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Supervision in Every Breath: Enacting Zen in an Elementary Education Teacher Program

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Supervision in Every Breath: Enacting Zen in an Elementary Education Teacher Program

by

Steven R. Haberlin

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Journeys are often depicted as heroic adventures, full of valuable lessons and victories. However, journeys can also be trying, lonely, often-frightening experiences. During my journey of completing this dissertation, I was fortunate to have a number of individuals, who served as lanterns, emanating warmth and illuminating the path. These individuals provided direction and a guiding light in the form of continual support, encouragement, and advice. For that, I am eternally grateful.

I would first like to thank my life partner, Fon. Her Chinese name translated to English is “flower,” which is how she appeared to me along this path. She provided direction, beauty, warmth, and love during the entire process. Her support never wavered. She has brought out the best in me, made me a better man in all ways—not only as a scholar and teacher but as a human being. Around her, I feel inspired, and she is the original reason I felt confident enough to pursue my PhD in the first place. I feel incredibly grateful to have her in my life.

In past times, monks would learn Zen by wandering the land, in search of masters to provide knowledge and spiritual mentoring. I’ve been fortunate enough to find a number of masters during this quest. First, I must thank my major professor and mentor, Dr. Jennifer Jacobs, who tirelessly worked with me on this manuscript. She provided constant feedback and challenged me to improve my work at every turn (even editing during professional conferences). In Zen fashion, she served as the master, who led by example and questioning—and douses of humor.

Another master I’d like to thank is Dr. Rebecca Burns, who also served on my dissertation committee. A truly inquisitive mind, Dr. Burns peppered me with insightful questions and challenged my thinking through this entire process. Her enthusiasm for my work
and ideas and encouragement to push the boundaries in the field helped inspire me and keep me going. I also want to thank committee member, Dr. Janet Richards, my first qualitative research teacher and an inspiring mentor, who pushed me to become a better researcher and writer and invited me into so many fruitful collaborations. Our long talks, with your rescued puppy at my feet and sipping iced coffee, were invaluable and full of wisdom. I also feel much appreciation for committee member, Dr. Elizabeth Shaunessy-Dedrick, who epitomizes a beginner’s mind and has continually opened doors for me throughout my career. It seems like fate that we met so many years ago when I was a fledgling elementary school teacher and later bumped into you again when I entered academia. Like an invisible hand, you seem to be continually guiding me along the path.

I also received incredible support from Dr. Jennifer Wolgemuth, my research design professor. She encouraged me to take academic risks and pursue the study of Zen Buddhism within the context of my scholarship.

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I must also acknowledge my family, including my parents, who were continually supportive of my PhD studies. An extra thank you to my father, who read drafts of this paper and offered insights; Dad, you would have made a great professor.

Finally, I’d like to thank members of the Council of Professors of Instructional
Supervision (COPIS) for recognizing my contributions through this research and being open to the expansion of how we conceive supervision. I received much feedback and many ideas during interactions with its members.

A final note about the quotations that appear at the start of each chapter. I decided to utilize these words as not only an attempt to encapsulate Zen but to memorialize the late Alan Watts, who brilliantly managed to put the nearly impossible task of Zen into words and examples in a fashion that Westerners like myself could understand.
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ABSTRACT

The field of teacher education is in tumultuous times. Criticisms and questions about teacher preparation have led to calls for reform, including grounding teacher preparation programs in clinically rich experiences. Responsible for preparing these teachers, university-based supervisors are under added pressure to provide opportunities that connects theoretical knowledge with field experience. Complicating matters, views of supervision continue to evolve and remain divided, creating uncertainty over how to best approach the role. In light of these challenges, I argue in this study that current conceptions of supervision need to be reevaluated and expanded by entertaining new views, namely those from outside of traditional Western perspectives. For instance, scholars (Burns, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2018; Glanz, 1995; Tremmel, 1993) have referenced Eastern philosophies of Taoism and Zen Buddhism as ways to improve supervision practices. To more deeply explore this line of thinking, I studied the enactment of Zen Buddhist constructs within my role of supervising teacher candidates in a clinically rich teacher program. Using a spiritual self-study methodology, I collected data through journaling, field notes, surveying candidates, and candidate artifacts, such as lesson plans and observation reflections. I analyzed data through meditative writings and mindful coding practices. Eight findings, or “awakenings,” emerged from the analysis, including experiencing anxiety as I became more mindful of my supervision practices, experiencing a flow state during supervision, feeling more connected with triad members, and noticing an enhancement of the observation cycle through deep listening and other mindfulness techniques. Implications from the study include Zen assisting in developing a state of mind that enables
supervisors to flow more seamlessly between tasks and functions, manage the stresses of the function and role, and became more mindful of the needs of teacher candidates. I also present a reconceptualizing of supervision, reframing it as a present-moment experience that can transform.
CHAPTER 1: 
INTRODUCTION

“It’s called in Zen, satori, or sudden awakening, and at that moment, the observing self which comments on oneself, the self which obstructs, dissolves and disappears...the monk becomes unobstructed, free as the clouds...cloud and water, where he drifts like cloud and flows like water” (Watts, 1960, n.p.).

I followed the steep, stone path that led towards the structure, admiring the prayer flags that waved in the wind. Two, fierce Shinto-god statues greeted me at the entrance. My partner, friends, and I had trekked to the top of an ancient, Shinto temple in Kamakura, Japan, about an hour outside of Tokyo. Out of breath, I sat on the creaking wooden steps, constructed with centuries-old wood. Closing my eyes, I imagined how the monks who lived in this temple so long ago meditated and sought enlightenment. I looked down, past the hill, at the Zen bamboo garden in the distance. A peace washed over me. The excursion encapsulated my decades-old fascination with Eastern philosophy.

My interest in Eastern philosophy and all-things Zen naturally surfaced when, as a PhD student, I began supervising teacher candidates. I wondered how Eastern views might intersect with my current supervision stance, which I believed had been overshadowed by Western perspectives. I stumbled (maybe synchronously) across journal articles by teacher education scholars, who introduced the ancient Chinese philosophy of Taoism as an approach to helping
teacher educators find balance and Zen Buddhism as a way to foster reflective practice. These writings fueled my curiosity. Might a mental state such as *beginner’s mind* (think of the wonderment of a child) found within Zen teachings enable me to be more open and aware to teacher candidates’ needs? Could embracing concepts such as interconnectedness and impermanence encourage strong relationships with teacher candidates and mentor teachers? Further, could meditation, mindfulness, awareness and other more Eastern notions help me navigate the daily challenges and struggles of supervision? These questions whirled through my mind like a *koan* (Zen riddle), causing me to dig deeper into the subject.

Subsequently, I struggled in my first year as a teacher educator. Like other supervisors, I grappled with problems of enactment (Darling-Hammond, 2006), falling back on what I knew as a k-12 teacher. I falsely believed that because I had been successful as a classroom teacher, I could simply transfer that knowledge and content to teacher candidates (Bullock, 2007, 2009). Professional development offered by the university, PhD coursework, and experience in the field helped me develop a sense of the role. The university program strongly advocated a reflective practitioner model. I also dabbled with cognitive coaching (Costa & Garmston, 2002) and strengths-based coaching (Tschannen & Tschannen, 2011). But honestly, I was overwhelmed by the number of approaches to supervision. Furthermore, I did not know how to envision myself—a coach, a collegiate partner, a guide, an evaluator? What exactly was I? While I grew aware of the decisions, reactions, and responses that influenced my teaching of teachers (Russell & Loughran, 2007, p. 2), I was not sure how to best assume the position of supervisor.

My dilemma is not unique, as it reflects the larger narrative of instructional supervision and the long, complexed history of teacher education. Views of supervision, for instance, have greatly changed, and at times, clashed. Supervision was initially considered merely an
inspection-oriented role, but the focus later shifted to democratic relationships and teacher improvement (Glanz, 2000). Regardless, post modernists, have deemed this more recent focus as “overly technicist” (Glanz, 2000, p. 77), with some suggesting that the term “supervision” be eliminated entirely. The expansive views of supervision might be compared to holding an over-ambitious restaurant menu, the customer overwhelmed by too many options and unsure what to order. As Snow-Gerono (2008) put it:

The multitude of supervisory approaches and models leaves educators in a place in which they may be unsure of specific roles and responsibilities or supervision’s place as a field and as a profession, not to mention professional ethics and responsibility in the current age of accountability (p. 1502).

In addition, the role of teacher educators has come under additional pressure, as criticisms have been leveled against the quality and effectiveness of teacher education programs on an international scale, including in the United States (Heck & Ambrosetti, 2018). As the challenges of teacher education continue to become more complex, scholars contend the importance of the supervisor’s role grows exponentially (Burns, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2016). For instance, the Blue Ribbon Panel report (NCATE, 2010) and more recently, the AACTE’s (2018) commissioned report, have called for teacher education programs to be firmly grounded in clinical practice. This means clinical educators “must themselves be effective practitioners, skilled in differentiating instruction, proficient in using assessment to monitor learning and provide feedback, persistent searchers for data to guide and adjust practice, and exhibitors of the skills of clinical educators” (NCATE, 2010, p. 6). A “new” demand that has emerged from these added pressures is the need for supervisors to practice pedagogical mindfulness or not reacting but being mindful or more aware of practice (AACTE, 2018). In reality, this need is not entirely
new as it has been implied or worded differently throughout supervision literature. For instance, Pajak (2003), when describing different styles of observers within a clinical supervision model, referenced an intuiting function, or “sixth sense,” which makes holistic inferences “about possibilities inherent in a situation” (p. 12). Burns and Badiali (2016b) also emphasized the importance of noticing, or “the ability to distinguish some incidents from other incidents in practice” (p. 162), as one of the six, pedagogical skills needed by supervisors. To promote teacher candidate learning, supervisors in clinical settings must also “create a balanced approach to supervision,” knowing when to combine high-leverage practices with routines of practice (Burns, Jacobs & Yendol-Hoppey, 2018, p. 22). A supervisor, for example, must know how to address instructional support with a teacher candidate without neglecting the critical aspect of building relationships. In essence, the effective teacher educator must become more “consciously skilled…being metacognitive about how to skillfully select, couple, and enact different pedagogical routines of supervisory practice” (Burns, Jacobs & Yendol-Hoppey, 2018, p. 23).

Within clinical-oriented programs, teacher candidates require developmentally appropriate, scaffolded opportunities to problem-solve in practical settings. This requires “unprecedented levels of support” and the ability to prepare a new type of teacher candidate. Thus, the role of the supervisor also needs to be “reconceptualized” (Burns, Jacobs & Yendol-Hoppey, 2016, p. 46-47).

In light of this perfect storm—evolving, conflicting views of supervision, increased pressure on the role, and the demand for more mindful, conscious practice—I also argue that conceptions of supervisor should be reimagined. Traditionally, supervision views have been limited and narrow in scope (Cohen & Bai, 2007; Glanz, 1995; Zeichner, 1983). To expand these views, I contend that scholars venture outside typical beliefs, epistemologies, and
traditions-to reach beyond Westernized, Cartesian perspectives. For instance, Glanz (1995) introduced the idea of blending principles from Taoism to improve supervision by bringing together varied approaches and lending balance to an unstable field. “If the Taoist premise of complementarity and harmony among seemingly diverse, if not opposing, ideas or frameworks can be accepted, supervision can be conceived as a function that uses a wide array of strategies, methodologies, and approaches” (p. 207). Contemporary scholars extended this metaphor of Taoist balance to clinical settings, as an approach to assist supervisors in balancing the myriad of practices and tasks (Burns et. al, 2018).

**Purpose of the Study**

In this self-study, I explored how Zen Buddhism constructs might illuminate my views of supervision. I was particularly interested in how Eastern notions, including awareness, emptiness, and impermanence, might be enacted during my naturally occurring role as teacher educator for candidates in their third semester in a clinical internship program. For instance, how might these constructs illuminate my experiences in participating in the formal observation process (e.g. conferencing, observing and gathering data, providing feedback)? I was also curious as to how these ideas might enlighten my interactions with the triad (teacher candidate, mentor teacher, and supervisor). I was equally interested in how these constructs might help me navigate, negotiate, and make peace with the inevitable challenges, stresses, and trials that arise when supervising in a teacher preparation program. The specific questions that guided my research were:

1. What do I experience as I attempt to enact Zen constructs within an undergraduate elementary teacher education program?
2. How might Zen constructs interact with routines of practice I regularly perform within supervision?

3. In what ways might Zen constructs illuminate my views as a supervisor working with teacher candidates?

**Rationale for the Study**

Why does this research matter? Why should others involved with teacher education care about my interest in Zen and its relationship to supervision? One answer is that supervision is a complex role, with many functions, which is constantly being tested by educational reform and outside forces. This is happening within a field that is conceptually and philosophically divided—unsteady, constantly waffling between supervisory views (Glanz, 1995). In other words, supervisors are like tight-rope walkers perched atop a wire that is constantly being wobbled. I believe the best defense against this uncertainty is to broaden our conceptions of supervision, to seek new and innovative approaches that assist supervisors in meeting these ever-present challenges. This requires being bold enough to entertain different, more foreign views that assist teacher educators in facing the inevitable storms. Presently, recommendations to adapt non-Westernized views of supervision have consisted solely of conceptual papers (Glanz, 1997; Tremmel, 1993). These ideas have not been fully enacted in practice. While scholars have researched a wide range of topics and concerns within instructional supervision, expanding supervision through Eastern ideologies, including Zen, remains unchartered. I also engaged in self-study to carry out this research. Self-study is extremely significant to the field of supervision and teacher education literature (Zeichner, 1999), as it has produced much of what is
known about how teacher educators work in the field. By conducting what I am coining a “spiritual self-study,” I examined self-study methodology as a possible vehicle for investigating new dimension, for instance, matters of spirituality, consciousness, and meditation.

**Methodology for the Study**

I conducted this self-study over two semesters (Fall 2018/Spring 2019) during my role as a graduate assistant/supervisor in an undergraduate teacher preparation program at a research 1 university. During this time, I enacted constructs found within Zen Buddhism and collected data during my time working with 11 teacher candidates in their third semester of the elementary teacher program. I used self-study as a methodology. Self-study is commonly used within teacher educator circles to examine practice and advanced findings in the field (Dinkleman, 2003; Korthagena & Lunenberg, 2004; Zeichner, 1999). However, I blended tenets of contemplative inquiry (Janesick, 2016) with self-study methodology to more appropriately investigate matters of a contemplative and spiritual nature (e.g. consciousness, mindfulness). Thus, I coined my approach, spiritual self-study. I collected data on my experiences enacting Zen constructs by maintaining a researcher’s journal, creating poetry, recording field notes, gathering teacher candidate artifacts, completing mindful observations (to be explained) and issuing exit surveys to candidates. I analyzed data through meditative writings and mindful coding practices, methods that supported my spiritual research paradigm.

**A Conceptual Framework for Supervision**

In designing my conceptual framework, I drew upon Glickman, Gordan, and Ross-Gordan’s (2001) framework of supervision. These images of the supervisor help me envision how scholars and teacher educators have presently conceptualized the image of the supervisor, and thus, how we can expand upon those images and entertain fresh images that could push the
field forward. The Glickman, Gordon, and Ross-Gordan framework features three prerequisite skills needed by supervisors: 1) knowledge; 2) interpersonal skills and 3) technical skills. The framework also addresses supervisory tasks, including direct assistance, group development, professional development, and curriculum development. I also build upon the theoretical work of Burns (2012), who asserting that the Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordan model failed to account for the supervision process in the context of field experiences, added the construct of beliefs as a fourth prerequisite. In addition, Burns (2012) referenced extreme images of the supervisor, which she based off the work of Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007). Calling them Supervisor A, B, C, and D, Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) originally conceived four images of the supervisor. Burns (2012) added monikers and descriptions for each image as well as potential sources of authority and power bases (Table 1). I agree with Burns, that although supervisors will likely not exist solely as one of these images but rather a combination, together these caricatures provide a conceptual basis for how supervisors are conceived. The following is a brief description of each image:

**Supervisor A (The Monitor)**

Grounded in the scientific management area (Bolin & Panaritis, 1992; McNeil, 1980; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007), this supervisor views teachers as the issue and “need to be held accountable for their actions and trained properly” (Burns, 2012, p. 36). This supervisor focuses on monitoring the behaviors and performance of the teacher and wields much control over the supervisory process. Consequently, the relationship is very hierarchal. As Burns notes (2012), teachers respond to this supervisor because he or she is in a position of power.
Supervisor B (Ms. Congeniality)

This supervisor operates within the human relations model of supervision, where relationships are the major focus. Ms. Congeniality is most interested in teachers as individuals, in their “interests, their happiness, and their well-being” (Burns, 2012, p. 36). The supervisor

Table 1: Revised Images of the Supervisor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image: (Burns, 2012; Arnold, 2016; Jacobs &amp; Casciola, 2016)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source of Authority</th>
<th>Power Base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Image:</strong></td>
<td>(Sergiovanni &amp; Starratt, 2007)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(Levin &amp; Nolan, 2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Monitor</strong></td>
<td>Scientific Management Era Efficiency, Training, Evaluation, Hierarchal Relationship</td>
<td>Bureaucratic</td>
<td>Legitimate Reward/Coercive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ms. Congeniality</strong></td>
<td>Human Relations Relationships take precedence</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Referent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
spends much time with the teacher, and it’s not uncommon for them to socialize after hours.

Supervisor C (The Critical Friend)

Like Ms. Congeniality, the Critical Friend supervisor values relationships and perceives each teacher as an individual, however, the difference is that there exists a “mutual dissatisfaction” (Burns, 2012, p. 37), which connects the supervisor and teacher candidate to the learning community. The teacher is given authority and responsibility to make decisions, and as a result, is more empowered under this supervisor than others mentioned. As Burns (2012) explains, both the supervisor and teacher hold expertise, which is valued among members in the learning community.

Table 1 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source of Authority</th>
<th>Power Base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Critical Friend</strong></td>
<td>Relationships and Discomfort</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Referent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mutual Dissatisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td>Expert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Organic Member</strong></td>
<td>Learning Community &amp; Ideas</td>
<td>Moral</td>
<td>Communal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shared Values/ Norms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table was adapted from a table featured in Burns, R. W. (2012). Conceptualizing supervision in the professional development school context: A case analysis (Doctoral dissertation).*
**Supervisor D (The Organic Member)**

In describing this image, Burns references Garman’s (1982) work, which positions collegiality as a frame of mind. One frame of mind is the organic supervisor, who is “indiscernible from the teacher as participant” (Burns, 2012, p. 37) in the learning community. The organic member supervisor understands her or his role to be to help teachers find leadership potential within themselves; the label, transformational leader, is associated with this image (Nolan, Badiali, McDonough, & Bauer, 2007).

**Expanding the Supervisor Image**

The images above have assisted teacher educators and scholars in describing various types of supervisors and how they approach their roles. These images help to identify supervisors’ beliefs, where they place their attention, and where they draw power. However, there is room to expand upon these images. For example, Glanz (1997) proposed the idea of embracing a “new ontological and epistemological perspective” (p. 194) in the form of Taoism. Glanz realized the potential for Taoism to be “particularly instructive” (p. 194) on reflecting upon the field of supervision in hopes of gaining greater conceptual clarity, writing:

> Often clearer perspectives can be achieved through the assumption of a different frame—a lens for viewing and understanding a particular problem. Such a frame can provide a different, perhaps more enlightening perspective and help individuals achieve higher levels of conceptual clarity. Taoist teachings and Eastern philosophy provide a unique perspective or frame through which issues in educational supervision can gain greater meaning (p. 203).

Similarly, Tremmel (1993) pondered how Zen Buddhism could help teacher candidates become more reflective in practice, noting how Western culture had largely shaped teacher
education programs. For instance, teacher education programs often encourage linear processes of reflection, rooted in Dewey’s five distinct steps of reflection. However, Tremmel drew connections to Schon’s (1983) ideas on reflection, which view “reflective practice as being intuitive and as emerging out of the self rather than being rule bound” (p. 440). Working with teacher candidates, Tremmel experimented with more meditative types of reflection, such as a stream-of-consciousness technique, where students freely write down what comes into the mind without hesitation.

Cohen and Bai (2007) also suggested teacher educators consider Eastern philosophies to help bridge the gap between teacher candidates acquiring knowledge and skills and the need to consider the human being and consciousness., articulating:

In this picture, what gets lost or left out is, of course, the human being who is undertaking all this doing in the service of having. The focus is on what he or she has, not on who he or she is. The focus on the person would take us to a very different paradigm: the being mode of existence and schooling… Can we conceive of an alternative educational paradigm that takes the states of consciousness seriously and deems them to be the legitimate and central educational concern? Yes, we can. For that, we need to go to radically different ontological views like the Daoist qi philosophy and the Zen philosophy (p. 5).

Such conversations raise questions about present views of supervision and what might added. What about the supervisor who might operate from a space of openness, awareness, and mindfulness, fully engaged in the role of supervisor? How do we imagine the teacher educator that remains centered and balanced, embracing change and interconnectedness, despite the chaos around him or her? How might we conceive such a supervisor? Glickman, Gordon, and Ross
Gordon, Sergiovanni and Starratt, and Burns significantly contributed to the conception of the supervisor, however, their images and descriptions of the supervisor fail to account for those supervisors seeking to operate under more contemplative, spiritual paradigms. Clearly, more work is needed to theorize these new possibilities.

**The Awakened Supervisor**

To expand present conceptions, I propose another image of the supervisor: The Awakened Supervisor (Table 2). The Awakened Supervisor approaches each day, each function, with curiosity or what is known as *beginner’s mind*. He or she operates from a space that transcends logic and rationality and socially-trained behavior. Rather, the Awakened Supervisor is mindful, intuitive, and present in every moment. Meditation and the inner world of the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source of Authority</th>
<th>Power Base</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awakened Supervisor</td>
<td>Impermanence, emptiness, mindfulness, openness, simplicity, beginner’s mind, paradox, interconnectedness</td>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>Embodiment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table was adapted from a table featured in Burns, R. W. (2012). Conceptualizing supervision in the professional development school context: A case analysis (Doctoral dissertation).*

Table 2: The Awakened Supervisor
supervisor are highly valued within this view. Additionally, the Awakened Supervisor embraces the notion of impermanence—things are constantly changing—the teacher candidates’ perceptions, beliefs, experiences, the supervisor’s expectations and experiences, the classroom dynamic, the triad dynamic—everything. Accepting constant change, the Awakened Supervisor attempts to flow with this movement, gently navigating the process like a skilled kayaker on a fast-moving river. In addition, the Awakened Supervisor represents an individual, whose flexible mind enables him to embrace other supervision images and approaches, as he sees fit, based on the given context and circumstances. This ability to find balance within seemingly opposing views is reminiscent of Glanz’s (1997) assertion that Taoism could benefit instructional supervision.

Being a conceptual framework, uncertainties exist around this image, which I explored during this research. For example, the Awakened Supervisor’s authority might be based on his or her spiritual strength or her inner power. No consensus exists on what constitutes spirituality (Claxton, 2002). For the purposes of this framework and study, I subscribe to the notion of spirituality encompassing various qualities, including aliveness, timeliness, an experience of oneness, and a sense of self beyond the physical reality (Claxton, 2002; Pava, 2007; Piechowski, 2003). While drawing upon other sources as well, the Awakened Supervisor might find his or her power base within the practices of contemplation, mindfulness, being one with the supervision process, and the like. The powerbase for the Awakened Supervisor may reflect elements from other power bases, namely referent and communal aspects. For instance, he or she might feel interconnected to others, and thus, enjoy deep relationships with triad members. However, teacher candidates also might respond positively and follow the lead of this supervisor because he or she “embodies” the qualities—the awakening—they seek.
In propositioning this new view of the supervisor, I anticipate some resistance from those unfamiliar with Eastern concepts. As Ho (1995) noted when observing Western psychologists, Eastern perspectives are often quickly dismissed as being unscientific, an “exotic curiosity” (p. 115) or taken more seriously by those dissatisfied with the “spiritual emptiness” (p. 155) found in the West, who are seeking wisdom and direction. Perhaps I fall into the second category, but I ask that scholars and others reading this study suspend their disbelief long enough for teacher educators to examine the possibilities inherent within this research. To comprehend how non-Western perspectives might assist supervision, it’s necessary to discuss some epistemological and ontological differences between Western and Eastern philosophy. In the United States, for instance, idealism, pragmatism, and existentialism, and other philosophies have dominated the ideological landscape, heavily influencing educators (Smith & Hu, 2013). The U.S. education system has also been greatly influenced by the thinking of Dewey, who promoted a progressive, practical education, which relied on scientific problem-solving, inquiry, and project work, the focus being on the growth of the individual (Smith & Hu, 2013). Contrast this philosophy with that of Confucianism, which greatly molded Chinese classrooms to be more collectivist, emphasizing virtue, discipline and conformity (Smith & Hu, 2013), and the disparities quickly become apparent.

Considering Eastern views within the context of supervision introduces a concept largely missing from teacher education—spirituality. Discussions of interconnectedness, consciousness, intuition, meditation, balance, flow states, openness, mindfulness, and other more esoteric topics are almost absent from teacher education literature. Such concepts could expand current understandings and epistemology of the field and perhaps could help guide teacher educators—both new and experienced—through some of the challenges inherent in the role. This new image
of the Awakened Supervisor takes into account the greater landscape of supervision, not only performing high-leverage practices and routine tasks but learning to expertly operate within the larger context. For instance, for supervisors burdened with responsibilities, meditation could help supervisors maintain a mental state conducive to “fresh, creative, and surprising insights that spring from an encounter with what is: the awesome, complex, and evolving reality in front of our eyes” (Cohen & Bai, 2007, p. 6). In much the same way that Glanz (1997) proposed Taoism as a way to balance supervision, Zen constructs might assist supervisors in navigating the storms, the rough seas of supervision. The Awakened Supervisor might be positioned to move between roles, to remain calm amidst the many responsibilities and demands, and to stay balanced despite the pressures and reforms bursting within the clouds of teacher education (see Figure 1.)

The Awakened Supervisor represents a new imaging of the role. Traditionally, the supervisor has been imagined as an individual that monitors teacher candidates, who works collegiately with them, who merges with the triad, and focuses a lens on issues such as social justice and cultural responsiveness. Building upon these conceptions, the Awakened Supervisor

Figure 1. The Awakened Supervisor
operating within the greater context of teacher education draws upon constructs largely absent from teacher educator conversations. The image invites exploration and questions into how awareness, mindfulness, openness, interconnectedness, even spirituality, factor into the role of supervision, including the routine practices, such as providing instructional and emotional support to teacher candidates. The Awakened Supervisor is open and aware of these other representations—for instance, he might value relationships and social equity—but emphasizes present-moment awareness and mental states of calmness and equanimity, which could aid in navigating the many challenges of supervision.

Definition of Terms

Before concluding this chapter, I provide a definition of key terms used throughout this research.

Clinically Rich Teacher Education Program. A program that integrates content and coursework with clinical field experiences. Clinical practice is integrated throughout the program, and the focus is on student learning. Furthermore, such a program features strategic partnerships and shared accountability between k-12 schools and colleges and universities regarding pre-service teachers’ progress, collaborative communities and research (NCATE, 2010).

Mindfulness. Various definitions exist for mindfulness, the most common dealing with the idea of intentionally paying attention to the present moment. Segal, Williams and Teasdale (2002) provide a more sophisticated definition, writing that mindfulness “has to do with refining our capacities for paying attention, for sustained and penetrative awareness, and for emergent insight that is beyond thought but that can be articulated through thought” (p. 8).
**Mentor Teacher.** A teacher who is the school-based teacher educator for a candidate in a clinical program (AACTE, 2018).

**Self-study.** A method of examining one’s own practice within teacher education. Self-study can occur independently or collaboratively (Dinkleman, 2003).

**Spirituality.** The concept has been associated with qualities such as experience of oneness, awareness, and a sense of self beyond the physical reality (Claxton, 2002; Pava, 2007; Piechowski, 2003). However, there is no consensus on the definition of spirituality.

**Supervision.** There is no agreed upon definition for instructional supervision (Waite, 1995). Definitions include: “improvement of instruction” (Weller, 1971, p. 5). Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2013) contend that, “supervision itself is not a role but rather a set of tasks aimed at improving pre-K–12 student achievement” (p. 400)

**Supervisor.** An individual that provides support to a teacher candidate within a clinical setting (Burns, Jacobs & Yendol-Hoppey, 2018).

**Teacher candidate.** These are individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs. The term pre-service teacher has been used to identify these individuals, however, teacher candidate is being used to reflect language in AACTE’s (2018) report, *A Pivot Toward Clinical Practice, Its Lexicon, and the Renewal of Educator Preparation*.

**Triad.** The triad consists of the teacher candidate, mentor teacher, and supervisor (e.g. the university supervisor). Each role carries different responsibilities, however, the purpose of the triad is to provide support and encourage the candidate’s growth and development.

**Zen Buddhism.** A subdivision of Buddhism, Zen has significantly influenced Eastern culture, predominately in Japan, where it has underpinnings in art, architecture, food, martial arts, and
other aspects of society. Zen holds various definitions and arguments exist over whether it is a religion, philosophy, or way of life.

