An Integral Inquiry into the Relationship Between Addiction and Emotional Intelligence

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ABSTRACT This article examines the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence using Integral Research. Six of the eight zones of Integral Methodological Pluralism are used in order to investigate the nature of this relationship. Data from each methodology suggest that addiction is correlated with deficits of particular aspects of emotional intelligence, and I conclude that the processes of addiction and emotional intelligence are ultimately not separate. In addition, I conclude that Emotional Brain Training is an effective way to increase emotional intelligence and alleviate addictive/compulsive behaviors.

KEY WORDS: addiction; compulsion; emotional brain training; emotional intelligence; mixed methods research

The U.S. National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) estimates that nearly 1 out of every 10 Americans over the age of 12 has a problem with substance abuse (2007). With economic costs thought to exceed half a trillion dollars annually due to health care expenditures, lost productivity, and crime, it has become generally accepted that addiction is one of the most serious health and social problems facing the United States today (NIDA, 2007). In addition, there are millions more Americans who struggle with other compulsions such as codependency, overeating, gambling, and sex addiction.

There are many different perspectives on what addiction is and how to treat it. NIDA takes a third-person bio-behavioral view of the individual and defines addiction as a brain disease, caused by a combination of genetic and environmental factors, which is expressed as compulsive behavior. Others take a third-person perspective of the collective and believe that the reason Americans, who comprise only 4% of the world's population, consume two-thirds of the world's illegal drugs (Califano, 1997) is because they are living in an "addictive system" (Schaef, 1987, p. 4). Some experts in the field take a second-person perspective and see addiction as a "family disease" (Wegscheider-Cruse, 1989) or even as an attachment disorder, where chemical relationships are substituted for human ones (Flores, 2004). First-person perspectives can range from viewing addiction as an impairment in affect regulation (Khantzian, 1999) to understanding it from a Buddhist standpoint as an exacerbated form of the desire for pleasure and aversion to pain that everyone experiences to some degree (Kornfield, 1993; O'Malley, 2004).

An integral view recognizes that each of these perspectives, along with a multitude of others, are accurate and yet incomplete, each disclosing different facets of the same phenomenon (Wilber, 2006). As addiction is an integral event, the most successful treatment will no doubt accommodate and address as many of these perspectives as possible. Although multiple perspectives are needed to fully understand the process of addic-

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tion, this research will focus on the first-person experience of addiction and its relationship to the process of emotional intelligence.

Most reputable treatments for addiction, including cognitive-behavioral approaches and 12-step programs, acknowledge the relationship between addiction and emotional immaturity and include the cultivation of skills related to emotional intelligence. Many experts believe that addicts often suppress uncomfortable feelings, keeping recognition of their affective state far from conscious awareness (Flores, 2004). There is high co-morbidity of substance abuse and mood disorders, thus it has long been posited that addicts may be self-medicating in order to relieve emotional distress (Khantzian, 1999). Research has also found that negative, and even positive, emotional states are the strongest predictor of relapse (Marlatt & Witkiewitz, 2005).

I first became interested in the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence after repeated attempts to modify my diet. I literally found this task to be impossible—I simply could not do it. My inability to refrain from eating certain foods reminded me of other experiences with compulsive behavior I had had in the past. I was raised in an alcoholic family and as an adolescent I developed my own problems with substance abuse and completed a year of outpatient treatment at a drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility. Over the years, I have had what can be characterized as an addictive relationship with a myriad of things ranging from the life threatening to the relatively benign.

As is common among those who struggle with addiction, when my more destructive behaviors were abandoned, less dangerous habits developed to take their place. In the addiction treatment field, this phenomenon is known as *cross-addiction* (Flores, 2004) In Alcoholics Anonymous, it is commonly referred to as "switching seats on the *Titanic*" because although one may have moved to a higher deck, they are inevitably "going down" (Ruden, 1997, p. 95). It would be fair to say that I have switched seats on the *Titanic* a number of times, and although I have overcome my more problematic addictive relationships, I still get that "sinking feeling" when it comes to food.

I noticed that I can "use" food in much the same way I used alcohol or other drugs in the past (i.e., primarily as a way to manage stress and emotional discomfort). I started wondering about my own level of emotional intelligence and was curious about the relationship it may have to my past addictions and current compulsive behaviors around food. Although the association between low emotional intelligence and a tendency toward addictive behaviors has been documented (Trinidad & Johnson, 2001; Khanmohammadi et al., 2009), further research is needed to fully illuminate the nature of this phenomenon. In an attempt to shed more light on this relationship, the research question that guided my work was: *What is the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?*

Throughout this project, "addictive" or "compulsive" behaviors will refer to those patterns of being that are habitually engaged in despite negative consequences and multiple attempts at termination. Therefore, the definition is not limited to substance abuse and can include food, work, sex, gambling, spending, or relationship addiction (and it may also include an addiction to certain thoughts or feelings). As for emotional intelligence, I use the definition outlined by John Mayer and Peter Salovey (1997):[1]

> Emotional intelligence involves the ability to perceive accurately, appraise, and express emotion; the ability to access and/or generate feelings when they facilitate thought; the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and the ability to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (p. 10).

In addition to this definition, Mayer and Salovey provide four branches of emotional intelligence with four representative abilities each. For this research, I was particularly interested in those abilities that have to do with internal emotional recognition and processing. I focused on five such abilities:

1. Ability to identify emotion in one's physical states, feelings, and thoughts.
2. Ability to express emotions accurately and to express needs related to those feelings.
3. Ability to stay open to feelings, both those that are pleasant and those that are unpleasant.
4. Ability to manage emotion in oneself and others by moderating negative emotions and enhancing pleasant ones, without repressing or exaggerating information they may convey.
5. Ability to reflectively monitor emotions in relation to oneself and others, such as recognizing how clear, typical, influential, or reasonable they are. (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p. 11)

As is obvious from my research question, I assume that there is a relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence as a result of my first-person experience with compulsive behaviors as well as the existence of corroborating literature. I also believe that the interior-subjective experience of addiction is an integral part of what addiction is. In addition, I assume that when addiction is viewed through the methodology of phenomenology, the data disclosed will, in part, be feelings and therefore related to the emotional processing skills inherent in the definition of emotional intelligence.

Because the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence is complex, I chose a research design that attempts to capture as much of this complexity as possible. Using Ken Wilber's (2006) AQAL model as a guide, this article examines the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence from six different perspectives as revealed by their corresponding methodologies. Two modes of first-, second, and third-person inquiry were used to investigate the research question. To begin with, self-inquiry and autobiographical analysis were employed to explore the connection between the research topic and myself. Next, I used my Sentence Completion Test international (SCTi), Riso–Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator (RHETI), and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) scores to expose the strengths and limits of my awareness in the context of this research. In addition, the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence was explored through an interview with Linda Williams, LCSW, a certified facilitator of Emotional Brain Training (EBT), a cognitive-behavioral treatment for addiction that involves increasing participants' emotional intelligence.[2] My research question was also investigated through a 24-week participatory evaluation of EBT workshops. The next part of the research consisted of survey results from EBT participants and John F. Kennedy University (JFKU) students, as well as a review of two empirical studies on the effectiveness of EBT. Finally, a systems analysis was accomplished through a library/Internet search of articles related to the impact the American media may have on the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. This research project took place over a period of six months, from October 2007 to March 2008, in conjunction with the Integral Research course within the Integral Psychology program at JFKU.[3]

The following section introduces each methodology used in this study, including the respective research design, data analysis, and discussion of results. I have grouped these methodologies into first-, second-, and third-person perspectives, and present them in that order.

First-person Methodologies

First-person methodologies are important because they connect the researcher to the research topic by illuminating the interior-subjective dimensions of the observer from both the inside and the outside. According to Integral Theory, the phenomenon being observed can never be separated from the observer (Wilber, 2006). Therefore, it is essential to examine the awareness of the perceiver in addition to what is being perceived, as this awareness is actually co-enacting the phenomenon.

For my phenomenological investigation, I employed autobiographical analysis and self-inquiry. The methodology-based question for these phenomenological investigations was, "What is my direct experience of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?" For my structural analysis, I took a series of assessments that disclosed my current altitude of awareness, Enneagram type, and personality type. The methodology-based question for this inquiry was, "How does the structure of my own awareness impact my inquiry into the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?"

Phenomenological Method and Research Design

A phenomenological investigation of my first-person experience of the relationship between addiction and the aforementioned aspects of emotional intelligence was accomplished through self-inquiry and autobiographical analysis. I chose these modes of inquiry in order to reveal my connection to addiction as an ongoing struggle by highlighting the emotional aspects of both past and present experiences. These methods were well suited to my topic because they revealed how my personal experience with addiction shaped my inquiry from the very beginning. Unfortunately, these methodologies only reveal brief "snapshots" of interior life and cannot possibly capture the entirety of lived experience.

The data for the autobiographical analysis were collected by reviewing structured journal entries that were written as part of my participation in EBT workshops, starting from June 2007 and continuing throughout the course of this research project. EBT is a two-year program that treats addictions and compulsive behavior by, among other things, increasing participants' emotional intelligence through specific practices for identifying and dealing with feelings. In EBT, addictive or compulsive behavior is viewed as an *external solution* to what is essentially an unwanted internal experience (Mellin, 2003). Participants are given weekly prompts that include writing about their past experiences with addiction, as well as documenting their current emotional process. All journal entries begin with a short meditation and body scanning exercise in order to cultivate embodied memories that are emotionally charged.

The data for the self-inquiry were collected by recording my first-person experiences with a practice of emotional processing skills in real time at least three times per week. When I felt emotionally out of balance (e.g., high levels of anger, sadness, fear, or guilt), I set aside time to engage in a *cycle*, which is the primary emotional processing tool employed by EBT. The format for a cycle is as follows:

> I feel angry that…
> I feel sad that…
> I feel afraid that…
> I feel guilty that…
> Are my expectations reasonable?
> Is my thinking positive and powerful?
> What is the essential pain?

> What is the earned reward?
> What do I need?
> Do I need support? (Mellin, 2003, p. 369)

I responded to each prompt in written form as many times as I felt was necessary to complete the inquiry. In addition, I practiced non-judgmental kindness towards myself, allowing myself to feel whatever emotions arose even if I believed they were immature, irrational, or socially inappropriate.

These data were analyzed by coding 24 journal entries and 30 written cycles that were recorded over a period of 6 months. These codes were then labeled and sorted into broader themes. After the core themes were determined, they were compared, related, and used to shed light on the research question.

Phenomenological Research Data

Data analysis of my journal entries and written cycles yielded several key themes, including 1) the use of addictive/compulsive behaviors to soothe/nurture myself and avoid feeling; 2) difficulty knowing how I feel or what I need; 3) growing up in an alcoholic family; and 4) having unrealistic expectations.

The use of external solutions to soothe/nurture myself and avoid feeling. The first theme that emerged is that I had a long history of using external solutions to comfort myself when going through difficult emotions or as a reward to "celebrate" my positive accomplishments/feelings. In addition, my entries expressed a great deal of fear related to unpleasant emotions that were often accompanied by the belief that "my feelings will never end" or that "I will always feel this way." In general, I had a strong desire to avoid highly charged unpleasant emotions, particularly anger, and often used external solutions to mitigate their symptoms.

Difficulty knowing how I feel or what I need. A related theme that surfaced is that I often expressed having a hard time knowing how I feel or what my needs are. In some entries I reported feeling "bad" or "awful," but I had no idea why or what incidents these feelings might be connected to. Similarly, I also wrote about feeling "numb" and not knowing how I felt at all. Both the negative experiences and the numbness were clearly associated with sensations, or the lack of sensation in my body. Furthermore, I repeatedly expressed frustration that I didn't know what my true needs were (other than feeling like I "needed" to engage in an addictive/compulsive behavior). This was often due to the fact that I did not know what I was upset about or why I had "shut down" emotionally.

