaps was trying to express the intuitive nature of phenomenology by altering the direct translation. W.R. Boyce Gibson, who translated the *Ideas* into English in 1931, was a student of Edmund Husserl. In the preface to his translation, Gibson emphasized that the translation “has had its difficulties, and the sincerest effort has been made to straighten these out, and present a faithful rendering... of the terse and compact original” (in Husserl (2012), p.LII). To his advantage, Gibson stayed in touch with Husserl through the translation so that Husserl could clarify the meaning of the original text. It is also interesting that this translation is more in line with what Gokhale (2016) referred to as “understanding phenomena directly at the level of meditational wisdom” (p.12 of this manuscript). If I rely on my understanding of Husserl’s ideas, mapping them according to my understanding of Buddhism, I conclude that in the original German quote Husserl expresses the duality of contemplation and inner practice (see Figure 1), where the English edition makes this quote more one sided.

⁶ I obtained the Teaching German as Foreign Language Certificate (Das Deutsche Kleine Sprachdiplom) in 1994 and taught German for credit classes in Czech Republic and in Canada at the college and high school level.

Throughout the text, Husserl (2012) comes back to this description: “I am present to myself continually as someone who receives, represents, thinks, feels, desires, and so forth; and for the most part herein I find myself related in present experience to the fact-world which is constantly about me” (Husserl, 2012, p.54). Therefore, the self (or ego) becomes a starting point of the investigation. However, the ego needs to be purified into “ego cogito”, or liberated from suppositions and judgment (Husserl, 2012). Therefore, a phenomenological investigation goes beyond “living in perception” (Husserl, 2012, p.183).

Moustakas (1961) examined the concept of loneliness on the example of different historical figures ranging from Emily Dickinson, a poet, to the president of the United States. He argued that what they had in common was an ability to find different ways of “maintaining an inner life” (Moustakas, 1961, p.73), so that each individual could “develop a depth of awareness and sensitivity” (p.80), “relying on his own searching solitude for insights” (p.81). This echoes Husserl’s (2012) idea of psychological awareness of self as a core of inner practice.

Other Qualities of Phenomenological Insight

So far, I identified two aspects of inner practice – *psychological awareness of self* and an *altered state of consciousness*. To avoid a reduction of phenomenological insight practice to these two components, I also included in my findings the other qualities of phenomenological insight that are essential for developing and maintaining such inner practice according to Husserl (2012) and Moustakas (1961). These other qualities of phenomenological insight include intentionality, integrity, values, and intuition.

Intentionality. Intentionality is the most essential because it initiates and maintains an inner practice. Therefore, it is generalizable to all three areas that I considered initially – Research (on the example of phenomenology), Buddhism, and Psychotherapy (Figure 1). I

include intentionality within my findings to emphasize its importance. The idea of working towards a better understanding of oneself and the world (i.e., the phenomena) is essential for Husserl (2012). In this regard, one can argue that within the phenomenological method of psychological inquiry one is working towards liberation from a set point of human perception.

We picture ourselves as involved in this or that act, in joy, it may be over a theoretical train of thought that is running its free and fruitful course. We perform all the reductions and see what lies in the pure essential nature of the phenomenological material. We turn then first towards the passing train of thought. We develop further the phenomenon in its illustrative aspect. During the course of the enjoyment we cast a reflective glance on the joy itself. It becomes the experience glanced at and immanently perceived, fluctuating thus and thus in the focus of reflection, then sinking away (Husserl, 2012, p.151).

Therefore, intentionality is about consciously directing the attention that helps us to focus on different aspects of the experience, and this impacts the “free flow of thought” of which “we are now aware in the modified way” (Husserl, 2012, p.151). In Husserl’s (2012) words,

the intentional experience is the consciousness of something, and is so in the form its essence prescribes: as memory, for instance, or as judgment, or as will, and so forth: and so we can ask what can be said on essential lines concerning this ‘of something’ (p.184).

However, there is another dimension of phenomenological intentionality – the attitude of the investigator. As highlighted in the previous quotes, not only the investigator directs his attention, this act also requires an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance. Parallel to Buddhism, the investigator is not set to *change* this experience, the investigator is there to *observe* it (Husserl, 2012). This brings to light the next quality of the investigation – its integrity.

