Why the mentoring of female educational leaders with an ethic of care matters

by

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Abstract

The intent of this dissertation is to investigate how mentorship practices embodying an ethic of care can play a role in the recruitment and retention of female educational leaders into administrative roles in education. Through a critical review of Nel Noddings' ethic of care theory and the concept of mentoring, associated as well as opposing or alternative theories are examined. By employing the methodological approach of autoethnography, the marriage of mentoring with an ethic of care can be studied in support of female educational leaders seeking ascension. An informal conceptual analysis of mentoring as well as Noddings' ethic of care theory provide the framework for analyzing this study which spans both the public K-12 and post-secondary education sectors. Noddings' ethic of care theory is the lens through which we may view the personal narratives for care or lack thereof, while informal mentorship is explored using autoethnography. Four components are critical to Noddings' (2012b) care theory from the perspective of a moral education: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). Through autoethnography, these components are considered with a focus on natural, relational caring in supporting a female educational leader's quest towards educational administrative leadership. The findings illustrate that foundational to a female educational leader's quest for ascension are identity development and dialogue, both of which play a key role in the development of the mutuality of relation. Additionally, through informal mentoring, a mutual relation between the one-caring and the cared-for serves to confirm the best self possible in the cared-for. Encouraging the development of the best self possible in the cared-for is the expression of Noddings' moral objective. Because the moral objective of allowing natural caring to flourish between the cared-for and the one-caring in reaching the female educational leader's best potentialities is important in building her capacity to ascend to educational administrative leadership, collaboration with a mentor is key to successfully transforming female educational leaders through ascension into educational administrative leadership roles.

Keywords: educational leadership; ethic of care theory; educational administrative leadership; female leadership, mentor; autoethnography; moral education

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation, my voice, to my family—Mom, Dad, Mike (Lynett, Alex, and Naomi), and Jeff (Eilan, Kaitlyn, Lucas and Kyle). I would like to acknowledge my Mom and Dad who have supported me throughout all of my life's adventures, especially this incredible decade-long journey. My love for you is more expansive than you'll ever know because you taught me how to love and how to care in a way that matters.

I am thankful to my dearest Ginger for being my most loyal advocate and the only one who could steal my heart away from my writing every single time I was at the computer: morning, noon, and night. You captured my heart and soul. This is my gift to you, the completion of something we endured together.

I vow to continue to establish a culture of natural caring in support of female educational leaders. That is why I am sharing this dissertation with and for you. This has been my life's work and will continue to be. This is what keeps me young.

Acknowledgements

It takes a village.

I have persevered because my family, especially my Mom, Dad, and Ginger, have all been my cheerleaders throughout. I have felt the strength of their love and care throughout this journey. I know they are proud of all I have accomplished and have overcome because I was raised with an ethic of care. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Peter is my best friend who taught me to live life to the fullest and who taught me the joys of taking a chance. He is one of the most intelligent people I know. Thank you for always knowing just what to say and do to help me find myself.

I have waited a long time to recognize some very important players in the crafting of my dissertation. These individuals are my senior supervisors, Dr. Daniel Laitsch, Dr. Charles Scott, and Dr. Michele Schmidt as well as my supervisor, Dr. Larry Johnson. I have always appreciated their advocacy, patience, honesty, and critical lens. Dr. Daniel Laitsch has been my second senior supervisor for the past several years. I am grateful for his ability to listen and to guide me even when I did not know what would come next, as well as for his wisdom, kindness, intelligence, and thoughtfulness. Dr. Charles Scott, my co-supervisor, has been by my side the longest. He is one of the most articulate, positive, visionary, and humble educational leaders I know. His sunny disposition always came through, not only in person but also in print throughout countless revisions. Dr. Schmidt was my first senior supervisor until her life went in a different direction. She had a gift for keeping me grounded, and I loved that we shared similar interests such as music, dogs, travel, and academia. Dr. Larry Johnson has a rich educational history, touching the lives of numerous students including me. He supported me from a distance like any good parent, friend, educator, and naturally caring person does. Thus, I have not just one or two, but four special academics in my life each of whom played a critical role in helping me achieve this level of accomplishment. I know without a doubt that they all mentored me with an ethic of care or I would not have come this far. Thank you.