Growing up in an alcoholic family. Another major theme that came up repeatedly was an exploration of feeling like an "adult child" as the result of having been raised in an alcoholic family. If my parents did not have a high degree of emotional intelligence, they would have been unable to model the skills of emotional maturity for me. Similarly, if they were largely unresponsive to my feelings or needs, I may have a tendency to repeat this pattern within myself. In my journals, I wrote that I do not believe I ever internalized the "good mom" and "good dad" that are necessary for healthy psychological development. This left me feeling like a "child" who could not take care of her own needs and was waiting to be rescued by someone or something else (e.g., an addictive/compulsive behavior).

Having unrealistic expectations. The final theme to surface was the pervasive presence of unrealistic expectations concerning not only how I should feel/be, but how the rest of the world should feel/be as well. These expectations were often related to the harsh, perfectionist demands of my inner critic. Some examples include

"I shouldn't feel angry about that," "I should never make a mistake," and "They should respond the way I want them to all of the time." In addition, when it came to my expectations about the use of external solutions, it was often "all or nothing." I tended to employ either indulgence ("I can eat the whole box of chocolate") or deprivation ("I can't have any chocolate ever") and seemed to lack a more reasonable middle-ground ("I can have three pieces of chocolate").

The validity of these data is determined by the sincerity, integrity, honesty, and vulnerability of my journal entries (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006). Throughout the research, I did my best to uphold these standards of validity and demonstrate that my journal entries contain these qualities. This included a commitment to fair presentation of the data that emerged, even when it was unflattering.

Discussion

The themes I uncovered reveal that I have a direct experience of a relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. Indeed, I often engage in compulsive behaviors as a way of avoiding emotions that I find uncomfortable rather than staying open to them. I also have difficulty knowing how I feel, what I need, or how reasonable my expectations are. Taken together, these patterns suggest that I may lack sufficient mastery of the five abilities that are representative of emotional intelligence.

When my interior-subjective experiences of addiction are looked at from an interior-objective perspective, specific thoughts, feelings, and sensation patterns emerge (e.g., not being able to recognize my emotions or having difficulty tolerating certain feelings). These patterns can be evaluated as exhibiting varying degrees of emotional intelligence. Therefore, it appears that my phenomenological experience of addiction, from an interior-subjective perspective, is not separate from the process of emotional intelligence.

If I were to further investigate my first-person experience with the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence, I would focus on recording my feelings before, after, and during my engagement in any addictive/compulsive behaviors. I would also record my experience of using emotional processing skills as an alternative to these behaviors. Next, I will turn to the structural method and research design in an effort to understand how the patterns of my awareness have influenced my approach to the research question.

Structural Method and Research Design

For structural analysis, I took Susanne Cook-Greuter's SCTi because I believed it would provide insight into my current altitude in the self-identity line, or level of ego development. The other two instruments I used were the Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator (1999) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), which provided insight into the typological structures of my consciousness. Taken together, these assessments provided a more complete picture of my strengths and challenges as a researcher. The SCTi was completed online in a single sitting that lasted approximately one hour. Both the Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator and the MBTI were taken in written form in under one hour.

I assumed that my center of gravity, as well as my typology, would influence how I interpret the meaning of "addiction," "emotional intelligence," or any of the data I obtained. I also understood that I would not be able to accurately interpret, or sometimes even register, phenomena that were beyond my current level of development. In addition, my level of development in specific lines (including cognitive, emotional, spiritual, interpersonal, etc.) would influence the type of data I sought, my ability to recognize data, and the way I interpreted data after they were collected.

The results of the third-person data obtained from the above instruments were analyzed through a triangulation between first-person and second-person assessments of my altitude, Enneagram type, and personality type. After integrating these perspectives, I discuss the overall themes that emerged in regard to each instrument and how they revealed my strengths and weaknesses as a researcher.

Structural Research Data

Sentence Completion Test international (SCTi). My SCTi results indicated that my current center of gravity for ego development was at the Achiever stage (Cook-Greuter, 2002). Initially, I was reluctant to accept the accuracy of these results because I identify cognitively with higher levels of ego development, including the Individualist and Strategist. Similarly, I have received feedback from others that they experience me as inhabiting a post-conventional stage of cognitive awareness. However, I hold open the possibility that although my level of cognitive awareness may (or may not) be higher, I could still be identified with the Achiever stage of ego-development.

It is also important to note that if my center of gravity for ego development is at the Achiever stage, I should be operating at this altitude approximately 50% of the time, with the other 50% split evenly between the Expert and the Individualist stages of ego development (Wilber, 2003). Analysis of the Achiever stage indicates that my strengths as a researcher include the following themes: 1) a motivation to figure things out, always looking for root causes/reasons; 2) an interest in feelings, moods, traits, and motivations; and 3) a tendency to be responsible, conscientious, and expedient (Cook-Greuter, 2002). My limitations as a researcher include: 1) a tendency to be hypercritical/self-critical; 2) the suppression of negative pole and shadow side; and 3) a failure to recognize the constructed nature of beliefs and question the underlying assumptions of systems (Cook-Greuter, 2002).

Riso-Hudson Enneagram Type Indicator. The results revealed that I identify as Enneatype 9, which is consistent with my first-person experience as well as others' second-person evaluations of me. The strengths of being an Enneatype 9 include: 1) being a holistic thinker; 2) the ability to entertain multiple perspectives; and 3) the ability to synthesize different points of view or schools of thought (Riso & Hudson, 1999). The weaknesses of being an Enneatype 9 researcher include: 1) absent-mindedness and obliviousness to what is going on around me; 2) problems recognizing and processing emotions (especially anger); and 3) a predilection for narcotization/addiction and dissociating/shutting down (Riso & Hudson, 1999). I believe that these qualities support my ability to engage in mixed methods integral research, and they also enable me to relate the diverse data from different methodologies to my original research question. Furthermore, I believe that my Enneatype has a significant influence on why this topic is important to me (because my particular typology can leave me vulnerable to addiction).

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). Assessment results revealed my personality type to be INFJ (Introverted, Intuitive, Feeling, and Judging). Again, this is consistent with my first-person experience of myself as well as others' second-person experience of me. The themes related to my strengths as an INFJ researcher include: 1) the ability to look at information from a global viewpoint and spot patterns and relationships; 2) intuitive understanding and insight into people/situations; and 3) a tendency to take work seriously and enjoy academic activity (Myers and Briggs Foundation, n.d). The themes related to my weaknesses include: 1) difficulty dealing with minutia or very detailed tasks; 2) a tendency to do things in excess; and 3) cutting corners or becoming preoccupied with unimportant details (Myers and Briggs Foundation, n.d).

I can relate to having the ability to take a global viewpoint and recognize patterns/relationships, which is an asset to me as a researcher. I also have the ability to intuitively understand things without being able to explain how, which can lead me in new directions when it comes to research design and analyzing data. Furthermore, I do take work seriously and tend to enjoy academic activity. However, I do not enjoy the detailed tasks involved in research and can get the urge to "take the easy way out" if I am feeling overwhelmed.

The validity of each of the aforementioned structural assessments is determined by the use of acknowledged test procedures and a triangulation between first-person and second-person modes of assessment (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006). All of the assessments I chose were properly administered according to established standards. In addition, I considered whether or not the test results are consistent with my experience of myself as well as my colleagues' experience of me.

Discussion

I feel confident that each assessment provided insight into the structure of my awareness, and helped to provide a better estimate of where my consciousness lives in the AQAL matrix. The most useful insight for me was the apparent discrepancy between my sense of my level of cognitive development and my level of ego development as indicated by my SCTi score. It is important for me to be aware that just because I understand or resonate with something cognitively, that does not necessarily mean that I am able to embody it or "live from that place." The SCTi served as an important reminder of that truth and has helped me to see my strengths and limitations more clearly. In addition, it is interesting to consider that my level of emotional development is intimately related to my level of ego development.[4]

If I were to continue my research into the structure of my own awareness, I would include additional assessments for the purposes of constructing a more complete Integral Psychograph. Some of these instruments may include Robert Kegan's Subject-Object Interview as well as the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test.

Second-person Methodologies

Second-person methodologies explore how the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence shows up in mutual resonance with others. They accomplish this by revealing both the interior-subjective and interior-objective aspects of collective experience. Because there is no "I" without "we," inquiry into the mutual understanding and shared experiences of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence will disclose perspectives that are fundamental in order to fully appreciate this phenomena.

For my hermeneutic analysis, I conducted an interview with an EBT program facilitator who has expertise in the area of the research topic. The methodology-based question for this inquiry was, "What is our mutual understanding of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?" For my ethnomethodological analysis, I explored patterns of meaning within a culture through EBT program participant-observation. The methodology-based question for this inquiry was, "How does the relationship between addiction and emotional show up in a group?"

Hermeneutic Method and Research Design

A hermeneutic analysis of the second-person experience of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence was accomplished through an interview. This method was well suited to this research project

because it brought forth a mutual understanding of the subjective experience of the topic, enabling me to balance my own perspective with that of another. This method revealed an intersubjective understanding of the research topic, but because only one interview was conducted, this intersubjective understanding may not disclose data that are representative of the general population.

I interviewed Linda Williams, LCSW, a certified EBT facilitator who was trained by Laurel Mellin, the creator of EBT and author of both *The Solution* (2000) and *The Pathway* (2003). I chose Linda because I assumed she had knowledge/experience of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence via her experience treating addiction. After the date and location were set for the interview, I sent Linda a confirmation e-mail and a copy of the release form (also via e-mail). In addition, I sent her the definitions of the terms *addiction* and *emotional intelligence* that I used for the purposes of this research. I also e-mailed her the interview questions so that she would have time to reflect on them beforehand.

During the interview, I used primarily open-ended questions (Seidman, 2006). The following questions were included:

1. How do you define addiction?
2. How do you define emotional intelligence?
3. How do you *understand* the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?
4. How do you *experience* the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?
5. How might EBT increase emotional intelligence?
6. How do you define recovery from addiction?
7. What emotional processing skills do you feel are important for recovery from addiction?

In order to accurately capture the data, I used a Class B digital recording device during the interview. I also brought a copy of the interview questions and a pen and paper to make notes during the interview (e.g., to record phrases or topics that I wanted like to follow-up on later in the interview). After the interview, I sent Linda an e-mail thanking her for her participation and to remind her that I would be e-mailing her the transcript for her review.

The data for the hermeneutic analysis were collected by transcribing the interview in its entirety. The resulting transcript was analyzed after performing *epoché*, or doing my best to suspend judgment. Interesting passages were marked and then assigned labels. Labeled passages were then sorted into categories and grouped into broader themes. Once key themes had been established, they were compared and related to the research question.

Hermeneutic Research Data

Data analysis of the interview transcript yielded four main themes: 1) the components of emotional intelligence; 2) how to overcome addiction; 3) factors that contribute to addiction; and 4) what recovery from addiction looks like.

The components of emotional intelligence. According to our mutual understanding, the skills related to emo-

tional intelligence include having an awareness of the body and bodily sensation. It is essential that a person is able to adequately feel their emotions before they are able to express and process them, which are also essential skills that are representative of emotional intelligence. Furthermore, once a person is able to feel, express, and process their feelings, they need to be able to discern what their related needs may be and how they can adequately meet these needs (e.g., if someone is feeling sad, they may need to cry or seek support from another person). In addition, being emotionally intelligent can be related to being a mature adult and having the ability to "self-parent" through the use of self-nurturing and effective limit setting. This also includes using the rational mind to confront and challenge unreasonable (and often unconscious) expectations about the self or world.