Integrity. In the preface to the English edition of *Ideas*, Husserl (2012) noted that “I obtain an original and pure descriptive knowledge of the psychical life as it is in itself, the most original information being obtained from myself” (p.XXXVI). He emphasized that “imagined data are never under any circumstances real data” (Husserl, 2012, p.14). To maintain integrity of a phenomenological investigation, “we should and must strive in each step we take to describe faithfully what we really see from our own point of view and after the most earnest consideration” (Husserl, 2012, p.203). Husserl (2012) also talked about describing “faithfully and completely” (p. 191), and about grouping together “characters that conform to certain essential laws” with “conceptual strictness” (p.191). Therefore, there is an intentional striving for the integrity of the investigation – striving which in turn fuels an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance. This is significant because the first Ethics Code was not introduced in the field of psychology in North America until 1953 (Smith, 2003), 40 years after Husserl posed these questions to his students:

how we are to guard against statements which go beyond what is really given at the moment and transcend the eidetic grasp; and still another question is that of the methods proper to *empirical* thinking: how we humans, as psychologists may be, must proceed under the given psychological conditions so as to confer on our human knowledge as much dignity as the case admits of (Husserl, 2012, p.161).

Moustakas (1961) also noted that even when rejected and isolated from the society, many individuals “often maintain an unyielding integrity and strength” (p.86).

Values. Husserl (2012) argued that

in the matter of values we... take up an attitude; this that we see facing us in space pleases us or determines us to action; what there presents itself we lay hold of, work it up,

and so forth. If we now carry out the phenomenological reductions, every transcendent setting, that above all which is bound up with perception, receives its suspending bracket, which envelops all the derivative acts, every perceptual judgment with the valuations grounded in it, and eventually the judgment of value, and so forth (p.190).

So, what are the values that Husserl (2012) and Moustakas (1961) emphasize? Husserl (2012) pointed out that an attitude is grounded in a set of values, and therefore an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance is grounded in value of cultivating wisdom. Moustakas (1961) emphasized the value of solitude and argued that “the hours of silence and loneliness cultivate a deepened sense of values in life” (p.58). For example, for French pilot and writer Antoine de Saint-Exupery, who was lost in a desert, “being separate and alone, brought deepening awareness and growing wisdom into basic human values. He brought with him a rapturous commitment to his fellow man and within this commitment he discovered the foundation for compassion, self-fulfillment, and living happiness” (Moustakas, 1961, p.61).

Intuition. To distinguish between perceived and intuitive knowledge, Husserl (2012, p.184-185) introduced terms “noema” and “noesis”, where noesis reflects meaning attributed to a “real” object, and noema reflects its intuitive (immanent) meaning. Noema is instilled with intentionality: “every intentional experience... is noetic, it is its essential nature to harbor in itself a ‘meaning’ of some sort” (Husserl, 2012, p.184). Therefore, to consciously know something means in phenomenological approach to grasp a “noematic content” or “noema” – what is available in the field of intuition (Husserl, 2012, p.185). Husserl (2012) considered noesis and noema as parallel, “noetic-noematic structures” (p.192) and called the inability to see “what we have already in our field of intuition” a “kind of psychic blindness” (p.40). Husserl

(2012) invited his followers to look beyond concepts to gain a “deeper insight into *the relation of the transcendent to the Consciousness that knows it*” (p.76).

In the *Manual of Insight*, “intuitive knowledge” is introduced as “the meaning that insight meditators know” (Sayadaw, 2016, p.106). Moustakas (1961) calls this an experience of “knowing and understanding” (p.53) that can be accessed through loneliness: “loneliness keeps open doors to an expanding life. In utter loneliness, one can find answers to living, one can find new values to live by, one can see a new path or direction. Something totally new is revealed” (Moustakas, 1961, p.102).

Loneliness

Loneliness is an earlier book of Clark Moustakas (1961) that initiated a long journey of psychological self-exploration reflected in his writings, leading to phenomenology of Edmund Husserl. In this book, written in a passionate and vivid language, Moustakas (1961) examined loneliness as an “experience of being human which enables the individual to sustain, extend, and deepen his humanity” (p.IX). He identified two opposite concepts of loneliness – one being existential loneliness leading to full awareness of self and characterized as “genuine experience” (Moustakas, 1961, p. 33), and another one being loneliness of self-alienation and self-rejection leading to anxiety and separation from self as a feeling and knowing person.