**Conclusion**

Views on instructional supervision remain divided. The field of teacher education continues to oscillate between varied approaches, models, and paradigms, presenting a complexing situation to the supervisor. Supervisors are also under added pressure to prepare teacher candidates in clinical settings, as criticisms and concerns have been expressed over teacher preparation programs worldwide. Scholars need to reimagine current views of the supervisor in ways that position them to meet these increasing demands. This includes looking to other, diverse perspectives, philosophies, and ideologies. In this chapter, I have argued that by researching my enactment of Zen constructs in my supervisory role, I am furthering this idea of expansion and positioning myself to productively contribute to the professional literature. Ideas around imagining the supervisor, for instance, have mainly consisted of conceptual papers rather than actual research within clinical settings. I also engaged in self-study—drawing on spiritual elements-in a manner that could invite new discourse on how teacher education practice is examined. In the next chapter, I review empirical studies within instructional supervision, provide historical context, elaborate on various supervisor views, and explain Zen and its constructs relevant to this research. I also discuss my plan for enacting these ideas within the context of a clinical teacher preparation program.
“They’re so contradictory these people. Don’t expect consistency out of a Zen master. There’s a big book called the Shogogenzo I talked with a Zen master about this book. He said, ‘Oh, that’s a terrible book. It explains everything so clearly it gives the show away’” (Watts, 2014, n.p.).

In this chapter, I review the professional literature relevant to instructional supervision, I begin with an overview of the state of teacher education before defining instructional supervision. From there, I explain the various eras of supervision, providing a historical snapshot of how these views have evolved and conflicted overtime. I then address the current empirical literature on instructional supervision, including what has been reported from self-study research. I move into a detailed description of Zen and the constructs to be enacted in this study before ending the chapter with a plan for enacting those constructs within my supervisory role. It should be noted that the literature on supervision is vast and diverse, and many topics, theories, and ideas were intentionally not included in this review. My criteria for inclusion revolved around these questions: 1) what are the various views/approaches of supervision and what are the underlying ideologies, and how have these views/approaches evolved, intersected, and conflicted? and 2) what is the current research around instructional supervision? Likewise, one could spend a lifetime studying Zen; countless books have been written on these subjects.
Hence, I included information on these topics that addressed the following: 1) what are the basic, underlying teachings and concepts embedded in this tradition? 2) What particular notions, concepts, and ideas might be relevant to supervision?

**The State of Teacher Education**

Prior to discussing instructional supervision, I believe it will help to present the broader landscape of teacher education. The supervisor might be pictured as a captain of a vessel, the vessel as supervision, and the ocean as the field of teacher education. Whatever occurs within teacher education impacts supervision, and hence the supervisor, at some level. A tumultuous ocean also requires a more skilled captain. Right now, internationally, teacher education “faces uncertain times” (Heck & Ambrosetti, 2018, p. 3). Reviews in Australia and New Zealand, for instance, have questioned the efficacy and impact of teacher education programs. Teacher education in England is undergoing a “period of dramatic and seemingly irrevocable change,” as teacher programs are pressured to become school-led (Bamber & Moore, 2017, p. 1). University and college teacher preparation systems in the United States have been called a failure, with debate around what teachers should know and be able to accomplish, and how teacher candidates should be prepared for the job (Heck & Ambrosetti, 2018; Zeichner, Payne, & Brayko, 2015). NCATE’s (2010) Blue Ribbon report called for major reform of teacher preparation, recommending that teacher programs be “fully grounded in clinical practice and interwoven with academic content and professional courses” (p. ii). The report also highlighted the need for increased accountability for teacher programs, strengthening the candidate base, conducting research on clinical preparation, and focusing candidate preparation on positively impacting student outcomes. As a result, teacher educators must be clinically trained and be “accountable for the performance of the candidates they supervise, as well as that of the students they teach”
Teacher educators in clinical programs must provide candidates with pedagogical experiences situated within high-leverage practices, or “a set of practices that are fundamental to support PK-12 student learning, and that can be taught, learned, and implemented by those entering the profession” (Windschitl, Thompson, Braaten, & Stroupe, 2012). Clinically based teacher educators must also encourage reflective practice or pedagogical mindfulness—not reacting but being mindful or more aware of practice (AACTE, 2018). Despite the challenges of teaching teachers, the work of university-based teacher educators is often undervalued within teacher education (Cuenca, 2013). Teacher education as a whole, in fact, is not taken seriously in colleges and universities (Cuenca, 2013; Labaree, 2004; Zeichner, 2006). “As a result, those with the least status and authority within colleges of education—clinical faculty, graduate students, or retired educators—often assume the greatest responsibility for teaching student teachers” (Cuenca, 2013, p. xi). Such pressures, criticisms, and reforms centered around teacher education programs are like the waves crashing against the vessel of supervision, unavoidable and impactful. These waves undoubtedly impact the supervisor, making their skill and presence even more needed (Burns & Badiali, 2016a).

A Brief History of Instructional Supervision

Instructional supervision in the United States can be traced to at least the 1700s, where the term, *inspector*, regularly appears in writings about schools (Grumet, 1979). During this time, supervision methods “stressed strict control and close inspection of school facilities” (Sullivan, 2004, p. 7). The industrial revolution of the second half of the 19th century resulted in massive expansion of the American education system, and supervisory responsibilities fell to school superintendents (Sullivan, 2004). Schools became centralized bureaucracies, with superintendents justifying their existence through supervision (Glanz, 1991). Later, new
administrative positions were created to assist the superintendents, such as non-teaching roles that were charged with supervising teachers (Auala, 1987). The role of supervisor became more distinct, with positions involving special supervisors (mostly female) and general supervisors (mostly male) to assist with various areas of instruction (Sullivan, 2004). By the 1920s, opposition to bureaucratic supervision practices led to more democratic methods and a focus on helping teachers improve. It should be noted that supervision literature originally focused on working with in-service teachers, or those already in the job, but later included pre-service teachers, or those preparing to enter the field. This research and literature review focuses on pre-service teachers, or rather teacher candidates, the term being used to reflect more recent language in the field, but also draws from foundational supervision literature.

**Defining Supervision**

Supervision originates from two Latin words, *super* “over” and *videre* “to view”. There is no agreed upon definition for instructional supervision (Waite, 1995). The goal of “improvement of instruction” (Weller, 1971, p. 5) has been commonly used. The role of instructional supervision has been surrounded by ambiguity, prompting researchers to repeatedly request clearer delineation of those roles (Gimbert & Nolan, 2003). As Gimbert and Nolan (2003) explain, supervisors working in a triad (supervisor, teacher candidate, and mentor teacher) have existed in some form for the last 70 years, but exactly what that position involves remains vague. Burns, Jacobs and Yendol-Hoppey (2016) believe a supervisor “typically refers to the person who supports preservice teacher learning within the clinical context,” but referencing Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (2013) assert that, “supervision itself is not a role but rather a set of tasks aimed at improving pre-K–12 student achievement” (p. 400). Other definitions of supervision include:
• “An organizational function concerned with promoting teacher growth, leading to improvement in teaching performance and greater student learning. Supervision is not concerned with making global judgments concerning the teacher’s competence and performance” (Nolan & Hoover, 2011, p. 6).

• “Assistance for the enhancement of teaching and learning” (Glickman, Gordon & Ross-Gordon, 2013, p. 9).

• “Assistance or hand of help given to a professional colleague, the teacher in the process of teaching” (Runcan, 2013, p. 4-6).

Instructional supervision involves ongoing support and focusing on the teacher’s professional growth. Supervisors perform a variety of functions, including facilitating pre-and-post conferences, professional development activities (e.g. leading seminars and workshops), gathering data as part of research, and portfolio development (Mette, Anderson, Nieuwenhuizen, Range, Hvidston, & Doty, 2017). Furthermore, supervision may be carried out by a variety of school and university-related staff, including administrators, classroom teachers, and independent consultants. Due to the complex nature of the role, supervisors inherently face many challenges, including smoothly transitioning from a classroom teacher to a supervisor of teachers (Bullock, 2012; Williams, Ritter, & Bullock, 2007, 2009). Supervisors often tread the line between carrying out evaluation duties and serving as a supportive guide or coach. While Nolan and Hoover (2011) recommend the best way to handle the separation of evaluation and supervision is to have two, different individuals do the jobs, this is not always an option, leaving the supervisor responsible for both functions. Burns and Badiali (2015) note the tensions that exist when supervision is conflated with evaluation, as the two have different purposes, rationales, scopes, and other dimensions. Teacher candidates might worry about receiving high
evaluations to complete programs. Supervisors must also manage relationships between themselves, teacher candidates, and mentor teachers. This element of a third person can cause challenges, as the roles of these three players are “often are unclear and shifting” and to make matters worse “these triads are inevitably hierarchical and thus promote shifting alliances, one with the university supervisor on top and another with the cooperating teacher on top” (Bullough & Draper, 2004, p. 417). Finally, supervisors “wear multiple hats,” including “evaluator, liaison, colleague, resource, mentor, and instructor of record” (Johnson & Napper-Owen, 2011, p. 50-52). In addition to performing academic and instructional tasks, such as providing observational feedback to teacher candidates, supervisors must perform other tasks, including a public relations role at field placement sites (Cuenca, 2013). Supervisors are often charged with communicating expectations of teacher education programs to collaborating teachers and school administrators. Supervisors find themselves having to “smooth out” conflicts and “troubled relationships” (p. x) they arise between personality mismatches between mentor teachers and candidates or situations caused by problematic teacher candidates.

**High-Leverage Practices**

Based a meta-analysis of empirical studies of teacher candidate supervision, Burns, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey (2018) proposed a Scope and Nature of Teacher Candidate Supervision Framework. The framework consists of two tasks, eight high-leverage practices, and 84 pedagogical routines of practice engaged by supervisors. The tasks are 1) Collaboration and Community, or practices that cultivate the learning environment through establishing, building, maintaining, and renewing relationships” (p. 9-10) and 2) Curricular and Instructional Support, or “practices that offer targeted instructional support to meet the demands of learning to teach in the clinical context” (p. 10). Within those two tasks are eight, high-leverage practices that enable supervisors to actualize routine tasks in their practice (Burns, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2018).
Teacher educator high-leverage practices “occur with high frequency in the clinical context, can be enacted by supervisors across different clinical contexts, can be learned and mastered, are research-based, and improve TC learning” (p. 10). The following is a brief description of each practice:

1. Creating a Culture of Collegiality: routines that build a trusting environment where all voices are heard and respected.
2. Developing Interpersonal Familiarity: routines that help teacher educators and teacher candidates get to know each other.
3. Developing Quality Placements-routines that put into place structures and process to build and sustain schools as clinical places for teacher candidate growth.
4. Fostering Reflective Thinking- routines that encourage teacher candidate’s reflection on the impact of his or her actions but also the larger socio-political and historical landscape.
5. Fostering Theory and Practice Connections-routines that assist teacher candidates to move beyond isolated theoretical and practical learning.
6. Helping Educators Cope with Stress: routines that support the social and emotional needs of teacher candidates.
7. Providing Focused Instructional Feedback: routines that support the providing of targeted feedback on teaching.
8. Strengthening Curriculum Planning: routines that create understanding of the instructional planning process.

Undergirding these high-leverage practices are 84 pedogeological routines of practice or “concrete activities used to actualize high-leverage TC supervision practices and tasks to foster
TC learning” (p. 12). Considering the complexity of supervision, Burns, Jacobs, and Yendol-Hoppey stress the need for supervisors to balance the various practices and tasks and conclude that supervisors can foster teacher candidate learning when these tasks and practices are balanced. They also caution that “an imbalance of attending to pedagogical routines of practice and high-leverage practices in both tasks ultimately inhibited TC learning” (p. 20). The authors advise that successful supervisors must learn to be “consciously skilled” (p. 23), not only be aware of the myriad of practices but knowing when to use which one.

Evolving Views of Supervision

The evolution of supervision, including how it has been conceptualized, is a long, complex story. To provide structure, I’m borrowing Glanz’s (2000) categorization of supervision into three eras: premodern, modern, and postmodern.

Premodern Era

During the Premodern Era, supervision was synonymous with inspection (Glanz, 2000). By the end of the 19th century, schools were transformed into bureaucracies, with superintendents in charge as supervisors (Elsbree, 1939; Griffiths, 1966; Gilland, 1935). Bureaucratic supervision, or relying on inspectional methods, “dominated” discourse in the field until about 1920 (Sullivan, 2004, p. 15). Rather than improvement of instruction, the focus during the premodern era was removing inefficient teachers (Glanz, 2000). Behavioristic teacher education (Zeichner, 1983) falls within this premodern view, where the supervisor is situated in a positivistic epistemology and behavior psychology and emphasizes the development of specific and observable teaching skills. This orientation is concerned with production and performance and the teacher viewed as applying scientific laws and principles of what is considered effective teaching. May (1989) described this approach as a traditional view
of supervision, where supervisors diagnose problems through classroom observations and prescribe correction action. “This conception suggests that supervisors are experts and teachers are not…This view of teaching and/or supervision carries several labels which embody a theme of control: directive, executive, behavioristic or positivist” (p. 728). The premodern era suggests an imbalanced power differential and a clear hierarchy between supervisor and the supervised. Collegiality, autonomy, and discretion are not featured in this view. However, post 1920s marked a growing opposition and dissatisfaction with bureaucratic supervision.

**Modern Era**

This era represents a movement toward better democratizing supervision, while minimizing evaluative functions. “Supervisors tried to change their image as ‘snoopervisors’ by adopting alternate methods of supervision” (Glanz, 2000, p. 73). During the Modern Era, supervisory practices were largely influenced by intellectuals of the time, including John Dewey (1929), who espoused democratic, scientific thinking, and James Hosic (1920), who encouraged democratic supervision. During this era, a strong belief existed in the need to foster teacher professional development, to provide support, and to help teachers improve instruction. These ideas surfaced in a variety of supervision approaches that emerged during the Modern Era. For instance, Glickman (1981) drew on non-directive, collaborative, and directive orientations, situating them within the idea that supervisors need to “be more mindful of the developmental stages of teachers” (p. 6) and choose strategies and approaches based on these stages. Noting Fuller’s (1969) stages of development, where new teachers are generally pre-occupied with their own survival before they can focus on students, and need-based theories of Maslow and Erikson, Glickman (1981) suggested that supervisors consider the variables of commitment and the ability to think abstractly. Also falling into the Modern Era, May’s (1989) *interpretive-practical* approach
positions the supervisor as a guide or facilitator, using collaboration and communication. This approach places the person at the center and operates under the premise that problems in teaching are situational and complex and do not contain universal answers.

Other supervision approaches falling into the Modern Era include ego counseling, which deals mainly with the psychological aspect of new teachers and “stresses the personal response of the beginning teacher” (Cohn & Gellman, 1988, p. 3) and group supervision, in which the supervisor aims to create a context for learning, where group members feel comfortable discussing and exploring, and thus, learn from each other (Cohn & Gellman, 1988). Later, other views and models of supervision emerged during the Modern Era, including cognitive coaching, a “nonjudgmental, developmental, reflective model” (Costa & Garmston, 1989, p. 5) grounded in humanistic and cognitive theories. Cognitive coaching features supervisors and teachers engaging in a cycle of planning and reflecting conversations. The idea is that by focusing on the teacher’s cognitive functioning, the result will be a change in behavior, which in turns improves performance in the classroom. Strengths-based coaching also shifts away from the traditional, apprenticeship model of teacher preparation and more towards a mentoring model of supervision (He, 2009). Basing their ideas on positive psychology, Tschannen and Tschannen (2011) encourage teacher educators to coach by recognizing and respectfully acknowledging teacher candidates’ current strengths and abilities and assisting them in capitalizing on these traits, shifting power dynamics and responsibility in the process. In line with strengths-based ideology, Korthagen and Vasalos (2008) developed the Quality from Within (QfW) model to make teachers aware of core qualities and inspiration and support them in enacting these practices. QfW is professional development that focuses on growth, “starting from and building upon the inner potential” of teachers (Zwart, Korthagen &
Attema-Noordewier, 2015, p. 580). Essential within QfW is reflection upon various layers of the model geared toward promoting awareness of ideals and core qualities, identifying obstacles, developing trust in the process, supporting inner potential, and developing autonomy in using core reflection (Korthagen and Vasalos, 2008; Zwart, Korthagen & Attema-Noordewier, 2015). As illustrated by these differing views, the Modern Era of supervision represents a divisive break from autocratic, bureaucratic supervision that placed heavy emphasis on control and evaluation. Collegiality, collaboration, facilitation, the growth and improvement of the teacher, and sharing of power emerged as characteristics of the Modern Era.

**Table 3: Characteristics of the Eras of Supervision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Era</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Examples of Associated Views/Models/Paradigms</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Premodern</td>
<td>Bureaucratic, controlling, supervision through inspection, lack of autonomy, evaluative.</td>
<td><em>Behavioristic teacher education</em> (Zeichner, 1983);</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
<td>Dissatisfied with premodern approach; emphasis on growth of the teacher, collegiality, relationship-focused, autonomy.</td>
<td><em>Developmental supervision</em> Glickman’s (1981); <em>Cognitive Coaching</em> (Costa &amp; Garmston, 1989).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postmodern</td>
<td>Modern views seen as overly technical; emphasis on relationship, particular language used.</td>
<td>Moving away from term, “supervision” (Glickman, 1992; Gordon, 1997). <em>dialogic supervision</em> (Waite, 1995).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This table was summarized based on work in Glanz, J. (2000). Supervision: Don’t discount the value of the modern. In J. Glanz & L.S. Behar- Horenstein (Eds.), Paradigm debates in curriculum and supervision: Modern and postmodern perspectives (pp. 70-92). Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.*
Postmodern Era

According to Glanz (2000), the postmodernist perspective positions modernist views of supervision as overly technical in nature. Instead, the postmodern view might embrace dialogic supervision (Waite, 1995), where the supervisor focuses more on the relationship with the teacher candidate rather than data and serving more as a witness to teaching for the purpose of engaging in that dialogue. Waite (1995), for instance, places great emphasis on the language used during conferencing between supervisors and teacher candidates, noting “supervisors wishing to exhibit more collaborative behaviors must seriously examine their agenda and motivations before engaging with a teacher in a conference” (p. 74). To move away from bureaucratic practices, postmodern scholars have gone as far as to suggest doing away with the term, supervision, instead favoring the phrase, instructional leadership (Glickman, 1992; Gordon, 1997).

The Empirical Literature of Instructional Supervision Within Teacher Preparation

Research within the last five years on supervisory practices within teacher preparation has largely focused on the triad dynamic, reflective practices for teacher candidates, providing feedback to candidates, and to a much lesser extent, the stance of the supervisor. Another major source of research stems from self-studies, often conducted by teacher educators. As one would expect, self-study literature is mainly concerned with the teacher educator’s own development, as opposed to the focus being on teacher candidates. The four broad themes found within these self-studies address: 1) the impact of pedogeological interventions on teacher candidate’s learning and development, 2) the dissonance between one’s beliefs and intentions and actual teaching practices, 3) teacher educators trying to create a more “socially just learning
environment” (p. 513), and 4) articulating a philosophy of teacher education and exploring theoretical concepts.

**Triad Dynamics**

Instructional supervision scholarship has often focused on the dynamic within the triad, including relationships and perspectives of members (Campbell & Lott, 2010; Koerner, Rust, & Baumgartner, 2002; Lemma, 1993; Rikard & Knight, 1997). In reviewing studies of relationships in practicum teacher programs, Haigh and Ward (2004) noted that discussions between triad members increased understanding of program expectations and bolstered collegiality. Nevertheless, the authors concluded that “although we found there is considerable good intent within the practicum, the situation has been shown to be less than ideal for all members of the partnership” (p. 145). Johnson and Napper Owen’s (2011) cross-case analysis also focused on relationships, specifically teacher candidates’ and mentor teachers’ perceptions of university supervisors. Teacher candidates expected the supervisor to be present at the placement school regularly and provide support and feedback while the cooperating teacher believed the supervisor should help link theory to practice and take care of administrative responsibilities, such as paperwork. Ultimately, the researchers’ findings reinforced research suggesting that increased communication between the triad could reduce negativity. In another study, Bullough and Draper (2004) examined what went wrong between a supervisor, mentor teacher, and teacher candidate, concluding that the politics existing within a triad revealed a “much more complicated story than is typically told” (p. 418).

**Reflective Practices**

Instructional supervision research has also centered around the development of reflective practice among teacher candidates (Choy, Yim, & Tan, 2017; Haberlin, Jacobs, & Robinson,
Topics include testing various analytical models (Choy, Yim, & Tan, 2017), action research approaches (Toman, 2017), and utilizing arts-based methods to encourage more complex layers of reflection (Haberlin, Jacobs, Robinson, 2018). Oakley, Pegrum, and Johnston (2014) also examined how e-portfolios, or digital collections of work-impacted candidates’ ability to reflect on practice, noting that candidates struggled at times with using the technology and required additional support. Jones and Ryan (2014) researched the impact of online forums on candidate’s ability reflect, concluding that they were equally likely to reflect on their teaching regardless of whether engaging in a structured format (e.g. threaded discussion) or a less structured one, such as a blog.

Feedback to Candidates

Researchers have also focused on how supervisors approach giving feedback to teacher candidates (Ackan & Tatar, 2010). These studies have examined types of interaction, specifically conversations held during feedback conferences between candidates and supervisors or mentor teachers (Lopes-Real, Stimpson, & Bunton 2001; Orland 2001; Wilson 2006). This research included studying the impact of utilizing video-taping technologies to enhance feedback to candidates (Baecher & McCormack, 2015; Gelfuso, 2016). For instance, Nagro and colleagues (2017) reported promising results when having teacher candidates use video-based reflections, noting that it assisted in both their reflective abilities and teaching skills. Burns, Jacobs and Yendol-Hoppey (2016) found that supervisors varied in the type of feedback provided to candidates; some provided immediate corrective feedback, while others provided concrete suggestions for improvement. Supervisors also posed different types of questions to candidates (e.g. open-ended, clarifying).
Supervisor Stance

Researchers also have studied supervisors as central to teacher preparation (Bates Burbank, 2008; Bates, Ramirez, & Drits, 2009; Ralph, 2003; Steadman, 2009), however, Bates, Drits and Ramirez (2011) argued that these studies do not concentrate on the supervisor stance. A supervisor’s stance can be considered his or her “professional knowledge, perspective and conceptualization about how student teachers learn to teach in the classroom context” (p. 70). In examining philosophies of different student teacher supervisors, Bates, Drits, and Ramirez (2011) discovered these supervisors derived their views and philosophies from a variety of sources, both personal and professional, and that their stances evolved overtime. Examples included one supervisor developing much of her philosophy from reflecting on practice while another gained her beliefs and ideas from her experience as classroom teacher. In a later work, Kosnik and colleagues (2016) published a book about 28 English/Literacy teacher educators across four countries, collecting data on their backgrounds, beliefs, and stances. The authors noted that eight of the teacher educators reported having a critical stance, their main goal being to support traditionally underserved students.

Self-Study Literature

Often completed by university supervisors, self-studies have produced much of the literature in teacher education, prompting some to even claim it to be the “single most significant development ever in the field” (Zeichner, 1999, p. 8). Self-study topics run the gamut, covering a myriad of ideas embedded within teacher education. Self-studies by novice teacher educators suggest that supervisors cannot simply transfer knowledge and skills learned as a teacher to a teacher preparation program (Berry, 2007; Bullock, 2007; Kitchen, 2005). “‘Learning to teach’ teachers is a complicated process that requires a teacher educator to confront and re-examine his
or her prior assumptions about teaching and learning while constructing a pedagogy of teacher education” (Bullock, 2009, p. 292). Self-studies have mostly described professional and personal development among teacher educators looking to improve their craft. In a compilation of self-study research, Russell (2005) wrote about examining his assumptions and becoming more aware of his own supervisory practices through metacognition and perception. Feldman (2005) explored an existential approach, studying what it means to be a teacher educator while Freese (2005) contemplated how the use of self-study by teacher candidates impacted her views and practice.

More recently, Bair and colleagues (2010) turned to self-study to investigate emotions experienced by teacher educators. Makaiau and Freese (2013) conducted a self-study on their multicultural identities as teacher educators. Later, Jónsdóttir, Gísladóttir and Guðjónsdóttir (2018) published a self-study on collaboration in supervision, working to create a third space. Self-study also has shed light on doctoral students in supervisory positions, attempting to build relationships with teacher candidates and acclimate to higher-education environments (Lynch, Andrew, Richards, & Pennington, 2018).

Despite this scholarship, few researchers have pursued empirical research—for example, in a field-based experience on the stance of the supervisor or how we can reimagine the supervisor. Surprisingly, self-study practitioners have not examined the possibility of turning to non-Western ideas, such as spirituality, within the teacher education context. Furthermore, while self-study literature describes personal development and renewal, the concept of spirituality, and how its methodologically handled using self-study, is largely absent.
A Non-Western Approach to Supervision

The idea of introducing Eastern views into education is not a novel idea. Emerging in the 1960s, the contemplative movement has seen a steady increase in interest in enacting practices in schools and other educational settings (Bai, Scott & Donald, 2009). Contemplative education is situated within Buddhism, Daoism, Yoga, and other disciplines and argues that conventional education is missing the study of different types of consciousness (Bai, Scott & Donald, 2009). Citing empirical studies that demonstrate positive benefits for practices such as meditation, scholars have proposed introducing this body of work to educators, including classroom teachers (Davidson et al., 2012).

Schon’s Knowing in Action

While not specifically referring to Eastern notions or ways of thinking such as Zen, Schon did much to broaden how education scholars and teachers conceptualize reflection of practice. Schon (1983, 1987) challenged contemporary notions of reflective practice, arguing that reflection should break away from the traditional Technicality approach, which privileged researchers and scientific knowledge. Rather, more weight should be given to insights gleaned from those practitioners on the job, such as teachers. Schon (1983) posited the concept of “knowing-in-action” (p. 42), which he associated with the ideas of reflection-in-action or “thinking on your feet” (p. 54). He compared this process to the same groove that athletes and musicians found when spontaneously making decisions and responding to stimuli in the midst of action. As opposed to reflection after an experience, Schon argued that reflection also occurred in the moment, through a more intuitive approach. Though not directly linking this experience to Zen or other Eastern traditions, I believe his ideas were very much aligned with this paradigm.
Zen and Teacher Education

Drawing connections to Schon’s (1983) work, Tremmel (1993) saw the possibilities of bringing Zen, and particularly the concept of mindfulness, to teacher education. Noting how Western culture has largely shaped teacher education programs, Tremmel expounded upon Schon’s (1983) ideas on reflection in action. For instance, Tremmel pointed out that teacher education programs often encourage linear processes of reflection, rooted in Dewey’s original five distinct steps of reflection (he later renamed the steps to “aspects.”) However, quoting Schon, Tremmel argued “reflective practice as being intuitive and as emerging out of the self rather than being rule bound” (p. 440). Tremmel described how mindfulness (a Zen construct to be later elaborated) aligns itself with deeper levels of reflection. In his work with student teachers, Tremmel experimented with more meditative types of reflection, such as a stream-of-consciousness technique, free-writing, where students write down whatever enters the mind without injecting editorial comments. Interestingly, Tremmel reported that some students resist their technique because it begins to reveal the workings of their mind, the knowing of the self—which is required to become truly mindful and reflective. A second technique involves focusing on the practice of paying attention when responding to students’ teaching and coursework. Tremmel recounts a situation when a teacher candidate struggled with planning instruction and how he advised this candidate to also be mindful of the students’ responses as well as his own thoughts and feelings during the lesson—as the real problem was the candidate’s inability to perceive what occurred and make adjustments. In my prepositioning the use of Zen constructs in this study, I turn to philosophical and conceptual understandings to support my argument. I also draw upon empirical literature on mindfulness and meditation practices.
**Taoism and Supervision**

Glanz (1997) published an article about providing balance and centering to a conflicted, oscillating field of supervision. He advocated embracing a “different ontological and epistemological perspective” (p. 194) in the form of Taoism. Glanz realized the potential for Taoism to be “particularly instructive” (p. 194) on reflecting upon the field of supervision in hopes of gaining greater conceptual clarity, writing: Often clearer perspectives can be achieved through the assumption of a different frame—a lens for viewing and understanding a particular problem. Such a frame can provide a different, perhaps more enlightening perspective and help individuals achieve higher levels of conceptual clarity. Taoist teachings and Eastern philosophy provide a unique perspective or frame through which issues in educational supervision can gain greater meaning (p. 203). Positioning supervisors as vulnerable within a tumultuous, divided field, Glanz offered several implications for Taoism: 1) rather than resist inevitable conflicts, see them as opportunities for change and improvement, 2) achieve balance through appreciation of diverse ideas and outlooks, and 3) realize that what appears negative might be the “seeds for positive growth” (p. 205). In addition, Glanz (1997) believed a Taoist perspective could empower supervisors to navigate the multitude of views, models, and paradigms, and rather than feel obligated to settle upon one approach, to maintain the flexibility and openness to select what’s best for a particular situation. “From a Taoist perspective, then, conflicting theories or proposals for supervision should be welcomed, not resisted. By accepting a diversity of views to inform practice, a balance or centeredness can be attained” (p. 205)

**Framing Zen within Supervision**

In my prepositioning the use of Zen constructs in this study, I turn to philosophical and conceptual understandings to support my argument. I also draw upon empirical literature on
mindfulness and meditation practices. For instance, considerable research, with promising results, exists around mindfulness and meditation in education, medicine, psychotherapy, and other fields. These findings include the impact of meditation techniques on cognitive functioning, such as memory and alertness and physiological functioning, such as blood pressure and cardiovascular health.