How to overcome addiction. It was clear that we both saw strengthening the skills associated with emotional intelligence as an effective way to alleviate the desire to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors. This can be achieved through the use of cycles. However, we both acknowledged that there are "many paths" to recovery. In addition, mindfulness practices were seen as an essential component along with "embracing reality" and paying attention to physical health. Another main component of overcoming addiction is that it is possible to form new neural pathways through practice and repetition. This can lead to different reactions to triggers that would normally encourage addictive/compulsive behaviors.

Factors that contribute to addiction. The factors that we both identified as contributing to addictive/compulsive behaviors include the desire to "avoid particular feelings and sensations" as well as an "inability to stay present for whatever is arising." Other factors include codependency and the experience of being raised in an alcoholic family culture (or one that does not provide sufficient modeling of the skills related to emotional intelligence). In addition, the qualities of compulsive behaviors (e.g., the fact that they "work" in the short run by altering feelings/perceptions), as well as the cultural predominance of thinking (as opposed to feeling), can contribute to addiction.

What recovery from addiction looks like. Linda and I both experienced recovery from addiction as including a strong connection to both the self (knowing how you feel/what you need) and the Self (an identity beyond the personal). Recovery is characterized by a freedom from compulsion/having the ability to choose, as opposed to a rigorous abstinence from something that you long to do. In addition, there are many rewards that spring from the ability to stay present/feel deeply, and "new ways of being" become possible. There also appears to be more of a balance between masculine and feminine energies involving the ability to both be nurturing and set limits with self and others.

The validity of the above data is determined by mutual understanding, resonance, and participant verification (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006). In order to make sure that the data I collected were both meaningful and symbolic of the interpersonal space I shared with my interviewee, I performed a participant check by e-mailing Linda the interview transcript and asked her to review the material and e-mail me if she did not feel it was accurate. As I did not receive a response, I assumed that she felt it accurately represented our conversation.

Discussion

My interview with Linda revealed that she and I share a mutual understanding of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. Although our understanding of emotional intelligence had a slightly different focus (more emphasis on the body/descent into feelings) than the definition provided by Mayer and Salovey (1997), our definitions were remarkably similar. In addition, it was clear that we both recognized

how the phenomenological experience of addiction can be seen as lacking components of emotional intelligence. This is exemplified by a quote from Linda:

> So I think [addiction] follows losing touch with myself—people lose touch with themselves on a feeling level. And then, the pain of that then leaves you floating through life, crashing into this and that. You're not connected with your own inner direction and so to ease the pain people will start with a number of addictions. I think if it's too painful to feel what we are feeling, we're really vulnerable to addiction. (transcript, p. 4)

This type of mutual resonance around the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence has helped me to clarify how working with emotional processing skills can reduce addictive tendencies. According to this understanding, it appears that it would be unlikely that someone would be, in the same moment, manifesting a high degree of emotional intelligence and engaging in the process of addiction.

Ethnomethodological Method and Research Design

The participant-observer technique was used for my ethnomethodological analysis of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. I chose this method of inquiry in order to illuminate the interior-objective aspects of the collective experience of the research topic. This method has the capacity to reveal the cultural structures of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence in a particular EBT study group. Unfortunately, this approach may not reveal the cultural structures of the research topic in American culture at large, and the data collected may not be representative of the general population.

In order to observe how the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence shows up in a group, I participated in an EBT group that meets for two hours a week in Corte Madera, California from June, 2007 through February, 2008. The group was facilitated by Linda Williams. There were seven group members, including myself, who each joined the group voluntarily in order to work with various addictions or compulsive behaviors they were currently engaged in.

During each group meeting, members performed body-sensing exercises and "check-ins" about how they were feeling physically and emotionally. In addition, each member reported how they were doing with their external solutions (i.e., their addictive or compulsive behaviors) and whether or not they had engaged in any of these behaviors during the week. Group members were taught and encouraged to practice various emotional processing tools as an alternative to their addictions, including *feelings checks* (How do I feel? What do I need?) and *cycles* (Mellin, 2003). In every group, at least one member completed a full cycle that was guided by the facilitator. Afterwards, each group member had the opportunity to give a *tender message* and let the speaker know how their emotional work impacted them (Mellin, 2003).

I documented my participation in the group by taking notes in my journal during each session. I began by recording primarily first-person aspects of the group, such as each member's cycle and other members' responses to it. After realizing that these notes were not necessarily highlighting the second-person dimensions of the group experience, I created three second-person categories that I could focus my observations on. They included: 1) how the group *defined* addiction and emotional intelligence; 2) how the group *understood* the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence; and 3) how the group *experienced* the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. I chose these categories because of their relation to the

research topic and their ability to support me in future data collection efforts. All subsequent notes were taken in response to these categories. In addition, I recorded any thoughts based on these categories that occurred to me after the group ended and included notes on group practice norms.

The data I collected before the implementation of categories was analyzed by coding my notes for these categories and recording the themes that emerged. The data that were collected after the assignment of categories were also analyzed for themes. After all the themes relating to each category were determined, they were related to the research question.

Ethnomethodological Research Data

Analysis of the data revealed multiple themes related to each category. Rather than list each theme separately, I will discuss themes together as responses to the question asked in each category.

How the group defined addiction and emotional intelligence. Addiction was generally defined as the use of any external solution (e.g. drug/alcohol abuse; compulsive eating/spending/gambling; sexual addiction; codependency). Furthermore, there was a general consensus that *anything* can be an external solution. The key to addiction is both the presence of *excess* and well as *why* that behavior is being engaged in (i.e., the behavior itself is not automatically an addiction/compulsion). Using an external solution was generally seen as relying on something outside the self, as opposed to internal resources, to cope with experience. The closest the group came to a consensus definition of emotional intelligence was: a series of skills including knowing how you feel, expressing your feelings, knowing what you need, and how to get those needs met. These views were supported by nods of agreement from the group while the facilitator or individual members spoke about their own experiences.

How the group understood the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. There appeared to be group agreement that the greater amount of emotional processing skills a person has, the less desire they will have to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors. This does not mean they will *never* use external solutions, but that they will lack the desire to do so compulsively because their needs have already been met in healthy ways. If one is able to learn the developmentally appropriate skills of a healthy adult, they will no longer be interested in engaging in behaviors that do not truly satisfy their needs. Therefore, the cultivation of emotional intelligence is seen to alleviate addiction, but the lack of addiction is not necessarily an indicator of emotional intelligence.

How the group experiences the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. As EBT takes approximately 18 months to complete, and the amount of training each group member had varied from 3 to 12 months, there were some differences in experience among group members. All group members appeared to have an increase in their emotional processing skills related to emotional intelligence, including a greater ability to recognize how they felt and expressed their emotions. Approximately half of the group members experienced a significant decrease in their dependency on external solutions as a result of using these skills. Others experienced a slight decrease, while some reported they still actively struggled with these behaviors. However, there was group consensus that as mastery of emotional processing skills was achieved, they provided a viable alternative to the use of external solutions. There appeared to be a general experience that as emotional intelligence increased, the use of external solutions decreased.

The validity of the data is dependent on my ability to accurately observe the group dynamics and symbolic

coherence of the group culture. Validity is also assessed through the quality of documentation, length of engagement, group acceptance, and member checks (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006). As I participated in the group for nine months, I believe that I was able to achieve a prolonged engagement with a high level of acceptance. In addition, I recorded over 80 pages of notes and was able to check the accuracy of my observations with other group members.

Discussion

The themes that surfaced indicate that the group experienced a strong relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. In many ways, this is not surprising because each group member elected to work with their addiction/compulsion via a method that focuses on the cultivation of emotional processing skills. The finding that as the group experienced greater mastery of emotional processing tools they had less desire to engage in compulsive behavior supports the notion that these two processes are related to one another. Furthermore, it attests that working with emotional intelligence through the process of EBT is an effective way to alleviate addictive/compulsive behaviors.

Third-Person Methodologies

Third-person methodologies were essential to this project because they capture the objective realities of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. They accomplish this by disclosing the exterior-objective elements of this relationship in both the individual and collective. As the subjective and the objective co-arise and are mutually interdependent, it is important to inquire into the exterior realities of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence in order fully comprehend the nature of this phenomenon.

For my empirical analysis, I performed a survey analysis as well as a review of two empirical research studies of EBT participants. The methodology-based question for this analysis was, "How do people experience the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?" As a systems analysis, I focused on how the American media may influence the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. The methodology-based question for this analysis was, "What is the impact of the media on the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence?"

Empirical Analysis Method and Research Design

I developed a survey in order to obtain objective measures of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. The survey was designed to measure how individuals who have engaged in addictive/compulsive behaviors relate these behaviors to their own emotional processing skills. I distributed the survey to individuals who were participating in an EBT group as well as JFKU Integral Psychology students. I targeted both of these populations because I felt they may have greater awareness of their experience of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence.

While creating the survey, I attempted to create statements that would illuminate the relationship between an individual's behaviors and their emotional processing skills. I also tried to include first-, second-, and third-person statements in order to gain a fuller picture of this relationship. I chose each statement because I thought it would prompt participants to reflect on the possible relationship between their behavior and a particular emotional processing skill. In addition, I wanted to include questions that would track the emotional experiences of participants prior to engaging in addictive/compulsive behaviors.

I distributed the survey to EBT group members at one of the weekly meetings I attended in Corte Madera. In addition, I also distributed surveys to JFKU Integral Psychology students who were on break between classes at the Pleasant Hill campus. All surveys were completed onsite by participants and collected by myself after completion. A total of 20 surveys were collected. As this was a self-report method, it was limited by the level of self-awareness available to survey respondents. Furthermore, the sample was not representative of the general population.

In addition to my survey analysis, I also reviewed two empirical studies on the effectiveness of EBT. The first study involved the use of EBT to reduce compulsive overeating and was conducted by the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) using methods that were approved by the UCSF Committee on Human Research (Mellin, 2003). The sample included 26 people and provided data on participants collected at two-year and six-year follow-ups after they had completed EBT. The second study was an independent survey of EBT participants conducted by the University of Illinois, Chicago (UIC) with methods approved by their Human Subjects Institute Review Board (Mellin, 2003). The survey was sent to 155 participants who had completed EBT in order to reduce a variety of addictive/compulsive behaviors (e.g., overeating, smoking, drinking, overspending, excessive working) and 134 were returned, yielding a response rate of 86% (Mellin, 2003).

Empirical Analysis Research Data

Figure 1 shows the data analysis to the survey statements. It is interesting to note that the majority of people (60%-65%) experienced a relationship between their addictive/compulsive behaviors and three key emotional processing skills, including their ability to identify feelings, express feelings, and meet related needs. In addition, the overwhelming majority of people (85%) experienced a relationship between their addictive/compulsive behaviors and two other aspects of emotional intelligence, including their ability to moderate negative emotions and tolerate uncomfortable emotional states. Furthermore, most people (75%) had the urge to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors when they felt angry, sad, afraid, guilty, numb, or bored.

It is also of interest that far less people (30%-40%) experienced a strong relationship between their addictive/compulsive behaviors and their ability to recognize how reasonable their feelings were, or with their ability to have healthy relationships with others. In addition, less people (40%) reported having urges to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors when they felt grateful, happy, secure, or proud.

Empirical Study Review. The study by UCSF included participant reports of improvement in several areas at the six-year follow-up (Mellin, 2003) (Fig. 2). The average participant lost weight, lowered their blood pressure, and scored 60% to 80% lower on the Beck Depression Inventory (Mellin, 2003). Furthermore, these results were either sustained or improved at the six-year follow-up (Mellin, 2003). The survey of EBT participants by UIC revealed very high percentages of respondents who reported that they had "resolved" their external solution after program participation (Mellin, 2003) (Fig. 3). Both studies indicate that the majority of EBT participants effectively increased their emotional processing skills. Furthermore, these increases appeared to co-arise with a decrease in compulsive behaviors (Mellin, 2003).