I see clearly now and the future holds promise because I have had the good fortunate of having all of these amazing people in my life. Thank you.

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Chapter 1.

Mentoring for women seeking educational administrative leadership positions guided by an ethic of care

1.1. Introduction

The overarching purpose of this dissertation is to articulate and to provide insight into the place of women in educational leadership as they take on educational administrative positions, in an effort to improve recruitment and retention processes in the field of educational administration. I believe that, for a variety of reasons which I will discuss later in this chapter, ascension up the ladder into an educational administrative leadership role is not happening as effectively for female teachers or educational leaders as it could and should happen (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Gupton, 2009). There is much research on issues about women seeking administrative leadership in education, recruitment and retention of women into administrative leadership positions in education, mentoring of women into administrative leadership positions in education, and the ethic of care in education, but there seems to be a gap in the literature because these concepts are not currently reflected in the literature together. There is a necessity to address the needs of women from these various perspectives and especially to consider the implications of these concepts together on these women in the field of education who are mentored with an ethic of care (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000) so that they are recruited and retained within educational administrative leadership roles (Ehrich, 1994; Morrison, 2012). My literature review of mentoring (Gardiner et al., 2000; Henry, 2008; Malinoff & Barott, 2011; Mullen, 2012) and of the ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982; Held, 2006; Monchinski, 2009; Noddings, 1984, 2003, 2012b, 2013b) for women seeking educational administrative leadership positions (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Morrison, 2012; Shakeshaft, 1987; Tarr-Whelan, 2011) will seek to address the melding of these concepts in a more comprehensive manner. Thus, my intent in writing this dissertation is to investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention (Crow, 2012; Henry, 2008; Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011) of women as they move into

administrative leadership roles in education guided by an ethic of care (Gardiner et al., 2000; Noddings, 1984, 1992, 2002a).

1.2. Roadmap

Embarking on this inquiry into teacher-leaders who are women and who may be seeking administrative educational leadership is important (Shakeshaft & Grogan, 2011). As a means of not only recruiting these women but also more importantly, retaining them, I investigate how mentorship practices using an ethic of care can provide female teacher leaders with the foundation to move forward in the field of education, specifically into administrative educational leadership.

Chapter 1 is foundational. Here, in this chapter, I introduce the topic of this dissertation by exploring the findings in the literature about mentoring educators, women in leadership, the recruitment and retention of women in educational leadership, and Nel Noddings' ethic of care. I will frame my question and my intent for this dissertation: to investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education guided by an ethic of care. I will also define important terminology that will help the reader understand more precisely the ethic of care and mentoring of females in education as it applies to this dissertation. This chapter provides the overview of my dissertation, illustrating that there is validity to the intent of this study.

The next set of chapters provide greater insights and grounding for the feasibility of this study of female educators being mentored as they potentially ascend into educational administrative leadership roles through an ethic of care. Every research study cited addresses the limitations and challenges, the current literature and associated scholars, the future visions, and the implications for mentoring women with an ethic of care—thereby laying groundwork for the next steps in the field of education based on these findings.

Chapter 2 outlines my literature review of mentoring in education. I begin with an historical journey of the mentoring of females in education and educational administrative leadership. What impact has mentoring had on the field of education over the last several decades? What does the literature say about the value of mentoring?

Are there similar and conflicting ideologies of mentoring in education? The findings about the mentoring of women in educational leadership and educational administrative leadership positions are critical to deepening the understanding of how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education, guided by an ethic of care.

Chapter 3 is a comprehensive literature review of Noddings' ethic of care theory. I detail Noddings' pillars of the ethic of care, review studies of Noddings' ethic of care as it pertains to my questions about the mentorship of women in educational leadership, and outline why Noddings' ethic of care theory is important to the mentoring of educational leaders such as teachers. What obstacles exist? Delving deeper into what is reported about the ethic of care in leadership specific to women who are being mentored, I then summarize my findings on conflicting ideologies to mentoring as well as on Noddings and her ethic of care theory. This analysis helps me frame my thoughts on women's journeys in educational leadership as mentored through an ethic of care and guides my quest to determine how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education.