To further elaborate on how Zen might assist supervisors, a thorough background is needed. First, Zen has been described as virtually impossible to explain (Watts, 2012). This is because Zen averts the use of the written word and is predicated on direct transmission of experience. Since I’m dealing with a highly abstract subject, I believe perhaps an effective way to present this material is through stories, analogies, and anecdotes (Zen has a tradition of this sort of thing), which will hopefully make these ideas more concrete to readers. Another point of contention in articulating Zen is that the topic fills entire books and lectures. Rather than cover every aspect of Zen, instead, what I’ve attempted to do is extract constructs that may be useful and practically applicable to supervision. This approach follows other authors, who have attempted to distill Zen into a series of constructs or concepts then suggest how they might be utilized within a particular field or endeavor. An example of this is *Presentation Zen: Simple Ideas on Presentation Design and Deliver* (Reynolds, 2011), which applies Zen concepts to the aesthetics of visual-digital mediums. In fact, Zen appears to be highly transferable, as it has been introduced and applied into a variety of fields and disciplines, including therapy, gardening, dance, archery, and hospice care (Collet, 1999; Harte, 1999; Herrigel, Hull, & Blum, 1953; Robins, 2002). I selected the Zen constructs for this study based partly that ones I deeply resonated with (e.g. awareness, beginner’s mind) as well as others that transferred well into Western activities (e.g. simplicity). I also made selections in light of the practices I regularly
engage during supervision (e.g. building relationships, providing feedback).

**Zen Buddhism**

Zen Buddhism, commonly known as Zen, is a derivative of Buddhism, an ancient religion originating in India. Debates over whether Zen is a religion, a philosophy, a psychology- or a mixture-have ensued. Watts (2012), who popularized Zen in the West, described it as “a way and view of life that does not belong to any formal categories of Modern Western thought. It is not religion or philosophy; it is not psychology or a type of science. It is an example of what is known in India and China as a ‘way of liberation’” (p. 3). Zen Buddhists refuse to be associated with any specific philosophical position, instead describing their teachings as a “practical method for spiritual development” (James, 2003, p. 144). James (2003), however, notes that Zen’s conceptual base is essentially drawn from Buddhist philosophical concepts. Zen originated as a highly practical break from Buddhism, which migrated from China to Japan, where it was in fashion among the aristocracy. Zen—with its value and traditional-free techniques—was adapted to weaponry, such as archery, and embraced by the Japanese warrior class, known as samurai (Twemlow, 2001). In its purest form, Zen eschews religion, even Buddhism in some ways. Zen is essentially a method of dealing with everyday life, a path to mental freedom, which prepositions “mundane daily matters” (Twemlow, 2001, p. 7).

Zen’s origins trace back to China (referred to there as Ch’an), when a monk named Bodhidharma brought Buddha’s teachings from India. The first Ch’an school was established in China in 730 (Shih, 1953). Studying in China, Myosan Eisai returned to Japan in 1191, teaching what became known as the Rinzai school of Zen. Dissatisfied with Rinzai teachings, Dogen Zenji also studied in China and established Soto Zen. While views on this differ, both Rinzai Zen and Soto Zen practitioners engage in *koans* (a type of riddle) and *zazen* (sitting meditation).
Rinzai Zen has been described as using a more shocking approach, relying heavily on _koans_ and unorthodox techniques, even sometimes physical striking, to promote a dramatic awakening in practitioners (Berkson, 2014). However, Soto Zen practitioners believe that _zazen_ in itself is sufficient to reach enlightenment. What separates Zen from other religions or spiritual practices is that it discourages the use of textual knowledge and scriptures. Instead, Zen encourages the transfer of direct experience through the assistance of a teacher and practices, including meditation. By ignoring the intellect in favor of intuition, Zen became what Hoover (2010) calls the religion of the anti-rational or the counter mind, experiencing life without distractions of the intellect or analysis. Watts (1967) described the Zen mind as “a as a mirror. It grasps nothing, it refuses nothing. It receives but does not keep” (n.p.). Zen contains numerous concepts and notions that underlie its practice, including mindfulness, impermanence, and _beginner’s mind_, which I describe below.

**Mindfulness**

I hesitate to use the term, _mindfulness_, in this literature review, as I believe mainstreaming of the term has caused it to become cliché and misunderstood, or as Neale (2011) called it McMindfulness. Nevertheless, I feel mindfulness—or a related concept, such as awareness or being fully present—is essential to the discussion of Zen and my enactment. Mindfulness is rooted in Buddhist practice, dating back to early teachings of the _Sutra on the Four Establishments of Mindfulness_ (Tremmel, 1993). Various definitions exist for mindfulness, the most common being the notion of intentionally paying attention to the present moment. Segal, Williams and Teasdale (2002) provide a more sophisticated definition, writing that mindfulness “has to do with refining our capacities for paying attention, for sustained and penetrative awareness, and for emergent insight that is beyond thought but that can be articulated through
thought” (p. 8). Kabat-Zinn (2003) known for mainstreaming mindfulness in the United States is often cited for this definition: “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” (p. 145). To explain the practice, Tremmel (1993) used the metaphor “to return” (p. 443). Imagine meditating or engaging in daily activity, and the mind begins to naturally wander and have thoughts. At that point, one would practice bringing the attention to the present moment. Another example, I offer, might be to recall an intense moment in one’s life, when all the senses were fully engaged-- perhaps during a car accident, skydiving, or exchanging wedding vows, for instance. Nothing exists in the mind but that moment; this would be an example of being mindful.

Robins (2002) prescribes two skill sets for developing mindfulness: “what skills,” and “how skills.” The what skills involve observing, describing, and participating. One simply observes phenomena through the five senses, without describing it. A person can also describe what one observes, and a person can act with full engagement and awareness. The goal, Robins (2002), explains is to act mindfully at all times. The “how” skills require being non-judgmental, one-mindedness or doing one thing at a time, and effectiveness, which means being clear in one’s intentions and skillfully achieving those aims. Vietnamese Buddhist monk and renowned Zen master, Thich Nhat Hanh (1975) posits meditation as the main vehicle to developing mindfulness, directing practitioners to sit and close the eyes then focus on the breath.

**Zazen (Sitting Meditation)**

Closely related to mindfulness, and central to Zen, is the practice of meditation or zazen. The practice requires sitting in a prescribed posture and watching the breath. During zazen, one begins by sitting with legs crossed (this can range from full-lotus to other positions for less
advanced practitioners). The most important thing during zazen is to keep the spine straight. “If you slump, you lose yourself” (Suzuki, 1970, p. 26). The shoulders, and hips are aligned, the chin tucked slightly in, the hands forming a “cosmic mudra” or oval (Suzuki, 1970, p. 26) by positioning the left hand gently on top of the right palm, thumbs touching as if holding a piece of paper. One does not try to accomplish anything during zazen. Thoughts are allowed to come and go. The breath is comfortably used to focus attention. Within five to ten minutes, the mind naturally calms down. By practicing this meditation, Suzuki (1970) wrote, one will “begin to appreciate your beginner’s mind” (p. 22).

It is worth noting that mindfulness is often confused with other meditation practices, and that mindfulness can take other forms than breathing meditation (Romero, 2016). For example, Transcendental Meditation, or TM, employs the use of mantra as the focal point (as opposed to the breath) to achieve a meditative state. TM, which has been heavily researched, has been used extensively in health sciences and being introduced in U.S. schools (Wendt et al., 2015).

Mindfulness in Motion

Mindfulness practices extend beyond sitting with the eyes closed or breathing while in a seated position. Mindfulness techniques can also entail mindfulness practiced while walking, eating, or doing mundane chores. Hanh (2016) describes how mindfulness could be used while washing dishes:

While washing the dishes one should only be washing the dishes, which means that while washing the dishes one should be completely aware of the fact that one is washing the dishes. At first glance, that might seem a little silly: why put so much stress on a simple thing? But that's precisely the point. The fact that I am standing there and washing these bowls is a wondrous reality. I'm being completely myself, following my breath,
conscious of my presence, and conscious of my thoughts and actions. There's no way I can be tossed around mindlessly like a bottle slapped here and there on the waves (p. 1-2).

Hanh (2012) also teaches Deep Listening or Compassionate Listening, where the listener is fully present, and the goal is to allow the talker to completely empty their heart. In this type of listening, the listener does not interrupt or interject opinions or advice but simply allows the other to speak, which Hanh believes can reduce suffering.

**Empirical Research on Mindfulness and Meditation**

Mindfulness-based practices have also filtered into schools, the medical field, and psychoanalytical field. Kabat-Zinn’s Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), an eight-week program, has been scientifically tested extensively (Kabat-Zinn et al., 1992; Romero, 2016). While there has been some criticism over findings and the manner in which studies have been conducted, the majority of research on mindfulness and meditation has been promising. For instance:

- Mindfulness meditation reduced substance abuse and recidivism rates in prison populations (Ivanovski & Mali, 2007)

- Mindfulness meditation was reported to reduce blood pressure (Black, Milam, & Sussman, 2009; University of Alberta, 2007).

- A review of 20 studies found meditation and other mindfulness practices reduced blood pressure and depression and improve sleep, cognitive functioning, self-esteem, attention, and anger management (Romero, 2016; Sibinga & Kemper, 2010). TM was also reported to reduce absenteeism in schools along with suspensions (Sibinga & Kemper, 2010).
Romero (2016) in her work on mindful teaching, outlined a number of studies that demonstrated the cognitive benefits of mindfulness meditation, which are particularly relevant to the role of supervisor, who must regularly observe to provide feedback to teacher candidates. For example, researchers found mindfulness meditation produced consequences such as increased perceptual receptivity and concentration, increased cognitive flexibility, enhanced self-awareness, and a significant improvement in the attention controlling processes (Malinowski, 2013; McGee, 2008). Early research involving measuring brain activity using measurement of electroencephalogram (EEG) among Zen monks engaged in zazen showed that the practice produces a unique state of mind, a “relaxed awakening with steady responsiveness” (Kasamatsu & Hirai, 1966, p. 334). A more recent study suggested that zazen practitioners had more control over the brain’s default network, which is responsible for automatic stream of thoughts that occur in the absence of goal-directed activity (Pagnoni, Cekic, & Guo, 2008).

**Emptiness**

Zen teachings include the concept of *emptiness* or void, referring to the emptiness of separate things from being. *Emptiness* emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things (Twemlow, 2001). As James (2003) instructs:

> briefly put, the emptiness teaching states that all things lack an inherent nature, that all things are, as it were, “empty” of self-existence. The claim here is not that nothing exists at all, but only that nothing exists as a substance; that is, as wholly independent of its relations to other things (p. 144).

In other words, all things found in phenomena are not self-existent, single elements, or units—further examination would reveal these units by themselves would be empty of self-existence (James, 2003). Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh (2013) teaches that *emptiness* does not mean
nothingness. He uses the example of a flower: it contains sunshine, soil, time, space, the gardener, and consciousness. The flower is only empty of one thing—self-being, a separate nature or separate existence, because a flower cannot exist by itself. If these other elements are removed, the flower would perish. Hanh says that likewise, a person could not exist without his or her parents, nutrients from food, air, etc. He or she is inextricably connected to everyone else.

**Impermanence**

Underlying Zen (as well as Buddhism) is the idea that nothing is permanent, that “every experience quickly disappears the same moment we experience it” (Yoshimoto, 2011, p. 84). *Impermanence* can be observed in gross experiences (e.g. death, growing old) as well in subtle ones (e.g. a moment in time, a fleeting thought). But the idea of *impermanence* in Zen is not to be taken as some fatalistic outlook but rather to empower practitioners to see the beauty in every moment of life. This appreciation of the ever-changing beauty in nature is captured in a poem by Zen Master Dogen (Tanahashi, 1995, p. 12):

To what shall
I liken the world?
Moonlight, reflected
In dewdrops,
Shaken from a crane’s bill.

Buddha taught that *impermanence* was the cause of much suffering (Martin, 1999), as individuals cling to what will inevitably change. The trouble is not in the fact that things change but an individual’s inability to gracefully allow change. “‘Impermanence’ means that we live in a dynamic and ever-changing universe—there is no permanent self and no permanent condition except change itself. Suffering arises when we become attached to a fixed way of looking at the
world and attempt to resist impermanence” (Bloom, 2010, p.18). The idea of impermanence has been used by Buddhists as a teaching tool to cope with death and loss. Hanh has compared life and death to clouds, noting that a cloud is never gone but rather simply changes form. In this view, “birth and death are fictions, and not very deep” (in Smith, 1996, p. 9).

Shoshin (Beginner’s Mind)

Beginner’s mind or shoshin in Japanese is the idea of approaching situations and activities as if learning or experiencing them for the first time, regardless of how experienced we might be. One must return to a sort of innocence. Beginner's mind remains open to new possibilities, unrestrained by prior experience, knowledge, or assumptions. Suzuki (1970) proclaimed the entire goal of Zen practice was to maintain a beginner’s mind:

In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few…The mind of the beginner is empty, free of habits of the expert, ready to accept, to doubt, and open to all possibilities. It is the kind of mind which can see things as they are, which step by step in a flash can realize the original nature of everything.…. In the beginner's mind there is no thought, "I have attained something." All self-centered thoughts limit our vast mind. When we have no thought of achievement, no thought of self, we are true beginners. Then we can really learn something. (p.13-14, 21-22).

Those unfamiliar with beginner’s mind might have heard of the phenomenon of beginner’s luck, when a novice attempting something for the first time performs better than an experienced person; beginner’s mind would explain this as the novice’s previous experience and thought did not interfere with a task (Belshee, 2005). Shoshin can be seen expressed through Japanese calligraphy, where the goal is to write simple and straightforward, without embellishment or appearing skilled, as “if you were writing for the first time” (Suzuki, 1970, p. 14). The
beginner's mind positions one to be responsive to whatever comes his or her way. Applying shoshin to learning to dance, Demerson (2013) explained that the practitioner enters the activity without expectations, allowing “each moment to be unique, and with an open mind can perceive the entirety of the moment with clarity. The mind is open—ready for anything” (p. 99). Beginner’s mind does not discount an individual’s training or experience, but rather it provides practitioners with “with an opportunity to rejuvenate,” and experience “heightened sensitivity” and “responsiveness to the present moment” (Demerson, 2013, p. 100).

An anecdote known as “Cup of Tea” (Sensaki & Reps, 1957, p. 19) has often been used to succinctly illustrate the mindset needed for beginner’s mind. As the story goes, a university professor visits a Japanese master to inquire about Zen. While serving tea, the master intentionally pours the professor’s cup until its full then keeps pouring. Unable to restrain himself, the professor blurts, “the cup is full. No more will go in!” The master replies, “like this cup, you are full of your own opinions and assumptions. How can I teach you Zen unless you first empty your cup?”

Beginner’s mind has been applied to various fields with positive results. For example, novice software engineers were found to be more productive and innovative at certain tasks. “People tend to be more creative when they only partially understand a situation. Because they don’t know all of the limits yet, they don’t have as much difficulty seeing past them” (Belshee, 2005, n.p.). Applying Zen to grading papers, a law professor found beginner’s mind benefited students. “When I’ve achieved my goal in preparing the exam question, it also allows the student to exercise beginner's mind by expressing something fresh, original, and wonderful about policy, theory, and even well-established doctrine” (Robson, 2002, p. 313).
Mushin No Shin (No Mind)

Associated with beginner’s mind is the concept of “no mind” or mushin, which is not to be mistaken with mindlessness or the absence of intelligent thought. Rather, mushin might be thought of as a clearer, more efficient state of mind, free of outside distractions brought on by social anxieties. As Belshee (2005) explained, “Beginner’s Mind is distinct from, but interrelated with, No Mind. Beginner’s Mind happens when the thinker is unsure of his boundaries. The thinker opens himself up and thoroughly tests his environment. No Mind is a meditative state in which the practitioner leaves behind all the dreck in his life, allowing himself to just be” (n.p.). One of the most comprehensive writings on mushin was produced by Takuan Soho (2012), a fourteenth-century Zen priest, who advised samurai on the psychology needed to be victorious in combat.

If one puts his mind in the action of his opponent’s body, his mind will be taken by the action of his opponent’s body. If he puts his mind on his opponent’s sword, his mind will be taken by that sword…The No-Mind is placed nowhere…when there is no stopping place, it is called No-Mind. (p. 10-11).

Soho (2012) constantly stressed the importance of not allowing the mind to linger or become taken by objects outside the mind but to flow freely, without stopping, between thoughts and objects (the interval or space), “like a ball riding in a swift-moving current” (p. 8). This idea of no-mind, of allowing the mind to flow and move freely within one’s environment, is reminiscent of Schon’s (1983) writings on knowing-in-action, where, for example, an athlete enters a state of mind that allows him to make decisions without hesitation, adjusting to stimulus as he received more information from his environment. This state of no-mind has also be connected to the concept of flow, or optimal performance one experiences when totally engrossed in an activity that provides the right amount of focus and challenge. Czisikszentmihalyi (1990), who studied
the topic extensively, draws comparisons of flow to states of mind in Zen and Yoga and those achieved by martial artists. “The warrior strives to reach the point where he can act with lightening speed against opponents without having to think or reason about the best defense or offensive moves to make” (p.106).

**Paradox**

Zen training emphasizes the understanding of paradox, which is performed in a deliberate way to reveal the nature of the mind (Twemlow, 2001). To accomplish this, Zen students are presented *koans*, or mental exercises such as riddles and stories used for a thousand years between teacher and student. The contemplation of a *koan* “frustrates the reasoning process” (Fitzpartick, 2005, p.958) and is meant to “trigger a sudden awakening that is like the sun bursting through the clouds dreary day or a hammer smashing through solid rock” (Heine, 2014, p. 2). Some examples of *koans* include (Suler, 1989, p. 221-222):

- What is the sound of one hand clapping?
- Show me your face before your parents were born?

Zen masters are notorious for their unorthodox teaching methods, representing a mixture of unpredictability, spontaneity, humor, and authority. “The master refuses to give any answers, which frustrates the student to the point of crisis and self-disintegration—yet the master is also a reassuring presence, the authority whose very presence proves that the answer exists” (Suler, 1989, p. 225). Watts (2017) explained that the role of a Zen teacher is to place the student in various situations where in the “normal course of social relations they would get stuck. By asking nonsensical questions, by making absurd remarks, by always unhinging things, and above all, keeping them stirred up with impossible demands” (n.p.).
**Simplicity/Directness**

Zen emphasizes directness and simplicity. What to leave out becomes as or more important than what to include. This idea can be observed in Japanese gardens (often referred to as Zen gardens), where deliberate positioning of rocks and other objects, spacing, and simplicity of design are evident (Eckel, 2003). In employing Zen constructs to presentation, Reynolds (2012) relies highly on this idea of less is more, of stripping PowerPoints, for instance, to the essentials. Quoting Powell (2004), who discusses the need for simplicity and restraint in Japanese arts such as bonsai and haiku, Reynolds reiterates “Do only what is necessary to convey what is essential…carefully eliminate elements that district from the essential whole, elements that obstruct and obscure” (p. 42). Hoover (2010) says Zen artists, by avoiding the gaudy, busy, or overdone, “convey the impression of disciplined restraint, of having held something in reserve” (n.p.).

**Zen: Life in Every Breath**

In pervading Japanese culture, Zen generated the notion that the goal of religion is tranquility and the ability to remain calm and peaceful despite chaos (Hoover, 2010). Though Zen is often associated with the image of someone meditating, perhaps in a temple atop a mountain, the greater purpose is to take that sense of calmness into the world. This inner equanimity is illustrated in an anecdote about two monks arguing over whether a banner is moving in the wind. The first monk believes the banner is moving while the second monk argues that the wind is moving. To that, a third monk corrects them both, saying that the mind is what is moving (Hoover, 2010). In addition to stories, poetry can also serve as a medium to better comprehend the Zen mind. This can be seen in a famous haiku written by Matsuo Basho, a wandering poet of the Edo period in Japan.
Eckel (2003) explains that the old pond represents the stillness of the mind (found in meditation), and the frog jumping is a natural event followed by a sound, a plop—an instant awakening. If fully present in that single moment, one can grasp the “totality of experience… thousands of worlds in an instant of thoughts” (n.p.).

Another example of this direct experience can be found in the film, The Last Samurai (Zwick, 2003), which depicts Tom Cruise as a war-torn American soldier who finds himself living among a samurai clan in Japan. Discussing how a warrior might find peace of mind, the samurai leader tells Cruise that the goal is to “find life in every breath, every cup of tea” (n.p.), suggesting the need to remain fully present, fully engaged in every moment. The film features another scene, where Cruise is accosted by several thugs. Armed with only a sword, he quickly dispatches with them in action-hero fashion. However, the film replays the scene in slow motion to portray the presence of mind that Cruise experiences in the heat of combat. Despite what’s occurring around him, he is fully present. It is this fully engaged, open, present mind that serves as a central theme in the Zen constructs presented above (see Figure 2).

Finally, I’d like address possible criticisms regarding that my very research and writing about this study and its results contradicts the tradition of Zen, which discourages reliance on the written word. My use of literature through this research may strike some as a paradox---however, my apparent contradiction mirrors the often-contradiction of Zen masters and scholars. For instance, revered Zen master, Dogen, composed a voluminous body of literature, including essays and poetry (Tanahashi & Levitt, 2013). While Zen is based on the actual experience
Figure 2. Zen constructs to be enacted in the study.

of enlightenment (as opposed to studying or reading about it), literature such as *The Blue Cliff Record*, a collection of 100 anecdotes of sayings and accounts from Zen masters and disciples, has served as a guide and inspiration for meditation and practice (Cleary, & Cleary, 1977).

While my research aims at a direct experience of Zen ideas within supervision, as a scholar, I find no other recourse but to write about my experiences. A second concern with this research, and any involving Zen, might be that I am proselytizing a religion. To that, I echo Tricarico’s (2015) sentiment that while rooted in Zen Buddhism, Zen, when used as a philosophy, is not connected to any particular religion or doctrine and be can practiced by someone of any faith or religious persuasion” (p. 10).
Enactment of Zen Constructs in Supervision Practices

Like water in one’s hand, these ideas are elusive and can easily slip away during enactment. Structure is needed at times, particularly in the beginning of an undertaking. Before presenting my enactment structure, I offer the metaphor of Bonsai or the ancient practice of growing small trees in pots or containers. To produce certain styles and effects, bonsai practitioners often use wiring to shape and train branches. However, once the branches take form, the wires are removed—as they are no longer necessary (Figure 3). The branches take shape on their own,

![Figure 3. Bonsai after wire on branches removed.](image)

without support. I view this enactment structure the same way. I believe flexibility and openness are critical to the success of this study. The teacher education literature, including the certainly guide this enactment. They serve as the wires to provide structure to my enactment. For instance,
the high-leverage practices will serve as a guide or frame, a place to hang these abstract concepts, as I engage in my naturally occurring role as supervisor. For instance, I can specifically, “see” places where I can engage candidates and situations with a beginner’s mind, and furthermore, later reflect on how this state of mind interacted and possibly influenced these practices. This enactment structure will also assist me in examining how the Zen constructs interact with the high-leverage practices. In addition to exploring how Zen interacts with high-level practices of supervision, I also believe it is pertinent to contemplate how these constructs might be applicable to functions of evaluation embedded within my regularly occurring supervision practice. For instance, along with the observation cycle, my current position requires me to complete a mid-progress report and final summative evaluation of teacher candidates. While I subscribe to Glickman’s (1987) recommendation to separate coaching from evaluation practices, I’m faced with the reality of completing evaluation functions and sometimes struggle with reconciling these requirements with my own philosophy. Perhaps the Zen constructs and collecting and studying data through the lens of the Awakened Supervisor might assist me in achieving a sense of peace or at least some measured balance between the two, conflicting functions.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, I’ve reviewed the literature on instructional supervision, providing historical background, definitions, and challenges faced by supervisors. Additionally, I reviewed the different views of instructional supervision, showing the lack of consensus with the field. In providing a summary of the three eras of supervision, one can begin to recognize the inherent conflicts and tensions, the natural progressions, and where the field might be going.
Furthermore, I reviewed the extant literature on instructional supervision, including teacher education self-studies. I also resurrected ideas on introducing non-Western notions how they might be enacted in my supervision practice. I attempted to describe Zen, including constructs enacted in my supervision practice. Finally, I unpacked my enactment structure for these constructs. In summary, this review has revealed that few scholars have researched the stance of the supervisor, and even fewer have carried out studies involving expanding current supervisory images based on non-Western ideas. Thus, a clear rationale for this study exists. In the next chapter, I explain the methodology I will use to collect and analyze data around this enactment.
CHAPTER 3:  
METHODOLOGY

“A lecture on Zen is always something in the nature of a hoax because it really does deal with a domain of experience that can’t be talked about” (Watts, 2017, n.p.).

Discovering an inquiry framework for spiritual matters and topics centering around Zen Buddhism and education is challenging. Few dissertations have been published in this genre. The difficulty lies in finding a way to research, analyze, and write about experiences that often transcends words, and even, thoughts. Complicating matters, trying to explain these ideas to others, for instance, non-meditators or individuals who don’t subscribe to spirituality, is like trying to describe the taste of an orange to someone who has never eaten the fruit. Nevertheless, I believe spiritual research can provide new dimensions and avenues and produce new meaning and insights into untraveled areas within teacher education (e.g. consciousness, contemplation, spiritual matters). Like Romero (2016), faced with dissertating about the ineffable, I sought a method that would best serve me in contemplating how Zen constructs impacted my experiences as a teacher educator. Like those before me who labored to translate spiritual-based inquiries and meditative experiences into academic language (Llewellyn, 1998; Romero, 2016), I gravitated toward spiritual inquiry as way to meaningfully
and deeply explore Zen constructs against an instructional supervision background. Spiritual-inquiry scholars seek to understand phenomena that might not be perceived or understood through traditional means such as positivism and constructivism. They embrace age-old ideas such as meditation, prayer, and intuition as tools to go beyond traditional thinking. As Anderson (2016) wrote, “a possibility to consider is that current research vehicle is inadequate for the task of conducting spiritually-based in the same sense that car, adequate for navigating surface roads, cannot navigate the airways and fly over the roads” (p. 35). Since I “hunger for meaning and answers that go beyond the usual curriculum,” I’m embracing methods that start from an ontology that views reality as “multidimensional, interconnected, and interdependent” knowing (Lin, Oxford, & Culham, 2016, p. xi), Hence, adopting new lenses, such as those informed by Buddhism, Daoism, or Confucianism, for example, can expand our ability to study areas such as consciousness and allow researchers to engage in “an act of cultivating wisdom and enlightenment” (Lin, Culham & Oxford, 2016, p. 144). Open to ideas of experiential knowing, a spiritual paradigm also focuses on its connection to others and the environment and how it’s interconnected (Heron & Reason, 1997).

“Spiritual” Self-Study

Interest in self-study as a method to explore teacher education practices has grown rapidly. Coincidingly, researchers have built a rich theoretical and empirical argument for the power of self-study as a change-agent tool in rethinking how teachers might learn (Dinkleman, 2003). Self-study serves as a method of modeling of examining one’s own practice through self-directed inquiry and can assist teacher educators in balancing academic theory and personal practice (Korthagen & Lunenberg, 2004). While academics have questioned the validity and pragmatics of self-study research, the method has produced a great deal of what is known about
teacher education and supervision, providing a “deep and critical look at practices and structures of teacher education” (Zeichner, 1999, p. 11). LaBoskey (2004) distilled self-study into five major features: 1) is self-initiated and focused, 2) deals with the “self” and is self-improvement aimed, 3) collaborative, 4) engages multiple, mainly qualitative methods, and 5) determines validity through trustworthiness. Regarding data collection, self-study researchers have remained open to a variety of innovative techniques, including using the arts (e.g. performance, photography, video documentary, and multi-media representations) (Weber & Mitchell, 2004). Self-study also requires intentionally problematizing one’s self and practice (Samaras, 2010) and being vulnerable and willing to take risks (Loughran, 2004). Self-study possesses an almost Zen-like, paradoxical quality. Though it emphasizes examination of the self, for the method to be successful and truly beneficial, it must move beyond the self, push past the individual level (Loughran, 2004). While self-study methodology focuses on improvement of one’s practice, a “major expectation” of self-study research is that the work will “lead to valuable learning outcomes for both the teacher and the students” (Loughran, 2004, p. 154). During this process, self-study participants gain new insights into teaching and learning as they model quality teaching practices for emerging teachers. Thus, teacher educators engaged in self-study become “agents for student teachers” (Kosnik, 2001, p. 65,” by “working on the very way” (Loughran, 2004, p. 154) we encourage teacher candidates to approach their teaching, whether it’s through inquiry, action research, or other means.