In surveys, validity is established by a high response/return rate, clarity of questions, and having a representative sample (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006). As the participants were not aware of my operational definition of emotional intelligence, I related their addictive/compulsive behaviors to the five different emotional processing skills related to emotional intelligence that I focus on in this article. Hopefully, this simplified version was easier for participants to relate to their own experience. The first study had a small sample size and there has

I currently engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors. **65% Agree**   15% Disagree   20% Neutral
There is a relationship between my addictive/compulsive behaviors and my ability to identify the way that I feel. **65 % Agree**   10% Disagree   25% Neutral
There is a relationship between my addictive/compulsive behaviors and my ability to express my emotions accurately. **60% Agree**   25 % Disagree   15 % Neutral
There is a relationship between my addictive/compulsive behaviors and my ability to express needs related to my feelings. **65% Agree**   20% Disagree   15% Neutral
There is a relationship between my addictive/compulsive behaviors and my ability to moderate negative emotions and enhance pleasant ones. **85% Agree**   15% Disagree   0% Neutral
There is a relationship between my addictive/compulsive behaviors and my ability to tolerate unpleasant or uncomfortable emotional states. **85% Agree**   10% Disagree   5% Neutral
There is a relationship between my addictive/compulsive behaviors and my ability to recognize how normal and reasonable my emotions are. 30% Agree   25 % Disagree   **45% Neutral**
There is a relationship between my addictive/compulsive behaviors and my ability to have healthy relationships with others. **40% Agree**   35% Disagree   25% Neutral
I have the urge to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors when I feel angry, sad, afraid, or guilty. **75% Agree**   10% Disagree   15% Neutral
I have the urge to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors when I feel grateful, happy, secure, or proud. **40% Agree**   30% Disagree   30% Neutral
I have the urge to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors when I feel numb or bored. **75% Agree**   10% Disagree   15% Neutral

Figure 1. Survey responses.

yet to be large-scale controlled clinical trials of the use of EBT in treating addictive/compulsive behaviors. The second study had a larger sample size, but was predominately made up of white, middle-class women. Both of these factors reduce validity and make it difficult to generalize results.

Discussion

The themes from my original survey research indicate that most respondents experienced a relationship between their own addictive/compulsive behaviors and their level of emotional intelligence. This was evidenced

Area of Improvement	Improved, %
Substance abuse	80
Overspending	54
Health	69
Happiness	88
Relationships	88
Spirituality	88
Work stress	100
Exercise	88

External Solution	Resolved, %
Overeating	92
Drinking	88
Smoking	83
Overspending	90
Overworking	82
Rescuing	97
Distancing	86
Overthinking	86
People-pleasing	72

Figure 2 and *Figure 3*. University of California, San Francisco study (*left*); University of Illinois, Chicago study (*right*).

by the general agreement that these behaviors were linked to mastery of several key emotional processing skills. However, participants did not experience a strong relationship between their addictive/compulsive behaviors and other skills such as their ability to identify how reasonable their feelings are. This finding is interesting because it may indicate that certain components of emotional intelligence are more related to addiction than others. This could also indicate that respondents did not clearly understand the nature of the question, or that they are largely unaware of how their cognitive scripts my influence their addictive/compulsive behaviors. More research is needed to further explore the implications of this result.

The data from the research conducted by UCSF and UIC suggest that EBT training results in greater emotional processing skills, as participants experienced greater levels of emotional balance and happiness along with less stress. In addition, their data support the claim made by practitioners of EBT that increasing emotional processing skills can alleviate the urge to engage in addictive/compulsive behaviors. The fact that these results were either sustained or improved at a six-year follow-up was also encouraging, as most weight loss interventions result in weight being regained one to two years after treatment ends (Mellin, 2003).

Although the validity of my empirical data does not meet the highest standards, I believe that it yielded valuable information. As this is a new area of research, data is in the preliminary stages and can be useful in providing directions for further research. Consequently, if I had more time and resources to devote to this endeavor, I would like to design and conduct studies that meet more rigorous standards of empirical validity.

Systems Analysis Methodology and Research Design

In order to disclose some of the interobjective or exterior-collective dimensions of this study, I analyzed how certain aspects of the American media may influence the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. Corporate media sources such as television, films, radio, billboards, and print media all work together to create a cultural environment around behaviors that could be considered addictive/compulsive. This corporate media system, fueled by business, is connected by advertising interests that join together to promote the public consumption of goods and services. I focused on this system because I believe that many corporate media sources encourage addictive/compulsive behaviors while simultaneously discouraging the emotional processing skills related to emotional intelligence.

I collected the data for my systems analysis by reviewing studies related to the relationship between the American media and addiction. In addition, I performed Internet searches of topics related to the relationship between addiction and the media. I documented my findings by printing out articles and taking extensive notes on information I retrieved from books or other media. Once I gathered sufficient data, I analyzed my notes and highlighted any themes that emerged. Each theme is discussed in the context of what impact the media may have on the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence.

Systems Analysis Research Data

Analysis of the data revealed the following themes: 1) the encouragement of excess or addictive/compulsive behaviors for profit; 2) the expectation that people can/should improve their interior experience through the consumption of material goods (e.g., that a person requires something outside of themselves to be happy); and 3) the promotion of a desire to feel or be different from how one is presently experiencing themselves.

The encouragement of addictive/compulsive behaviors for profit. It is clear that some advertisers promote the use of addictive substances such as nicotine and alcohol in order to increase sales through the use of billboards, print media, and commercials. In addition, these products regularly appear on television and film. Advertisers also market addictive substances to specific populations, including African-Americans and women (Kern-Foxworth, 1991; Moog, 1991).

The expectation that people can/should improve their interior experience through the consumption of material goods and services. The corporate media also appears to promote the idea that life can be "fun, easy, and exciting at all times," if one has access to the appropriate goods and services (Silver, 1991, p.7). Similarly, the reality that life is both a challenge and a struggle at times has been replaced by the demand for "immediate fulfillment" and a desire to "buy easy solutions to problems" (Silver, 1991, p. 54).

The promotion of a desire to feel or be different from how one is presently experiencing themselves. Advertisers often sell products through the promotion of the idea that people are not okay the way they are and that they require something outside of themselves to feel, or be, "better" (e.g., a new car, new clothes, a nice dinner, a vacation, or an anti-depressant). According to many corporate media sources, there is always room for improvement/change rather than an acceptance of how one currently experiences themselves. Another aspect of advertising's "mythology" is that without certain products, "life would be dull, mediocre, and boring" (Kilbourne, 1991, p. 15).

The validity of the data I obtained was determined by the empirical, repeatable, and logical nature of the information as well as the use of the controlled conditions present in any scientific study. In addition, validity was established by using both multiple and reputable sources, as well as by my own direct experience with the media system (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006). Although I drew data from multiple and reputable sources, none of the data I obtained were from empirical studies. However, I am still able to claim some degree of validity based on the fact that I have lifelong direct experience with the corporate media system of America.

Discussion

As the structure of any system is often just as important in determining individual behavior as the qualities of its members, it is important to consider what behaviors a given system encourages/discourages. The themes that emerged from the preceding systems analysis support my experience that certain advertisers in the American mass media system encourage addictive/compulsive behavior while discouraging the capacities

associated with emotional intelligence. This likely contributes to a dominant culture that is preoccupied with external solutions and lacking in emotional intelligence.

These conditions may leave people vulnerable to addiction. Instead of accepting difficult emotions and experiences as a normal, natural, and inevitable part of life, people see them as pathological and something that must be changed, avoided, or disposed of. Data suggests that the media teaches people how to deal with their feelings by not dealing with them, which is part of what addiction/compulsive behavior looks like when viewed from an interior-subjective perspective.

If I were to further investigate a systems perspective of the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence, I would gather more empirical research and achieve a higher standard of validity. In addition, I would focus more on the objective aspects of the system, instead of the interior culture that it may support. I would also like to explore the impact of economics as well as the systems of different recovery approaches to addiction.

Conclusion

This article details a mixed methods Integral Research inquiry into the relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence. It includes a convergence of both qualitative and quantitative data through the use of first-, second-, and third-person methodologies in order to more fully investigate the complexity of this relationship.

Findings from each methodology support the existence of a relationship between addictive/compulsive behaviors and emotional processing skills related to emotional intelligence. My first-person perspectives revealed my phenomenological experience of this relationship as well as how it is impacted by the structures of my awareness. Second-person perspectives illuminated a strong mutual resonance as to the relationship between the process of addiction and emotional intelligence. Finally, third-person perspectives further revealed people's experience of this relationship as well as how it may be supported by the American corporate media system.

As for the nature of this relationship, the data suggest that addiction correlates with deficits of particular aspects of emotional intelligence (e.g., the ability to stay open to feelings, to moderate negative emotions and to enhance pleasant ones). However, it is not clear whether addiction causes these deficits or whether these deficits lead to addictive/compulsive behaviors; the data only support the notion that they tend to co-arise. Indeed, it is difficult to establish any type of causal relationship because of many possible confounding variables. Evidence also suggests that increased emotional intelligence can result in a decrease in the desire to engage in compulsive behaviors, and that EBT is an effective approach to working with addiction in this way.

Although my research confirmed the existence of a strong relationship between addiction and emotional intelligence, the exact nature of this relationship remains elusive. I have discovered that within myself, these processes are intimately related and ultimately not separate—my phenomenological experience of addiction is characterized by a lack of emotional intelligence. There is some evidence that this may be true for others as well, but more research on the phenomenological experience of others is needed to support this claim.

It is important to remember that my research focused primarily on the subjective experience of addiction, merely one of the many facets of this complex phenomenon. Even within that limited perspective, emotional

intelligence is only one of many variables that can contribute to addiction and the subsequent recovery from it. For each perspective on addiction, there are associated risk-factors (e.g., low emotional intelligence, genetic predisposition, alcoholic family culture, and societal structures that support addictive behavior), and the more vulnerabilities a person has, the more susceptible they are to addiction. In addition, health/support in some of these areas can mitigate the effects of deficiencies in others, which helps to explain why not everyone with low emotional intelligence suffers from addiction.

I am in agreement with John Dupuy (2007) that an integral recovery model is needed to unite current perspectives on addiction and to help develop more effective treatments. Like Dupuy (2007), I see Integral Life Practice as the foundation of recovery from addiction, and working with emotions would take place in this larger context. There are many different forms of emotional practice that build emotional intelligence and research indicates that EBT may be valuable addition to the repertoire, another way of adding the emotional piece to the recovery puzzle. For me, EBT has proven to be a significant piece, and one that feels like it may actually land me in a life boat, instead of scrambling for another seat on a sinking ship.

N O T E S

[1] Although Daniel Goleman is responsible for popularizing the term *emotional intelligence*, the concept was first formulated by John Mayer and Peter Salovey in 1990. Much of Goleman's (1995) work is based on their research and I have found their definition of emotional intelligence to be better suited for the purposes of this article.

[2] Linda Williams is a pseudonym used to protect the privacy of the interviewee.

[3] My data collection and analysis ended in March, 2008. However, I have since made changes and added references to the introduction, discussion, and conclusion sections of this article as the result of feedback received in the preparation for publication.

[4] Interestingly, I took the SCT again in April, 2009 as part of the Developmental Intensive for Professionals seminar led by Susanne Cook-Greuter and Beena Sharma, and my score indicated that I was at the Magician stage of ego development (Cook-Greuter, 2002). I discussed the apparent two-level discrepancy between my two scores with Susanne and she reviewed my test protocol in order to confirm its accuracy. As with my previous score, my latest score does not entirely match my subjective experience of my current level of ego development. Receiving such different scores, attending the seminar, as well as my personal conversations with Susanne and Beena, has served as an important reminder to hold such test results lightly. Although they are definitely "evidence of something," and their implications are certainly worth exploring, they are simply one lens and not the last word on an individual's level of ego development (B. Sharma, personal communication, April 8, 2009).