Chapter 4 is the introduction, explanation, and justification of my methodological approach, autoethnography. I adopt my methodology and justify my research method by providing context for my autoethnography as well as the value of this methodology in supporting my question. My research method has been selected to allow me to gain insight into my research question: how can mentorship practices play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care?

In Chapter 5, I explore my own personal narratives and share more of my own perspectives on being mentored. This leads me to begin to address the inherent value I believe my work has in the field of education. By discussing my lived experiences through autoethnography, I make an effort to present the marrying together of the notions of *mentoring* women into leadership and administrative leadership roles in the field of education with an *ethic of care*.

Chapter 5 is also an examination of my autoethnography through the lens of mentoring using Noddings' ethic of care theory. I discuss the implications of my research

and review the current potential of mentoring with an ethic of care in the field through the lens of my autoethnographic methodology. I want my work to contribute to the literature to support women seeking educational leadership towards educational administrative leadership and to confirm that the ethic of care theory has validity as I continue to grapple with how and why women can and do move into educational leadership and educational administrative leadership positions. I further consider what has been learned from my quest to challenge the status quo. I set the stage to consider whether or not my contribution to the research through autoethnography in the field of education enriches the lives of women who are educators now and in the future.

Chapter 6 brings my dissertation to a close. I set out to write this dissertation with a lofty goal of seeking out the value in mentoring female educational leaders moving into administrative leadership roles in education through an ethic of care, in support of their recruitment and retention in the field of education. In moving forward, I first look at my findings and determine the best way forward. What recommendations do I make based on the findings of this dissertation? Is there room for more literature and more research? In this dissertation, I seek to answer many of my own questions and investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care. In the process, I am sure I will unravel many more questions and look to move in other directions. "Arguably, there is an ever-growing need for research in all walks of life, including educational practice" (Pachler & Redondo, 2012, p. 463). As an educational practitioner "seeking to solve everyday problems occurring in [my] professional context" (Pachler & Redondo, 2012, p. 463), I believe there has never been a better time to dig in and get messy.

1.3. Important terminology defined

To assist the reader throughout this dissertation, I provide definitions for key terms that are critical to my work. Having a clearer understanding of how I use the terms will avoid confusion and will hopefully assist the reader in keeping focused as I conduct a literature review, perform a methodology review, and allow my autoethnography to unfold. My key goal in assigning consistency to important terminology is to try and help the reader make sense of the issues surrounding the mentoring of females into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care. I will write at length about teachers as educators and as leaders as well as about females who are teacher leaders

or educational leaders: the target group I am investigating to determine how mentorship practices play a role in their recruitment and retention into educational administrative leadership roles through an ethic of care. Creating a common understanding of the key terms is important for studying mentorship practices and their role in recruiting and retaining women into administrative roles in education using an ethic of care. Such understanding will also assist the reader in following the impact mentoring has on females as they look to ascend the ranks as educators and find continued success and happiness in their work.

The first term I use frequently is **teacher** or **educator**. I refer to the teacher as one who teaches, guides, and facilitates learning for students and is led by educational administrative leaders (Lieberman, Hanson, & Gless, 2012). The teacher is also my proposed candidate to be a protégé or mentee with the potential to be mentored into becoming a teacher leader (Byrum, 2008). Further, a **teacher leader** or **educational leader** has the potential and/or capacity to become an educational administrative leader through vertical ascension. Teacher leaders are experienced teachers who, through the roles and responsibilities they have had as teachers, illustrate an ability to have been successful at meeting challenges in the field of education. This means they value doing what is best for students, they work well with others, they may have taught numerous students at various grade levels with various ability levels, and they have shown initiative by taking on school leadership: including the role of department head or committee member in the school or district in which they are employed. For whatever reason, teacher leaders either choose not to ascend, are unaware of such capacity for ascension, are thinking about ascension and have not yet made the leap, or have been unsuccessful at becoming educational administrative leaders. They exhibit leadership in the field of education in ways without necessarily climbing the ladder (e.g. through lateral ascension) and likely find satisfaction in their work as teacher leaders. These are the teacher leaders who are ideal candidates for mentorship by an educational administrative leader (Kersten, 2010; Lieberman et al., 2012; Noddings, 2003).