Embedded in self-study is the importance of the individual or “the self” (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986), with countless examples of exploration of self (Bass, 2002; Freidus, 2002; Kaplan, 2000; Pereira, 2000). Grounded in theories of teacher inquiry and reflective practice, “self-study works from the postmodernist assumption that it is never possible to divorce the
‘self’ from either the research process or from education practice” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2004, p. 607). Focusing on the self, practitioners reexamine beliefs, assumptions, perceptions, and gain new insights and new awareness into their practices—but also themselves as individuals, this manifesting often as a higher-level of consciousness (Korthagen & Lunenberg, 2004, p. 422). For example, when Oda (1998) examined the influence of her Japanese heritage on her teacher educator work, “she became conscious of her focus on harmony, her appreciation of others and her respect for great teachers who had preceded her” (in Korthagen & Lunenberg, 2004, p. 422). The concept of mindfulness also has been directly associated with self-study. Claiming that self-study was a form of reflection and essential for teacher educators, Dinkleman (2003) wrote that he had “come to appreciate how the so-called mindfulness present when I conduct self-study is the same sort of reflection found in the best classroom and field-based teaching moments” (p. 9). Parallels can be drawn between self-study—and its occupation with self-exploration— and contemplative inquiry or “qualitative techniques that place a deep and serious emphasis on thought in every component of a study of the social world” (Janesick, 2016, p. 34). While self-study concerns itself with teaching practices and the improvement of those teaching practices, these aims undoubtedly are tied up in domains such as awareness, beliefs, feelings, reflection, and other more internal experiences as one looks to reframe their understanding of practice. This suggests that additional tools, as well as epistemological orientations, might be useful to self-study researchers exploring the inner landscape of their practice and the self. What if, for instance, a teacher educator wanted to study how intuition plays into their ability to assist teacher candidates? Or how meditating on various field experiences could improve practice? Bhattachary (2017) explains that contemplative inquiry is:
a set of practices that allow us to have first person understanding of our inner dynamics. So that could be something that we understand in terms of who we are in relation to the world, what beliefs and values we have, and the ways in which we connect and relate with our world” (n.p.).

According to Janesick (2016), contemplative inquiry relies heavily on meditation, deep, self-inquiry, imagination, creativity, and mindfulness. Deep thought compliments exploring the self and one's practice. Therefore, contemplative inquiry methods can provide the alternative research vehicle needed to explore unexplored topics of spirituality, intuition, mindfulness, and philosophies such as Buddhism and Taoism and their relationship to conceptions of supervision and teacher education. Bringing in these innovations aligns with Samaras’ (2010) assertion that “there is no one way of conducting self-study research” (p. 93) as self-study scholars originate from various theoretical orientations, positioning their studies to fit these views, and conduct research using diverse qualitative methods (LaBoskey, 2004). Thus, I am calling the methodology being used for this dissertation, “spiritual self-study,” which subscribes to the features and tenets of self-study in teacher education but also calls upon methods of contemplative inquiry. In addition to adhering to self-study concepts, my methodology will be guided specifically by characteristics of mindfulness meditation as applied to research in spirituality (Miller, 2016, p. 131): 1) non-judgmental observation or seeing things in their natural state, 2) impartial watchfulness or, as much as possible, treating experiences equally, 3) non-conceptual awareness—not thinking about or conceptualizing experience, 4) present-time awareness or focusing on the “here and now,” 5) non-egoistic alertness—not identifying with what is occurring, and 6) awareness of change participatory observation or being the participant and observer at the same time.
Conflating a spiritual research paradigm, such as a Zen orientation, into self-study opens many possibilities, including re-framing goals and beliefs about self-study and introducing non-traditional qualitative methods that could expand the terrain for self-study researchers. For instance, while self-study’s purpose is to improve practice by concentrating research back at the self, what happens when “we have no thought of achievement, no thought of self” (Yoshimoto, 2011, p. 83). What then becomes the goal of self-study researchers? While one might argue this can cause confusion or a laze fare attitude, rather, Suzuki asserted this lack of focus on the self creates a mindset “where we can really learn something” (1970, p. 22). I believe these are ideas worth studying through this research.

**Purpose of the Study**

In this spiritual self-study, I explored how constructs from Zen interconnect with my current supervision views and assist me in navigating the myriad of models, approaches, and paradigms within teacher education. The following questions guided my research:

1. What do I experience as I attempt to enact Zen constructs within an undergraduate clinical teacher education program?
2. How might these Zen constructs interact with routines of practice I regularly perform within supervision?
3. In what ways do the Zen constructs illuminate my views as a supervisor working with a group of teacher candidates?

**Research Design**

I designed this research around the principles of self-study but also infused elements of contemplative inquiry (e.g. analyzing data through non-traditional means that rely on a more
intuitive, meditative approach). In this section, I articulate my positionality within the research, provide context for the study, and describe my plan for data collection and analysis.

**Participants**

In this spiritual self-study, I was the single participant. I present my personal and professional experiences relevant to the research below.

**Personal Experiences**

My entire life served as the context for this study (Llewelly, 1999) I recall being fascinated with Eastern philosophy since I was a child. Curled up in bed with a dog-eared copy of *Shogun*, the 1975 novel by James Clavell, I immersed myself in feudal Japanese tales of samurai, ninja, and geisha. My interest in Eastern philosophy continued as I trained in various martial arts, and where I was introduced to meditation. In karate class, we sat cross-legged, attempting to block out the noise from the aerobic studio next door. During college, I learned Transcendental Meditation (TM), hoping to discover a healthy way of dealing with stress and remain focused. TM involves silently repeating a *mantra*, or specific sound, in a prescribed manner for 20 minutes, twice a day. To deepen my understanding of TM, I attended weekly gatherings, group meditations, and weekend retreats. I also read literature about TM and watched video lectures of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the founder of TM. My fascination with TM led me to study other meditation practices, such as Buddhist mindfulness breathing. I later co-published a study, in which we introduced mindfulness and meditation to 28 gifted elementary students (Haberlin & O’Grady, 2017). As a doctoral student, I was inspired by scholars who introduced ideas of Eastern philosophy to teacher education. (Glanz, 1995; Tremmel, 1993). During this research, I also began practicing Zen at a local center. I engaged in *zazen* and interacted with
others in the Zen community by joining discussions and listening to lectures. I also practiced zazen at home for about one hour a day (two, 30-minute sessions).

**Professional Experience**

During the time of the study, I was a doctoral candidate and graduate assistant in the elementary education program at a large research university. Before entering the field of education, I worked as a journalist for a newspaper in Central Florida. During this time, I covered the education beat, reporting on the local school district. I learned writing and research skills (e.g. interviewing, fact-checking) that later served useful as a scholar. Prior to studying for my PhD, I worked as a middle school and elementary school teacher, later specializing in teaching gifted students. Assuming the role of a university supervisor, like many new teacher educators, I experienced problems of enactment (Darling-Hammond, 2006) and had to get past relying too much from experiences I gained as a classroom teacher (Loughran, 2010). For instance, I believed, being a k-12 teacher, I could simply share what worked for me in the classroom, rather than realizing that teacher educators require a new set of skills and knowledge. I participated in professional development sessions offered through the elementary education department and studied supervision while completing two, graduate-level courses on the topic as part of my program of study. I derived the remainder of my supervision knowledge from on-the-job experiences as well as listening to more experienced supervisors and attending regular supervisor meetings held by program instructors. Wanting to better understand my own teacher educator platform, I engaged in self-study (Haberlin, 2018) to examine practices, beliefs, and assumptions. All the while, I grappled with which supervision approach to embrace, experimenting with cognitive coaching, strengths-based coaching, and reflective inquiry, but
never feeling completely satisfied with any of them. I also struggled with how to view myself as a supervisor.

**Context**

I conducted this study during the Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters. The context of the study occurred naturally through my work as a supervisor. I examined and reflected upon naturally occurring data produced from the Fall 2018 semester and gathered additional data during the Spring 2019 semester. During the study, I worked as graduate assistant and field supervisor in the elementary education program. My duties included supervising approximately 20 pre-service teachers, half in Level 2 (second semester of internship), and half in final level (final semester of the program) and teaching an undergraduate course on instructional planning.

**Teacher Program**

The teacher education program serving as the setting for this study is located in the southeast United States. The program serves more than 300 elementary education teacher candidates and is a clinically rich model, emphasizing theory-to-practice connections between and field experiences. The program’s leaders also emphasize an inquiry as stance approach, requiring pre-service teachers to complete and present research projects regarding their practice. A systematic examination of one’s own practice, inquiry can help educators better understand their craft, take charge of their professional development, and grow beyond the technical knowledge learned in coursework (Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2014). Teacher candidates in the program simultaneously complete coursework and field experiences through internships. The internship groups are organized by cohort, consisting of about 30 candidates. The cohorts are assigned to one of about 20 partnership schools that have been established between the university and local school districts. Candidates spend between one-to-five days per week at their
placement school (depending on their experience level), under the guidance of an experienced, certified mentor teacher. Each semester, candidates are required to complete two formal observations (three during final semester); the observation cycle—pre-conference, observation, and post-conference—is followed. To evaluate candidates’ teaching, the supervisor is required by the university to utilize the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching, which is composed of 22 components of practice across four domains: instructional planning, classroom environment and management, actual instruction, and professional development and responsibility (Danielson, 1996). The supervisor facilitates a weekly seminar for teacher candidates, addressing coursework, inquiry practice, and other program-related topics.

**Level 3/Final Internship**

Teacher candidates in Level 3 of the program were in their junior year. Level 3 occurs in the third semester of the teacher program. Prior to Level 3, teacher candidates have been introduced to basic course content (e.g. instructional planning, classroom management) and served in an internship capacity one day per week at a partnership school. During the Level 3 semester, candidates spend two days per week at their internship schools and take a full-load (12 credits) of coursework. In final internship, the candidates spend five-days per week in their internship school and take one course, Teacher as Researcher. I intentionally collected data and explore my supervision beliefs and experiences during my time at the Level 3/Final internship school. I believed that, with these candidates possessing more experience, foundational knowledge, and knowledge of the program’s logistics, I might gather richer data in this setting. The fact that Level 3 and final candidates attended two-to-five days per week of internship (as opposed to Level 1s, who spend one day per week) afforded me additional opportunities for enactment and data collection.
The Elementary School

The partnership school in this study is a k-5 public school in a large suburban school district. The school opened in 2002 and serves 850 students, with 61 percent being white, 20 percent Hispanic, 7 percent black, and less than two percent Asian. The school was named a “National School of Character.” School administrators and teachers have embraced the internship program, as evidence by the surplus of collaborating teachers who have received training and are willing to host candidates. I previously served as a supervisor at this school, working with the same teacher candidates featured in this study, who at the time, were beginning the teacher program as Level 1 interns. I had established a relationship with the mentor teachers and administrators at the school.

Data Collection Methods

I collected data using qualitative methods that addressed my research questions and remained faithful to self-study tenets by providing a window into the self. Maintaining a research journal, for instance, fostered introspective, contemplation, and deep reflection.

Teacher Education Platform

A teacher education platform fleshes out one’s definition and purpose of instructional supervision as well as knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to be successful in the role (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2014). Producing iterations of one’s platform during self-study research can provide valuable insights (Arndt, 2016). Thus, I analyzed my supervisory platform, beginning with early versions I created during doctoral coursework, and revising this platform during this research. In drafting subsequent versions, I used Sergiovanni and Starratt’s
(2002) suggestions for supervisors to consider defining instructional supervision, who should be supervised, and knowledge, skills, and attitudes found in successful supervisors. In total, I produced three written reiterations of the platform, one in the early stages of research (first month), a second version in the middle of the research (month three) and the final stage (month seven) (see Appendix A, B, C).

**Researcher’s Journal**

Through journal writing, I became more aware of my role in the research and became “more contemplative” about my thought process (Janesick, 2016, p. 132). I record my thoughts, ideas, and feelings weekly in this journal on my enactment of the Zen constructs. In addition, to encourage contemplation and openness, I employed free-writing (Tremmel, 1993), a technique that “calls for the writer to write down everything that comes to mind without interposing editorial comments…the writer’s stream-of consciousness is suddenly brought to attention and put on paper” (p. 449). Examples of journaling writing included capturing my thoughts and experiences during supervisory practice (e.g. conferencing with teacher candidates, conducting observations, meeting with the triad, holding seminars). I reflected on different “themes” each journal session, for instance, writing about mindfulness, impermanence, beginner’s mind and how they interrelate with my supervision practice. Other examples of journal entries include reflections on interaction with teacher candidates and mentor teachers and experiences in the classroom. These journal entries helped me reframe my platform, based on my enactment. In addition, I believed it would be beneficial to reflect on the overall research process and challenges and obstacles as they occur (e.g. potential researcher bias, lack of data/too much data, ethical concerns).

**Data-based Poetry**

Scholars suggest poetry is a form of inquiry (Furman, 2004; Janesick, 2016; Willis,
Increasingly more common in qualitative circles (McCulliss, 2013), poetry is a powerful medium for helping researchers to express subtle ideas and emotions not easily conveyed through traditional, linear means. As Furman (2004) explained:

Poetry is a particularly powerful tool for achieving this aim. For thousands of years, poets have used the medium to explore and express the importance truths of their hearts and their experiences of existence. Poetry often has the capacity to penetrate experience more deeply than prose (p. 561).

Poetry has also been employed in Eastern traditions, such as Zen Buddhism, as it goes to the heart of the matter and has served as a guide in meditation practices, (Janesick, 2016). During this study, I produced 8 poems from my research experiences as well as from other forms of collected data, including transcriptions, journal entries, and teacher candidate work. To address my research questions, I poetically transcribed data with certain ideas in mind, such as how Zen notions interacted with my practice, how they reimagined my role as a supervisor, and the tensions I experienced.

Field Notes/Observational Data

I recorded detailed field notes during my regular practices working as an instructional supervisor. Field notes, which can help generate theory through coding (Creswell, 2013), allowed me to document my enactment and prompt deeper reflection (Arndt, 2016). Notes were taken when conducting observations of teacher candidates and spending other time in classrooms. While capturing notes, I was guided by Janesick’s (2016) ideas on observing with impermanence in mind and a “wide awakedness to the world” (p. 46). Capturing field notes
guided me in discovering spaces for Zen constructs within everyday practice. To structure the field notes, I used a self-created form (Appendix B).

**Documents and Artifacts**

I also studied naturally occurring documents and artifacts from my work as an instructional supervisor, including teacher candidate lesson plans, written reflections, observational tool notes, and course assignments. These artifacts helped shed additional light on my enactment of Zen principles and better inform my teacher educator platform. For instance, communications or comments I wrote on a teacher candidate’s lesson plans or other assignments could be studied for possible indications of my enactment. Furthermore, I audio recorded conversations occurring during pre-and-post observations with candidates. I listened to the recordings and reflected in my researcher’s journal, examining my experiences in the process. Additionally, during formal observations, I scripted Slice of Classroom Life writings (Tremmel, 1993), short narratives, where I simply described what was occurring during the observed lesson. I crafted these writings in addition to the required evaluation rubric (Danielson Teaching Framework) I was required to complete as part of the teacher program. I decided to complete these “mindful narratives” after reading about the activity and believing it would be helpful in helping me achieve present-moment awareness while observing candidates. I also believed the narratives could later be used to provide new insights and reimagined feedback to candidates. **Exit Surveys**

I also collected data regarding teacher candidates’ perspectives on my supervision stance and practices through weekly exit surveys. This type of data will provide outside perspective on my enactment and supervision view and platform and assist me in guarding against solipsism.
Exit surveys proved a valuable method of collecting data with candidates and allowing them to openly share their views on my supervision practice (Haberlin, 2018). Exit surveys have been effectively used by other self-study researchers to collect data from teacher candidates (McDonough & Brandenburg, 2012). Candidates completed anonymous responses to exit survey questions posted on Padlet, an online website, which will be password protected and only accessible to myself and the candidates. I posed open-ended questions at various times in the internship experience, for instance, following pre-conferences, observations, post-conferences, seminars, and at the completion of the semester (Appendix D). In total, I issued 10 surveys.

Data Analysis

As data analysis reflects the constructs, paradigms, and theories used to structure the study (Merriam, 1998), I utilized analysis methods that placed heavy emphasis on intuitive thinking, meditation, and deep reflection. Like Romero (2016), I struggled to find a tested analysis method that aligned with my research paradigm and goals for this study. Thus, based on her contemplative analysis process, and the promising results of meditation and mindfulness impact on cognitive functioning and attention, I created a modified version of my own. Data analysis consisted of two phases: an initial contemplative exploration using meditative writings and a second method I am calling mindful coding. The first phase of data analysis was ongoing, occurring throughout the research process and occurred simultaneously with data collection.

Initial Contemplative Exploration

With the goal of self-study being to examine and improve one’s practice (Dinkleman, 2003), I believed concurrently analyzing my data through meditative writings might render more insight into improvements and enhancements of my practice and also allow time and flexibility to interact, respond, and adjust to what is occurring within the research. This proved
to be the case (details are provided in the introduction of Chapter 4). Every week, I read over my data (e.g. platform, reflective journal, exit tickets, artifacts) collected that week. I then engaged in a form of contemplative exploration (Llewelly, 1999; Romero, 2016) by sitting with my data and research questions then writing reflections or meditative memos “from the space of contemplation” (Romero, 2016, p. 101). To place myself in the proper contemplative mindset, I practiced meditation, which is “one of the oldest forms of research” (Miller, 2016, p. 128). I emerged from the meditation and wrote a reflection. The specific steps for contemplative exploration were:

1. Read over my data and research questions.

2. Enter a state of meditation by practicing zazen (sitting cross-legged, eyes slightly open, concentrating on the breath).

3. Remain present with the object of attention—the data and research questions. As Romero suggested (2016, p. 101), “as the meaning of the words begins to penetrate, let the words drop away, and rest in (the meaning). “Become familiar with that meaning as it penetrates.”

4. After 15-20 minutes of meditation, arise with meaning in my heart and mind.

5. Immediately, write a reflection in whatever form comes to mind.

These meditative memos served as a first attempt at contemplating deeply about how the Zen constructs illuminated my current supervision views as well as how they played out within the framework of high-leverage practices (Appendix E provides an example of a meditative memo). I e-mailed the memos to my Critical Friends members each week, and we engaged in written dialogue.
Mindful Coding

The second phase of analysis—mindful coding—occurred at the conclusion of the data collection process. This allowed me to look across my data for possible changes over time and larger, encompassing themes (Richards, 2013). When examining the writings, I practiced Miller’s (2016) mindfulness meditation characteristics (non-judgmental observation, impartial watchfulness, non-conceptual awareness, present-time awareness, non-egoistic alertness, and awareness of change participatory observation). For instance, I read through my writings without judgment, without conceptualizing, without identifying with the data as much as possible, being

Table 4. List of Categories Developed from Opening-Coding/Theming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories Generated from Meditative Memos</th>
<th>Conversion to Thematic Sentences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living Zen</td>
<td>Living Zen means not trying to intellectually implement it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety/Nervousness</td>
<td>Anxiety is something I experienced when becoming more mindful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowing/Moving Between</td>
<td>Flowing is an experience I had during supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with Mentor Teachers</td>
<td>Connection with mentor teachers means I was more interconnected with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement of Observation Cycle</td>
<td>Enhancement of the observation cycle is what happened when enacting Zen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noticing Stress/Emotional Difficulties</td>
<td>Noticing stress/emotional difficulties among the teacher candidates is what I experienced when becoming more mindful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present-moment Awareness</td>
<td>Present-moment awareness is what I came to believe about supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised Purpose of Supervision</td>
<td>Revised purpose of supervision means I saw my role/responsibility differently</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
totally present with the data, allowing me to “see phenomena as clearly as possible without distortion” (Miller, 2016, p. 131). During this process, I practiced a form of open-coding within the data (see Appendix H). Based on that coding, I created categories for codes containing substantial data evidence (Saldana, 2009). I then drew out and elaborated on the meaning of the categories by converting each category out into a sentence. I themed the data by adding the word “is” or “means” after each category and completed the sentence (Saldana, 2009, p. 188) (e.g. Mindful Supervision means…).

**Ethical Considerations**

Naturally, I interacted with the candidates using guidelines suggested under the university’s Instructional Review Board (IRB). For instance, anyone connected to the study (e.g. critical friends, teacher candidates) were assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity. Data were also protected using the university’s cloud storage system. Furthermore, in spiritual research, the “relationship of subjects to subjects is sacred and requires an approach of great care and respect” (Brantmeier & Brantmeier, 2016, p. 243). Inclusion and openness to diversity as well as seeing the interconnectedness between myself, teacher candidates, and critical friends were major considerations. Respect for cultural differences, multiple perspectives, and confidentiality served as “integral components of ethical behavior” (Edwards, 2016, p. 260). In one or two instances, to protect teacher candidate’s identities and others (e.g. mentor teachers), I re-constructed details around a situation. I believe I still maintained the essence of the situation and the integrity of the data—regardless, I felt the possible repercussions of providing exact details were not worth it.
Trustworthiness of the Study

Some scholars in qualitative circles have deemed validity—the criteria used in traditional, scientific-based research—as inappropriate to evaluate the quality of inquiry-guided qualitative research (Mishler, 1990). Instead, the concept of “trustworthiness” is used and represents “a way to ground self-study researchers’ claims to knowing and doing” (Craig, 2009, p. 22). After conducting an extensive review of teacher education self-studies, Mena and Russell (2017) concluded that about 40 percent of “the papers failed to clearly elaborate for the reader the ways in which trustworthiness had been achieved” (p. 117). Thus, in this section, I provided a comprehensive review of how trustworthiness was achieved in my work. To accomplish this, I utilize two frameworks: Laboskey’s (2004) five characteristics of self-study and Bullough and Pinnegar’s (2001) guidelines for quality autobiographical self-study. In this first table, I strive to assess whether I demonstrated the five common features of self-study by citing specific examples.

Table 5: Trustworthiness Review 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LaBoskey’s Self-Study Features</th>
<th>Example(s) from this Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-initiated and situated within personal context of teaching</strong></td>
<td>This research emerged from my own wonderings and dilemmas as a supervisor working in a clinical elementary education teacher program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-improvement aimed, seeking gain new knowledge</strong></td>
<td>I sought to improve my practice as an instructional supervisor; for instance, I focused on how Zen might make me more effective in the field (e.g. engaging in conferences and providing instructional support). I also examined what might be learned from enacting Zen in the context of high-leverage supervisory practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-study as interactive and collaborative</strong></td>
<td>During the study, I regularly interacted with teacher candidates sharing information (e.g. mindful notes) and seeking their perspective</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LaBoskey’s Self-Study Features | Example(s) from this Study
---|---
(exit surveys). I also collaborated extensively with Critical Friends. |  
**Self-study uses multiple research methods**
To collect data, I kept a researcher’s journal, wrote poetry, examined teacher candidate documents, recorded observations, taped observation conferences, and issued surveys to teacher candidates. I also conflated theoretical paradigms (contemplative inquiry with self-study), incorporating meditation with traditional qualitative data analysis.  
**Self-study as rigorous and trustworthy**
I practiced transparency by clearly articulating the entire research process, engaged with critical friends, and triangulated data through multiple methods. Additional information on trustworthiness is provided in the next chart.


As demonstrated, this self-study originated from my own problematizing of supervision, involved collaboration on several levels, consisted of the use of multiple qualitative methods and used critical members and triangulation to achieve trustworthiness. To further establish rigor and credibility, I also think Bullough and Pinnegar’s (2001) guidelines for quality for autobiographical self-study can frame my work. The authors expose the necessity of writing a self-study with an authentic, honest voice, which doesn’t simply portray the positives of the research but rather the complete picture. Bullough and Pinnegar’s framework adds additional depth to this trustworthiness evaluation. In the following chart, I address nine of the author’s principles and how I demonstrated each in this study:
**Table 6: Trustworthiness Review 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Study Guideline</th>
<th>Demonstrated in the Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Autobiographical self-studies should ring true and enable connection” (p. 16).</td>
<td>I repeatedly attempted to connect with readers through candid writing, exposing myself “warts and all.” I presented supervisor experiences in a manner, in which other teacher educators ideally could relate to their own practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Self-studies should promote insight and interpretation” (p. 16)</td>
<td>I articulated nodal moments in the research and enacting of Zen. For example, I detailed the realization of “living Zen,” feeling interconnected with others, paradigm changes in my theoretical orientation as a supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Autobiographical self-study research must engage history forthrightly and the author must take an honest” (p. 16-17).</td>
<td>In this work, I have made myself vulnerable, exposing my prejudices. I have openly written about my constant interrupting of candidates during conferences, my inability to truly connect with mentor teachers, and my insecurities as both a supervisor and novice Zen practitioner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Biographical and autobiographical self-studies in teacher education are about the problems and issues that make someone an educator” (p. 17).</td>
<td>During the research, I consistently pose problems I faced as a teacher educator (e.g. conflicting orientations, stress on the job, lack of collegiality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Authentic voice is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the scholarly standing of a biographical self” (p. 17).</td>
<td>While I strove for an authentic voice in this dissertation, I also rigorously examined my research and writing, with the goal of professional development. I framed my writing within the contextual understandings and empirical research of the professional literature proceeding me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Powerful autobiographical self-studies portray character development and include dramatic action: Something genuine is at stake in the story” (p. 17).</td>
<td>While admittedly this could be furthered developed, I attempted to portray the development of own character (e.g. anxieties, moods, personal thoughts) against a dramatic backdrop (novice supervisor in a tumultuous field of teacher education).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In summary, I hope that my work whole-heartedly embodies self-study characteristics, portrays my voice, and reveals honest, fresh insights and perspectives. Also, a further explanation of the critical members discourse is needed. Self-study is not done in isolation (Samaras & Freese, 2009), rather “self-study relies on interaction with close colleagues who can listen actively and constructively” (Russell, 2005, p. 5). Practitioners can benefit from collaborating with a critical friend “a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers a critique of a person’s work as a friend” (Samaras, 2010, p. 75). I discoursed weekly via e-mail with my two critical members: a PhD candidate and colleague, who specialized in teacher education in elementary education settings, and an experienced professor, who had authored several books on teacher education. The professor was also a long-time Zen practitioner. Each week, I -emailed completed meditative memos to the two critical members, who responded with questions, concerns, and other

Table 6 (Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Study Guideline</th>
<th>Demonstrated in the Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Quality autobiographical self-studies attend carefully to persons in context or settings” (p. 18).</td>
<td>Telling my story, I emphasized the importance of the clinical program. This was later evidenced by the heavy interaction between Zen and supervisory practices occurring with the observation cycle-a major piece of clinical supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Quality autobiographical self-studies offer fresh perspectives on established truths” (p. 18).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

comments that furthered my thinking and added perspective (this is elaborated on in Chapter 4).

Appendix F provides an example of a critical member exchange.

Similarly, “spirituality is largely communal” (Edwards, 2016, p. 257), as groups work collaboratively to find meaning and wisdom. Many spiritual traditions are based on communities, such as Zen Buddhism, which revolves around the sangha, or groups of monks, nuns and laypersons. Moreover, the sangha, often revolves around a teacher and the importance of the teacher-student relationship (Robson, 2003). In that tradition, I regularly discoursed with other Zen practitioners and enthusiasts at a local Zen center. Following meditation (zazen), we engaged in dharma talks on weekly themes. I also had the opportunity to ask the center members questions and share ideas and findings of my research. This practice provided another layer of critical member analysis and discourse, providing background and context as I analyzed and meditated on my data and findings.

**Limitations of the Study**

Prior to sharing my findings, I acknowledge the limitations within this study. As Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy, and Stackman, (2003) note, “to participate in the dialogue of the academic community, self-study researchers need to articulate the findings of their research to others, identifying how the results contribute to the academic discourse while addressing any limitations of the study” (p. 164). Serving as both researcher for this study and supervisor for the teacher candidates involved poses challenges. I agree with Alderton (2008), “the practice of self-study is inextricably intertwined with the act of teaching and may result in potential conflict between practitioners’ research agenda and their obligations to keep the interests of their students paramount” (p. 101). Researching while working with teacher candidates under one’s care creates situational limitations. For example, though exit surveys were anonymous,
candidates could be hesitant to be forthcoming, knowing I was their supervisor. They could also forget or color experiences. Also, candidates knew I was conducting research on my practice and might have felt pressured to say certain things during observation conferences. I did my best to maintain the candidates’ interests and make sure they were comfortable during the research but these limitations may have transpired regardless. Additionally, the nature of self-study itself entails being close to the data. “The data are not abstract or distant” but rather about ourselves (Lederman & Lederman, 2016, p. 420). This implies that the researcher could become too immersed in the research, unable to see the forest for the trees. To intentionally distance from the data and experiences, I engaged in discourse with my Critical Friends.
CHAPTER 4:  
FINDINGS (AWAKENINGS)

“Just as you have to stop talking to hear what others have to say, you have to stop thinking to find out what life is about” (Watts, 2014, n.p.).

The purpose of this study was to examine how Zen might interact with my supervision practice. Using self-study, I also aimed to improve my practice, as self-study can serve as a tool for change (Dinkleman, 2003). In this chapter, I share the findings that emerged from the research and answer my guiding questions. As I determined my findings, I drew upon the conceptual framework in Chapter 1, namely the Awakened Supervisor image. Moreover, I structure the findings around my research questions, which addressed my experience with Zen and supervision, the interaction of Zen constructs with high-leverage practices, and how my supervisory views and beliefs were illuminated and altered as a result. I refer to my findings as Awakenings (as opposed to themes) since they generally emerged from the data during meditation or other times my mind was allowed to think deeply and openly about my experiences. Often, these Awakenings came as flashes of insight or satori, as the Japanese call it.

Prior to presenting my findings, I believe it helpful to share a timeline of the enactment of the study and a brief descriptive of how the self-study unfolded. The enactment of Zen within
my research unfolded and evolved, as a result experiences in the field, including interactions with the teacher candidates, data collection, meditating on data, and discourse with Critical Friends. Within this journey, there were turning points or times they marked significant points in the enactment. These points were like lanterns illuminating an often-dark road, leading me to the next step. As the path became clearer, I continued to push forward and gain more certainty in how to embed concepts like mindfulness and beginner’s mind into my supervision practice. Figure 4 shows the timeline of the enactment and how these lanterns marked turning points in the enactment.