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individual's skills typically results in anxiety, while too little challenge for those same skills typically results in boredom (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). A flow state, then, occurs as a result of directing skilled activities toward accomplishment of a goal while maintaining a balance between the continuums of skill and challenge, boredom and anxiety. An individual might describe the experience as total immersion in an activity, absolute focus, loss of external distractions, loss of a sense of time, and loss of self-consciousness (Seligman, 2004). Flow states allow the individual a psychological momentum toward achieving and accomplishing goals that are just within an appropriate reach.

A peak experience is neither synonymous with nor in any way a necessary dimension of flow state experiences. Some standard characteristics of peak experiences are an emotional "rush" or "charge," ego transcendence, and revelations of new awareness sometimes associated with religious rites. A peak experience might come on very quickly, and only occur for a brief instant. Other times, however, peak experiences extend beyond the initial rush and conclude with a plateau phase that might last for minutes, days, or weeks (Maslow, 1994). David Hartman and Diane Zimberoff (2008) summarize the moments of Maslow's conceptions of peak experience such as fascination, giving up the past and future, innocence, lessened defenses and inhibitions, strength and courage, and acceptance. Peak experiences are of significance, particularly to what Maslow (1994) calls a "self-actualizing individual," as the experiences lessen the self-importance of their own self-actualization, and increase their sense of responsibility toward service and contribution in the world.

In pursuit of increasing the knowledge regarding music's psychoactive elements, I use an Integral Research methodology for exploring live music, flow states of consciousness, and peak experiences (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006). Integral Research combines first-, second-, and third-person methods as a means to explore subjects from multiple perspectives, converging data from mixed methods. The first-person methods, phenomenology and structuralism, act as a means for reporting personal subjective experiences and structures of awareness related to the topic. The second-person methods, hermeneutics and ethnomethodology, act as an invitation for me to become part of the culture surrounding the research topic. The third-person methods, empiricism and systems analysis, situate the research topic within objective and social systems. The importance of a mixed methods approach is to explore how a phenomenon can be interpreted from one or more different perspectives while grounding each perspective with appropriately documented data (Creswell & Clark, 2007). An Integral Methodological Pluralism approach is unique because it simultaneously integrates each research method, and illustrates how they fit amongst one another (Wilber, 2006). Although I chose primarily experimental research methods for this investigation, more orthodox methods for research in music education and therapy are outlined in Wheeler (2005) and Colwell and Richardson (2002).

First-person Research

Phenomenological inquiry is concerned with how personal experience relates to the topic of investigation (Roald, 2008). For this study, I was concerned with my personal experience of flow states and peak experiences as related to the experience of live music. The method-specific research question I used was, "How do flow states and peak experiences appear in an individual person's experience of live music?"

Structural analysis, from a first-person perspective, is concerned with the capacity and structures of awareness related to an individual's comprehension of a topic. The typical parameters for a structural analysis are defined through developmental psychology or psychology of personality (Wilber, 2000). In this article, I detail my structural capacity for musical understanding and appreciation in relation to flow states and peak experiences. The method-specific research question for the structural analysis was, "How does my current

musical awareness influence my experience of flow states and peak experiences during live music?"

Phenomenological Research Method and Design

Phenomenological research is an attempt to document, report, and analyze the personal experience of any topic of interest (Roald, 2008). Attending concerts and journaling on my experience allows me to present an overview of the states of consciousness I experienced related to live music.

I attended a total of 13 live music performances and wrote a total of 18 pages of journal entries, including a short journal documenting my intentions within my live music experiences. I attended a diverse array of concerts from several musical genres (jazz, classical, bluegrass, reggae/rock/hip hop blend, blues/soul, folk, reggae, and hip hop). The music experiences took place from October 14, 2007 to November 25, 2007.

I then read each journal entry as a means of gaining a basic feel of their overall content. Next, I highlighted the key phrases I determined as the most important. On a third read-through of the journals, I focused directly on the highlighted phrases and labeled each one with short, one-to-three word descriptions. Using a thematic coding approach to qualitative data analysis, I generated 115 total labels and organized the labels into 11 categories. As a thematic analysis, I distilled the 11 categories into 3 main themes within my journal entries, and then analyzed and reflected on the experiences as I presented the data in terms of the themes (Creswell, 2007; Shank & Villella, 2004). I then described one example from each of the themes, providing an illustration of how the labels and categories manifested within the data set. These examples act as intensive examples of recent experiences related to the topic question.

Phenomenology has many advantages and disadvantages in regards to answering research questions. One advantage of using a phenomenological exploration is the presentation of experiences of flow states and peak experiences relative to music. As my research is strongly directed toward personal experience, these data present rich examples. On the other hand, the phenomenological context cannot give accurate accounts related to others' experiences. Therefore, my autobiographical survey cannot produce objective universal definitions for flow states or peak experiences or a comprehensive array of musical elements that may produce these experiences.

As mentioned above, I distilled the 115 labels I produced from the phenomenological research into 11 distinct categories. The 11 categories I created were conversation, connection, alcohol, environment, somatic experience, mood or emotion, my understanding/impression, communication/expression, control, effects on me, and New Age interpretations. I then separated each of the categories into one of three different themes. The three themes I determined from my data were interpersonal, personal, and external. These themes indicate the influence of my study of the first-, second-, and third-person elements of an Integral Research agenda.

Interpersonal Theme

The interpersonal theme contained 3 of the 11 categories, including communication/expression, conversation, and connection, and included 41 of the 115 labels from my journals. The communication/expression category contained all musical expressions. The conversation category contained verbal and musical conversation, and how the music related to the tone of conversations within the audience. The connection category included my connection with the music, the audience, and how the musical vibration influenced my experience of emotions.

A specific example of musical conversation from my journals occurred during the sole blues/soul concert I attended. Toward the end of the concert, after introducing band members, the lead singer played his harmonica to each band member, and the other musicians responded with their own instrument. When the lead singer reached the trumpet player and the sax player, he addressed them each individually, but in the midst of one of the dialogues, the third person jumped in and the dialogue became a discussion. None of the musicians skipped a beat with this added dimension, and in my interpretation it enlivened the interaction. An important note of interest for the interpersonal theme is that while the data represented information transmitted from person to person, it did not just include verbal language and conversation—much of the data were found in the way music expressed a feeling, mood, or interaction between musicians.

Personal Theme

The personal theme included five categories, including somatic experiences, mood or emotion, my understanding/impression, effects on me, and New Age interpretations, and contained 58 of the 115 labels from my journals. The *somatic experiences category* included physical reactions, and awareness of vibration and other sensations. The *mood or emotion category* contained mainly joyful or fun labels, and mood shifts in the music and myself. The *my understanding/impression category* consisted of my interpretations of the musical performances. The *effects on me category* included labels indicating feelings or lasting impressions in response to the performances. Finally, the *New Age interpretations category* contained labels I considered as "alternative" explanations of experiences related to the music. From the somatic experience category, a common label was music's effect on my movements, especially while dancing. During the research process, I found myself able to start dancing even while at concerts I attended alone, which was previously uncommon for me.

External Theme

The external theme contained 3 categories (alcohol, environment, and control) and 16 of 115 labels. The overall qualities within this theme were things that were not really a part of the music or my personal experience, but nevertheless affected the research. The *alcohol category* appeared in that, while journaling, I wrote about things I had to drink or eat at each performance in bringing myself back to the experience as much as possible. The *environment category* included the weather and the performance's setting. The *control category* included elements of timing and coherence mechanisms within the performance.

A major portion of the external theme was the conductor's role during a classical music performance. The conductor functions as a time-keeping device for the entire band. Moreover, the conductor influences the musical dynamics within the different instrumental sections. I considered the conductor's role external because he himself was not playing an instrument, and did not have a direct effect on my experience, apart from the above-mentioned insights. On the other hand, the conductor expertly guided the musicians through a magnificent performance, thus serving his role in the performance while not actually producing the music himself.

Discussion

The data presented represent an honest and sincere description of my personal experience related to the research topic. Each journal entry I cite is an attempt to express typical experiences I had in response to the live music I researched. With each example, I attempt to illustrate potential flow states or peak experiences. I also present examples containing insights concerning different sensory inputs (e.g., seeing, hearing, feeling).

With this in mind, the capacities for live music to facilitate flow states of consciousness as peak experiences

are expressed through interpersonal, personal, and external dimensions. Interpersonally, live music appears to literally transmit information between persons, including between musicians and from musicians to the audience, that cannot be communicated through any other means. This kind of interpersonal awareness is also a critical dimension of music therapy (Wigram et al., 2002). Personally, I feel the data indicate both flow states and peak experiences resulting from live music might occur physically, somatically, emotionally, or mentally. In the personal dimension, flow states as peak experience might take place in any of these realms of awareness. Externally, the environment and time-keeping devices (e.g., a conductor) can catalyze and enhance flow states or peak experiences. The existence or absence of any external influences can also affect the experience of flow states and peak experiences.

Interestingly, my phenomenological data appear to indicate that flow states and peak experiences can occur in many dimensions of experience. These states might occur personally or interpersonally, and they can be influenced from external sources. Ensuing investigation will analyze music's more direct influence on flow states and peak experiences in specific aspects of the interpersonal, personal, and external dimensions (e.g., music's impact on flow at the somatic level, how environment impacts peak experiences influenced by live music).

Structural Research Method and Design

The flow states of consciousness and peak experiences an individual is capable of witnessing and reporting on are influenced by the individual's structures of awareness, perception, and attention. I offer an analysis of my musical abilities in order to provide an understanding of my musical capacity at the time of this research. For this structural method, I recorded myself practicing guitar on 11 different days from October 29, 2007 to December 7, 2007. I produced a total of 40 recordings, using all except 6 that did not categorically resemble the others. Of the 34 remaining recordings, I analyzed 10 different songs and 96 minutes of recorded music.

Structuralism is primarily the product of developmental psychology. An individual's structures of awareness are considered to develop through various stages capable of holding different degrees of complexity (Wilber, 2006). Without relying on a specific developmental model, I analyzed the strengths and weaknesses within my own structural awareness through my musical capacity and reanalyzed my phenomenological journals structurally. First, I classified each song I recorded as either primarily rhythmic or melodic. Then I counted the number of rhythm mistakes and melodic mistakes I made throughout each song. For each mistake, I noted whether I returned to the point of the mistake in order to correct the mistake or not.

I informally reflected on my general strengths and weaknesses relative to three lines of development (emotional, kinesthetic, and interpersonal) based on examples from my journal entries. Daniel Goleman (1994) defines *emotional intelligence* through the domains of knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, recognizing emotions in others, and handling relationships. With a mindfulness perspective, Jon Kabat-Zinn's (2005) position on *kinesthetic intelligence* includes the understanding and habitation of the body's "ever-changing boundaries, limits, and capabilities" (p. 275). Goleman (2006) describes *social intelligence*—herein, interpersonal—as the ability to be present and mindful in relationships.

I analyzed my journals through the phenomenological themes and categories for evidence of flow states throughout the experiences. Thereafter, I related any insights during these self-determined flow states to a particular line of development. If the experience appeared to have contributed to strengthened insights within a line of development, I considered it a peak experience.

Structural Data

I consider myself a beginner to intermediate guitar player and each of the songs I recorded were from *Christopher Parkening's Guitar Method* (Parkening et al., 1999). During my playing, I counted a total of 274 melodic mistakes and 151 rhythmic mistakes (see Appendix A). The total number of times I attempted to correct an incorrect note in the melody was 79, while I attempted to correct an incorrect rhythm 7 times. On average I counted 8.06 wrong notes per song, 4.44 rhythm mistakes per song, 2.32 corrections of wrong notes per song, and 0.21 corrections of wrong rhythms per song. I returned to correct the wrong notes 28.8% of the time, while I returned to correct wrong rhythms 4.6% of the time.