This dissertation is about supporting—through mentoring with an ethic of care— female teachers and teacher leaders who aspire to become **educational administrative leaders.** Educational administrative leaders' journeys start at teaching, then they become teacher leaders or educational leaders who successfully ascended to administrative leadership in education. They are also known as vice-principals, assistant

principals, or principals whose role is to manage, administrate, and build capacity in their group of teachers, staff, students, and parents in their schools towards empowerment and a shared vision for a higher purpose (Dufour & Marzano, 2011). Educational administrative leaders focus on "building relationships, developing strong people skills" (Malinoff & Barott, 2011, p. 281) and passing on the skills of educational leadership, including the skills of "understanding and navigating systems, supporting staff, goal setting, visioning, practical knowledge about teaching and learning, curriculum and accountability, using data, developing community" (p. 281). Leaders also foster the mentoring relationship with a potential protégé as proposed in this dissertation— specifically mentoring female teacher leaders guided by an ethic of care. The term administrative educational leader is used interchangeably with educational administrative leader, educational leader in administration, and administrative leader in education.

The purpose of examining mentorship practices for females in administrative roles in education through an ethic of care is to seek ways to positively impact the recruitment and retention of females into leadership roles. By encouraging sustained leadership within the various levels of education, mentoring has the potential to help teachers and teacher leaders ascend into educational administrative leadership roles, to attract talent to the profession in ways that sustain the growth and longevity of the profession, and thus increase the likelihood that positive action will occur in the form of **transformative leadership.** Such leadership in education focuses on action—"what works" and "what should be done for a better and more just society" towards the betterment of education (Shields, 2011, p. 21) whose "key tenets … [are] optimism, hope, promise, and moral courage" (Shields, 2013, p. viii). For what is common to all of these groups of individuals, or those who work as educators, educational leaders, and educational administrative leaders, is their desire to "make a difference" and to purposefully assume a "formal position of authority" (Shields, 2013, p. viii). In this manner, learning in education can focus on a fundamental shift in an individual's view of the self and their beliefs, sense of the past, and their sense of the future, as well as gaining a personal voice or heightened awareness (Collay & Cooper, 2008). This is **transformative learning.**

1.4. Framing the problem

The recruitment and retention of women in administrative leadership roles in education has not been a primary focus in education; however, women are seeking educational leadership positions in what has been, as noted in the literature, a male dominated profession (Kersten, 2010; Morrison, 2012; Perkins, 2011; Young & Grogan, 2008). This is a time when women are still underrepresented in school administration (Young & Grogan, 2008; Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011); thus, we have a moral obligation to build capacity via an ethic of care in females who are striving to become educational administrative leaders (Gardiner et al., 2000). Bruce Barnett and Gary O'Mahony (2008) and Gary Crow (2012) assert that mentoring development in educational leadership development strategies has been lagging. "The significance of the leader's role [in the school community] is … critical" (Crow, 2012, p. 228).

Strategies such as mentoring can create significant change in leadership identities in education as well as a focus on transformative learning (Crow, 2012). Crow (2012) encourages practitioners to "rethink the nature of mentoring … in order to ignite [the] transformative learning potential" that mentoring can have, for instance, on women aspiring to educational administrative leadership positions (p. 240). Transformative learning promotes reflection and learning that will challenge the status quo in education (Crow, 2012). Transformative leadership also seeks to challenge the status quo by hiring females into educational leadership roles at a younger age, comparable to the age at which males are being recruited into educational leadership positions (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011). These women will have been able to "see beyond, above, below and beside the taken-for- granted assumptions" that have potentially jeopardized their place in the field of education (Brockbank & McGill, 2006, p. 17).

What is needed is strong mentorship promoting a kind of leadership development that hinges on an ethic of care. Consider Held's (2006) statement that the "central focus of the ethics of care is on the compelling moral salience of attending to and meeting the needs of the particular others for whom we take responsibility" (p. 10). Mentoring educational leaders into successful educational administrative leaders requires a kind of "leadership development [that] can and should include skill development" (Crow, 2012, p. 238). Mentoring that produces "the types of skills, and more importantly, dispositions and values, to encourage creative thinking and critical reflection" (p. 239) is necessary

for "active and transformative learning development" (p. 237). According to Shields (2013), the work of a transformative leader is essential, involving "deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge frameworks that perpetuate inequities in the status quo" (p. 2). "If we really care about addressing the gross inequities in educational opportunity and outcome … we've got to mobilize now" (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011, p. 106).