![Figure 4](image-url)

**Figure 4.** Timeline of enactment of Zen constructs.

The first box in the timeline represents my analytical start to understanding Zen. I studied the literature on concepts such as mindfulness and beginner’s mind and formed a conceptual understanding of these constructs. I approached the enactment of Zen as a sort of checklist, each
week thinking I could concentrate on a particular construct (e.g. this week, I will think about mindfulness and how it applies to supervision. The first lantern signifies a major shift in enactment. With the assistance of a Critical Friend, I realized that Zen must be lived--not simply studied--as one would study a language by purely reading over the words. Rather, one would be better served by immersing one’s self in the culture and speaking the language at every opportunity. I did the same with Zen.

This resulted in implementing mindfulness in supervision practices (e.g. observation cycle, interactions with teacher candidates) as depicted in the third white box on the timeline. Looking to better ground my practice in Zen, I began acting out some of the mindfulness practices I had studied during the literature review of this research. In particular, Thich Nhat Hanh’s teachings profoundly influenced my enactment, as his suggestions possessed a practicality and transferability that lent themselves to supervision. For instance, I started to practice the simple method of becoming aware of my breath (breathing in, I know I am breathing in…breathing out, I know I am breathing out) during various time in the role as supervisor. Later, I grounded this practice by mindfully breathing at the top of every hour. If no one was around, I closed my eyes (e.g. sitting in the backroom of the school’s Media Center). If people were present, I just concentrated on my breath for a few minutes with my eyes open. Another practice recommended by Hanh that I embedded in my practice was mindful walking. As I approached a classroom to conduct an observation, I slowed myself and focused on my breathing as I took each step. I also engaged in Deep Listening during conferences and other interactions with candidates, consciously refraining from interrupting or speaking too much, rather allowing the candidate to express herself fully. I tried to focus entirely on their words, including the tone, and be fully present with them, listening as if nothing else mattered or no
one else existed. Finally, I engaged in mindful observations, borrowing from Tremmel’s (1993) Slice of Classroom Life activity, I began narrating—as objectively as possible-whatever I observed while a candidate was teaching. Along with taking notes for the required evaluation rubric, I wrote details of what I saw, heard, felt (e.g. the children are talking to each other; the air conditioning is hitting my hair, the candidate fidgets with her name tag hanging from her neck). As shown in Lantern 2 on the timeline, practiced repeatedly, these various techniques served as rituals, which kept me grounded in present-moment awareness while supervising. I define a ritual as “a relatively rigid pattern of acts specific to a situation which construct a framework of meaning over and beyond the specific situational meanings” (Bernstein, Elvin, & Peters, 1966, p. 429). The lanterns illuminating this enactment-living the Zen constructs and experiencing mindfulness-became the foundation for experiencing the Awakenings, which I describe below.

**Awakenings**

During this study, I experienced eight Awakenings. These Awakenings represent profound experiences and major, reoccurring themes reflected in my data analysis. The Awakenings describing my experiences with Zen and supervision were: 1) living Zen versus trying to implement Zen notions; 2) experiencing anxiety as I grew more conscious of my practice and self; and 3) experiencing a flow state/slowing of time during supervision practice. Awakenings resulting from the interaction between Zen and high-leverage practice were 4) instructional planning, instructional feedback, and reflective thinking (during the observation cycle) were enhanced; 5) increased awareness of relationships and collegiality with mentor teachers; 6) greater sensitivity to the social-emotional need of teacher candidates. Awakenings addressing how Zen illuminated my views and beliefs of supervision were: 7) a
reconceptualizing of the image, role, and responsibility of the supervisor; and 8) viewing supervision as a more intuitive, moment-to-moment activity.

Research Question #1: What do I experience as I attempt to enact Zen constructs within an undergraduate elementary teacher education program?

In this section, I explicate my experiences with Zen and supervision, which, depending on how one views these experiences, might be labeled both positive and negative. These experiences involved Zen as a direct experience, feeling anxiety, and finding myself in what might be described as a state of flow (Czisikzentmihalyi, 1990).

Awakening #1: “Living Zen” Versus Trying to Enact Zen

As I began to meditate on data from the Fall 2018 semester and contemplate how I might incorporate Zen into my supervision role, I did not know exactly where to begin. I lacked a roadmap to explore these ideas as they relate to supervision. I started with the Zen constructs described in the literature section, holding them in my hand, but like water, they felt like they were slipping through my fingers. The tighter I grasped, the faster these highly abstract notions evaded me. With these constructs in mind, I wrote journal reflections and observations and reflected on observation conference transcripts, looking for signs of Zen. Each week, I focused on a particular construct. For instance, I looked for examples of impermanence in the school, within the framework of my supervision, with the triads, and I found it.

I observed much impermanence-much change-today. The school held a lockdown and fire drill, which pushed back schedules for observations. Some interns thought they might have to reschedule observations, since initially the time for the drills was unknown. Also, an intern’s child was sick so she wasn’t going to attend internship but later came (Journal Entry, 9-19-2018).
Nevertheless, while examining the constructs and how they played out in my supervision practice provided insights and obvious improvements, I felt a nagging, an insincerity in how I was living out these concepts. The enactment seemed contrived. On 10-31-2018, I journaled:

Today, I intended to focus on the construct of simplicity/directness. It seems too overwhelming to try and enact all the Zen constructs each day I am in the field. The other challenge in enacting Zen constructs is just that, these are constructs, mere ideas, theories-invisible ghosts.

My Zen Critical Friend later articulated this dissatisfaction when he commented that, while I was describing Zen notions, I was too focused on these ideas. Rather than experiencing Zen, he noted I was “writing about Zen” (e-mail, 12-24-2018). I was taking a far too analytical approach to an anti-analytical subject. Even when journaling about my experiences, my Critical Friend encouraged me to immerse myself in the details:

If you're truly mindful, you're mindful, first of all, of the concrete details of life in the classroom. It's quite revealing that some student teachers have real trouble temporarily suspending their judgement and discursive mind and first focusing on the details--where the action really is. To paraphrase Mark Twain: "Don't say the old lady screamed; bring her on and let her scream." (e-mail, 12-24-2018).

At that moment, I experienced what Zen masters describe as a satori, a sudden awakening. I realized for this work to be authentic, to honor the ideas I was positing, I needed to push them aside in a sense, and just live them out. As the Critical Friend put it, “Don't write about Zen; write Zen” (12-24-2018).

I took this a step further to mean not only to write Zen, but to live out the ideas in my supervision role. I needed to move away from the over-analytical mind normally possessed by
researchers and hurl myself into the throes of intuition and direct experience. To me, this meant engaging in supervision practices and tasks with a fully-present, fully engaged mind—what I’ve come to describe as *supervision in every breath*, the title of the following poem I wrote in my journal (3-12-2019) following my new awakening:

The spaces between

Moments

I supervise

Between steps

Inhale

Exhale

Nothing else exists

Except this moment

The teacher candidate

In front of me

*Supervision in Every Breath*

The above poem reflected my shift to thinking about Zen within supervision to *living* Zen within the field. My journal and memos also reflected this change. The first example is an early journal entry (10/13/2018), the second an entry (2/5/2019) that I wrote after a Critical Friends interaction:

Today, I am practicing being mindful, in the present moment during my supervision practices and tasks. While conducting final conferences, I am intentionally being present—or at least trying. I find returning to my breath helps me be present. At times, I find my attention slipping to thinking about work I have to do, my dissertation proposal
presentation, chores, errands. I do find that when I remain in the present, I notice more: the intern’s facial expressions, what they are wearing (jewelry, watches), their tone of voice when they discuss an area of performance. For instance, their voice might change when discussing a “progressing” evaluation mark from their CT. Their tone also goes higher when discussing an area they are excited about (Journal, 10-13-2018).

***

Mind racing—just a few minutes before first conference with intern. I stop remember to focus on the breath. I feel calmer, clearer. I feel my job is to first connect with the intern; check on their well-being, their state of mind. Then proceed to instructional planning support. I hear the sound of the heater above. My hands feel cold from outside. I wonder how the interns are doing now that they are in the school five days per week.

Breath…out

Breath…out.

The high-leverage task comes into mind—instructional planning support—that’s my entire day—conferences. Can I stay present, completely in the moment with them? Should I be expected to do that. When I breath, time changes, seems to slow. I seem to remember what’s important. The eye of the storm. I notice the features of the intern’s face, the glimmer in the eye or lack of. I notice whether she smiles. Her responses to my statements or questions. I seem more aware of how much I talk, how much the intern talks—I stop myself at times. It’s like a dance, a give and take flow (Journal, 2-5-2019).

These two entries demonstrate the shift from intellectually writing about Zen to describing the Zen experience as it was happening. The first quote, for instance, suggested how I was writing about my experience the way someone would narrate a story in third person; the second quote
demonstrates living and writing about the experience as fully immersed in the experience, in first-person. This type of writing—the Zen experience—continued during the second half of the study. The contrast between writing about Zen versus writing Zen could also be found across the journal entries and the second platform iteration I created in an attempt to describe how to I might enact Zen. For instance, below is what I wrote regarding how the construct of impermanence might be viewed within the triad and building collegiality:

See the triad as living dynamic, subject to constant change; this could mean the triad is growing stronger, staying neutral or weakening. Perceptions of each other might be changing, evolving. Beliefs about the triad itself may be influx (Meditative Memo #6). However, I later journaled (10-15-2018) the following:

A living breathing, pulsating force. I can see, almost feel the dynamic of the candidate and mentor. Every word, action, thought, changes the relationship. I hear the mentor talk with the candidate, the tone. I feel how close they stand to me, each other. I am inspired to poetically reflect on the impermanence of it all:

Like passing clouds
Interns, mentors
come and go
Slipping away
Into the future
We are “here” together
For some time
Sharing the skies
Until we slip away
The first quote “tells” about my experience with impermanence while the second piece of data suggests the living of the construct—hearing the sights, sounds, and emotions associated with the construct. Thus, I am totally immersed in the moment. During the study, I naturally evolved to living Zen rather than simply read about it. Like an aspiring cook, who simply read recipes but realizes the experience is in the cooking itself, I grew to embody the very constructs I was studying.

**Awakening #2: Becoming Mindful of My Supervision Produced Anxiety**

Contrary to ideas that Zen represents calmness and peace, I experienced that awakening to one’s self and supervision can be unnerving. At times, I experienced heightened anxiety as I became more mindful of my thoughts, words, and actions. I had glimpses of insight that caused nervousness. Gaining knowledge is not always positive-sometimes you learn things you don’t want to know. While self-study sheds light on one’s practice, mindfulness techniques, such as mindful, breathing and mindful walking, produced direct awareness into my practice, including the impact of my words and action. I apparently experienced dissonance between my espoused platform and the reality of what was occurring in the field. For example, in my second platform iteration, I stressed the need to:

- be mindful and sensitive to the needs of the group and of individual members; notice how each other’s actions and words impact the triad and individual members. Be aware of the “health” of the triad, whether it’s existing within a positive energy or whether negativity is entering the dynamic.

However, during the study, I realized that I knew little about my actual connections with other triad members, particularly mentor teachers. Practicing mindfulness (intentionally paying
attention to the present moment), I increased awareness when entering a classroom, thus, I noticed more about the teacher candidate, the mentor teacher, as well as how I carried myself. This heightened mindfulness often caused anxiety, as Meditative Memo #2 reflected:

Awareness is also a double-edged sword. I am now becoming more aware of my shortcomings, my limitations, my weaknesses as a supervisor, as a human being. I am all too aware of how little time I spend at the internship school. Also, I strongly felt last week my lack of connection with the CTs—it hit me like a bolt of lightning that not matter, I will never enjoy the connection that the interns have with their CTs. I felt a little helpless in this situation. I am aware of it but not sure I can really improve it all that much. It’s like watching the news—you become aware of all the world’s problems, but then what? What the hell can you do about it? Sometimes supervision feels like that. You become aware of the things you must do. How can you do them all 100 percent? You throw your hands up to them. What can I possibly do?

As the above quote reflects, growing aware of my time spent at the school and my relationships with the mentor teachers, the reality versus my perceptions, produced anxiety. It was as if I took a giant chalkboard or poster and listed all my shortcomings and then just started at it for a while. All the areas that I could perform better, all the disparities between my supervisory platforms and my current reality became evident.

In one instance, I became mindful of a strained relationship between a mentor teacher and candidate. As part of my increased awareness, I began directly asking mentor teachers to describe their relationship with candidates and paying closer attention to their responses, such as their physical reactions and use of language. In the past, I was not so direct. I would simply have conversations, exchanging pleasantries, and act on information if it came up. In this case, to my
surprise, the mentor teacher expressed concern that the candidate was repeatedly failing to meet her expectations—this feedback never surfaced on evaluation forms or during conversations with the candidate. This one new insight led to a whole series of actions aimed at improving the situation, and eventually reassigning the candidate to another teacher. I later wrote (Meditative Memo #3):

Now, I have to address the situation. Ignorance may be bliss in some supervision situations. Then again, these problems tend to become bigger later in the semester o program. Being aware means being aware of the good and the bad.

This memo exemplifies this idea that knowing or becoming more mindful of one’s situation includes knowing more about potentially negative situations or problems. A major source of this anxiety came from being more mindful and responsive to the needs, concerns, and opinions of the candidates. Becoming mindful of a certain piece of feedback (e.g. survey responses, conferences with candidates) or gaining a new insight was difficult at times, such as when I suddenly realized that I didn’t enjoy the strong relationship with mentor teachers I believed I possessed. This flash of insight also included the notion that I did not enjoy the same type of meaningful relationships that candidates enjoyed with their mentors. In a survey about triad relationships, one candidate responded:

My CT likes Steve, however she is not happy about the lack of communication between him and the rest of CTs… she felt like he wasn't being flexible or accommodating to her needs so that stressed her out and myself to try and find the time to plan for the upcoming weeks. My CT and I get along great! We laugh and talk all the time and we both work extremely well together in the classroom. I'm so glad that she was my CT and that I get to work with her for half of the day next semester.
Another candidate responded:

I think my CT's relationship with Steve is okay. They don't talk much except the few words when he comes in to observe me… I think the relationship between my CT and I is amazing! I could have asked for a better CT. We get along really well, she encourages me, and she is always there for me if I need anything.

These responses produced a wave of anxiety, which surfaced during meditating on the data.

Arising one day, I wrote (Meditative Memo #5):

In truth, this whole study scares me at times. Become strongly aware of my supervision practices is frightening. My major professor agreed, I am making myself very vulnerable-open to criticisms. Self-study requires this vulnerability; to improve practice, one must be open to the positive and negative aspects. I surveyed the interns, asking them to describe my qualities. This was scary!

As I explain, I attempted to sooth my nerves but justifying the feelings in the name of research and self-study. I pushed forward but increasing awareness often coincided with increased discomfort. I experienced another moment of cognitive dissonance when I surveyed the candidates to describe and rate my ability to remain present-minded with them during conferences, seminar, and other interactions. In this case, they positively stated that I had the ability to remain highly mindful during our interactions, writing things like “Steve is able to stay present and mindful in the moment through conferencing, in seminar, in classrooms, and in observations” and “Steve is always present and attentive. He always listens to what I have to say and gives me feedback.” However, I felt guilty since I believed that I was only marginally successful at the construct of mindfulness, for example, during conferences, since at times I
caught myself wandering, thinking about other tasks I had to do later in the day, what I was having for lunch, etc. In Meditative Memo #8, I described my inner conflict:

Is this true? How can they know this? How can they know that sometimes during formal observations my mind wanders—I think about lunch, or checking my e-mail? That I might grow bored. Yes, I bring my mind back to the observation and give it my best—but my mind is not always there 100 percent. Their perception and my perception do not exactly line up. If I am using them as a mirror to examine this self-study, my practice, what if they mirror is slightly distorted, slightly cracked?

I also expressed this inner turmoil to to one of my Critical Friends, who, as a fellow field supervisor, sympathized with the situation and dissonance in general:

I often feel overwhelmed during observations myself because I try to focus on too many components of the lesson, I find myself going in with a focus, such as how is the teacher attending to the objective, or how do they attend to formative assessment? YES! 100 times yes! I am never satisfied with my work as a supervisor. I do not think it is possible to do all it takes as a supervisor well. (e-mail, 12-17-2018).

This Critical Friend cited the teacher education self-study literature, distilling this advice in a follow-up e-mail (12-17-2018):

I think the interns are "disturbing" your practice and as a result startling you out of your comfort zone and current habits. I remember the Loughran Book (2007) Developing a Pedagogy of Teacher Education talking about this. This idea of disturbing practice always stuck with me because it requires problematizing practice—which causes a certain amount of being uncomfortable. No one likes to be outside their comfort zone.
While I suppose commiserating with another supervisor helped me gain perspective, it did not diminish the stress I felt during the study. Engaging mindfulness certainly yielded positive results (to be detailed in coming Awakenings), the practice also created an uneasiness, or an awakened anxiety, which ran like a jittery current through my supervision practice.

**Awakening #3: Experiencing a Slowing of Time/ Flow State during Supervision**

Anchored in the mindfulness practices of walking meditation, mindful breathing, and mindful notetaking, I experienced what I can only describe as a slowing of time during supervision practice. Of course, this was a change in the perception of time, of not feeling so rushed, so frantic. Mindful walking and breathing as I went from classroom to classroom or up the stairs of the school campus, I noticed that my movements slowed, and consequently, my thoughts seemed to slow. My mind didn’t race as much. This journal entry (1/15/19) described this state of mind:

As I walk up the stairs, I concentrate on my steps. Breathing in, I take another step, breathing out, another step. I feel the breeze past my face, the warmth on my skin. In the distance, I see the school resource officer patrolling the grounds. A child passes me on the staircase but doesn’t make eye contact. I continue walking slow and breathing mindfully. Colors seem to pop. Life is more alive. I enter the school building, aware of my shoes clanking against the tile floor. Worry has dropped away. I enter the classroom feeling more refreshed.

In Meditative Memo #5, I articulated:

I feel as though time stands still a bit, time slows down, when I focus on the moment and breath. Like Thich Nhat Hanh recommends, I slowed down before entering classrooms, one foot in front of another. I became aware of the sunshine on my sky outside, the air
passing, the children’s laughter. Things seem magnified. When I enter a classroom, things seem more colorful. The students’ faces, their smiles, expand. But the stress—the creases, the wrinkles of the CTs faces also blows up in my mind. I also notice the expressions on the interns—the tension around the mouth, the strain in the eyes, the dark circles under the eyes-if they exist.

This slowing of time also seemed to ground me, serving as a mental sanctuary, during high-stress days at the school. The experience of slowing the mind—the frantic racing of thoughts—became even more important when things did not go smooth, as was the case when some infighting among mentor teachers at the school created a negative environment for the candidates and required added attention (Meditative Memo #8):

Today was crushing. I felt like I was being pulled apart, torn, limb from limb, my center dragged in some many directions. I had put try and put out this large fire, working all day to determine the situation…All this while I conducted my normal observations and other supervisory duties. The Zen rituals—mindful walking, brief meditations, just breathing—saved me. They kept me grounded, as much as I could be, and able to function and perform my regular duties and also stay focused on what had to be done to resolve this situation. Though I felt torn and stressed, I was able to keep returning to the breath, to slow my steps, and just breath, for instance, before I entered a classroom.

The following poem expressed the role that mindfulness practices—and its’ ability to slow my mind- began to play, particularly on stressful days:

Pulled

Torn
So Many Directions

I ache from the inside

My mind,

A Scattered Mess

Breath

Slow my monkey mind

My only salvation

The ability to slow my experience seemed to interact positively with the need for supervisors in the field to complete a variety of functions (e.g. evaluation, supervision) and practices (e.g. providing emotional support, providing instructional feedback). The following excerpt from Meditative Memo #8 elaborated on this experience:

I come to see the high-leverages practices, such as finding placements, developing collegiality, and this whole supervision process, as a living dynamic that is constantly tugging at my energy, my attention, pulling me in many directions at once. This is why supervision, like teaching, can be so demanding and stressful, because it is so complex and requires much skill. Mindfulness, though, can serve as a buffer against this onslaught. Zen techniques and philosophy can help ground one, keep one whole, stop one’s being from being disintegrated by this process. Zen seems to slow this fast-moving game of supervision, so like an athlete, I can better make the right plays.

As noted, slowing down mentally better positioned me to make decisions and take actions. Like an athlete who might perceive the ball moving slower, and thus creates opportunities and more chances to be successful, I experienced the ability to more clearly and positively respond to demands in the field, such as a candidate needing emotional support. Feeling calmer and more
centered, I didn’t overreact to situations. My Zen Critical Friend connected my experiences back to Schon, e-mailing (12-06-18):

The memo reminds me very much of what Schon is describing when he discusses reflection-in-action. One famous part of that discussion uses the example of a pitcher in baseball making subtle adjustments during the course of a game to find and then stay "in the groove." Another well-known example is a jazz musician trying to get the flow of what the other musicians are doing.

Related to the slowing of time, I also experienced supervision, particularly when things worked well, as a state of flow. One of the characteristics of flow is a transformation of the perception of time—either speeding up or slowing down (Czisikszentmihalyi, 1990). I experienced moments when supervision was fluid, smooth, and lucid--when, for example, I could move from one practice to another seamlessly. While difficult to substantiate this highly subjective experience, I present a series of journal reflections and meditative memos to encapsulate what I experienced. From Meditative Memo #2:

Supervision for me is becoming a “feel,” an intuitive process, of being in tune with the teacher candidates and CTs—their needs, their wants, their concerns and challenges, and adjusting myself to those elements. I am like a chameleon at times, changing shape and form, adjusting to the environment, so it does not consume me.

In these moments, as described above, supervision felt more like a rhythm, an ebb and flow, as opposed to a series of prescribed tasks and practices. I felt more fluid when engaged in various practices, such as connecting with triad members or providing instructional feedback, more able to move between them. During this flow state, I also experienced a feeling of non-attachment to
what was occurring. This was different from non-caring, rather I cared but seemed untouched by outside event, a type of engaged-distancing that enabled me to respond more effectively.

I realize to be effective in supervision, I must remain in a flow state, fluid, flexible, responding but not getting attachment. I sort of non-attached supervision, where I bend and flow to make things work for everyone. This has also helped me cope with the stress and frustration that can come with supervising. For instance, I dealt with my interns’ being upset by going with it, non-resistance, and helping, guiding them towards a solution. Maybe this flow-state supervision also provides a good model for teacher candidates. It models a person who remains calm, centered, not losing himself amidst the chaotic activity around him (Meditative Memo #4).

This flow state happened occasionally when interacting with candidates, particularly during one-one conferences, where I was completely engrossed in our conversation (Meditative Memo #6):

In this state, I appear to use my energy more efficiently. I also seem to know when to flow with the conference—in other words, when a candidate is more advanced, has sound ideas, I let them go on about their lesson plan without interruption, with less corrective feedback. It’s not necessary. It’s like a stream running smoothly—I just glide along with it. If the lesson plan is not so sound, I still try to move with the current but gently redirect through questioning (e.g. might there be another way to assess that skill?).

The following post conference transcript (2-20-2019) suggested this flow state, knowing when to shift gears, when to redirect energy, to maintain a fluid conversation that remain balance and did not harbor on negativity. In this case, the candidate began the conversation with stating how engaged she believed the students were during her instruction—describing the lesson as the “best one to date.” However, the talk inevitably led to a situation during the observation, when another
student had intentionally bumped into a classmate, causing the candidate to react strongly and deliver a swift consequence to the child.

Candidate: He’s so used to getting in trouble that he will just accept it.

Supervisor: Well, we can come back to it, but that was obviously an intense part of the lesson to you.

Candidate: Yes, that’s what stands out. On a positive note of that happening, I look behind me and all the other kids were still working.

Supervisor: That’s right—I don’t want to take that one incident and blow it up so that it overshadows all the great things going on in your lesson. Why don’t we table that, maybe come back to that.

Candidate: Okay.

The above exchange suggests the positive benefits of operating within this state, as I could move more easily between practices and functions. On another occasion, I also experienced a state of flow between supervisory functions—evaluation and providing emotional support—after a candidate grew upset over evaluation scores. After noticing the candidate was upset, I shifted the conservation towards her well-being, asking if she needed to take a break from the conference. Within a few minutes, the candidate calmed down and said she want to proceed with the conference. I then shifted back towards providing targeted feedback to help the candidate understand how to improve performance. The conference ended in this manner (Transcript, 2-20-2019):

Supervisor: I want you to understand you are doing a good job. I’m just pushing you to the next level. Sometimes it’s hard. You want to be concerned about your scores but not to the point you’re making yourself sick about it.
Candidate (changes subject): Do you have our paperwork…

Supervisor: No, no…wait. Are you okay? I want to make sure you’re doing okay.

Candidate: Yes, I’m okay.

As the above conversation suggests, I grew more aware of my transitions between various functions and practices played out by the supervisor. It was as if I was consciously flowing or moving between these spaces, which in the past seemed unconscious.

In the above, three Awakenings, the constructs of mindfulness and paying attention to the present moment produced varying effects. In one way, being mindful created anxiety or a being uncomfortable with supervision as I “lived” Zen. In another, I experienced a perceived slowing of time and flow state.

**Research Question #2: How might Zen constructs interact with routines of practice I regularly perform within supervision?**

In the next, three Awakenings, I address how Zen constructs intersected with the high-leverage practices of supervision. What I experienced while enacting Zen is now overlaid against the backdrop of executing specific practices, such as providing emotional support to candidates and fostering reflection of teaching.

**Awakening #4: Zen Constructs Enhancing the Observation Cycle (Curriculum Planning, Instructional Feedback, and Reflective Thinking)**

As a result of following Zen Rituals (e.g. Mindful Walking, Deep Listening), I experienced a deeper, more profound awareness during pre-conferences, formal observations, and post-conferences with candidates. This expanded awareness generated new insights and new outcomes within the high-leverage practices of curriculum planning, providing instructional feedback and fostering reflective thinking among teacher candidates.
Curriculum Planning

Engaging in Deep Listening during pre-conferences, I experienced a more focused perspective and listened more closely and accurately to candidates as they explained their instructional plans for the upcoming lesson. Transcripts of pre-conferences revealed I began to interrupt less, to speak less and listen more. More aware of my interrupting, I created more opportunities for candidates to explain their reflection on the lesson, occasionally interjecting only a single word or two to affirm their explanation.

The following conversations occurred during pre-planning conferences on 10-18-2018. The transcripts show my inability to listen deeply before talking:

Supervisor: I wonder if, with the worksheet, are there other ways they could express their learning and understanding?
Teacher Candidate: I was thinking about that because I have a couple of students…
Supervisor (Interrupting): What if they couldn’t…Right..
Teacher Candidate: They struggle with writing…
***
Teacher Candidate: I’m just really want them to be engaged and to listen and to learn something from it because I’m always afraid when I’m teaching they are not really taking something away from it. That’s just my personal..
Supervisor (Interrupting): So are you taking about management?
Teacher Candidate: Yeah.

I grew increasingly aware of my inability to listen during conference without interjecting and expressed my concern over the inability to listen without interruption, noting in my journal:
I truly tried to deeply listen during conferences. I find it hard not to talk, not to share my knowledge. After all, I am a teacher at heart. I did become aware of myself wanting to interrupt the candidate and worked to remain quiet. Later in the day, during a pre-conference, I found myself interrupting a candidate again as she explained her lesson plan. I started telling her how she might design her lesson. I wanted to share my experiences when I was a k-12 teacher. But I was aware of my interrupting, and I stopped myself, saying aloud, “I’m doing it again.” I apologized to the candidate and let her speak, focusing on listening intently. It’s very hard not to speak and share (Journal Entry, 10-13-2018).

However, after practicing Deep Listening, conference recordings suggested that I interrupted less. During the following exchange (Conference Transcript, 2-14-2019), I had practiced Deep Listening:

Teacher Candidate: I think it went really well. They (the students) were able to understand the objective and take that away. I think it was cool for them because they got to dive pretty deep into it and create their own thing related to…

Supervisor: Yeah.

Teacher Candidate: Their writing and illustrations. The only thing I think if I did again I would change would not have them write “written by” or “illustrated by” because I think it was a waste of time. If we just had it on the paper first…

Supervisor Yes.

As can be observed in this conference transcript, though, I wanted to interject, I focused on the candidate’s words and voice, refraining from speaking with the exception of simple confirmation words (e.g. yes) and the nodding of my head.
Approaching pre-conferences with a beginner’s mind, I also noticed that I asked more questions and exhibited more curiosity, even when discussing lesson plans that reminded me of plans I had reviewed in the past. This state of mind resulted in a constant stream of questioning, a continued curiosity, as the following conference transcript excerpts demonstrate:

(10-31-2018)

Supervisor: Talk a little but about what you hope to accomplish?

Teacher Candidate: They are acting like scientists when they do this?

Supervisor: How so?

(10-17-2018)

Supervisor: Why use collaborative grouping, why not have them work individually?

Teacher Candidate: I don’t know when they’re so young I think individual isn’t as engaging for them. If they have to be silent on their own…I think they will learn more by socializing.

(9-12-2018)

Supervisor: I wonder if, with the worksheet, are there other ways they could express their learning and understanding?

Teacher Candidate: I was thinking about that because I have a couple of students…

(9-12-2018)

Candidate: I plan to teach them how to add by tens…

Supervisor: Why is that? Why should they learn this skill?

(10-17-2018)

Candidate: So, I’m going to use these pinch cards with the kids.