For melodic songs, the average number of incorrect notes played was 7.89 per song. The average number of rhythmic mistakes was 5 times per song. I corrected incorrect notes in melodic songs 2.79 times per song, and corrected rhythm mistakes in melodic songs 0.21 times per song.

For rhythmic songs, I played an average of 8.27 incorrect notes per song. The average number of rhythmic mistakes was 3.73 per song. The average number of times I corrected an incorrect note was 1.73 times per song while I only corrected wrong rhythms 0.2 times per song. The songs varied in length and difficulty, which added to variance of the data.

While listening to the recordings, I noticed the majority of rhythmic mistakes were a result of pausing to situate my left hand fingers on the correct frets. In this case, I might have been able to maintain the rhythm with my picking hand, but my fretting hand did not situate fast enough to allow a steady rhythm. Melodic mistakes, on the other hand, were the result of various causes such as fingering the wrong note, not pressing down hard enough on the string, or plucking the wrong string.

From these data, it appears I have a stronger capacity for playing rhythm in classical guitar songs than I do melody. In addition, I am stronger playing melody in more melodic songs than I am in rhythmic songs, whereas I am stronger playing rhythm in rhythmic songs than I am with melodic songs. I was also more likely to return to correct a melodic mistake rather than a rhythmic mistake. I will now turn to my phenomenological journal data to compare my awareness as an audience member with the data from my musical ability.

Journal Data

When considering my *emotional line* of development (as represented in my journal entries), I examined the mood or emotion category from my journals. It appears that I have a considerable amount of insight regarding when I am feeling strong emotions, but I am not particularly skilled at naming or categorizing these emotions. From the personal theme, an example of my emotional awareness relates to the way I experienced an emotional reaction to musical vibration. For example, I noticed that if a song reached a sad part I would feel the vibration more in my eyes and heart as compared to in my legs, torso, or shoulders during more lively parts of songs.

In regards to my *kinesthetic line* of development, I expressed an ability to connect my awareness to my breath and to my movements. I additionally had the ability to expand these insights to include my perceptions of bodily energy flow. On the other hand, I was not regularly aware of these perceptions and typically needed to direct my awareness toward my breath or my body. Again, from the personal theme of my phenomenological data, my kinesthetic awareness was exemplified through noticing my breath and the musical vibrations' effects on my body. Changes in my breathing pattern were mentioned several times in one journal entry, but I

did not mention how the music affected this awareness. Vibrations played a role in the ways I danced at one particular concert. Musical vibrations appeared to activate certain body parts while dancing, but this awareness was fleeting, and I was unable to sustain it for extended periods of time.

My first realization while analyzing the *interpersonal line* data was that they did not include conflict. (I remember conflict occurring while at one concert, but it was not noted in my journal.) An example that highlighted this interpersonal nature is the environment music provides as a space for entirely non-verbal interactions with audience members. I left many concerts having never engaged in conversation, and it appears that I enjoy music because it provides a social atmosphere that does not rely on conversation.

Discussion

My methods illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of one individual's emotional, kinesthetic, and interpersonal intelligences in relation to musical experience and ability. Others may relate to the analysis of my personal structural awareness regarding flow states, peak experiences, and live music, but may differ depending on their own individual structures. The most significantly transferable results are the assertions that flow states are closely related to context, and peak experiences are related to an expanded understanding of content.

In terms of musical flow states and peak experiences, flow states seemed to occur in my emotional and interpersonal intelligence within my understanding of emotions and relationships. Peak experiences tended to occur as I increased my ability to utilize understandings as action directed into the world. The trend reversed in my kinesthetic awareness, as flow states occurred while dancing and sensing my bodily reaction to the context presented through music, but peak experiences occurred as I increased content of understanding or had heightened insight into my body in relationship to the music. More broadly, then, these data indicate how individuals vary interpersonally in their ways of understanding and modes of orientation to experience flow states or peak experiences related to live music across lines of development.

Csikszentmihalyi (1990) describes flow as providing order to consciousness. Thus, musically induced flow states seem closely related to rhythm through their repetitive patterns. Furthermore, peak experiences might be similarly related to content and melody, as peak experiences appear as the highest expressions of meaning, understanding, and reality (Hartman & Zimberoff, 2008). Interestingly, from a structural perspective, it appears that an individual's experiences of flow states and peak experiences are capable of varying across lines of development within individuals, and in terms of the experience of differing musical elements (e.g., rhythm and melody).

Second-person Research

For my hermeneutic analysis, I interviewed a musician on his perspective of performing live music, the dynamic between the musician and the audience, and writing songs. Within these parameters, I attempted to gain an understanding of how a performing musician experiences and observes flow states and peak experiences during live music performances. The research question I used was, "What is a musician's experience of live music's ability to facilitate a flow state of consciousness as a peak experience?"

For my ethnomethodology analysis, I enrolled in a community college guitar class. I attended this class as a participant-observer investigating evidence of flow states and peak experiences within the class. As I analyzed the class proceedings according to examples of group flow states and peak experiences, I noticed the teacher's role in facilitating a musical learning experience. My method-specific question for this analysis was,

"How do flow states of consciousness as peak experiences appear within a classroom of guitar students?"

Hermeneutic Research Method and Design

I interviewed David Kai, a performing musician, in order to develop narratives of experience with the research topic and to establish a means of conversation about the topic (Patterson & Higgs, 2005). On his website (www.davidkai.com), David describes his music as "inspirational folk rock that invites his listeners on a journey of the heart." David is a friend and musical collaborator of a classmate, and I became interested in interviewing him because the classmate said David would be interested in my research topic. After contacting David, we agreed on a time, date, and place for the interview. Prior to the interview, I prepared a list of potential questions, tested my recording device, created a participant release form that we both signed, and informed David of my intentions for the interview. I informed David that the interview was for academic research, that I would record it, and that it would last approximately one hour.

After transcribing the interview, I used a similar coding process as described in my phenomenological method. I highlighted and labeled 220 significant phrases. After organizing the labels into 22 categories, I created 6 themes (tools, personal qualities, practices, essence, utility, and extraneous variables), noting the number of labels in each category and the number of categories in each theme. The *tools theme* contains five categories, namely, the instrument, musical elements, people involved, listening, and body/functions. The *personal quality theme* contains four categories, including mental, focus/presence, inspiration/desire, and complacency. The three categories in the *practices theme* are organization, time, and preparedness. The *essence theme* contains four categories, including expression, feeling/sensation, music descriptors, and effect/affect. The *utility theme* contains three categories, including healing capacity, creation, and transformation. Finally, the *extraneous variables theme* contains three categories, including energies, external influences, and connection to life.

Tools Theme

The tools theme contains categories that represent not only physical tools, but also aspects of a situation that contribute to a creative experience. This might include the people involved, musical characteristics, breath, and listening. David used various dimensions of the tools theme in his song-writing process. In explaining this process, he stated: "I come up with some guitar chords that go nicely together, and I come up with a rhythm that I like, and I just play it for a while. Then, I start humming, …start making sounds, and eventually out of those sounds will come a melody and on the melody will come words." In other words, David plays the guitar with his understanding and skill, but also crafts his songs using rhythm, melody, and lyrical content that takes shape in spontaneous ways.

Personal Qualities Theme

The personal qualities theme represents some personality characteristics that David considers useful for a musician. These qualities might be in paradox, as a musician is always trying to improve their musical skills, but while performing the musician must work with whatever skills they have acquired. David emphasized the need for a musician to hold attention in the present moment while performing. One of the ways he claimed a person slips out of the moment while playing is by thinking too much. David stated, "As soon as you start thinking, or thinking about what I'm going to say before or thinking about what I just said or anything, it just stops it, it just turns off."

Practices Theme

Each of the elements of the practices theme is an expression of preparing for performing live music. These preparations include organization of songs, practice time and preparation, and preparedness in choosing the correct songs without a pre-set plan. The practices theme presented itself in David's discussion of preparing songs to play during a performance. For example, "When I'm playing with other people, they like me to have a song list so they can mentally prepare for the next song." Alternatively, when David performs alone, "If I write a list and I go by the list, I'm really disappointed afterwards because I [sometimes] feel like that wasn't the right song to sing at that time." He enjoys the freedom to choose songs depending on the energy of the audience and environment present.

Essence Theme

The general subject matter within the essence theme deals with the overall feeling of or created through music. The elements of this theme relate to expression and generating particular emotional effects. David explained that it might take months or years "before you really have the total essence of a song or what it's about or why it came through." After that understanding takes place, though, "Later in life you can be like, 'Wow, that song's perfect, I totally understand.'" His explanation illustrates the depth and complexity within the essence of music.

Utility Theme

The utility theme contains the uses of musical practice and performance. These uses might be for the performer or songwriter, or for the audience or listener. An example of the utility theme is an experience David had while playing guitar in a small café. While playing, David noticed a woman listening intently in the audience, and directed the music toward the woman and she began to cry. After David finished his performance, the woman put a note in his tip jar that read, "I didn't come here expecting to have my life changed tonight…I lost my true love of 50 years, and I haven't been able to… mourn it quite the way as I did listening to your music." She added that he created a comfortable place for her to go through the emotions of losing her husband.

Extraneous Variables Theme

The extraneous variables theme is comprised of categories that are not necessarily directly relevant to my research (e.g., experiences and explanations of David's life tangential to his experience as a musician). For example, David discussed how he keeps his life in balance with his music. David observed, "You don't always live up to everything, but I'm trying to be in balance with what it is that I'm singing about, what it is that I'm saying, that I actually live that way." In this way, David attempts to let his music be an expression of his life and at the same time let his life be an expression of his music.

Discussion

The validity of the hermeneutic method depends on the honesty and sincerity within the questions and answers, as well as recognition that data are subject to the researcher's analysis and interpretation (Seidman, 2006). David's answers seemed to be honest and sincere. He backed up many of his statements with stories of real-life experiences, which provided me with an understanding of his background with the topic. As with my first-person research, the hermeneutic data represent only a qualitative investigation of this research topic. Because it involves my interaction with another individual, some generalizations might extend further, but other musicians might experience the topic differently from David.

Throughout my interview, it became apparent that David had insight into the states of consciousness live music is able to affect (i.e., David's examples of performing and writing songs illustrated experiences that I am unable to present with my own phenomenological and structural analyses). When crafting a new song, preparing for a performance, or setting a comfortable context for the audience to process their personal lives, David appears to have mastered various dimensions of taking advantage of music's capacity for facilitating flow states and peak experiences. Likewise, the connection between flow states and live music appear to be more intimately intertwined than I had previously considered. As music provides a soundtrack for "order in consciousness," it appears to be largely a product or expression of flow states (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). The flow state can be either planned/strategic or organic/improvised. This continuum represents the difference between technically based classical music, and more free form and improvised jazz or blues music. The targeted flow state also can occur on a broad scale, as indicated by selective succession of songs in a performance or a listening session, or on a narrow scale as indicated in a select passage within a single song.

Participant-Observer Research Method and Design

Researchers using a participant-observer method straddle seemingly conflicting roles in data gathering. In one role, the researcher participates within a collective, and uncovers data that tells a story of commonly shared experiences. In the other role, the researcher detaches from participation and offers a critical lens through which to understand the group dynamic (Butler, 1997).

I acted as a participant-observer in an intermediate level guitar class at Diablo Valley College (DVC) in Pleasant Hill, California. The guitar class allowed me to investigate my method-specific research question, "How do musically induced flow states of consciousness as peak experiences appear in a group of guitar students?" This method not only presents a lived experience of a guitar student inquiring into the states of consciousness for research, but also presents a shared group experience for the research.

The guitar class met for 40 minutes on Saturdays starting January 26, 2008 and ending March 20, 2008. Throughout this time period I attended six classes. I used an audio recorder to record two of the class sessions, and listened to each recording twice. After listening to the recordings for the first time, I created three questions related to my research topic related to music and states of consciousness in a group setting. The three questions were, "What are classroom expressions that show evidence of group flow states?", "What are classroom expressions that show evidence of group peak experiences?", and "What is the teacher's role in providing material to create these expressions?"