This dissertation is intended to help promote positive outcomes for women being recruited and retained into leadership positions in education via an ethic of care. If women were more successful in entering educational leadership and educational administrative leadership positions in administration because they were mentored through an ethic of care, this could be transformative. Having someone with experience in the field, the mentor, who plays a supporting or caring and care-giving role in helping the protégé become better at developing the capacities required to successfully become an educational administrative leader, is key to addressing the problem outlined here. The possibility of transforming this problem is my main motive for exploring the importance of the mentorship of females into educational administrative leadership roles with an ethic of care in this dissertation.

1.5. Framing the question

Research indicates a growing need to recruit and retain female educational administrators who are qualified for the ever-changing and complex task of leadership in the field of education (Gardiner et al., 2000; Morrison, 2012). I have very briefly discussed, and in later chapters will expand on, the value of the ethic of care theory as well as mentoring in the educational workplace. In education, the ethic of care is about a morality that links "the human desire to be cared for and the moral response of caring" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 236). Specifically, the ethic of care is important according to Noddings (2013b) because "our objective in moral education is to establish a climate in which natural caring flourishes" (p. 119). In education, mentoring is an aspect of leadership development that instils confidence, builds capacity, and reinforces positive attributes in women, which should make it an attractive component to any leadership development program (Morrison, 2012). This dissertation is about marrying these ideas as I seek to investigate how the ethic of care theory will support the mentoring of women seeking administrative leadership roles in education such that they are recruited and retained. The question is simply: How do mentorship practices with an ethic of care play

a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative leadership roles in education?

1.5.1. Justification of the question

Educational administrative leadership has been a male dominated profession. Indeed, Charol Shakeshaft (1987) has noted that during the mid 1980s, traditional literature on women in school administration was largely ignored. Shakeshaft (1987) postulated and Margaret Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011) affirmed that much research has come to light focusing on women in educational leadership roles. Research now portrays women as having the confidence to pursue educational leadership careers although the road has been cleared but not necessarily paved (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Gupton, 2009).

Sylvia Henry (2008) indicates that in particular, new educational administrative leaders are feeling unprepared for leadership positions because they are not being adequately trained for the role. Henry (2008) adds that preparation and mentorship is being requested by new educational administrative leaders as essential especially because the role has changed over the years. According to Henry, because educational administrative leaders are now much more accountable to students and staff as change agents of schools in support of students' progress, and because they are instructional leaders for staff in the continuing quest for the improvement of schools, senior level educational administrative leaders have a duty to network with and mentor the newer administrative leaders. "The importance of preparing new [educational administrative leaders] if schools [are] expected to be dynamic learning organizations" is key to the healthy, thriving, comprehensive and long-term success of the school system (Henry, 2008, p. 9).

I am not sure one can ever feel entirely prepared for the role of administrative leader, but taking the guesswork or at least much of the guesswork out of the role should be beneficial. For teacher leaders such as Malcolm Morrison (2012) who felt like a fish out of water, this was not the case because he should have felt more supported. The younger generations of women have ample role models from whom to draw courage, hope, and support for emulating those already in positions of leadership in education (Gupton, 2009). Doing what is right for our students by ensuring that educational leaders

are skilled at their roles and find contentment in their roles is important because when they are teacher leaders, they are committing to meeting with a mentor on a regular basis. When mentors meet frequently with their beginning educational administrative leaders, this ideally leads to such benefits as greater positive impact and increased job satisfaction (Skinner, 2006). "Graduate training alone does not prepare school leaders to improve education"; indeed, the shortfall of retainable or recruitable educational administrative leaders is a reality in the field of education (Skinner, 2006, p. 20). Hence, mentoring women into leadership positions should increase identity and self-awareness skills for effective functioning, these skills being rated as being more critical than either the technical or managerial skills required in a specialized role (Henry, 2008; Noddings, 2003).