Opposite to the loneliness of self-alienation and self-rejection, the existential loneliness facilitates a deeper connection with the universe and echoes Buddhist characteristics of not-self, unsatisfactoriness, and impermanence (e.g., “my heart yearns for permanence which never can be” (Moustakas, 1961, p.34). However, *acceptance* of loneliness is the first step in building this new relationship with self and the universe (Moustakas, 1961). Moustakas (1961) helped me to

articulate the affective qualities of phenomenological (inner) practice including relatedness, immediacy and depth, and feeling of joy.

Affective Qualities of Inner Practice

Barrett (2017) called affect a “fundamental aspect of consciousness” (p.72). However, to access affect, we need to connect to ourselves to on a deeper level so that affect becomes a *felt experience* that we can explore. Barrett (2017) identified two features of affect – how pleasant or unpleasant (valence), and how calm or agitated (arousal) one feels. Specific emotions arise within specific affect which underline our decision making (Barrett, 2017).

Relatedness. Both Husserl (2012) and Moustakas (1961) elaborated on a somewhat paradoxical sense of interconnectedness enhanced by psychological awareness of self that Husserl (2012) called “essential universality” (p.11). According to Moustakas (1961), intensified sense of loneliness can create an inner void, or spaciousness where a new relationship with self and the universe develops. Moustakas (1961) described this relationship as “fundamental relatedness with others” (p.47). This relatedness is a discovery “that life is rich in its resources and its ways, that truth is universal, that wisdom and love and reverence are rooted in every living meeting, that each individual stretches forward to touch a universal humanity” (Moustakas, 1961, p. 55).

Immediacy and depth. Moustakas (1961) argued that every experience in loneliness is “alive and vivid and full of meaning” (p.54) when we accept loneliness. With this acceptance comes realization that

loneliness has a quality of immediacy and depth, it is a significant experience – one of the few in modern life – in which man communes with himself. And in such communion man comes to grips with his own being. He discovers life, who he is, what he really

wants, the meaning of his existence, the true nature of his relations with others... His distortions suddenly become naked and transparent. He perceives himself and others with a clearer, more valid vision and understanding” (Moustakas, 1961, p.102).

Perhaps the opposite is true – to connect with our self, we need quietness and spaciousness of solitude and being alone. According to Barrett’s (2017) classification of affect, quietness results in neutral valence and neutral arousal which is a starting point of developing understanding of own affect.

Feeling of joy. Husserl’s *Ideas* (2012) evoke a sense of excitement and playfulness of being in the moment guided by intentionality and intuition. “In vivid intuition (imaginative, if you like it) we picture ourselves as involved in this or that act, in joy, it may be over a theoretical train of thought that is running its free and fruitful course” (Husserl, 2012, p.150). This translation somewhat departs from the original German text where Husserl rather talked about “vivid examination of some kind of action, for example experiencing joy over a theoretical train of thought that is running its free and fruitful course” (translated from German: a “lebendiger Anschauung... in irgendeinen Aktvollzug, etwa in eine Freude ueber einen frei und fruchtbar ablaufenden theoretischen Gedankengang” (Husserl, 1950, p.146). Considering the translator’s collaboration with Husserl before the English translation was published in 1931, this translation made me wonder if the separation between cognitive and affective domain became more obvious for Husserl after the *Ideas* were first published in 1913, and this is reflected in such departure from the original text. Husserl’s excitement about the potential of a “new science of phenomenology” peeks through in the English translation.

The other aspect that attracted me to this passage was Husserl’s description of joy. One of my first meditative experiences was joy arising with the sense of connectedness with myself

and the universe, and I would argue that this description was not accidental in the sense that the feeling of joy does come with an insight into the nature of human mind. Husserl (2012) also accurately emphasized that we can fully focus our attention on only one thing at a time – an observation which is in line with Sayadaw’s (2016) teachings.