While listening to the recordings a second time, I answered the three questions with evidence from the recordings. I then broke down each of the answers into its key components. I organized the components into themes for each question and used these data to compare and contrast the group flow states and peak experiences.

I used recordings of the class proceedings as data in order to focus my attention while in class. (I considered writing journals, but decided that writing them in class would distract me from the class material, and writing them after class would produce data more removed from the classroom environment.) For this reason, and so that the recorded data would represent the group experience in its entirety, I recorded—with the teacher's permission—and analyzed two class periods.

Question 1

 "What are expressions that show evidence of group flow states?" yielded five different answers. The answers

contained 19 components, which I organized into 5 themes: subject/role, action, relation, practice mode, and musical element. Each answer referenced what was being practiced or played and evidence of how the class related to one another and the particular music while playing. One example answer to this question was, "Group speeding up the tempo during warm-up song." This statement represents maintaining a flow state because the level of skill within the class was able to maintain a tempo faster than what the teacher set.

Question 2

"What are expressions that show evidence of group peak experiences?" yielded a total of seven different answers. The 7 answers had 20 components and broke down into 5 themes: improvement, action, practice focus, objects, and extras. The peak experiences I noted all related to evidence that the class was improving on particular pieces of music, and most specifically on difficult passages in the songs. One of the answers for this question was, "Increased ability to maintain a steady tempo." I consider this a peak experience because it represents a strengthened ability to restrain from playing as fast as possible, and maintain the intended pace of the song.

Question 3

"What is the teacher's role in providing material to create these expressions?" yielded 12 different answers. The answers had 35 components and reduced to 4 categories: actions, song elements, class material, and preparing. The answers represented that the teacher not only had to present music at just the right level to challenge the class' skill level, but also had to understand the ways music students differ in their playing styles and skills. An example of one answer to this question was, "Soloing along with the songs the class is learning." This answer represents the teacher's ability to give the students an experience similar to that of performing a jazz song professionally, completely matching the students' skills with their own improvisational skills.

Discussion

The validity of my participant-observer method benefited from investigating the classroom environment in a natural setting (i.e., it was not set up for the purposes of this study). However, the participant observer data only serve the purpose of studying the topic in a controlled environment; the expressions of flow states and peak experiences outside of the classroom likely would manifest in differing ways from the classroom. Additionally, without discussion and conversation with other students, I cannot report on their awareness of or understanding of flow states and peak experiences related to the class.

The difference between the questions regarding flow states and peak experiences is the practices involved for creating each. The answers to the flow state question included the sub-theme practice mode while the answers to the peak experience question included the sub-theme practice focus. A practice mode might be warm up, a whole song, a phrase, old/new material, and so on. The goal for practicing within these modes is to increase fluidity, and to maintain consistency throughout the entire portion of practice. A practice focus involves a particular structural foundation of music or a musical element. The purpose of a practice focus is to deepen the musician's understanding of the particular structure and increase their technical proficiency.

The teacher's role is important for facilitating flow states of consciousness as peak experiences in the classroom for many reasons. If it can be said that music is largely a product of directed flow states of consciousness, and that peak experiences are related to deepening or heightening insight and capacity, then the teacher effectively trains students in flow states and peak experiences. In this case, the teacher's role is much greater

than simply training the students in guitar, as he facilitates an ability to sustain musical awareness and strive for new skills and understanding. In addition, a teacher's capacity might improve through the use of various corollary practices such as those outlined in the Integral Life Practice framework, and more specifically practices or technologies designed to increase flow state and peak experience capacities such as meditation (Wilber et al., 2008).

Through the data analysis and my newly emerging opinions, the musical classroom appears to be a particularly rich environment for my topic's phenomena to naturally occur. However, my study would be incomplete without an objective exploration of music, flow states of consciousness, and peak experiences.

Third-person Research

For my empirical assessment, I created a survey to measure many different people's awareness of the occurrence of flow states of consciousness as peak experiences during live music. I designed this survey to measure distinct reasons people have for attending concerts and different flow state and peak experiences people might have at concerts. My method-specific research question was, "What is the general public's opinion of music's ability to facilitate flow states of consciousness as a peak experience?"

For my systems analysis, I analyzed the social systems that influenced my experience of the concerts I attended for the first-person section of this project. I chose to analyze several social infrastructures and systems that played a role in my experience or my ability to attend the concert. My method-specific research question was, "What aspects of social systems affected the research I am performing on live music, flow states of consciousness, and peak experiences?"

Empirical Research Method and Design

I created a survey measuring a range of experiences concerning live music, flow states of consciousness, and peak experiences. The first four questions on the survey are categorical, inquiring into the respondent's gender, age, number of recent live music experiences, and musicianship (i.e., if they play an instrument or not). The next 10 questions rate the extent to which the respondent agrees with various statements (1=agree and 5=disagree) (Burgess, 2001): the first four questions relate to live music, the next three relate to flow states, and the final three relate to peak experiences. The final two questions ask how often the respondent experiences flow and group flow at concerts (see Appendix B). The questions explore intentions for attending concerts, behaviors around music and spontaneous music experiences, and internal feelings and thoughts that occur when listening to live music. Aside from the final two questions on flow states, the questions do not use the terms *flow state* or *peak experience*.

I surveyed friends, co-workers, and fellow concertgoers in order to receive a range of responses that were not too wide or narrow. The respondents completed the surveys in my presence, and I received a total of 23 completed surveys. My intention was to survey various ways in which people connect to music in their conscious experience.

Empirical Data

All survey participants answered the first categorical survey question, age. There were three people in the 18-22 age range, eight people in the 22-28 age range, two people in the 29-35 range, five people in the 36-45 range, three people in the 46-55 range, and two people in the 55+ range. Thus, most people were concentrated

between the ages of 22 to 28, and 36 to 45. In hindsight, I recognized I mistakenly included the ages of 22 and 55 in two different categories.

I received two blank answers on the question regarding concerts in the past month. The remainder of the answers included 14 people attended 0, five people attended 1-2, and two people attended 3-4. On the number of concerts the respondents attended in the past year, five people attended 0, six people attended 1-5, one person attended 6-10, one attended 11-16, and one person attended 15+ concerts. Nine people did not answer this question.

All respondents answered if they played a musical instrument, with 9 people answering yes and 14 answering no, which resulted in 30% of respondents playing a musical instrument. Five of the musicians played guitar, three played piano, two played violin, one played flute, and one previously played clarinet.

The average results of the agree/disagree rated response statements are presented in Appendix C. The two highest levels of agreement from these questions were on statements #1, "Live concerts are more entertaining than musical recordings," and #10, "I typically feel a *natural* high at concerts." On question #1, no responses on these questions fell on the disagree side of the scale. Five people were neutral to the statement, which means that of the 23 people I surveyed, 78% of people agree that live concerts are more entertaining than recordings. On question #10, only five people were neutral and one person answered "N/A," which equates to 82% agreeing that they feel a natural high at concerts.

The only responses that averaged on the disagree side of the scale was question #4, "I attend concerts for social interaction more so than for music." The average answer was 2.07. The averages of the remaining seven rated response questions fell close to the neutral range. One average fell slightly under the neutral mark of three while the rest fell slightly above three.

On the final questions, no one answered that they never experience flow or never feel a part of group flow during a concert. Six people answered that they sometimes feel flow at concerts, 12 people answered that they often feel flow, and 5 people answered don't know. Similarly, 7 people answered that they sometimes feel a part of group flow at live concerts, while 12 people often feel a part of group flow and 4 people answered don't know. The primary importance of these statistics show no one reported never feeling flow states and peak experiences while witnessing live music.

Discussion

The validity of the empirical method is the extent to which one can analyze and make generalizations about the respondents (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). My survey measured the respondents' agreements with their experience of particular types of musical experiences, flow states of consciousness, and peak experiences. Generalization is inherently strongest for these 23 respondents and perhaps only loosely to the populations I surveyed, including developmental service workers, John F. Kennedy University Holistic Studies students, and concertgoers. It does not appear valid to generalize my findings to a broader population.

The survey confirmed that most people experience flow states and peak experiences while attending concerts. In terms of flow states, respondents were most likely to experience them as an ability to anticipate changes in the music during a concert. Answers to the final two questions indicated that most individuals experienced flow and group flow during concerts. Related to peak experiences, all three questions averaged higher than in

the neutral range. The results of the final question indicate that peak experiences can be addictive, and generate a craving for more and more intense peak experiences (Maslow, 1994). These kind of peak-to-peak experiences can be dangerous if the individual does not recognize an addictive craving for this experience. Related to live music, a concertgoer solely interested in the kind of natural high described in the survey question and not interested in the value of these experiences might develop an unhealthy relationship to live music.

My data would benefit from a further analysis of how age and gender affect the average responses. Additionally, increased depth might be gained through comparing respondents that practice music as compared to those who do not. Nevertheless, the data present a general account of how the group of respondents typically responds to live music.

Systems Research Method and Design

I used the concerts I attended to analyze my research topic related to social systems. I created a chart listing many systemic influences related to each concert (see Appendix D). The chart depicts various systemic factors that inform and influence a person's decision to attend a concert. This method takes a third-person perspective on the information and systemic factors I detailed above in the phenomenological section.

The categories of social systemic influences I chose to use were date, name of band(s), price, concert location, availability of alcohol, availability of food, number of attendees, number of bands, type of venue, whether the concert was seated or standing, genre of music, and the modes of transportation I used to arrive at each concert. This information was readily available through the Internet, on my ticket stubs, and in my own memory.

This method does not measure any specific experience in relation to my research topic. Rather, it measures how structures of society affected decisions and enabled me to attend the live concerts I analyzed in the first-person section of this study. A systems analysis like this one can only measure what means society has in place within a particular location to enable a music fan to make decisions and attend particular concerts.

Systems Data

I attended 13 concerts from October 14, 2007 to November 25, 2007. During this span of the research, I did not go more than six days without attending a music performance. I saw a total of 15 different bands/performers throughout the research period.

The price of the concerts ranged from free to $22. I attended six free concerts, one $10 concert, one $12 concert, one $15 concert, three $20 concerts, and one $22 concert. Of the 13 concerts, all but one were located in the San Francisco Bay Area. The most common city in my list of concert locations was the city in which I live in, Crockett, which appeared five times. The second most common city was San Francisco, appearing four times. The one town outside of the Bay Area I attended a live concert in was Floyd, Virginia.

The availability of food and alcohol, type of venue, and seated or standing audience were also categories in my systems data. These categories are similar because they measured the systemic influence on the concert's atmosphere. All but three venues made alcohol available to the audience, and about half of the venues served food. Venues included cafés, an art center, bars and/or restaurants, a non-profit music organization, nightclubs, and a fellowship hall. Five of the concerts had a standing audience, while eight had a seated audience.

The number of bands playing at each concert was the next category in my systems data. The number of bands influences the length of the concert and duration of the break between sets. I attended nine concerts in which only one band performed, three concerts in which two bands performed, and one concert in which three bands performed. Finally, I coded the concerts according to musical genre. I attended concerts in the genres of jazz, bluegrass, old time, folk, reggae, hip-hop, rock, blues, soul, and classical. The genre of music influences the experiences of the audience member in terms of enjoyment and also influences the decision to attend the concert.

Discussion

The social systems method is only valid in terms of measuring different social influences on a music fan's decision to attend a concert and the experience they might have at the concert. It would not be valid to use data in this section to make generalizations about audience members' particular experiences during a concert or details of the concert proceedings. Additionally, the systems analysis is only valid for the systemic factors in the areas it is measuring or sampling.