Supervisor: Pinch cards? What are those? Tell me about that!
As you can see, in each of the quotes above, I exhibited a child-like curiosity at times, expressed through consistent querying. In the last exchange, I experienced a sense of surprise, despite my many years as an educator.

**Instructional Feedback and Reflective Thinking**

I also gained greater awareness when conducting formal observations, which enabled me to think more deeply about the feedback I later gave candidates. The habit of Mindful Walking prior to an observation provided clarity of mind, which created an ideal mental state for noticing details. The ritual impacted observations, particularly during high-stress days at the school, when my mind was racing or pre-occupied. The following journal entry (2-05-2019) exemplifies this experience (some of the details of the situation have been changed to protect the identity of the candidate):

Tears swell up in her eyes. I see them grow watery. Her voice waivers. The candidate explains how a parent had become angry with her and her mentor teacher over the handling of two students, who got into a disagreement. I try to reassure her that she did nothing wrong. I ask her to explain the situation. She explains her story. Nothing exists except this intern and her words, her story, her experience. This is how I started my supervision day. I had to hurry upstairs for my first observation. My mind was racing. How to handle this situation? Who to speak to? What’s the best course of action? Whirlwind of thoughts. Then, I remember to breath, in and out. I engage in mindful walking. I slow everything. My steps, my breath, my experience, time seems to slow. I enter the classroom to observe the intern. While my mind is a bit cloudy, I am far more prepared to observe her lesson, to give it the attention it deserves.
As can been seen in the above journaling, mindfulness prepared me for the act of observing by calming the ocean of the mind. Once the waves of thought settled, I could better focus on a candidate’s teaching and give my full attention. With deeper insight, I was then positioned to give deeper, more thoughtful instructional feedback during post-conferences.

Engaging in mindful observation note-taking created a deeper layer of perception, which then was used to generate new insights and discussions. I noticed details and events that I normally would not notice or capture in writing using the university-approved observation tool. Open-ended, narrative scripting—trying to objectively record events and actions that occur during teaching—has been a suggested practice in supervision (Sullivan & Glanz, 2005). However, the mindful notes I completed also included considering thoughts and feelings that arise (Tremmel, 1993) during the process. For instance, I noted a wondering I might have about a candidate’s teaching method or an emotion (anxiety, frustration, joy) that might surface during the process of observing. I also engaged in mindful breathing during the process, occasionally returning awareness to my breathing if I believed I was losing concentration. In this first example of mindful notes (1-23-2019), I recorded an unexpected event when a mentor teacher was excited and surprised by a teaching method used by the candidate:

Teacher candidate directs student to talk to partner. Room loud with chatter. “Ok, 3,2,1…OK let’s try that again Turn and talk is done!” Room quiet. Mentor teacher says “that’s so cool!” Tells observer to come see that candidate has covered pictures in book for student to predict illustrations. Mentor goes next door and tells colleague about strategy. “I never thought about that-that’s so cool!” I wonder what the candidate is feeling? Is she proud? Does this distract her? I never observed this before, a mentor teacher getting so excited. I think it’s rather cool myself.
As can be seen in this example, I also found myself writing down details that involved physical mannerisms of the candidate and students:

Some hold heads with hand, elbow on able. Expressionless. PST teaches from sitting behind computer. Her leg crossed, foot moving. *Is she nervous, I wonder?*

In this example, I not only record the candidate’s physical movement but became more conscious of my own thoughts and inner reactions to that movement. I became more focused also on the inner workings of the candidate, wondering what thoughts and emotions she might be experiencing during the observation.

Furthermore, mindful observation notes caused me to pay attention to the physical location of those in the classroom. For example, in each observation, I grew more aware of where the candidate positioned herself as well as the mentor teacher. I also focused on where the students spent time during the lesson (details such as notes about the mentor teacher were not required using the university evaluation tool). This excerpt (2-25-19) depicts capturing physical positioning:

Intern stands from of room talking to students sitting on the carpet. “Boys and girls, I need eyes over here.” Intern talks to students about what they will learn. Students sit quietly on carpet. One student raises hand. Students shout out answer in unison. Student comes in classroom (late?). CT sits at computer, back to classroom. I’m not sure what ti make about the mentor teacher’s positioning: *Interesting that the CT is not watching? Is this good or bad? Does she care what’s happening? What does the candidate think of this?*

Insights from mindful notetaking carried over into post-conferences, generating discussions that traditionally had not occurred between myself and candidates. I decided to only share the
mindful notes with candidates only if they agreed, since this was outside the purview of the program’s evaluation tool and perhaps some details might make the candidate uncomfortable. The following are notes recorded during a fifth-grade teaching observation (1-23-2019):

Class is quiet. Students sitting large horseshoe, starting at overhead. Math problem on screen. PST asks student come up and teach solving problem. Student talks, explains. PST asks clarifying questions. “Very good, you know what else I noticed she did.” Student raises hands and corrects student teacher’s work. Mentor teacher films lesson with cell phone in back of room. Students write with pencils. Some hold heads with hand, elbow on able. Expressionless. PST teaches from sitting behind computer. Her leg crossed, foot moving. PST asks questions. “What’s first thing we do when solving this problem? “That’s it. I only have two hands raised?” Seems like the candidate is nervous. I want her to do well. I suppose I would be nervous if I were being watched with someone typing notes.

PST reads directions for problem. Gets up and circulates. “I’m going give you 5-6 minutes to solve it” Mentor teacher asks students question; Another teacher in the room speaks. PST watches them. Mentor teacher asks another question. The other adults are speaking a lot. Does this bother the candidate? I feel like it would bother me if I were being observed.

These notes sparked a completely different conversation than one held just minutes earlier based off notes recorded using the university-required evaluation rubric. During the earlier conversation, we strictly discussed the candidate’s performance on prescribed teaching practices; there was no mentioned of the candidate’s or students’ physical movements or mannerisms or how the mentor teacher’s involvement might have impacted the lesson. Initially, the candidate
was surprised after I read the mindful notes, saying “oh, I did bad.” She said she didn’t realize that the students weren’t smiling and wondered why they were not as engaged as she originally thought. The candidate wondered why only two students raised their hand and felt that it made her appear negative or scolding them when she asked a question.

This statement led to a conversation about what techniques she might use to increase participation. Finally, the candidate discussed the presence of her mentor teacher and a resource teacher in the classroom during the observation and focused particularly on how the mentor teacher interjected during the lesson (Conference Transcript, 2-20-19).

It’s not a bad thing, but it does put you on the spot. Like I could have asked that question.

It puts you in a different spot. At least for me.

This comment led to a discussion on how the candidate might interact with other adults in her future classroom (e.g. resource teachers, aides) and ways she could view co-teaching. During another conference (2-27-19), a candidate recognized her use of movement and animation as a way to engage first-grade students. She said she hadn’t realized this insight during the typical reflection cycle, which involved reviewing the written evaluation feedback, including my standard note-taking, and watching a video of the lesson.

Certain kids--I try to open my eyes to them. They love doing motions. It shows me doing the little motions, might jog their memory. I’m trying to incorporate that more, but I didn’t realize I was trying to do that.

The above excerpts demonstrate how mindful notetaking led to new discussions, which prompted candidates to reflect on new details. Candidates’ awareness of teaching-as well as the influences around them that impacted their teaching-increased. Overall, candidates generally
responded positively to the practice of capturing mindful notes to improve their teaching and help them grow professionally. As one wrote in a survey:

I think it is interesting. I think one advantage is it helps you stay focus during our observations and provides something to go back and look at in case you forgot about what happened. I will probably ask to see mine because I like to know my tendencies and things of that nature. It will help me become better. I think it will help as feedback after the lesson. It also helps me understand what people are looking at and for while they observe a lesson.

Overall, infusing mindfulness into my practice enhanced my ability to help candidates plan instruction and provide meaningful feedback, which helped fostered reflective thinking by prompting candidates to consider details in the lesson (e.g. physical gestures/movements of students and themselves, positionality of those in the room) that might normally be overlooked. Increasing both my awareness and that of candidates’ teaching sparked new insights and fresh discussions.

**Awakening # 5: Zen Constructs Increasing Awareness of Collegiality and Interpersonal Familiarity with Mentor Teachers.**

During the study, the data suggested being mindful increased my awareness of relationships with mentor teachers at the placement school. Mindfulness, therefore, directly interacted with the high-leverage practices of Collegiality and Developing Interpersonal Familiarity. As mentioned in Awakening #1, I became aware of how candidates viewed my apparent lack of communication with mentor teachers. Exit surveys particularly raised my consciousness level regarding how I communicated with stakeholders in the program.
Candidates continued to comment on my communication procedures, even into the middle of the final semester. For example, one wrote:

I think my CT feels distant from Steve. the only time she hears from him is during my observations and through emails sent from the head CT which she is sometimes still confused about. Overall, I believe he does a great job and these are my only concerns.

Another candidate posted:

I think communicating with CT’s is okay. Sometimes I know the CT’s are a little confused on what is expected of them. Overall I think he does a good job communicating to us and making sure we know his expectations for assignments, observations, etc.

The construct of mindfulness impacted my awareness—how I perceived and interacted with—mentor teachers. For instance, I became more conscious of how they greeted me when I entered their classroom, their tone of voice, facial expressions, and other mannerisms. I also listened closer to what they said. In one case, by intentionally trying to connect more with a particular mentor teacher and being aware of her needs, I surprisingly learned that she had a strained relationship with her intern. I later wrote in my journal (11-07-19):

Change is a constant within the triad dynamic—particularly between the CT and intern. Either the relationship is growing stronger or the CT and intern are growing apart, becoming at odds or more distant. I must become more aware of this change, and whether it’s positive or negative. Today, an intern broke down in tears, explaining how strained her relationship had become with her CT. She felt the CT was too demanding and that their personalities did not match. I had some indication from the CT that the relationship was not great—but didn’t think it would get to this point.
The practice of Mindful Walking and entering a classroom being fully present caused greater awareness of my proximity to mentor teachers and how often I engaged them. I realized many times I only greeted the teachers, conducted an observation, then exited the classroom. However, practicing mindfulness, I began to intentionally interact with greater frequency and for longer periods of time. At times, we exchanged pleasantries and small talk but also compared notes and ideas on how to help the candidate further develop. I journaled (2-27-19) the following:

Today, I mindfully engaged with several mentor teachers following observations. Just spending a few more minutes talking with them, standing closer to them, I felt closer. I felt like a relationship was growing, a sense of collegiality and collaboration.

In addition, I grew more conscious of how often I communicated with mentor teachers when not at the school (via e-mail) and the content of those communications. I e-mailed the teachers more frequently, once a week, for the most part, providing updates on candidate expectations and program requirements. However, I also became more conscious of what I included in those messages and how the teachers responded. Specifically, I started including personal photos (e.g. traveling to various parts of the world) in hopes of establishing a deeper connection with the mentor teachers. I also listened closely to the impact this approach had, as in the case of when I shared a photo of myself meeting a sumo wrestler outside of a Tokyo subway, and a mentor teacher told me her colleagues “got a big kick out of the photo.” Here is an excerpt from one of the e-mails I sent (1-22-19):

Finally, in hopes of getting to know each other better, I thought we could engage in this fun, little activity of sharing a photo and a detail about ourselves (hobbies, interests, etc.) I will start by sharing this photo of myself traveling in Toyko several years ago. I love to travel to other countries with nothing but a map and a deep breath. I "bumped" into this
Practicing mindfulness, I grew increasingly more cognizant of times when I believed I had connected more deeply with the mentor teachers, even if those moments were fleeting. Feelings of collegiality were more heightened and noticed. For example, following a potluck gathering held with teacher candidates and their mentors at the conclusion of the Fall 2018 semester, I journaled (11-26-18):

This was one of the first times I really feel connected with many of the mentor teachers. We talked about our kids, about life—not just the classroom and evaluations. We laughed. We ate. We need do this more often.

So when it came to the practices of interpersonal familiarity and collegiality, engaging in mindfulness enhanced my sensitivity to the connection, of in this case, lack of connection between myself and mentor teachers. Just growing aware of the “feeling” when I entered a classroom, the response or facial expressions of the mentor teacher, helped me stay in-tune with my relationships and caused me to try and improve them.

**Awakening #6: Increased Sensitivity to Social-Emotional Needs of Teacher Candidates**

Zen also impacted the practice of assisting teacher candidates with coping with emotional-social difficulties. My heightened awareness enabled me to be more sensitive—more in tune with the emotional worlds of the candidates and positioned me better to respond to their needs. After practicing mindful breathing and other rituals, I better noticed the candidates’ facial expressions and tone of voice, which allowed me better access to what they were experiencing.

On 9-12-18, after holding a pre-conference, I journaled:
I noticed when I first started talking with a candidate today she sounded nervous; her voiced wavered as she explained the purpose of her observed lesson. I tried to ease her with conversation. I noticed her voice steadied as we spoke. These subtle signs tell them how a candidate might be feeling in the context of the internship or how they might feel about teaching a particular lesson.

Embracing mindfulness, I not only noticed subtle signs of nervousness but also when candidates appeared in a positive frame of mind, as I wrote in my journal (1-15-19) following a pre-conference:

I noticed her jewelry, her rings, her nose ring. Her eyes seem bright; she seems alert, fresh.

I also felt more empathetic towards the candidates, imaging what they might be experiencing when handling stressful situations. In one instance, a candidate’s choice of mentor teacher fell through and a second declined to host her. I continuously wondered how this affected her psyche and self-confidence. Consequently, I worked quickly to reassign her, along the way assuring her that the situation would work out. In another instance, I grew highly aware of a candidate, whose mentor teacher was absent several days, causing her to prematurely take the lead with the students. After visiting her classroom, I later journaled (1-15-19):

Her face is tight, tense. Her eyes a bit watery. I wondered what she is thinking, feeling? Her voice seems shaky as she speaks to the students.

With the image fixed in my mind, I consulted with the mentor teacher in the adjoining classroom, asking her to “check up” on the candidate. Tasked with conferencing all day, I also asked another candidate to visit the candidate’s classroom and see if she needed assistance.

Being able to slow my practice and mind, I felt more present when distressed candidates
approached me. In the past, I might dismiss some of their concerns, rushing to address “more pressing matters.” However, I grew more mindful of the importance of allowing candidates to freely express themselves and the need to assist them in managing their emotional states. This was the case when a candidate approached me in between conferences. She said she was exhausted and feeling like she just wanted semester to be over. She was dealing with family members being sick in the hospital as she was trying to finish her classwork and internship. Though I had to conduct an observation within a few minutes, I paused, took some quiet breaths, and told her, of course, I had time for her.

Dark circles under her eyes, she doesn’t look herself. Her voice is softer, almost weak. I feel the pressure to stick to my schedule, but ignore it, staying present with her, knowing this is the most important thing I could do right how, the “best use” of my time (Journal Entry, 11-07-2018).

There were other moments during the study that candidates came to me in highly distressed states. By being fully present with them, listening deeply to them and not simply distilling hasty advice, I enhanced my sensitivity to their needs. In a few instances, this new awareness seemed to magnify my sensitivity. In Meditative Memo #9, I described the following scene:

I watch the tear streak down her face, cutting through her make-up. I feel the breeze pushes past us, the school courtyard quiet. The sound of the reading garden fountain trickles. Her eyes water, redness expands in the corner of her eyes. Her words broken, coming in between shallow breaths. I listen closely, deeply. Nothing else exists. I feel her stress. My body tenses a bit. She continues. Another tear drop falls. I affirm her words. Ask her if she wants to take a break. I wish I had a Kleenex. I assure her things will work out. I will help her. The tears subside.
I experienced a similar, heightened sensitivity when another candidate, upset over a situation with a parent in her placement class, approached me in a school hallway. While difficult to articulate, I could feel her stress as she spoke. I later journaled (2-15-19):

I watch her lower lip tremble. He eyes begin to water behind her glasses. I’ve never seen her this upset. She struggles to speak. I tell her that it’s okay, to tell me her “side of the story.” I listen closely, as if nothing else matters but her words. She tells me what happened. Within a few minutes, the tears subside. Her shoulders seem more relaxed. I slow my words, try to make them more assuring. I remain calm and hope it helps her. She seems to calm and thanks me for speaking with her.

In survey responses, candidates generally believed that I attended to their social-emotional needs. Though difficult to say whether candidates perceived an increase in my sensivity as a result of practicing Zen, their views reflected my actions in the field. For example, one wrote:

I think that you handle stress/emotional issues very well. You keep a level head and help in a sincere way (Exit Ticket, 10/20/2018).

The construct of mindfulness, in particular, assisted me in becoming more attuned to the emotional needs of the candidates, and thus, positioned me to respond positively and empathetically. In summary, mindfulness also enhanced the practices of collegiality and familiarity, providing instructional feedback and curriculum planning support. Improving my own ability to stay present in the moment positively impacted these high-leverage practices.

**Research Question #3: In what ways might Zen Buddhism constructs illuminate my views as a supervisor working with a group of teacher candidates?**

In this section, I substantiate the Awakenings that dealt with a change in my supervision orientation, beliefs, and stance. While involving my experiences with Zen, as well as enacting
high-leverage practices, these Awakenings were mental transformations, changes in my psyche. These Awakenings deal with my expansion of views on the role, responsibility, and image of the supervisor and viewing supervision as a present moment, intuitive process.

**Awakening #7: Zen Constructs Expanding My Views on the Role, Responsibility, and Image of the Supervisor**

Enacting Zen in supervision prompted me to reconsider what role, ethical responsibility, and image I held as a supervisor. In the first reiteration of my supervisor platform (Appendix A), in articulating my role, I wrote “I believe the goal of supervision is to foster growth and development in preservice teachers and prepare them to effectively work in schools.” While I still believed that to be the case, the study expanded my views. In my final platform iteration (Appendix C), I asserted:

I believe supervisors hold an even higher purpose. I believe supervisors have an ethical obligation to serve as an example, a model for awakened, mindful practices in education. They must demonstrate the ability to remain highly aware, centered, connected, and intuitively responsive to students, teachers, parents, and others in the schools.

This expanded definition advocated the importance of mindfulness and being centered in one’s practice—but also how this awakened supervisor impacts teacher candidates. A significant part of helping teacher candidates grow became linked to expansion of awareness, as Meditative Memo #10 reflected:

I realize that maybe the goal of supervision is to help the intern awaken, to make them more aware of themselves, their environment, the children they teach, their lack of knowledge and what can be learned, the possibilities in the classroom and in their own lives and careers. They must awaken as well.
As stated above, my view of supervision pushed past coaching candidates to be effective teachers to becoming mindful of not only their teaching but themselves, their students, their environment.

My thoughts on the responsibility I held as a supervisor were also altered, as evident in both journal and platform writings. The study’s focus on awareness brought to light the impact of where I placed my attention while in the field (Meditative Memo #11):

Giving your full attention, your best self, even on days when you don’t feel like showing up. It means being present on good supervision days and on bad ones (like last week). It means being there in mind, body, and spirit, regardless of who the intern or CT is, regardless of the classroom, the school even. It’s become an ethical responsibility to me—I owe it to myself and these interns to give me best through being fully present. Bringing all my knowledge, awareness, personality, energies to bear on the process of supervision, that’s my duty. That’s the best I can do.

My image of the supervisor also evolved. Reiterations of my platform suggested a deeper, more sophisticated imaging of the supervisor, moving from one who engaged in a complexity of tasks and practices to assist teacher candidates in professional growth to an individual who navigated the supervision space mindfully, fully aware, and grounded mentally and spiritually. My perspective on the relationship between supervisor and teacher candidates also changed to reflect this more spiritual definition found in my final platform. I began to view myself and triad members as interconnected beings, dependent on each other for growth (Appendix C):

The Awakened Supervisor: One who practices daily mindful engagement in working with teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and others involved in teacher preparation; an
individual who consciously expands awareness of one’s own feelings, beliefs, strengths, shortcomings, and the impact of one’s thoughts, words, and actions on the other; furthermore, this supervisor remains grounded while flowing effortlessly between high-leverage practices and tasks and assuming various roles as they situation arises.

I have come to reimagine the supervisor/teacher candidate relationship. I also view the relationship as one of deep interconnectedness—the supervisor and candidate being as one, operating differently but entirely dependent on each other.

The emotions and internal struggles of the candidate invariably affect the supervisor and vice-versa. The two are like the clouds and the sun, different entities but in constant contact and engaged in dynamic interaction. I also view the roles as interdependent and inter-changeable at times. The supervisor guides the candidate, but the supervisor also learns and becomes more awakened through her interaction with the candidate.

In summary, my views vastly evolved during this study. My early view on supervision as merely coaching teacher candidates in a mentor-type role opened to include a more consciousness-based spiritual definition, where I perceived myself as one to awaken and awaken others and to be fully present in this process. I now also viewed myself as more connected to triad members.

**Awakening #8: Viewing Supervision as an Intuitive, Moment-to-Moment Function.**

I came to see supervision as less mechanical and technical or a prescribed complex series of tasks and practices and more an intuitive experience that involved an individual making decisions and taking actions in each moment. For example, rather than believe conferencing to be a mostly formulaic procedure (e.g. I ask pre-determined questions, the candidate responds), I
began seeing conferences as moments of dynamic exchange, a sort of dance between my words and those of the candidate. As Meditative Memo #6 depicts:

When I am face-to-face with candidates, interacting one-on-one, like in conference, I seem fully engaged, fully mindful. This almost seems to happen situationally. There’s nothing else to focus on (though, one’s mind can wander, for instance, to other tasks that must be done that day). But for the most part, I am fully engaged, aware of their words, the tone of voice, their facial expressions, body posture, non-verbal communication. In this state, I appear to use my energy more efficiently. For instance, I am more mindful of how often I am speaking, how often the candidate is speaking. Whether I am dominating the conversation, interjecting too much or too little. Being aware of myself in the moment provides me with a more balanced conversation. I also seem to know when to flow with the conference—in other words, when a candidate is more advanced, has sound ideas, I let them go on about their lesson plan without interruption, with less corrective feedback. It’s not necessary. It’s like a stream running smoothly—I just glide along with it.

I also started viewing observations in a similar manner: a moment-to-moment experience where I made decisions on what to note and what to mentally engage. Whether walking to classrooms, interacting with distressed candidates, or speaking with the principal or mentor teachers, each became a moment in which I intuitively sensed where to place my focus and energy. As I declared in Meditative Memo #2:

Supervision for me is becoming a “feel,” an intuitive process, of being in tune with the teacher candidates and CTs—their needs, their wants, their concerns and challenges, and
adjusting myself to those elements. I am like a chameleon at times, changing shape and
form, adjusting to the environment, so it does not consume me.

In our exchanges, My Zen Critical Friend confirmed my new views of supervision. He helped
validate and substantiate my view, writing on 2-6-2018:

I particularly like this passage: "I also keep coming back to this image of “supervisor in
every breath.” Usually we think of "supervision" in kind of mechanistic terms that can be
interpreted with a rubric or a checklist. That's way too reductive for the subtle action that
really takes place. You're probing beyond that

Viewing supervision in this new manner could be found in my reiterations of high-
leverage practices within my platform. Practices including encouraging collegiality or providing
emotional support, which I originally viewed as formal, technical practices embedded in specific
steps and methods, gave way to living in the moment and following intuition. In articulating my
original platform (Appendix A), my approach appeared more prescriptive for helping
candidates cope emotionally. For instance, I wrote:

As a supervisor, I must carefully “care” for the preservice teacher, with my priority being
his or her growth. I must provide the right conditions for growth, without providing too
much of any one thing. For instance, watering is essential to a plant, but watering too
much can kill it. Likewise, providing guidance or advice must be distributed in the proper
amount, based on the situation and the developmental stage of the preservice teacher.

On the contrary, my final platform suggested a more intuitive method:

The supervisor can become more conscious of the interactions with candidates and
mentor teachers, and thus, identify and practice the “small gestures” that may help
strengthen interpersonal familiarity. For instance, even becoming aware of the other’s
facial expressions, tone of voice, and other mannerisms, could influence this familiarity and the supervisor’s ability to develop relationships. Helping candidate’s cope with stress and their emotions is more an art form, a “feel.” One only knows the right move when immersed in the moment and acting from that space.

Similarly, I now perceived the practice of helping candidates to draw theory-practice connections as an intuitive activity, writing in Meditative Memo #11:

Drawing deep, theory-practice connections requires being fully aware and open to these connections during each moment of the field experience as well during coursework. The mind of both the supervisor and candidate must remain open to all possibilities.

In one of my final Meditative Memos (#11), I implied that my view of supervision, which I once entertained as a series of incredibly complexed practices and tasks, had been reduced to single moment, to a single breath or perhaps what occurred in between those breaths. It was not that supervision was now seen as simple or easy but rather what mattered most was found in each moment of practice:

I also keep coming back to this image of “supervisor in every breath.” Supervision to me has become a moment-to-moment activity. Every moment involves being focused, aware, and making decisions and actions. In between every breath is the act of supervision. That’s where I must live to be most effective. As your awareness expands, you realize supervision is nothing more than a series of continuous moment-to-moment decisions, a constant thinking on your feet (Schon), a type of dance, where you must think and act, think and act. What I find is the more I can accept this, and put myself into the moment, the more I feel I can effectively operate from this space.
As evidenced, my supervisory views and stance radically transformed during this study, following the enactment of the Zen constructs. Being mindful in each moment of supervision had a profound impact on my beliefs.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter was to report the Awakenings I experienced as I enacted Zen within supervision. These Awakenings demonstrated an altered experience, a slower, more grounded experience of supervision. However, I also experienced anxiety as I became more conscious. I also found that high-leverage practices, namely providing instructional planning and feedback support, connecting with mentor teachers, and responding to the emotional needs of teacher candidates were enhanced through mindfulness practices. Consequently, my views on the role and responsibilities of the supervisor was also expanded to include spiritual dimensions. In the next chapter, I contemplate on what these Awakenings might mean for other supervisors and teacher educators as well as future research in this area.
“There’s way of putting a finger on this thing. There’s no way of nailing it down and that’s the whole point, because you see fundamentally, Zen makes you do what you were doing all the time, only it makes you do it consistently (Watts, 2015, n.p.).

In this study, I enacted and examined Zen constructs within my supervision of elementary education teacher candidates. Engaging in self-study, I hoped to investigate and improve my practice while studying how notions such as mindfulness and beginner’s mind might interact with building collegiality, providing instructional feedback, helping teacher candidates cope with stress, and other high-leverage practices. In this chapter, I discuss possible meanings and implications of my Awakenings. To organize this chapter, I turned to the Zen circle or Enso. Sometimes called the Circle of Enlightenment, the Zen circle represents vast space, infinity, the nature of all things, the circle of life containing all things, and all beginnings and all endings (“Enso,” n.d.). Using this circular design, I begin the chapter with origins of the study and research questions before revisiting each Awakening and contemplating what meaning each might hold for the practice of supervision. I then discuss implications for future research before returning to my original curiosities about Zen and supervision.
A life-long fascination with meditation, Japanese culture, and Zen drew me, called me, to this work. Articles by Glanz (1997) and Tremmel (1993) served as signs--nudging hunches--to pursue Zen within the framework of instructional supervision. I also struggled with the many, often-conflicted views and approaches to supervision and which might best suit me. Knowing Eastern-based thought in Western-dominated discourse may not always be well received, I still plunged forward, following my inner voice (luckily, supported by my dissertation committee and other faculty). I wanted to understand my experience as I enacted Zen during supervision in one of my placement schools. I also wondered how Zen constructs would interact with the high-leverage practices that carry much weight in my role. I also questioned how my beliefs and views on supervision--my platform--might be impacted. From these questions, 8 Awakenings emerged, shedding some light on my curiosities. I now revisit each and ponder their meaning and relevance to the field of supervision and teacher education.

A Further Meditation on my Awakenings

My attempt to implement Zen as opposed to directly experience Zen, or “live Zen,” (Awakening #1) appears to be a result of my inexperience with Zen. I approached the subject as I would others in education and in a typical Westernized, analytical, (perhaps hyper) intellectual fashion. I don’t believe there is inherently anything wrong with this, except when the subject is a foreign one that discourages the intellect and the written word in favor of direct experience. My example serves, perhaps, as warning for other teacher educators interested in exploring non-Western practices. Usual approaches that are highly technical in nature may not work rather may even backfire. One cannot reach the sunset by heading east. On the other hand, I realize Zen may be too exotic for some supervisors or simply not the appropriate theoretical stance. Engaging in Zen also takes much dedication and time (as my legs would attest from sitting in meditation for
an hour). Thus, I confess that I might not be practical for supervisors in general to practice Zen. Personally, I think embracing Zen, living it as I have done, provides the proper context to understand such constructs as beginner’s mind or mindfulness. For example, without engaging in zazen, I do not believe a supervisor would fully grasp the essence of these constructs. It’s sort of like talking about the backstroke or freestyle without submerging in the pool. That said, supervisors might enjoy some of the fruits of Zen without caring for the entire tree. For instance, supervisors might embrace mindfulness methods for its benefits, such as others have done in school settings, without converting to Zen. (Zenner, Herrleben-Kurz, & Walach, 2014). I would not fault a supervisor who practices mindful note taking or mindful listening during observations with teacher candidates, finding positive outcomes, but doesn’t subscribe or study the philosophical underpinnings of Zen. Of course, further research (e.g. self-studies, case studies) is needed to determine if other supervisors benefit when applying these practices.