When "someone sees the potential for genius in you" (Gehrke, 1988, p. 192), this "provides a new vision of life and encourages the protégé to realize this vision" (Crow, 2012, p. 235). This notion of mentoring, according to Nathalie Gehrke (1988), is a form of gift giving, where the mentor shares wisdom and awakening: "There is a stirring, a recognition of the import of the gift, of the strength or talent, of the possibilities of one's life" (p. 192). This is in line with my personal belief that, as Crow (2012) expresses it, the "notion of the goal of mentoring [is] transformational" (p. 235). When a mentor offers new ways of looking at things so that we can be the geniuses we want to be or are capable of becoming, this is a labour of love because the gifts received by the protégé are of "incalculable worth" (Gehrke, 1988, p. 191).

Mentoring for women seeking significant promotions needs first to break through the glass ceiling (Brabazon & Schulz, 2018; Ehrich, 1994). "Mentoring is an act of leadership" that provides "practice in humility, openness, caring, and love" (Malinoff & Barott, 2011, pp. 280-281). The growth of effective leaders in the USA was and continues to be relevant in "building relationships, developing strong people skills, and passing [the skills of educational leadership] on … this is integral to being a leader. … These are the skills [used] most often as an educational leader" [not the skills of] "understanding and navigating systems, supporting staff, goal setting, visioning, practical knowledge about teaching and learning, curriculum and accountability, using data, developing community" (Malinoff & Barott, 2011, p. 281). Mentoring requires that the selection of mentors or the pairing of a mentor with a protégé be a critical process so

that the appropriate mentor with the appropriate skill set is involved in the teaching and learning relationship (Crow, 2012).

I now address the key tenets of Noddings' ethic of care theory that I am identifying as being critical to the development of a confident, successful female educational administrative leader. This kind of leader is one who is attending to moral education from the care perspective of "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 237; see also Noddings, 1984, 2013b). Mentoring becomes possible when a relationship between mentor and protégé is built upon a foundation of trust that each will have the capacity to understand, learn, grow, adapt and change together. Through a natural flow of communication, each individual in the encounter reflects deeply and openly and is therefore exposed to a vulnerability that is present in order to entertain the sensitivities of the tasks at hand. Leaders in the field of education behave as they ought to and *model* appropriate ways of being and knowing. A leader in education engages in *dialogue* about caring and caring for self and others. A leader in education *practices* and then reflects on that practice to embody one who is naturally caring and morally sound. Finally, through *confirmation*, a leader in education embodies a sense of trust and continuity to aspire to a greater vision of self (Noddings, 1984, 2012b, 2013b).

If "active participants with a critical activism in which this understanding is used to influence changes in the practice of leadership" are available for women who are mentored and guided by an ethic of care, the status quo will be challenged (Crow, 2012, p. 233). That which is important should last and flourish. Lynn Malinoff and James Barott (2011) attest to the process of mentoring as being critical to leadership and legacy:

> I am looking in a mirror at a reflection of myself in the mirror behind me and the image keeps going and going and going. This is the mentoring experience, and in that mirror is everyone who has ever mentored me and everyone I mentor. It's quite a crowd, a lineage that keeps on going long after I die. This is my legacy. (p. 317)

Imagine that by challenging the status quo and by mentoring women with an ethic of care, the practice of mentoring women into educational leadership roles who have been recruited with intentionality, could potentially be beneficial not only for retaining the female educational leader, but also for the other individuals, colleagues, and the children who are part of the school system. This dissertation will focus on considering how

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combining an ethic of care with the mentoring of females into educational administrative leadership roles holds promise. A shift in mindset to allow more opportunities for women to move into educational administrative leadership positions could help bring awareness to ways to enhance an equitable community of educational administrative leaders in education, supporting the future of school-aged children in the education system and thus, the leaders within (Ryan, 2009). This dissertation will uncover how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care: in turn, providing school-aged children the opportunity to reap the benefits of the hard work of its educational leaders and administrative educational leaders (Ryan, 2009).