A Way of Being

As identified in my literature review, Carl Roger’s name occurred in different searches that reflected essences of both phenomenological approach and insight meditation practice, such as the person of the investigator, intentionality, freedom from suppositions, developing wisdom, as well as the essence of the research on what works in therapy and on master therapists. To examine whether the identified essences of inner phenomenological practice hold true for Rogers, my last reading was *A Way of Being* (Rogers, 1980). One of the major themes of this book was that it is our attitude as therapists that defines the effectiveness of therapy and that as therapists, “our major task is to be *ourselves*”: “fully open”, “prepared to explore new and unknown areas of our own lives”, “truly acceptant of our own differences”, and “open to the new learnings... from our fresh inward journeys” (Rogers, 1980, p.186). The emphasis on “preparing *ourselves*” rather than focusing on treatment plans and materials (p.187) and a “new realization that the person is a process, rather than a fixed set of habits” (p.346) highlights the essence of the Rogers’ philosophy and resonates with the need of practicing the same attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance outlined by Sayadaw (2016) and conveyed by Husserl (2012) and Moustakas (1961). The choice of word “philosophy” in this context is not accidental as Rogers (1980) acknowledged the existential roots of his approach and his own fascination with Eastern philosophy.

Chapter V: Discussion and Conclusion

Meichenbaum and Lilienfeld (2018) discussed “hype” in the field of psychotherapy and raised their concerns about grounds for the effectiveness claim of some of the therapeutic approaches, including mindfulness. They reminded that skepticism was a core of an investigation and that this kind of skepticism was closely related to therapist’s intellectual humility and a healthy self-doubt towards both their own practice and psychological treatment. Hence the attitude of the therapist was more important than approaches used. This echoed a re-occurring theme of my study. I find compelling that more than 100 years ago Husserl’s ideas about phenomenology were developing around *the process* of engaging in a psychological inquiry and that now, supported by research in different fields, we are coming to the same understanding in both research and therapy.

This research study revealed some of my earlier misconceptions about Edmund Husserl as at the beginning I saw him as a philosopher theorizing about (pure) phenomenology. In the preface to the first English edition, Husserl called himself a psychologist, and it became clear to me as I was reading *Ideas*, that phenomenology was about a psychological inquiry – an inquiry that involves consciousness alteration. Perhaps, the emphasis Husserl (2012) made on philosophical aspects of this inquiry serve the mere purpose to distinguish phenomenology from descriptive psychology.

At the beginning of this research, I was also wondering whether Husserl’s (2012) ideas about phenomenological insight would point towards *contemplation practice* in line with Western philosophic tradition. However, his separation of psychological awareness (inner practice) and contemplation was clearly revolutionary for a European thinker of his time. The

experience of interconnectedness through quietness and isolation from the others lies outside of formal logic and is indeed an experiential learning.

How the Method of Analytic Induction Informed my Study

Looking for exceptions. Tacq (2007) pointed out that on one hand, looking for exceptions promotes reflections and making meaning of the results, on the other hand, analytic induction lacks rules on how to find exceptions. Therefore, he concluded that analytic induction was “not a research procedure, but a leading principle in the process of reflection on a research problem” (p.205). I can relate to this conclusion. The four texts that I examined in this research study helped me in different ways to identify inner practice leading to alteration of consciousness as an essence of a phenomenological insight. Using the method of analytic induction, I was looking for exceptions as well as for the ideas confirming the findings from my literature review. However, even two such different books as *Ideas* and *Loneliness* led me to the same realizations (e.g., creating inside spaciousness and developing a new awareness of self can lead to phenomenological insight). Perhaps the adjustment that I had to make to my theory was acknowledging the difference between a formal insight meditation practice and the glimpses that Edmund Husserl and Clark Moustakas had into the practice of developing awareness of self – Husserl (2012) through describing his own process of self-awareness as a part of phenomenology, and Moustakas (1961) through his own experience and through examining the faith of individuals who in different ways have experienced a profound sense of loneliness and isolation from the society.

Inner practice and contemplation. Inner practice is interwoven with contemplation, and it takes a deeper understanding to tease apart where contemplation (intellectual quality) ends, and inner practice (existential quality) begins, especially because they both are directed inward.

I attempted to capture the essence of this dualism in Figure 1. This inner practice can be defined as a purposeful exploration of human mind. The essential conditions or qualities of this exploration include intentionality, intuition, integrity, and values. Perhaps, these qualities, identified by Husserl (2012), prompted him to explain phenomenology in terms of phenomenological reduction and not in terms of inner practice. One can also argue that the emphasis on these qualities is an attempt to separate phenomenology which bears a scientific goal and Buddhism with its aim for liberation.