My second Awakening, which involved episodes of anxiety as I enacted Zen and grew more aware of my practice, surprised me. I suppose I held stereotypical notions of Zen producing calmness and serenity, but awakening can be a rocky path. Peterson (2018) explains that one of the impediments of reaching enlightenment—becoming awakened—is the struggle of letting go of the past, of what one once was, to progress to one’s ideal self. To awaken to the full self, an individual must also face one’s shadow or dark side. As Dogen (1990) articulated, “when one side is illuminated, the other side is darkened” (p. 41). While I don’t think I exposed a darker side within my supervision, I do believe that increased awareness revealed flaws and shortcomings within my supervision. Putting Zen aside, self-study researchers sometimes report anxiety when placing one’s self and practice under a microscope. Samaras and Freese (2006) remind us, “self-study research requires openness and vulnerability since the focus is on the
self” (p. 5). Nevertheless, it’s difficult to isolate my source of anxiety--whether it resulted from becoming more mindful of myself and practice or emerged from the act of conducting a self-study. I suspect the two produced a compound effect. While completing other self-studies on my supervision (Haberlin, 2018, 2019), I did not experience such a high-level of anxiety, though I felt concern at times when collecting feedback from teacher candidates. Of course, other variables exist, including the extended length of time for this research and what might else might have been occurring in my personal and professional life. Regardless, other supervision scholars delving into similar topics might find comfort knowing they are not alone if they experience related experiences.

Experiencing a flow state and the slowing of time during supervision (Awakening #3) paralleled athletes describing being in “the zone.” Considered a higher state of consciousness, the zone finds theoretical roots in flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1975, 1990) or a “rare and dynamic state characterized as the experience of self-rewarding and enjoyable involvement.” The zone also has been linked to reversal theory, an optimal relaxing state or exciting state (Young & Pain, 1999, p. 22). The zone has been characterized as “focusing on the present moment, effortless merging of action and awareness, loss of personal ego, sense of control, clear feedback, and an intrinsic reward system” (p. 23). John Brodie, former quarterback of the San Francisco 49ers, described moments when time slowed down and players moved in slow motion (Shainberg, 1989). I cannot unequivocally claim that I entered this same “zone” during this study, but I can confidently state there were moments when the experience of time seemed to slow. Interestingly, this often came when I focused on the present moment using Zen rituals (walking mindfulness mindful breathing). This slowing of time presents an interesting scenario, as supervisors could feel rushed and perplexed over what actions to take. Being grounded, a
supervisor finds herself operating from a position of clarity and centeredness, where decisions can be optimally made (Figure 7). When selecting particular practices (e.g. instructional support versus emotional support), supervisors could find such a state useful.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 5. Grounding state produced by Zen rituals

A state of flow also connects to the need for supervisors to be consciously skilled, balancing practices and tasks, or what Burns, Jacobs, and Yendoll-Hoppey (2018) have coined the “Tao of supervision.” Supervisors must know when to emphasize building relationships with mentor teachers or teacher candidates and when to focus on the task of providing instructional support. Not knowing the difference can impede success. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) discusses the connection between flow and the obtainment of skill in the workplace, noting that work
conducted in a state of flow “transforms the worker from an animal guided by instincts into a conscious, goal-directed, skillful person” (p. 149). Personally, I experienced some moments of flow between practices, like in the instance when I sensed a teacher candidate was becoming upset over evaluation scores and I needed to shift to relationship-building and emotional coping. In this state, I was conscious skilled, demonstrating awareness over when to engage in a more appropriate task. While scholars have claimed it is impossible to balance evaluation functions with supervision effectively (Nolan, 1997), I found this flow state helped me reconcile-find a small measure of peace-between the two. I experienced a few instances in conferencing, where I could fluidly shift between functions. I believe mindfulness might help me navigate difference the scope of supervision, which is more focused, and that of evaluation, which is more comprehensive (Nolan & Hoover, 2010). Though, honestly, I still struggle with balancing evaluation and supervision; I wrestle with serving as a coach to facilitate teacher growth and development while being tasked with assigning scores based on minimal competencies. Becoming more aware of a contradictory situation does not necessarily resolve that dilemma. For instance, a teacher could grow aware of the bureaucratic restraints on his autonomy in the classroom, but that does not mean he is in a position to rectify the situation. Hence, I agree with Burns, Jacobs, and Yendol-Hoppy (2018) that more research is needed in this area.

This flow state also included a sense of being grounded, being anchored in practice. I especially recognized the usefulness of mindfulness techniques during highly stressful days in the field. The professional literature around emotional coping and stress-reduction mechanisms for supervisors is extremely thin. Burns and Badiali (2013) wrote about approaches such as procedural mentoring or “offering practical solutions to problems and dilemmas encountered while they were working in the field as supervisors” (p. 412) and emotional mentoring or
“consoling the novice supervisor or diffusing the intensity of the emotions that arise from disorienting dilemmas encountered while they were working in the field as supervisors” (p. 414). While seemingly sound, both approaches require engaging in a community of practice, where experienced supervisors or program directors are at schools with novice supervisors. My experiences suggest the need, and a possible method, of self-management for supervisors.

Mindfulness techniques should be further investigated as practical ways to help supervisors cope with emotions and stress in an individual manner, which could then be enhanced by other, more communal methods. I know that as a supervisor responsible for a placement school and cohort of candidates, I was often alone for most of the time in the field. I required a way to stay centered despite the constant fires I had to put out each day—I found such centering in Zen. Equipping supervisors with self-management techniques to combat stress are also particularly relevant when considering the possible impact supervisors and other teacher educators have on their students. As Wadlington, Slaton, and Partridge (1998) have warned, “it is important for professors to defuse their own stress so they don’t communicate to the pre-service teachers with whom they are working” (p. 343). Ideally, learning self-management techniques such as mindfulness and practicing them within a community of learners, the way teachers and Zen practitioner alike do, might have the most powerful results.

As explained in Awakening #4, Zen most strongly impacted high-leverage practices embedded in the observation cycle (e.g. strengthening curriculum planning, providing focused instructional feedback, fostering reflective thinking). Engaging in deep listening, mindful walking and mindful note-taking provided an enriched layer of observation, which in kind, facilitated deeper conversations and enriched feedback to candidates.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Conference</th>
<th>Observation</th>
<th>Post-Conference</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Anchors:</em> Deep Listening, Beginner’s Mind</td>
<td><em>Anchors:</em> Mindful Observing (Slice of Classroom Life writings), Beginner’s Mind, Mindful Breathing</td>
<td><em>Anchors:</em> Deep Listening, Beginner’s Mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Result:</em> Connecting more deeply with candidates/ more in the moment/closer listening, less interrupting. Positioning myself to provide more enriched guidance in planning instruction</td>
<td><em>Result:</em> Remaining in the moment, connected more to the experience, the unfolding of the teaching, noticing of additional, “undiscovered details.” Better positioned to encourage deeper reflection and provide enriched feedback on teaching.</td>
<td><em>Result:</em> Connecting more deeply with candidates/ more in the moment/closer listening</td>
</tr>
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*Figure 6. Interaction of Zen rituals and observation cycle.*

With the observation cycle being the cornerstone of clinical supervision (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007), my experiences of Zen enriching this cycle are particularly pertinent. For
instance, Sergiovanni and Starratt posit that the pre-planning conference is the most important step of preparing to observe a teacher candidate—but what if one does not listen closely during this stage? What if a supervisor, preoccupied with his or her own experiences and ideas, fails to hear the ideas, intentions, concerns, and questions of the candidate? How might this impact how the rest of the observation cycle unfolds? In my case, the practice of Deep Listening to candidates—intentionally speaking and interrupting less—gradually transformed the observation cycle for me. I became more conscious and responsive to goals of the candidate, what they wanted to accomplish in the lesson and how they wanted to accomplish it. While I still guided candidates at times, I better sensed when to step aside and let more advanced candidates freely articulate their plans, only adding my ideas if necessary. This deeper understanding during the planning conference then better positioned me to be more aware and in-tune during the actual observation.

Mindfulness technique also established the proper frame of mind to be highly observant during candidate observations. I better grasped what Cohen and Bai (2007) meant when they wrote about a mindset that allows “fresh, creative, and surprising insights that spring from an encounter with what is” (p. 6). Despite the chaos of the day, I felt more confident of my ability to clear my mind before engaging in an observation and be fully present for the candidate. Mindfully observing candidates teach and writing stream-of-consciousness narratives also transformed the observation cycle. I noticed details I normally didn’t notice. I now “heard” the laughter of the children, recognized physical mannerisms of both candidates and students, sensed the energy of the room. I seemed to tap Pajak (2003)’s notion of a sixth-sense or intuitive function within clinical supervision, where I could intentionally center myself to make holistic inferences “about possibilities inherent in a situation” (p. 12). These new inferences then
informed my providing instructional feedback to candidates and assisted in encouraging reflective thinking by guiding them to think about situations, events, and details that they typically might have not considered. Though uncomfortable for them at times, making candidates more aware of their teaching and classroom surroundings supported the function of fostering reflective practice.

Furthermore, the practice of mindful note-taking raises questions about using frameworks and other evaluation tools. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) advise that frameworks, although establishing standards in which to measure high-quality teaching, should be used with flexibility and as a script. Danielson (1996) notes that a framework “provides a structure within which educators can situate their actions. The components are grounded in the assumption that even though good teachers may accomplish many of the same things, they do not achieve them in the same way” (p. 17). While I agree with common standards for evaluation, the writing of mindful observation notes has stirred some questions, maybe even some doubts. Requiring supervisors to identify evidence of good teaching practices around a framework, noting observations and details around, for example, predetermined components, might limit what could be captured. Intent on collecting predetermined evidence, supervisors might be ignorant of other telling details. This might be akin to the exercise where people are asked to close their eyes then open them and scan the room for everything blue (or some other color). The person’s mind has been narrowed to seek out prescribed information, and in the process, filters out other possibilities. Mixing mindfulness and observation note-taking could keep the mind open to more “colors.” For instance, noting that a mentor teacher had entered the room or interjected sparked a new discussion, thus, fostering reflections and thoughts that wouldn’t have otherwise arisen. I fear
that emphasizing frameworks in teacher programs might discourage the beginner’s mind that I began to appreciate as I freely captured details.

Also, a supervisor might find using a mindful breathing technique to bring awareness back to the present moment could enhance their observations. Perhaps a solution lies in employing both a framework such as Danielson and inserting one directly into the teaching experience through mindful note-taking, simultaneously, as I have done. On one hand, an evaluation framework guides the observation process, on the other, the observer openly describes what is observed while remaining focused on the present moment. Imagine the artist painting within the canvas (framework) but what she paints within that frame is unlimited and freely expressed—while being completely focused in the moment. Mindfulness might also benefit those enacting the function of fostering a candidate’s growth (as opposed to evaluating for minimal competence). Just being more aware of a candidate’s abilities, their strengths and areas of enhancement, their goals and ambitions, their fears and doubts, could prove incredibly useful.

I also believe by experiencing an increased awareness of the other, my collegiality with mentor teachers, sensitivity to the stress of teacher candidates (Awakening #5 and #6) deserves attention. Becoming more mindful of these dynamics could be highly beneficial as triad relationships can be very challenging (Bullough & Draper, 2004; Cuenca, 2013). As I became increasingly aware of my supervision, I noticed subtle cues and other nuances when interacting with mentor teachers. For example, I recognized whether a mentor teacher greeted me upon entering her classroom, her facial expressions (e.g. smiling, tension around the mouth), and proximity to myself and the candidate. I found by approaching and standing near a mentor teacher following a candidate observation produced a feeling of closeness and more collegiality. I also listened more deeply to their concerns, talking less and attempting to be more responsive
(as in the case of the mentor teacher confiding in me her strained relationship with a candidate).

All of these cues (e.g. facial expressions, tone of voice) existed previously, however, the practice of Zen revealed them to me. As Twemlow (2001) reminds us, the “most obvious thing of all is often hardest to see” (p. 16). Of course, how supervisors can become more aware of these finer nuances requires additional study.

Similarly, I became significantly more aware of the high-leverage practice of helping teacher candidates cope with stress that inevitably surfaces during student-teaching experiences (Marais & Meier, 2004; Sadler, 2006). In particular, Zen awakened me to the candidates’ emotional struggles. I became more conscious of their stress during conferences and other interactions, noticing fluctuations in their voice, their physical appearance (dark circles under the eyes, redness in the eyes, watery eyes), and language (e.g. “I’m struggling with…). I became more present when they expressed their stress. I felt fully engaged with their words and situation, and while hard to articulate, I could feel their stress-- something I didn’t experience within supervision prior to this study. This notion of becoming more in-tune with candidates’ stress can create new discussions and opportunities for research, particularly when overlaid with Burns, Jacobs, and Yendol-Hoppey’s (2018) suggestions. Their research has addressed helping teacher candidates cope with emotional strain by facilitating conversations about course assignments and expectations, helping candidates complete an emotional “barometer check,” and using humor and statements of encouragement. In my opinion, being intimately connected with a candidate’s state of mind and stress is a predecessor for being able to effectively and meaningfully engage in these tasks. Knowing when to make light of a situation or bring up certain situations requires being fully aware of the context of the situation, the candidate’s current ability to respond, and whether the timing of such approaches is tactful. A supervisor must be in touch with himself, the
situation, and the candidate’s internal world, before he is able to successfully provide support to others.

While the Zen constructs impacted certain practices, they did not appear to influence others, at least not within the purviews of this study. The high-leverage practice of encouraging theory-practice connections, such as relating theory learned during coursework to fieldwork, did not seem to be enhanced by the mindfulness rituals. That’s not to say that this practice could not benefit from mindfulness under a different research design. While I might be mindful of certain theory-practice connections, getting teacher candidates to see them clearly would require the candidates themselves to be engaging in mindfulness techniques. Another high-leverage practice that did not seem enhanced by the Zen constructs was that of creating quality placements between teacher candidates and the mentor teachers. I think the main factor was timing: I had created placements for the candidates prior to the study. I theorize, however, that the influence Zen had on my relationships could deepen my insight into making quality placements, as I might be more aware of the candidates and mentors’ personalities, preferences, idiosyncrasies, and teaching beliefs. This heightened awareness would most certainly influence the practice of placements and establishing partnerships that benefit both candidate and mentor. More research is obviously needed in this area.

Attempting to enact the various Zen constructs also revealed that some seemed more practical and transferable to supervision than others. For instance, mindfulness seemed to more easily converge with supervision practices. I believe this to be the case since mindfulness features specific techniques that are highly transferable (this is reflected in the mainstreaming and popularity of mindfulness across many fields and walks of life). On the contrary, I found it difficult to enact the constructs of impermanence, emptiness, paradox, and even beginner’s mind
to some extent. These highly abstract concepts appear to be more of a side-effect of enacting mindfulness through methods such as meditation. Suzuki (1970), for instance, suggests that beginner’s mind is the state of mind produced from zazen. Therefore, while these Zen constructs might serve as a theoretical or conceptual framework, I don’t believe they hold value as being directly implemented into supervision.

Self-study researchers must also consider the context of their work. As self-study scholar, Loughran (2007) writes:

Teaching is inevitably shaped by the context in which it occurs. The socioeconomic situation, the physical nature of the setting, the age, disposition and ability of the students being taught, the content under consideration, and a host of other factors influence what might be described as the context of a teaching and learning environment (p. 173)

I believe the same might be said about context influencing supervision. The participants being in their final semester of the teacher program, their age, dispositions, and worldviews, the school, the structure of the program, the focus of the program (clinically rich), all played into how the enactment of Zen interacted with my supervision practice. For instance, if the candidates were in their first semester, for instance, the conversations during conferencing would sound very different, thus, what I became mindful of would have also be altered. The same could be said of mindful note-taking; I would have observed different teaching experiences. The very design of the program, revolving around the observation cycle, likely influenced how mindfulness practices impacted specific supervision practices. In addition, the candidate’s background with mindfulness of Eastern philosophy (essentially non-existent) also influenced this research. A teacher candidate experienced in mindfulness, for example, might reflective differently or respond to my mindfulness note-taking in a different manner. Nevertheless, while results would
have varied, I believe there’s a certain transferability in this research, in the practice of the Zen anchors. Mindfully walking down the hallway of a school is mindful walking for the supervisor, though that school might contain different students and teachers, its own unique culture and norms, and different paint on the walls.

During this research, I also reconceptualized the role, responsibility, and image of the supervisor (Awakening #7). Previously, I envisioned the main role of the supervisor to assist teacher candidates in their professional development and growth. However, though experiences with Zen, I came to define supervision as having a larger, “more spiritual purpose.” As I wrote in my final platform:

I believe supervisors have an ethical obligation to serve as an example, a model for awakened, mindful practices in education. They must demonstrate the ability to remain highly aware, centered, connected, and intuitively responsive to students, teachers, parents, and others in the schools.

This definition expands the current conception of supervision. Until now, scholars (Burns, 2012; Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2013; Jacobs & Casciola, 2016; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007) have conceptualized the supervisor in various ways: an expert who provides technical assistance; someone who works collegiately with teacher candidates to help them solve problems and further their growth; an individual that models cultural responsiveness. The effective supervisor, I believe, also exemplifies qualities of awareness, centeredness, interconnectedness, and intuition. This means these qualities—previously under-emphasized—become prominent. The Awakened Supervisor does not conflict with preexisting conceptions. Rather, as I experienced in this research, this type of supervisor—grounded, centered, able to flow between functions and practices—can embrace this fluctuation with a calm, quiet strength. A supervisor practicing
mindfulness, for instance, can enhance his or her evaluation skills, if that is the focus. Seeing the interconnectedness of all things, this supervisor can also operate effectively as a relationship-based supervisor. Highly aware and perceptive, this supervisor can also identity disparities in schools, and then, grounded in oneself, enact cultural responsiveness and social justice ideals.

Studies have suggested that tensions can often exist within a triad, as a third person is introduced to the dynamic. Supervisors and mentor teachers may also have direct conflicts (Veal & Rikard, 1998). Despite these challenges, positive, collaborative relationships between supervisors and teachers are the heart of clinical supervision (Cogan, 1973). For instance, “care must be given to developing a good interpersonal relationship between a university supervisor and an intern before the supervisor can effectively provide constructive criticism,” (Hoover, O’Shea, & Carroll, 1988, p. 23). In this light, my beliefs about my relationships with candidates also changed during this study. My early platforms implied that I valued relationships with candidates, believing myself to serve in a mentor-apprenticeship role. I believed my responsibility was to coach candidates to help them develop into successful teachers. After practicing Zen, I reimagined triad relationships, believing in the possibility of experiencing a deeper, interconnectedness. For example, I now view myself and the candidates more as parts of a dynamic whole, absolutely essential to each other’s existence and future development. While their progress as emerging teachers depended on myself, I also realize I could not improve my own practice without them. Holding such a paradigm—interconnectedness —could help supervisors in their efforts to create harmonious relations within triads.

During the study, I formed a second belief about my ethical responsibility as a supervisor in a clinical program. While attentive in the past, listening to candidates’ questions and concerns with a partially (sometimes highly) distracted mind, I came to believe that the candidates
deserved my *complete* awareness in the field. When I was speaking with them or observing them, nothing else existed. They had my full attention. I cleared my mind and focused intently on their words or actions. During observations, it was my moral responsibility to be fully present, despite whether I was dealing with stress at work or in my studies, whether I had not eaten or was tired from the day before. I owed candidates my full presence.

In addition, Zen caused me to see supervision as a moment-to-moment, intuitive experience. This belief contradicts, or maybe expands, current definitions of supervision. Sergiovanni and Starratt (2007) believe supervision is “best understood as both a role and function,” (p. 5). While principals and department chairs, for instance, engage in formal supervisory roles, others, such as teachers, also enact supervisory functions at times. Framing supervision within a Professional Development School context, Burns and Yendol-Hoppey (2016) argued that “supervision itself is not a role” but those enacting tasks associated with the function of supervision can be considered supervisors (p. 98). If supervision is perceived as a function, this means the supervisor engages in specific work or activity directed towards a purpose. In other words, supervision is something an individual *does*. What if, however, supervision was framed as *an experience*? What if supervision is an experience that one undergoes. Experience suggest seeing, feeling, and perhaps being moved by something. Experience can also imply gaining knowledge and skills and being changed, or even transformed, as a result. How might this alter the way teacher educators view and approach their work? Based on what I learned in this self-study, consider supervision using the following characteristics:

1. An experience that includes dynamically interacting with teacher candidates, mentor teachers, school administrators, students, and others.
2. An experience that changes or transforms.


4. Flowing between a myriad of supervisory practices and tasks.

5. The direction of energy, attention, and awareness.

When considering supervision within these parameters, we realize that supervision comes down to an experience of the present moment. A supervisor’s effectiveness, abilities, skills, beliefs… power—all emanate from that single moment. *Supervision in every breath.* This shift in focus I am positing is reminiscent of Schon’s (1983, 1987) work when he renegotiated understandings of reflective practice across disciplines, including teaching, bringing it down to the minute-by-minute level. Perceiving supervision as an *in the moment* practice where supervisors are “developing interpretations in rapidly moving situations or flows of interaction and acting on them in the moment,” (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009, p. 1341) could produce new research and new insights. Theorizing what supervisors do and think in the midst of action as Schon has done with reflective practice can yield a new body of work around supervision. Perhaps this knowledge could assist supervisors who must balance a multitude of roles (e.g. critical friend, mentor, observer, university representative), often with minimal support and training (Butler & Diacopoulos, 2016). For example, what occurs in the consciousness of the supervisor as he or she evaluates teaching performance but must shift to playing a more relationship-based, supportive role? How are decisions made moment-to-moment? How does the supervisor’s beliefs and theoretical orientation impact these in-the-moment moves?

In my re-framing of supervision, I challenge the present emphasis of the rational, “logical mind” that enacts tasks and practices in the field. Stopping to think about choice to make, what action to take regarding a teacher candidate’s development or a triad dynamic, might be a
problem in itself. This “blocking” (Watts, 1957, p. 168) of the mind, as referred to in Zen literature, could be hindering the effective balancing of the many roles and practices expected of the supervisor. Rather, supervisors might move away from being self-consciousness of their practice, and engage teacher candidates with a mind that approaches “everything wholeheartedly and freely without having to keep an eye on itself” (p. 168). This idea of the idea of spontaneity is a concept generally looked down upon by academics and intellectuals but held in high regard within Zen and Taoist circles (Watts, 1957), Borrowing from Zen, I pose the following analogy to help illustrate this idea of the spontaneous, “no-mind” supervisor. Picture a leaf following down a stream. “If you allow the stream to carry you, it’s strength becomes yours. You are one with nature, without clinging, without attachment, leaving the past behind” (Braeley, 2007, n.p.). This image conjures up thoughts of free-flowing-ness, spontaneity, and non-resistance. Imagine a supervisor moving freely within the space of supervision, not restricted or caught up between practices or tasks, not worrying whether he or she is making the proper move, flowing freely in the moment.

In the diagram below (Figure 7), I present this re-conceptualization of the Awakened Supervisor, based on my self-study experience. This type of supervisor operates, moves…lives within each moment, dynamically engaging in practices, intuitively deciding and responding, fluidly flowing in and out of images and roles, while remaining balanced, grounded, and centered. This conceptual framework advances the work of Glanz (1997) and Tremmel (1993) by illustrating exactly how a supervisor might achieve balance among various supervisory orientations and approach her role with mindfulness. In the diagram, the supervisors remains
Figure 7. Awakened Supervisor conceptual framework

anchored by regularly using mindfulness techniques. The result is the individual becomes more fully present in each moment. From that place, that source of power, the supervisor is able to more easily flow between various routines of practice and high-leverage practices, for instance, moving from providing instructional feedback to emotional support. With increased awareness, the Awakened Supervisor is also positioned to navigate other images, adapting them if possible but likely reconciling them. Like water, the individual is lucid and not constrained to one “container.” For instance, the Critical Friend can mindfully transition to other images (e.g. Culturally Responsive) if the moment calls for it. Being immersed in each moment, the Awakened Supervisor finds refuge and equanimity between various approaches, practices, and
theoretical orientations. Rather than being conflicted, the supervisor views disparity and change as necessary to maximizing his or her potentialities and negotiate the “supervision dance” (Trout, 2008). I liken the benefits of supervising in the moment to Tricarico’s (2015) description of how Zen can help classroom teachers.

Teaching’s ability to stay in the moment is one of our profession’s greatest gifts and why it shares such a kinship with Zen. When our teaching comes from who we are and originates from our passions and our heart, we increase the likelihood that we will experience flow and be “in the zone.” Being open to what may happen, without sticking to rigid anticipated outcomes (p. 12).

Interestingly, a by-product—or perhaps a destination—is experiencing a greater interconnectedness with teacher candidates and mentor teachers. This results from the supervisor’s improved mindfulness in each moment, from his greater ability to remain calm, flexible, and responsive, but also due to realizing how each member is essential for the other’s existence. I think this speaks to the Awakened Supervisor’s possible source of power and influence, which in my experience, emanates from the power of being in the present moment. By being in the present moment, the supervisor can better connect with others involved in the supervision process and become more in-tune with the needs, motivations, difficulties, and developmental stages of teacher candidates, thus gain the ability to influence. While the Awakened Supervisor’s power base and authority might have tinges of referent power and come in part from strong relationships, the notion of present-moment awareness as a source of centrifugal power represents a new understanding.

Finally, using the Awakened Supervisor Framework, Zen might be considered a primer—a mental preparation for supervision. Centering oneself through breathing, walking
meditation, and other methods (the praxis of mindful supervision), the supervisor places him or herself in a place where they could become more effective, more connected to the needs of the triad, and more efficient with one’s energy and limited time. By reducing stress, clearing one’s mind, and engaging fully in the present moment, a supervisor could better participate in conferencing, observing, coaching, and interacting with candidates as well as mentor teachers. With full awareness, perhaps a supervisor is tapping their best self, regardless of the inevitable challenges involved. A centered supervisor can operate even within a chaotic, seemingly unsupportive environment, knowing that it is her frame of mind that will determine how she engages with the practices and tasks of supervision. In summary, Zen—particularly the construct of mindfulness—could enhance all facets of supervision.

**Implications for Future Research**

In this section, I explicate the implications of my study in regards to research, including self-study methodologies that delve into spiritual matters. Conflating concepts of contemplative inquiry with teacher education self-study opened up new dimensions and avenues. This research added to the scant literature on inquiry frameworks and the work of others using non-traditional methods to explore consciousness and other spiritual dimensions (Llewellyn, 1998; Romero, 2016). As Anderson (2016) pointed out, sometimes current research vehicles are not appropriate to study spiritual-based phenomena.

**Self-Study Methodology Implications**

I believe the methods used in this study help create new mechanisms to examine such topics, whether they occur in teacher education or other fields. Furthermore, utilizing unconventional means of collecting and analyzing data also enlarges the repertoire of self-study tools. In particular, meditating on data moved me beyond the possible constraints of analytically
and cerebrally coding data and determining findings. I was able to experiment with intuitively sorting out data, relaxing and transcending thought, and thus, able to allow insights to naturally surface, like fish coming up for air. While I had practiced the use of traditional qualitative data analysis methods, such as thematic coding, meditating on data created a new doorway, another technique to dig for meaning. Curiously, there were times when I was not intentionally analyzing data for this study and insights emerged, spontaneously, without effort. This occurred when I was meditating without research questions or data in mind, driving my car, or taking a walk. It’s as if I had planted a seed, which later germinated and sprouted when the time was right. Additionally, I believe I should discuss my use of the term, awakenings, as opposed to using the word, findings. While qualitative researchers might consider they are “finding” patterns and themes within data, I questioned whether this is the most appropriate phrasing. As researchers, what are we really finding? What exists in the data is already there, is it not? Rather, it seems more appropriate for researchers to state they are “awakening” to what’s there, as this suggests they are coming to greater understanding and greater intimacy with the data. For those conducting self-study, this term also denotes that was has been revealed within the data-and the study itself-has somehow transformed them.

Another implication for research centers on my use of the label, spiritual self-study. Calling self-study as such initially makes sense as the purpose is to examine one’s practice. As Laboskey (2004) outlined, self-study should be self-initiated and self-improvement aimed, but she also advocated self-study be collaborative. Loughran (2004) declared that self-study, to be truly meaningful, should extend past the individual. These ideas move towards the conception of Zen and the Self. Zen practitioners believe in the absence of a separate self, seeing everything and everyone has connected on some level. As Zen Master Dogen wrote:
[But] to study the self is to forget the self [ jiko o narau to iu wa, jiko o wasururu nari ].

To forget the self is to be verified by the myriad things [of the world]. To be verified by the myriad things is to let drop off the body-mind of the self and the body-mind of others. (Davis 2009, 256 –257)

If one subscribes to this idea of no-self, then it turns the entire notion of a self-study upside down. If there’s no self, what would there be to pursue in self-study? Where would the researcher fit into this idea? I posed this question to several Zen practitioners, who simply responded with a shrug of the shoulders, or as my Zen Critical Friend said, “you got me on that one.” After much thought, I realized the issue I had with the term, self-study: no study is truly a study of the self. While the focus might be on an individual’s practice, self-study, like other research, connects and impacts participants—others involved. For example, while not officially consented participants in this research, mentor teachers of the teacher candidates I worked with were impacted or influenced on some level, even if it were simply the energy or awareness I brought into their classroom. It could have been words I spoke or actions I took as I enacted Zen. Certainly, teacher candidates were touched on some level by this research. Recording and reading back mindful notes caused surprised, perhaps a mini-awakening-in some candidates. Other scholars have posited this Zen-like philosophy of self-study as well. Zumic (2002) wrote:

My research is certainly connected to the teachers with whom I work, but I did not initiate or conduct this project for them. And yet, in the ways I have come to see myself differently, it is through them that I own these understandings (p. 232-233).