1.6. Women seeking leadership positions

The current literature on women seeking leadership in educational administration suggests that "women are still significantly underrepresented in formal leadership positions" (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011, p. 24). There are challenges to be noted between the genders in educational administration with respect to ascension (Brabazon & Schulz, 2018; Morrison, 2012). Furthermore, much of the research on educational administration in the USA is not gender-specific, so documenting women's formal leadership positions in schools is difficult and lacking. Representation of women in leadership positions has increased, although when compared with the statistics of women engaged in post-secondary education and within the teaching profession, "women still do not fill administrative positions in proportions to their numbers in teaching, or in proportions to those who are now trained and certified to become administrators" (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011, p. 28; Young & Grogan, 2008). Considering that high proportions of women are registered in the teaching profession, women do not fill principalship positions in the same proportions as their male counterparts in the secondary school settings, which is a likely lead into the assistant superintendent role or the superintendency (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Kersten, 2010). Women are also entering administrative leadership positions in education at a much later age than their male counterparts (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011).

These challenges illustrate a sense of urgency that "women must lead the way" because "together, as transformational leaders, we can assure more equality, opportunity, and empowerment for all women and girls, not just white middle-class

women" (Tarr-Whelan, 2011, p.12). The status quo needs to be challenged for women to be able to enter educational administrative leadership roles more frequently and sooner (Crow, 2012).

Carolyn Shields' (2011) perspective of the importance of this kind of learning and leadership for educational leaders provides parallels to my work on women in educational leadership positions seeking advancement in education guided by an ethic of care. Shields (2011) begins by describing concisely that the "roles and responsibilities of leaders are increasingly complex, the contexts within which leadership is exercised are ever more diverse, the pressures for performance accountability are progressively greater, and the challenges presented by declining resources are severe" (p. 1). Hence, there is an imminent need for a kind of educational leadership that focuses on building on a shared vision, understanding, such as through dialogue and the building of relationships, clarity of beliefs, assumptions and support, as well as agility, the acceptance of ambiguity. This is known as transformative leadership (Shields, 2013).

"Transformative leadership is grounded in a number of principles that distinguish it from other leadership theories" (Shields, 2013, p. 5). The fact that it focuses on a number of desired goals, such as, "demonstrating moral courage and activism", show the value of transformative leadership because of its coexistent nature with the ethic of care theory, which is foundational to my dissertation on mentoring women in the field of education with an ethic of care. Consider the following: "an ethic of care is more pressing now" than in 1982 when Carol Gilligan (2011) introduced the notion in her first book, *In a Different Voice* (p. 17). As Gilligan asks, "given the value of care and caring and the cost of carelessness, why is an ethic of care still embattled" and "Why are women's voices still in the forefront in bringing these matters to our attention?" (Gilligan, 2011, p. 17). I seek to find "a better way" through Noddings' ethic of care theory because it focuses on "the objective in moral education" that encourages caring (Noddings, 2013b, p. 119). My activist notions involve mentoring women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care to allow for women to "lead rather than follow social change" (Brabazon & Schulz, 2018, p. 14; see also Shields, 2011).

When a teacher leader, with the support and guidance of a mentor, embraces the ambiguity of the unknown future of leading that is both in the leading and being led, transformative learning can occur that encompasses a greater desire for "liberation,

emancipation, democracy, equity, justice" and care ethics with the goal of "individual learning … societal transformation [and] global citizenship" (Shields, 2011, p. 14). Earlier, I spoke of a "critical activism" leading to an "understanding that is used to influence change in the practice of leadership" (Crow, 2012, p. 233). I return to this concept now because Shields (2011) describes a more robust extension of this idea which hints at how this can be possible when action is taken:

> Transformative leadership requires the leader to have a clear sense of the values and beliefs that undergird his or her own identity, be willing to take stands that may require moral courage, to live with tension, and, to some degree, to engage in activism and advocacy. (p. 3)