In their review of the research on altered states of consciousness, Vaitl et al. (2005) identified *spontaneously occurring, physically and physiologically induced, psychologically induced, and disease induced* altered states of consciousness. This classification accounts for the difference between what Husserl described as phenomenological mind set, and Moustakas inquiry into experience of loneliness. That is, the experience of loneliness might lead to a certain alteration of consciousness, however, this alteration might be physically or physiologically induced as, for example, in the case of Antoine de Saint-Exupery who found himself alone in a desert after his plane crashed. According to Vaitl et al. (2005), an altered state of consciousness due to meditation (psychologically induced) can mimic an altered state of consciousness due to starvation or extreme environmental conditions (physically and physiologically induced), however, more research of different meditation practices is needed to reach more conclusive results. Therefore, one can argue that the characteristics of inner practice, extracted from *Loneliness* do not necessarily reflect the affective qualities of inner practice extracted from *Ideas*.

Integration of the results. Stepping back, the method of analytic induction is about successful integration. However, “the inductive scientist does not consider truth as a final and unshakable result of research past and done with... On the contrary... he is never satisfied,

always asks the question of the new” (Tacq, 2007). I appreciated this aspect of analytic induction during my readings, especially because neither Husserl (2012) nor Moustakas (1961) described the actual practice in sufficient detail to allow replication. Being actively involved in a meaning making process became the key during this research.

In their methodological review of meditation research, Thomas and Cohen (2014) investigated uniqueness of meditation states (e.g., compared to relaxation), and asked if meditation practices would induce specific states of (altered) consciousness, distinguishable from other states of consciousness such as sleep or hypnosis. Even though their results were inconclusive, to account for a wide range of meditation experience studies they proposed a framework that included a cultural setting as the *place*, a life situation of the meditator as the *person*, details of the meditation practice as the *practice*, and the state of consciousness of the meditator as the *phenomenology*. Considering meditation as a subjective practice, they also pointed out the lack of phenomenological research in this area (Thomas & Cohen, 2014). Their research helped me to finalize the essence of inner practice mentioned by Husserl (2012) and Moustakas (1961) as being the *attitude* informed by *integrity* and not a set of specific instructions which would produce replicable results. Therefore, such essences as *psychological awareness of self* and *an altered state of consciousness* are secondary to the attitude and integrity. The affective qualities such as *relatedness, immediacy and depth*, and *feeling of joy* can be considered as markers of this inner practice.

This study also helped me to refine my own insight meditation practice. After Steven Armstrong was diagnosed with a lethal illness and started his medical treatment, I continued my practice under guidance of Michele McDonald and Steven Smith who were trained in Theravada

tradition with Sayadaw U Pandita, a student of Mahasi Sayadaw. This practice facilitated a deeper connection with myself and the readings.

Limitations. Besides the limitations of the method of analytic induction, other limitations of this study include the selection of the texts and the time frame. The four selected texts were written in the 20th century by scholars with different backgrounds and different areas of expertise from Southeast Asia, Europe, and North America, making this study cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural in many ways (e.g., different socio-political circumstances, different purposes pursued by the writers, different ways to express ideas). Two texts were later translated into English: *Ideas* and *Manual of Insight*. *Ideas* were translated by one of the Husserl's student who had an opportunity to consult with Husserl during the translation. *Manual of Insight* was translated, reviewed and edited by a team of dedicated practitioners with decades of formal (e.g., ordained) meditation practice. Even though this accounts for some of the challenges associated with a translation, the *Manual of Insight* represents a particular lineage within Theravada school of Buddhism.

Other limitations include interpretation of Buddhist texts within psychology and differences across disciplines in the meaning attributed to such fundamental concepts as wisdom, insight, and contemplation, as well as different meanings attributed to mindfulness and meditation. To account for this limitation, I established a glossary of important terms used in this project (Appendix B).

The results of this research reflect my cultural identity and personal understanding of the subject based on education, personal reflection, meditation practice, and readings of the relevant literature and selected texts. The experiential component – daily meditation practice, helped to realize the essences of phenomenological method of psychological inquiry and arrive to the

conclusions which can also be seen as a limitation to the person of the researcher with a specific meditation practice. Hence this study was not solely an intellectual process.