Through a thorough investigation of the systems data (Appendix D), I arrived at two distinct themes within the data. I recognized that typically the further away from my home the concert was, the larger the audience and more variation in venue occurred. One exception was the concert I attended furthest from my home, which was one of the smallest that I attended. Additionally, the venues in my hometown were limited to a café and a fellowship hall. The second theme in the systems data is the size of the city or town I attended a concert in was directly related to the size of the audience at the concert and the variety of genres available. The smallest towns, Crockett, CA, and Floyd, VA, had the smallest concerts and least musical variety. As the cities increased in size, so did the size of the audience at the concert and the variety of musical genres available.

This analysis illuminates the information a music fan might use to determine their desire to attend a concert, and to evaluate how they might enjoy the concert. Directly related to the research on flow states and peak experiences, the systemic influences available for the music fan might cause them to decide what kind of musical experience they might have. Whether or not the person is directly aware of flow states and peak experiences, they might make a decision based on how similar music affects them, how excited they might be about hearing a band or a style of music, and what they might gain from the experience. All of these factors are related to and influenced by the flow states and peak experiences the music fan previously and might experience at a particular concert.

Conclusion

The methods explored in this article give a general sense of the experience of, interaction with, and observation of live music's ability to facilitate flow states of consciousness as peak experiences. This study is one example of how to use an Integral Research methodology for a complex investigation (Esbjörn-Hargens, 2006).

From phenomenological and structural research, this study illustrated the variety of flow states and peak experiences available within individuals, between individuals, and across groups. My phenomenological research indicated the various dimensions of these states as a result of direct musical experience, while the structural research showed how an individual's patterns of awareness could vary in the areas of emotional, kinesthetic, and interpersonal development. The hermeneutic and participant observer research sections illustrated music and flow states and peak experiences in conversation and the classroom environment. The hermeneutic

research indicated various experiences of flows and peaks as described by a musician in an interview, while the participant observer research showed changes in capacity for flow states and peak experiences in a group of guitar students. The empirical research illustrated a small portion of the general population's experiences of flow states and peak experiences related to live music. Finally, the systems research indicated the systemic factors in place for informing consumer's interest in live music performances.

As a result of a mixed methods design utilizing first-, second-, and third-person methods, this study was very inclusive of many different types of data. However, my choice of research methods did not allow for an exhaustive analysis of the generated data. An additional limitation of this study is the unavailability of similar data to confirm my findings. Although there is information on music and altered states (e.g., Bonny & Savary, 1990; Bourguignon, 1979; Richards, 2003, 2004), I was unable to find similar research on music, flow states, and peak experiences. Through repetition of these and similar research methods the research would gain increased validation and a deepened understanding of this topic.

For further research, I propose focusing on distinct flow states of consciousness and their roles in various systems related to music. While I did not focus direct attention on music therapy, the implications of this research might be of interest to music therapists. More information on music therapy can be found elsewhere (Bruscia, 1998; Wigram et al., 2002). Research of the correlations between particular flow states, peak experiences, and music could contribute to theories in music therapy, music education, and personal growth designed to stimulate flow states of consciousness to produce particular peak experiences for learning, healing, and growth. It is my opinion that peak experiences are one necessary element of personal growth, as they involve ever expanding insights into different aspects of life.

And now the concert comes to a close, but I have a whole new conceptual organization of myself as a person and the world overall. I will take the reverberations of rhythm, tone, harmony, melody, creation, and inspiration along with me as I walk out of this experience slightly more awake and invigorated. My experience, in itself has been inspiration; it has inspired a need to investigate, communicate, fully appreciate, and be in awe of the experiences I have available throughout my life. I leave knowing there will be more concerts ahead, but with more capacity to embrace life's metaphorical concert as it is occurring, now.

Acknowledgments

Appendix A
Structural Data Chart

	Rhythmic=1 Melodic=2	Note Mistakes	Rhythm Mistakes	Note Corrections	Rhythm Corrections	Times Played
*Song Categories**						
Rhythmic	1	8.27	3.73	1.73	.2	15
Melodic	2	7.89	5.0	2.79	.21	19
Individual Songs						
"Etude"	1	18	7.75	2.5	.5	4
"Fur Elise"	2	5.4	3	1.2	.2	5
"Moderato"	1	3.67	.83	1.33	0	6
"Waltz"	1	6	4	1.6	.2	5
"Spanish Dance"	2	4	3	1	0	2
"Rondo"	2	14.75	10	5	.5	4
"Canario"	2	7	3.5	4	0	2
"Scottish Folk Song"	2	3	2	.33	0	3
"Andante"	2	10.5	6.5	4.5	0	2
"Minuet"	2	10	8	7	1	1
Totals	–	274	151	79	7	34
Average	–	8.06	4.44	2.32	.21	34

*Data are shown as averages.

Appendix B
Copy of Survey

Live Music and States of Consciousness Survey

This survey is part of a research project investigating particular states of consciousness live music has the ability to influence. The project is an intensive look at this particular topic using six distinct methods from first-, second-, and third-person perspectives. I will use the data from this survey as one of the third-person perspective methods in this project.

Gender? **What is your age range?**
Male   Female <18 18-22 22-28 29-35 36-45 46-55 55+

Approximately how many live music concerts have you attended in the last:
Month? 0 1-2 3-4 5+   **Year?** 0 1-5 6-10 11-15 15+

Do you play a musical instrument?
Yes   No   **If Yes, what instrument?** _____

Please circle your answer to the following questions according to the level you agree with the statements:
**1=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 5=Agree**

1. Live concerts are more entertaining than musical recordings	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
2. Live concerts connect me more deeply with the artists' music than recordings	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
3. When I hear someone playing music (e.g. on the street or at the park), I tend to move closer to hear	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
4. I attend concerts for social interaction more so than for music	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
5. I feel that I myself am part of the performance when I dance at a concert	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
6. I prefer not dancing and instead strictly listen to the music at a concert	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
7. I find myself able to anticipate changes in the music while at a concert	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
8. While at a concert, I typically gain new insights about life, others, or myself	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
9. I typically gain new insights about the topics in the songs during live concerts	1	2	3	4	5	n/a
10. I typically feel a *natural* "high" at concerts	1	2	3	4	5	n/a

I feel a sense of flow during experiences of live music	Never Sometimes Often Don't Know
I feel like a part of the group flow during live music	Never Sometimes Often Don't Know

Appendix C

Graph of Survey Agree/Disagree Questions[*]
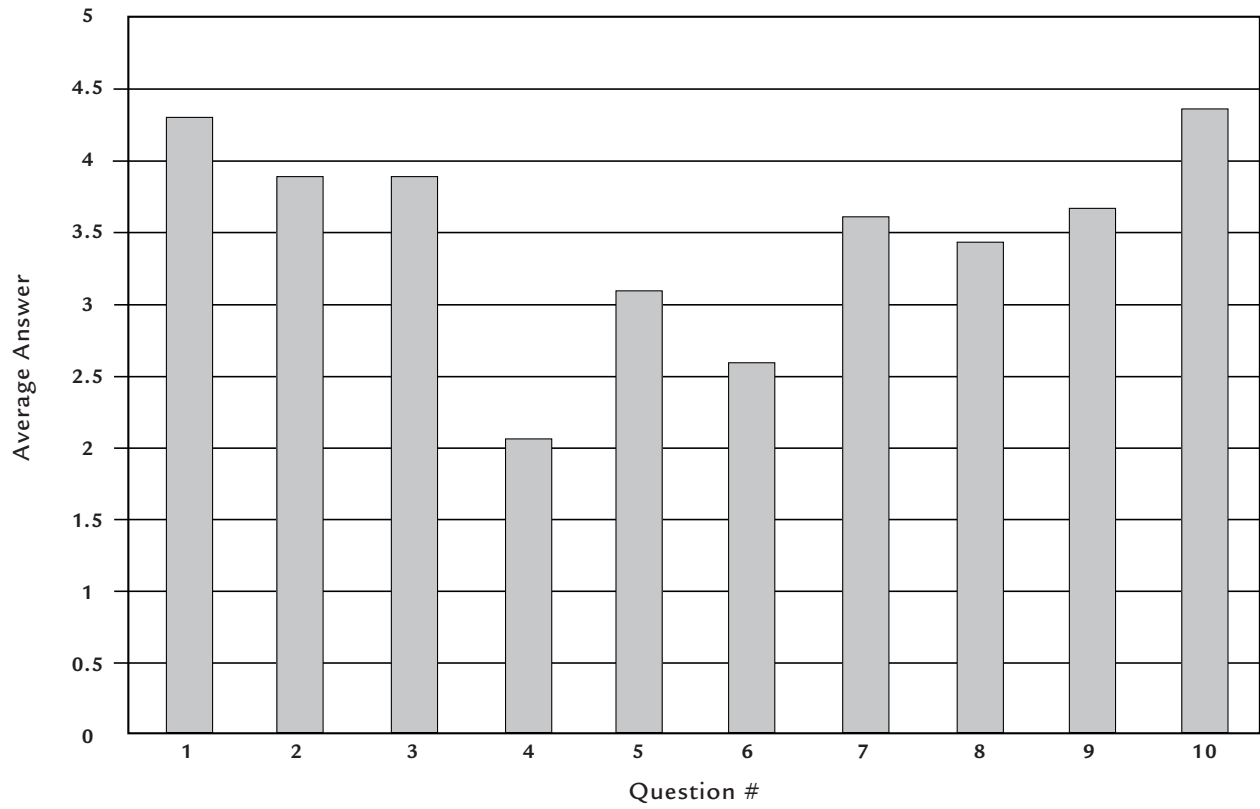
[*] X-axis numbers correspond to the 10 questions in Appendix B. Y-axis, 5=agree; 1=disagree.

Appendix D
Systems Chart

Date	Show	Price	City	Alcohol?	Food?	Atten-dance	# Bands	Venue	Seated or Standing	Genre	Mode of Transportation
Oct. 14	Terry Henry Trio	Free	Crockett	Y, Wine/Beer	Y	10-30	1	Café	Seated	Jazz	Drive
Oct. 16	California Symphony	$20	Walnut Creek	Y, Wine/Beer	N	350	1	Art Center	Seated	Classical	Drive
Oct. 24	Carolina Chocolate Drops	$12	San Francisco	Y, Full Bar	Y	60-80	1	Bar / Restaurant	Standing	Bluegrass	Drive, BART, Bus
Oct. 27	Stairwell Sisters	$20	Berkeley	N	Y	100-120	1	Non-profit	Seated	Folk	Drive
Nov. 2	From the Bottom, N2Deep, Planting Seeds	$10	Concord	Y, Full Bar	N	~60	3	Bar	Standing	Reggae/ Hip Hop /Punk	Drive
Nov. 3	JJ Grey and Mofro, Mark Ford	$20	San Francisco	Y, Full Bar	N	300	2	Nightclub	Standing	Blues/Soul	Drive
Nov. 4	Terry Henry Trio	Free	Crockett	Y, Wine/Beer	Y	10-20	1	Café	Seated	Jazz	Drive
Nov. 7	Band @ St. Marks Hall in Crockett	Free	Crockett	N	Y	20-40	1	Fellowship Hall	Seated	Folk	Drive
Nov. 10	Junior Reid, Reggae Angels	$15	San Francisco	Y, Full Bar	N	80-100	2	Bar	Standing	Reggae	Drive
Nov. 11	Terry Henry Trio	Free	Crockett	Y, Wine/Beer	Y	10-30	1	Café	Seated	Jazz	Drive
Nov. 17	Lyrics Born, Ryan Shaw	$22	San Francisco	Y, Full Bar	N	300	2	Nightclub	Standing	Hip Hop /Soul	Drive
Nov. 23	Ben Kirkland	Free	Floyd	N	Y	5-10	1	Café	Seated	Folk	Fly, Drive
Nov. 25	Terry Henry Trio	Free	Crockett	Y, Wine/Beer	Y	10-30	1	Café	Seated	Jazz	Drive

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