In the end, I am not advocating that scholars must toss out the term, self-study. I just come to believe the name can be misleading, as I have found that self-study methodology is intensively inter-connected, more than the name suggests.
**Implications for Future Research of Supervision**

Based on this work, scholars might want to further investigate the moment-to-moment experiences of instructional supervisors. Along with empirical research conducted around the functions and practices of supervisor, the cannon can be expanded through examining the mental processes of supervisors, the thinking on their feet, their decisions in the moment and what influenced those decisions. Another area of future research involves the enactment and infusion of Eastern-based philosophies. For example, based on Glanz’s (1997) contributions and Burns, Jacobs, & Yendoll-Hoppey’s (2018) theoretical framework, how might a supervisor enacting Taoism describe his or her experiences in the field? As spiritual practices grow exponentially when situated within a community, investigating Eastern ideologies and supervision could benefit from collaborative inquiries, which are often carried out by self-study researchers (Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy, & Stackman, 2003).

Following the Zen circle, I return to the original state of mind that brought me to this research in the first place: curiosity or a *beginner’s mind*. While I have gained new experiences, learned new insights, and made contributions through my study of Zen and supervision, I believe it is prudent I remain open to new possibilities and new outcomes. In that vein, I pose the following curiosities, leaving them open for future study:

- How might other supervisors experience Zen-or at least mindfulness?
- Can mindfulness help fellow supervisors and other teacher educators stay grounded and centered in the midst of action?
- What other possibilities does Zen and other Eastern-based philosophies (e.g. Taoism, Confucianism) hold for supervision and the larger landscape of supervision?
• How might constructs from this study—such as mindful breathing and mindful walking—be extended to teacher candidates? Might they be open to trying such methods and might they find them beneficial?

• What are the long-term effects of my practicing Zen not only as a teacher educator but as a human being seeking self-improvement?

While some academics might feel uneasy ending a dissertation with questions or unanswered theories, I am comfortable with concluding (more like pausing) at this point in the journey. Filled with knowledge and new ideas, I realize the necessity to begin again, to reexamine my preconceptions and notions, to begin questioning them again, to clear my mind, and empty my cup.
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APPENDIX A:

SUPERVISION PLATFORM #1

Aims and Definition of Supervision

I believe the goal of supervision is to foster growth and development in preservice teachers and prepare them to effectively work in schools. Supervision in teacher education is a complex endeavor, involving many tasks and responsibilities (Burns & Badiali, 2016a). In addition to conducting observations, leading seminars, establishing relationships with collaborating teachers, and completing paperwork, supervisors must also handle logistical concerns, such as scheduling and placement, which involves working closely with school administration. I think a tension exists between supervision and evaluation. As Tschannen and Tschannen (2011) note, there is a clear distinction between evaluation practices, which are bureaucratic in nature, and professional development, which reflects a coaching model. While my current position requires me to evaluate through the observation cycle and completing summative course paperwork, I resonate with developing preservice teachers through a strengths-based, growth-focused, coaching orientation (to be discussed later in this paper). When I consider the role of supervision holistically—metaphorically-- the following images come to mind:

1) The Coach-one who encourages, “cheers on,” motivates, challenges preservice teachers to higher-levels of performance
2) The Gardner—one who nurtures growth in preservice teachers by providing attention and proper condition (e.g. new knowledge, guidance, support, feedback, reflection)

3) The Chameleon—one who can effectively blend into various school environments, assume various roles (e.g. teacher, coach, counselor, advisor, colleague, mediator)

**Views on Knowledge and Learning**

I subscribe to the theoretical framework that teachers practicing inquiry-based models and those who practice inquiry better understand their craft and take charge of their own professional development (Dana and Yendol-Hoppey, 2014). Through the inquiry model, student teachers are encouraged to grow beyond the technical knowledge taught in coursework and develop into independent, autonomous professionals (Loughran, 2004). Additionally, teachers who self-reflect gain useful knowledge about their experiences, which consequently, can be applied to future experiences, producing additional knowledge and insight (Dinkleman, 2003). Critical, reflective thinking generates new insights and understandings—essential components to growth. Additionally, students learn reflective thinking from their teachers, from how teachers model this type of thinking. Thus, practicing self-reflection as an educator is of paramount importance. To assess learning in preservice teachers, I believe we can use a variety of tools that allow us to look across periods of time to determine growth. For instance, having the advantage of supervising the same students over two consecutive semesters, I can ascertain growth and learning through observation notes, conferencing, and coursework, such as student reflections. I can analyze patterns in areas of growth and areas of concern to determine whether the student is making adequate progress and reaching his or her goals in the program.
The Image of the Supervisor and Learner

I envision the supervision/preservice teacher relationship in two ways. First, I picture it using the gardener metaphor (See Figure 1). As a supervisor, I must carefully “care” for the preservice teacher, with my priority being his or her growth. I must provide the right conditions for growth, without providing too much of any one thing. For instance, watering is essential to a plant, but watering too much can kill it. Likewise, providing guidance or advice must be distributed in the proper amount, based on the situation and the developmental stage of the preservice teacher. If I provide too much guidance, the teacher does not learn to think independently. I also perceive the relationship as of one the master-apprentice (see Figure 2). As a former teacher with a decade of classroom experience, I have already assumed the role, the position, that the preservice teacher is seeking. I have experience, wisdom, and knowledge “to pass down” to this person in training. The hope is that my apprentice will someday surpass me, and become the master, and thus, be in a position to mentor others as well.

Beliefs about Curriculum and Supervision Pedagogy

As a supervisor, my practices reflect the traditional strategies used by many supervisors (e.g. observation cycles, critical reflection, seminar/workshops). More specifically, my strategies reflect my philosophical orientation of assuming a strengths-based, growth-oriented, relationship-centered approach. For instance, during conferences, I discuss with preservice teachers their individual talents and strengths and how they might utilize these traits in their observed lessons. Rather than pose as the “one who knows,” I collaboratively engage with them to move away from focusing on weaker areas and towards building upon what works. I provide ample space for the student teachers to express themselves and ask questions. As
Tschannen and Tschannen (2011) note, “When conversations are deficit-based, the weaknesses of teachers have the upper hand. The focus is on problem areas that need to be fixed. Focusing on deficits also shifts the responsibility for learning to the coach, who presumably knows how to do things better. Strengths-based coaching starts with a different assumption: In every situation, no matter how bleak something always works,” (p. 15-16). I also adhere to the notion of an engaged pedagogy where teaching is a performative act (hooks, 1994, 2010). Under this premise, the teacher must engage students. This begins being with building a community of learners. For instance, the instructor and students must take time to get to know each another and practice sharing ideas and thoughts through mutual participation. For me, it also involves bringing them into the curriculum by asking them how they want to learn topics and letting them share in the teaching. The test to determine whether these pedological practices are effective is through inquiry-the same mindset I instill in preservice teachers. I question, wonder, observe, collect data, and discuss findings with colleagues to determine whether what I’m doing is working, what needs to be adjusted, and what needs to be abandoned. For instance, in my current inquiry, I’ve noticed that incorporating strengths methods into the observation cycle has shown promising results, therefore, I will continue in that direction and monitor progress.

**Influence of the Specific Context**

I have realized the context (i.e. the school) where I supervise has a major impact on my work. Student demographics, faculty, test scores, culture, and community must all be taken into account when planning seminars, conducting observations, providing advice to preservice teachers, etc. For instance, one school where I currently supervise, is situated in the middle of strawberry fields and other farms and about 70 percent of the students can be described as second-language learners. This means that I must be aware of how the preservice teachers will
address ELL accommodations in every observed lesson and how they will differentiate to meet the diverse needs of the classroom. It also means bringing in guest speakers to seminar and having the preservice teachers conduct projects that better familiarize them with the challenges and unique need of this school community. Similarly, another school where I supervise, has struggled with test scores, which has resulted in school administrative changes and impacted pressures and demands place on teachers. I must account for this situation when discussing issues and establishing expectations with the preservice teachers at this school.

Criteria for Effective Teaching

My main criteria for a successful observation cycle relates to my growth orientation. If growth has occurred in the preservice teacher in some area, I feel like I have been at least partially successful. The growth emanates from critical reflection. For instance, if during a preconference, I prompt a teacher to question his or her design, differentiation strategies, assessment, or use of resources, causing them to reflect deeply on those areas and resulting in improvements, then I have facilitated growth through the observation cycle. Additionally, if a teacher critically analyzes a lesson they taught and with no or little prompting begins to identify area for enhancement and makes plans to put those improvements into place, the observation cycle has effectively facilitated growth. The real key, I believe, is whether the teacher can engage the critical reflection process throughout the entire cycle independently. As that happens, the circle becomes complete, and as the infamous Darth Vader informed his former teacher, “I am now the master.”
APPENDIX B:  
SUPERVISOR PLATFORM (EXAMPLE OF SECOND REITERATION)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating a Culture of Collegiality:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Pedagogical routines that create the conditions for a trusting environment where all voices are honored and respected</em></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mindfulness:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be mindful and sensitive to the needs of the group and of individual members; notice how each other’s actions and words impact the triad and individual members. Be aware of the “health” of the triad, whether it’s existing within a positive energy or whether negativity is entering the dynamic.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Beginner’s Mind:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remain open and curious about triad members. Don’t assume I know what they are thinking, what they need…ask constant questions. Learn about each member. See them as “new friends” each time, taking time to learn about how they are doing mentally, emotionally.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Impermanence:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See the triad as living dynamic, subject to constant change; this could mean the triad is growing stronger, staying neutral or weakening. Perceptions of each other might be changing, evolving. Beliefs about the triad itself may be influx.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Emptiness:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Realize that the triad cannot exist without each member; triad members are not separate but rather the triad only exists because of this interactions of individuals. The triad is also made up of abstractions such as trust, dialogue, and interaction.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Simplicity:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Practice clear, simple communication with triad members. Do not allude or “beat around the bush.” Be direct and simple in my speech.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Paradox:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contemplate how relationships can impact the overall triad. For instance, if the candidate and mentor teacher bond (which could help the candidate’s growth), how this might weaken the relationship with the supervisor. Or how my relationship with a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C:

SUPERVISOR PLATFORM (THIRD ITERATION)

*Note: Revisions/additions to original platform italicized.

Aims and Definition of Supervision

I believe the goal of supervision is to foster growth and development in preservice teachers and prepare them to effectively work in schools. Supervision in teacher education is a complex endeavor, involving many tasks and responsibilities (Burns & Badiali, 2016a). In addition to conducting observations, leading seminars, establishing relationships with collaborating teachers, and completing paperwork, supervisors must also handle logistical concerns, such as scheduling and placement, which involves working closely with school administration. While I believe a tension may exist between supervision and evaluation--Tschannen and Tschannen (2011) note, there is a clear distinction between evaluation practices, which are bureaucratic in nature, and professional development---I think supervisors can find flow and balance between these functions, provided they remain centered. I resonate with developing teacher candidates through a strengths-based, growth-focused, coaching orientation, I believe supervisors hold an even higher purpose. I believe supervisors have an ethical obligation to serve as an example, a model for awakened, mindful practices in education. They must demonstrate the ability to remain highly aware, centered, connected, and intuitively responsive.
to students, teachers, parents, and others in the schools. When I consider the role of supervision holistically—metaphorically-- the following image comes to mind:

The Awakened Supervisor: One who practices daily mindful engagement in working with teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and others involved in teacher preparation; an individual who consciously expands awareness of one’s own feelings, beliefs, strengths, shortcomings, and the impact of one’s thoughts, words, and actions on the other; furthermore, this supervisor remains grounded while flowing effortlessly between high-leverage practices and tasks and assuming various roles as they situation arises.

Views on Knowledge and Learning

While I still subscribe to the theoretical framework that teachers practicing inquiry based models and those who practice inquiry better understand their craft and take charge of their own professional development (Dana and Yendol-Hoppey, 2014), my conceptions of learning and knowledge have altered. I believe deep knowledge and learning also result from spiritual consciousness and direct experience through practices such as mindfulness and meditation. While I think teachers and supervisor who self-reflect gain useful knowledge about their experiences (Dinkleman, 2003), I think, for example, meditating on experiences and data produces another, deeper layer of intuitive understanding that cannot be obtained through analytical thinking alone. Critical, reflective thinking generates new insights and understandings—essential components to growth. Additionally, students learn reflective thinking from their teachers, from how teachers model this type of thinking. Thus, practicing self-reflection as an educator is of paramount importance. To assess learning in preservice teachers, I believe we can use a variety of tools that allow us to look across periods of time to determine
growth. For instance, having the advantage of supervising the same students over two consecutive semesters, I can ascertain growth and learning through observation notes, conferencing, and coursework, such as student reflections. I can analyze patterns in areas of growth and areas of concern to determine whether the student is making adequate progress and reaching his or her goals in the program. Moreover, through practices such as Deep Listening and Mindful Observation note-taking, I can be fully present during the observation cycle with teacher candidates, experiencing a deep, centered awareness that helps promote thoughtful reflection and new insights.

The Image of the Supervisor and Learner

I have come to reimagine the supervisor/teacher candidate relationship. I see the supervisor’s responsibility as serving as a beacon of light and an oasis of calm—providing a model of centered, focused, awakened teaching. I also view the relationship as one of deep interconnectedness—the supervisor and candidate being as one, operating differently but entirely dependent on each other. For instance, the emotions and internal struggles of the candidate invariably affect the supervisor and vice-versa. The two are like the clouds and the sun, different entities but in constant contact and engaged in dynamic interaction. I also view the roles as interdependent and inter-changeable at times. For instance, the supervisor guides the candidate, but the supervisor also learns and becomes more awakened through her interaction
with the candidate. Helping candidate’s cope with stress and their emotions is more an art form, a “feel.” One only knows the right move when immersed in the moment and acting from that space.

Beliefs about Curriculum and Supervision Pedagogy

As a supervisor, my practices reflect the traditional strategies used by many supervisors (e.g. observation cycles, critical reflection, seminar/workshops). More specifically, my strategies reflect my philosophical orientation of assuming a strengths-based, growth-oriented, relationship-centered approach. For instance, during conferences, I discuss with preservice teachers their individual talents and strengths and how they might utilize these traits in their observed lessons. Rather than pose as the “one who knows,” I collaboratively engage with teacher candidates. However, I believe that all pedagogical practices and approaches can enhanced with the practitioner is more fully engaged and present, more mindful and aware of the practices being used, why they are being used, and the moment-to-moment experience of using them. For example, when the supervisor is fully centered and grounded—mentally, emotionally, philosophically—then he or she can operate from this space, directing focus, attention, and energy with maximum results. Thus, the tools in hand become more powerful tools because of the focused state of the one wielding that tool. Like a skilled archer, the bow becomes more powerful in the hand of one who knows how to calm his or her mind, to focus, and to fully experience each moment.

Influence of the Specific Context

While I have realized the context (i.e. the school) where I supervise has a major impact on my work, I have reconsidered how much weight to assign this element of supervision. Of
course, the climate and environment can impact the coaching and development of teachers, however, I have come to realize that ultimately it is the mental state-the mindset and consciousness-of the supervisor that matters most. A centered supervisor can operate even within a chaotic, seemingly unsupportive environment, knowing that it is her frame of mind that will determine how she engages with the practices and tasks of supervision. The Awakened Supervisor learns to operate as a sort of eye of the hurricane, remaining calm despite the disorder that encompasses practice. The supervisor cannot control the environment of a school setting, however, through practices of mindfulness and meditation, he can influence his own state of mind.

Criteria for Effective Teaching

My main criteria for a successful observation cycle relates to my growth orientation. If growth has occurred in the preservice teacher in some area, I feel like I have been at least partially successful. The growth emanates from critical reflection. For instance, if during a preconference, I prompt a teacher to question his or her design, differentiation strategies, assessment, or use of resources, causing them to reflect deeply on those areas and resulting in improvements, then I have facilitated growth through the observation cycle. Additionally, if a teacher critically analyzes a lesson they taught and with no or little prompting begins to identify area for enhancement and makes plans to put those improvements into place, the observation cycle has effectively facilitated growth. I would add that expansion of awareness-of one’s self and of one’s teaching practice and impact on students—is also a factor for determining effective teaching. The goal is to help the candidate expand their consciousness so they are more aware of their pedagogy.
High-Leverage Practices

1. Creating a Culture of Collegiality: routines that build a trusting environment where everyone is heard and respected.

Being mindful and fully aware of the needs of the other, of the responses and reactions of teacher candidates, mentor teachers, and school administrators can assist one in achieving an interconnectedness; the supervisor may begin to see how closely intertwined the members of the triad are and to perceive it as a living, breathing dynamic that is influenced by all parties.

2. Developing Interpersonal Familiarity: routines that help teacher educators get to know each other

The supervisor can become more conscious of the interactions with candidates and mentor teachers, and thus, identify and practice the “small gestures” that may help strengthen interpersonal familiarity. For instance, even becoming aware of the other’s facial expressions, tone of voice, and other mannerisms, could influence this familiarity and the supervisor’s ability to develop relationships.

3. Developing Quality Placements-routines that put into place structures and process to build and sustain schools as clinical places for teacher candidate growth.

Developing quality placements requires being mindful of the impact of those placements
on all triad members. The supervisor must be sensitive to the relationships between candidates and possible mentors but also be aware of the relationships that result after placements occur and whether those relationships are synergetic and fruitful. This requires being in-tune with this dynamic.

4. Fostering Reflective Thinking- routines that encourage reflection on the impact of the teacher’s actions but also the larger socio-political and historical landscape.

Supervisors should first serve as models of reflective practice, of curious, open minds that explore existing assumptions and bias. This means that supervisors should strive to develop mindfulness and beginner’s mind in themselves, which is then demonstrated to candidates through daily interactions (e.g. conferences, observation notes, inquiry).

Expansion of consciousness can benefit reflection as one becomes more aware of both the self and environment.

5. Fostering Theory and Practice Connections-routines that assist teachers to move beyond isolated theoretical and practical learning.

Drawing deep, theory-practice connections requires being fully aware and open to these connections during each moment of the field experience as well during coursework. The mind of both the supervisor and candidate must remain open to all possibilities.
6. **Helping Educators Cope with Stress: routines that support the social and emotional needs of teacher candidates.**

Providing emotional support to candidates demands that supervisors be highly mindful and responsive to their needs, to their stressors and daily challenges, frustrations and struggles. This means engaging in Deep Listening as well as being aware of the physical signs and other indicators that might suggest candidates are faced with social-emotional struggles.

7. **Providing Focused Instructional Feedback: routines that support the providing of targeted feedback on teaching.**

Providing targeted, meaningful instructional feedback to candidates might be better facilitated through mindful observations and conferences. This means that supervisors thrust themselves fully and deeply into the observed teaching of candidates, being fully engaged in the process. It also means deeply listening to candidates during conferences and engaging in conversation that enlightens and awakens both parties to new possibilities.

8. **Strengthening Curriculum Planning: routines that create understanding on the instructional planning process.**

Similarly, supervisors should engage in mindful, Deep Listening when pre-planning with teacher candidates, thus providing optimal guidance and inspiration. Supervisors should
allow candidates to fully express their ideas and plans, and grounded in the experience,
provide the appropriate amount of directions based on the candidate’s developmental needs in that moment.
### APPENDIX D:

FIELD NOTE FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Zen Principle (s)</th>
<th>Observations</th>
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APPENDIX E:
EXAMPLES OF EXIT SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR TEACHER CANDIDATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exit Survey Question</th>
<th>Example Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe the observation #1 cycle with your supervisor? How might you</td>
<td>Overall I believe that the pre-conferences and post-conferences are very useful. They help with my observations and with my future teaching strategies. I feel as if sometimes the post-conferences are repetitive since we write a reflection that basically says how we feel. I would find it more useful if we just built off of the reflection instead. I wish we had a little more time to discuss the observations right after they happen but a lot of times even the observations are cut short unfortunately. As a whole I really enjoy the process. I just wish we had the supervisor there for more than one day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>describe the pre-conference interactions between you the supervisor, for instance, the</td>
<td></td>
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<td>observation and how feedback was delivered, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Please respond to the following: How would you describe your supervisor's ability to help you cope with stress/emotional distress in the internship?</td>
<td>I think you are a very accommodating supervisor, you always start seminar by letting us share how we feel. You respond to our concerns/emails in a timely manner. I think you do a great job with explaining assignments in a way that eases stress and extend due dates when our workload becomes too much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Please answer the following: How would you describe Steve's ability to help you (as an</td>
<td>Steve always has me reflect on my ability as a teacher. During pre and post conference he always questions me and encourages me to think deeper. I see things from a different perspective and I always learn something new. Whenever I leave a conference, I feel more confident in my abilities as a teacher and I feel reassurance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intern) become reflective about your practice?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F:
EXAMPLE OF A MEDITATIVE MEMO

Meditative Memo #5

I feel as though time stands still a bit, time slows down, when I focus on the moment and breath. Like Thich Nhat Hanh recommends, I slowed down before entering classrooms, one foot in front of another. I became aware of the sunshine on my sky outside, the air passing, the children’s laughter. Things seem magnified. When I enter a classroom, things seem more colorful. The students’ faces, their smiles, expand. But the stress—the creases, the wrinkles of the CTs faces also blows up in my mind. I also notice the expressions on the interns—the tension around the mouth, the strain in the eyes, the dark circles under the eyes—if they exist. This heightened focus aids me in using my time, in deciding what high-leverage practices to use and at what moment in time. For instance, Burns, Jacobs and Yendol-Hoppey (2018) discuss knowing when to employ what practice, knowing when to emphasize certain practices, tasks, and functions. Breathing in and out, I slow down, they my vision becomes clearer regarding practices. In the classroom scenario above, I focused on collegiality with myself and the CT—as well as bringing in the intern. I spent more time chatting, joking, touching base, then maybe I would have in the past.

This experience, in a sense, is like the clouds passing, clearing, then you can see the horizon better. I am able to see better. This same experience occurred when facilitating seminar later that day. Prior, I practiced centering myself in the moment. The worries of the day seemed to subside, then I could focus on what I believed was essential in the moment—the high-leverage practice of helping interns cope with stress and emotional distress. I asked them how they were feeling the first day back to internship—and I really listened.
I studied their faces and body language and really was there. But I find I can’t hold this present-moment awareness. After several minutes of talking—both in the classroom and in seminar, I seem to become distracted again. I lose my focus, my Zen. I don’t know what is possible in terms of remaining in the moment. Nevertheless, I find the practice of occasionally centering extremely beneficial, as supervision is highly complex (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2013). At least, I can relax and regain composure, even if it’s short-lived. In truth, this whole study scares me at times. Become strongly aware of my supervision practices is frightening. My major professor agreed, I am making myself very vulnerable—open to criticisms. Self-study requires this vulnerability; to improve practice, one must be open to the positive and negative aspects. I surveyed the interns, asking them to describe my qualities. This was scary! I didn’t know what to expect, as I made the survey anonymous. I wanted to determine what qualities I possess and how they might relate to Zen. The results were positive. Interns repeatedly used the words “caring” and “helpful.” One even called my inspiring (quite a compliment). But I don’t know how truthful these comments are—I am their course instructor. Caring does seem to align with ideas of compassion encouraged in Buddhism. Thich Nhat Hanh draws deep connections between caring and compassion and being mindful—for example, practicing deep listening with someone who needs to talk with someone. However, I could be reading into this—maybe I’m just caring in my personality, something I learned growing up, or a family value, etc. and I could have nothing to do with mindfulness.
Steve,

I think your answer to the "why Zen?" question was a good one. There will likely be some more push-back on the religion issue. I remember that I co-won an NCTE award for the Harvard Ed. Review article, and I heard later that the committee decided they needed to declare two winners because some members felt uncomfortable giving an award to an article "about religion."

At this point you really don't need to defend your research because your committee, overall, must like what you're doing. One further defense, though, is to make the writing good and the research orderly and systematic. As far as I can tell, you're doing that.

I had a chance to read your meditative memos. My first reaction is that you're operating at a pretty high level of abstraction. To a significant degree, you're just talking about Zen and mindfulness and other related concepts. It seems to me that if you're really concerned about mindfulness, you need to dig into the details of your teaching practice. Don't just mention the student and then worry about how you handled her situation--whatever it was. Instead, consider digging into the details of the event, reconstructing the dialog, the action, her physical responses to you and your responses to her, the setting, the other students. How hot or cold was the classroom? I think I mentioned "slices of classroom life" in the HER piece. Starting about that time and continuing to the present, our program has required student teachers to write (what have come to be called) SOLs, in which the first part is a detailed narrative account of some classroom encounter or event. The second part, then, is a commentary on the event--a commentary that has clear, concrete meaning because it is preceded by what the reader needs to know about what happened and why it's important. If you're truly mindful, you're mindful, first of all, of the concrete details of life in the classroom. It's quite revealing that some student teachers have real trouble temporarily suspending their judgement and discursive mind and first focusing on the details--where the action really is. To paraphrase Mark Twain: "Don't say the old lady screamed; bring her on and let her scream." Also, I remember one Zen teacher being asked "what is Zen?" and he answered "details, details, details."

Or think about it this way: don't write about Zen; write Zen.
This is already so helpful. I really resonate with the idea of the awakened supervisor as an image of the flexible mind, the individual that can entertain and employ all the other approaches, can step in and out of other images, remaining centered and in the present. Glanz (1997) suggested this, when he applied Taoism to supervision—a philosophical orientation that strove for balance among the conflicting views.

I did have one committee member push back on why I chose Zen rather than say, Jon Kabot's mindfulness, which is research backed—saying it would avoid possible secular/religious controversy.

My answer was that, first, all Westernized mindfulness stems from Zen and Buddhism, that's simply a fact. Second, since Zen was complex, abstract, and paradoxical, it would produce a richer, more complex dissertation. A dish is only as good as its ingredients.

There was some commending on the committee's part, saying I was pushing the boundaries and they expected my dissertation to get some attention. In the same breath, they told me to be prepared to be questioned and criticized and challenged by some, who were not comfortable with this risk. I wonder how you think I might better "defend" my work and prepare myself for future sparring matches.
APPENDIX H:

EXAMPLE OF A “CODED” MEDITATIVE MEMO

Meditative Memo # 10

I’ve become interested in how a flow state produced from being mindful and aware relates to the various images in my theoretical framework. For instance, I noticed that being in a certain frame of mind, I can flow or move from one image or role to another. For example, during an observation today, I began with small talk, asking a candidate how they are doing, being personal, then moved into the Evaluator role when I ran through the Danielson feedback. I also problematized the lesson/the candidate’s teaching (the Critical Friend) by asking how she could better differentiate the lesson—though the lesson went well. This led to exploring different options together—I created this sense of dissatisfaction to push the candidate’s growing skill level.

Another example from my journaling this week:

Intern began crying over evaluation scores. I asked her if she wanted to take break, talk about later. She said no and calmed down. We went through the rubric, and I gave suggestions. Later, she seemed more relaxed and began smiling. I seemed to move from Evaluator to Miss Collegiality then back to Evaluator-later I shifted back to friend mode, checking on her well-begin. It seems just being aware of the different images and being mindful in the moment, allows one to move in and out of these images/roles—to flow between them. They don’t necessarily
conflict but are interrelated. For instance, providing difficult feedback is easier when coming across in a friendly manner (e.g. we are on the same team. I am here to help you).
APPENDIX I:

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER

RESEARCH INTEGRITY AND COMPLIANCE
Institutional Review Boards, FWA No. 00001669
12901 Bruce B. Downs Blvd., MDC208 • Tampa, FL 33612-4799
(813) 974-5638 • FAX (813) 974-7091

3/22/2019

Steve Haberlin
Teaching and Learning
Brandon, FL 33511

RE: Expedited Approval for Initial Review
IRB#: Pro00036954
Title: Enacting Zen Constructs within Instructional Supervision of Teacher Candidates through Spiritual Self-Study

Study Approval Period: 3/21/2019

Dear Mr. Haberlin:

On 3/21/2019, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) reviewed and APPROVED the above application and all documents contained within, including those outlined below. Please note this study is approved under the 2018 version of 45 CFR 46 and you will be asked to confirm ongoing research annually in place of a full Continuing Review. Amendments and Reportable Events must still be submitted per USF HRPP policy.

Approved Item(s):
Protocol Document(s):
Protocol-Version#1-2-22-2019

Consent/Assent Document(s)*:
USFstudent-version#1-2-23-2019.pdf

*Please use only the official IRB stamped informed consent/assent document(s) found under the "Attachments" tab. Please note, these consent/assent documents are valid until the consent document is amended and approved.

It was the determination of the IRB that your study qualified for expedited review which includes activities that: (1) present no more than minimal risk to human subjects, and (2) involve only procedures listed in one or more of the categories outlined below. The IRB may review research through the expedited review procedure authorized by 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR
56.110. The research proposed in this study is categorized under the following expedited review category:

(5) Research involving materials (data, documents, records, or specimens) that have been collected, or will be collected solely for nonresearch purposes (such as medical treatment or diagnosis).

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

As the principal investigator of this study, it is your responsibility to conduct this study in accordance with IRB policies and procedures and as approved by the IRB. Any changes to the approved research must be submitted to the IRB via an Amendment for review and approval. Additionally, all unanticipated problems must be reported to the USF IRB within five (5) business days.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subjects research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,

Kristen Salomon, Ph.D., Chairperson
USF Institutional Review Board