The results of this study are specific to the ideas expressed in the four selected texts and cannot be generalized to all publications of Mahasi Sayadaw, Edmund Husserl, Clark Moustakas, and Carl Rogers.

Conclusions

Exploration into the human mind can be facilitated by a specific meditation practice (i.e., insight or mindfulness meditation practice). In his own way, Edmund Husserl (2012) described such practice as a core of a phenomenological investigation, where mindfulness can be understood as the “self-regulation of attention with an attitude of curiosity, openness, and acceptance” (Niemiec, 2017). On the other hand, Clark Moustakas (1961) with his own search for meaning of loneliness, identified a state of solitude as a core humane experience that leads to personal growth and understanding when we use this state to connect to ourselves. This connection promotes such affective qualities as relatedness with others, immediacy and depth, and feeling of joy. Even though it is unclear how much Husserl and Moustakas were familiar with Buddhist teachings and mindfulness practice, this context and especially the Theravada school of Buddhism provide a framework for understanding phenomenology as an inquiry into mind with the emphasis on attitude of the investigator and the integrity of the investigation. This study of four classical texts within psychology and Buddhism together with a broader literature review left me as a mental health professional with a sense of earnestness and necessity of personal practice that promotes insight. Roger’s (1980) reflection “it appears that our inner world is continually up to something we know nothing about, unless we shut off the outer stimuli” (p.313) summarized my readings.

Therefore, the results from this research study might encourage researchers and psychotherapists using phenomenology as a method of psychological inquiry to cultivate integrity and an attitude of curiosity, openness and acceptance in their work through developing a mindfulness practice. In her book *How Emotions are Made* Lisa Feldman Barrett (2017) argued that our brain is constantly predicting a future based on our inner resources. So, by default, we *presuppose* the next moment, and sometimes a supposition would tell us that as we practice mindfulness we will be free from suppositions. Hence the practice is also about our attitude towards learning how our mind works. For the future research, I identified an exploration of doubt as a major hindrance of our actions. If we confuse doubt with intuition, we might take a different path. How do we decide if this is a gut feeling that we should trust or a defilement we have to keep at bay? Finally, I move on to a new chapter in my professional life, with a quote that resonated with me: “increasingly I discover that being alive involves taking a chance, acting on less than certainty, engaging with life” (Rogers, 1980, p.89).

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Appendix A



Archeology of the Heart

STEVE ARMSTRONG | JANUARY 5 – 7 2018
NON-RESIDENTIAL VIPASSANA RETREAT

In this two-day, non-residential retreat, dhamma teacher Steve Armstrong will offer teachings and instructions that cultivate stable awareness of all experience. With awareness, we are able to explore all of life: burrowing beneath appearances through the depths of personality, from entanglement in experience to the ever-creative process of being. The journey unfolds deep into layers of past conditioning to discovery of the shifting, tectonic plates of bedrock awareness and the star-dust like conditional nature of reality. With such intimacy, the evolutionary unfolding of wise understanding is revealed.



Steve Armstrong has studied the dhamma and practiced insight meditation since 1975. He served for many years at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts as Executive Director, Board member and senior teacher of the annual three-month retreat. As a monk in Burma for 5 years, under the guidance of Sayadaw U Pandita, he undertook intensive, silent practice of insight and lovingkindness meditations, as well as studying the

abhidhamma with Sayadaw U Zagara of Australia. He continues his practice under the guidance of Sayadaw U Tejanya in Rangoon. He has been leading meditation retreats internationally since 1990 and is a co-founding director and teacher of the Vipassana Metta Foundation dhamma sanctuary on Maui. He also directs the Burma Schools Project having funded and overseen construction or renovation of over 115 schools, 6 clinics, 2 large nunneries and supporting many other nunneries in Burma. Out of compassion for future generations, he has planted more than 2500 trees on the dhamma sanctuary/hermitage land on Maui. He was the Managing Editor of the Vipassana Metta Foundation's translation committee that in 2016 brought to publication by Wisdom Publications, the Manual of Insight, by Mahasi Sayadaw.



WHEN

Friday, Jan 5 | 7:15 – 9 pm
Saturday, Jan 6 | 9 am – 5 pm
Sunday, Jan 7 | 9 am – 4 pm

WHERE

UBC Asian Centre
1871 West Mall, UBC Campus
Vancouver, BC

COST

\$95 (plus dana)
Fees cover retreat organizing costs. Voluntary donations (dana) for the teachings may be given at the retreat.

CONTACT

Visit bcims.org for more information and registration.

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Appendix B

Glossary

affect is the general sense of feeling that you experience throughout each day. It is not emotion but a much simpler feeling with two features – how pleasant or unpleasant (valence), and how calm or agitated (arousal) you feel. Philosophers from the West and the East describe valence and arousal as basic features of human experience. Affect is also a fundamental aspect of consciousness (Barrett, 2017, p.72)

concentration develops during the insight meditation practice (Sayadaw, 2016, p.47) and is understood as continuously dwelling on an object over a long period of time (Sayadaw, 2016, p.54).

consciousness is 1 a: the quality or state of being aware esp. of something within oneself; b: the state of fact of being conscious of an external object, state, or fact; c: AWARENESS 2: the state of being characterized by sensation, emotion, volition, and thought; MIND 3: the totality of conscious states of an individual (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 1995).

contemplation is 1 a: concentration on spiritual things as a form of private devotion; b: a state of mystical awareness of God's being; 2: an act of considering with attention (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 1995).

insight comes from practice and contemplation (Sayadaw, 2016, p.358), and is understood as first, insight into the three universal characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and not-self (Sayadaw, 2016, p.49), and, second, as *empirical* insight (vs. concepts that are in place of ultimate reality that we cannot yet experience). There are three types of insight: path-oriented, fruition-oriented, and cessation-oriented (Sayadaw, 2016, p.446).

The purpose of insight is to eliminate the field of latent defilements (Sayadaw, 2016, p.346). The highest level of insight is equanimity toward phenomena.

insight meditation is an uninterrupted observation of all phenomena as they arise at the six sense doors, such that one can realize the unique characteristics of mental and physical phenomena as they really are (Sayadaw, 2016, p.123). Observation of the conceptual form of the breath produces tranquility, while attention to its touch and movement produces insight (Sayadaw, 2016, p.130).

insight meditation practice (vipassana) enables one to realize the ultimate nature of mind and body, to see their common characteristics of impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha), and not-self (annatta), and to realize the Four Noble Truths (Sayadaw, 2016, p.1). It can be defined as mental practice of noticing physical and mental phenomena as they arise, exist, and fade away. This practice requires intentionality, integrity (morality), concentration, and volition. Practical instructions include a preparation stage to cut any impediments and noting mind together with noted objects as the practice develops.

intention is the leading factor for volitional action (Sayadaw, 2016, p.319).

meditation object is an ultimate mental or physical phenomenon and not a concept. However, in the beginning, one must observe objects on a conceptual level. This is the only way that concentration, awareness, and insight knowledge will mature (Sayadaw, 2016, p.264)

mental volition (cetane) is one of the fifty mental factors included in the aggregate of mental formations (sankharakkhandha). It activates or stimulates the mental factors (*characteristic*) it acts, works, and accomplishes (*function*); it coordinates activities like a ruler who sentences someone to death or a donor who allows the goods he has offered to be taken away (*manifestation*); and it is caused by a wholesome or unwholesome

attention or attitude (*manasikarapadatthana*), ignorance of true happiness and suffering (*avijjapadatthana*), the sense bases and sense objects (*vattharammanapadatthana*), or consciousness (*vinnanapadatthana*) (*proximate causes*) (Sayadaw, 2016, p.182).

Therefore, when we observe phenomena, we observe this conditioning and realize the three principles (impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-self). Furthermore, Mahasi Sayadaw (2016) discussed the forty aspects of phenomena – ten aspects of impermanence, twenty-five aspects of unsatisfactoriness, and five aspects of not-self (p.391).

nibbana (nirvana) is 1: the final beatitude that transcends suffering, karma, and samsara and is sought esp. in Buddhism through the extinction of desire and individual consciousness (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 1995).

phenomena possess characteristics, function, manifestation, and proximate cause, where **concept** possesses its manner, identity, image, solid form etc. (Sayadaw, 2016). See an example of phenomena under **(mental) volition**.

wisdom 1: accumulated philosophic or scientific learning; ability to discern inner qualities and relationships; 2: a wise attitude or course of action (Merriam Webster's Dictionary, 1995).