The process of coming to terms with a professional identity that is open to the transformative learning described above, over a period of time such that "no learner need feel alone in her transition situation" as she searches for a "purpose through meaningful work," is vital for the teacher leader being mentored in her quest towards becoming a competent educational administrative leader (Hess, 2009, pp. 298-299). This transformative process is especially critical because "researchers have illuminated [the] women's struggle to attain school leadership positions, but the transformation of females making this change to professional roles is seldom addressed in leadership literature" (Hasson, 2011, p. 1). What is known, is that "changing from one role to another does not happen in a discrete step; rather it is a process which requires bridging the disengagement of one role with the engagement of another" (Hasson, 2011, p. 1). Hasson warns that the "path to transformation on the outside (e.g. by donning a suit) was much more rapid than [the] internal transformation" (Hasson, 2011, p. 3). Internally, there is an emotional and social loss as the transition is made and relations change paths (Hasson, 2011). "It is clear [that] the most valued leadership approaches were ones based on care and connection" (Gardiner et al., 2000, p. 148). Gilligan (1982, 2011), Noddings (1984, 1992) and Held (2006) all converge in a display of solidarity through their writings by confirming that what is required for women to experience success is an association with the development of an ethic of care.

In particular, Noddings (1984) has written extensively on the ethic of care and its place in the field of education (See also Noddings, 1992, 2012b, 2013b). Noddings' (2012b, p. 237) "moral education from the care perspective has four major components: modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). The history and details of each

component, which I briefly attend to under the heading Ethic of Care in Leadership within this chapter, will be saved for my literature review in Chapter 3.

Rather than studying gender in the field of educational leadership, this dissertation is about considering a different approach to supporting women entering educational administrative leadership roles. Mentoring women and supporting women's recruitment into educational administrative leadership positions should increase the likelihood that we will be able to envision a female as leader more frequently (Morrison, 2012). Although Malcolm Morrison (2012) indicates that the "good ole boy" networks still exist, he remarks that educational leaders need to be able to count on their mentors to be mentored in a variety of ways, both formally and informally (p. 118). He also reinforces the idea that we owe it to ourselves to mentor our young administrators who are both male and female because leaders exhibit qualities common to both males and females. Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011) also emphasize the importance of raising questions around "female approaches to leadership and to seeing the world from a female lens, as opposed to comparing female and female behaviours within a previously identified male paradigm" (p. 33). They suggest we need to make a more concerted effort to "understand the worlds of women" for women by women (p. 33).

1.7. Mentoring of women

There are plentiful books, articles, and stories on the topic of mentoring in education, mostly linked to beginning teachers as protégés being mentored by teachers, teacher leaders, and administrators (Dogson, 1986; Ehrich, 1994; Gardiner et al., 2000; Gupton, 2009; Henry 2008; Kram, 1985a, 1985b; Morrison, 2012; Mullen, 2012; Peno, Mangiante, & Kenahan, 2016; Playko, 1991). The USA has also produced much research on pre-requisite training programs in states that prepare teacher leaders for the educational leadership position. Much of the literature refers to the support that these teacher leaders and beginning teacher protégés receive in the form of mentoring, coaching, guiding, learning, and teaching (Ehrich, 1994; Mullen, 2012; Playko, 1991). In Canada, Judith Dogson (1986) asks, "Do women in education need mentors?" and "Do they help women climb the career ladder" (p. 28)? With specific reference to mentoring as providing protection/sponsorship, hosting/guiding, teaching and modeling, women who received mentoring support were able to build their careers by climbing the ladder,

to build their self-esteem and confidence no matter how the mentor relationship originated (serendipity, chosen by mentee, approached by a mentor) (Dogson, 1986).

A problem identified by Lisa Ehrich (1994) is that women were not familiar with traditional models of mentoring because they had never really had the opportunity in prior years. As well, both female educational leaders and female educational administrative leaders were neglected both explicitly and implicitly in being considered for promotion. Women were not chosen explicitly for scholarship, awards, and publications, nor were women chosen implicitly to take on responsibilities such as the sharing of important information or for administrative and leadership tasks (Ehrich, 1994). But what research has been completed indicates that mentoring is a significant process for women educational administrators. "When learners can feel that their needs are heard and acknowledged, they will approach the higher dimension of development" (Hess, 2009, p. 299).

The fact is that "the primary focus is on the mentee's personal growth and learning, not necessarily on career advancement," so the benefits are numerous (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012, p. 188; see also Lieberman et al., 2012; Peno et al., 2016). Mentees could expand their leadership capacity laterally (e.g. department heads or district level educational leaders) and vertically into educational administrative leadership towards deeper, internally driven transformative learning. Deeply rooted beliefs about women are hard to break. It is this mindset that "has to change to provide a vision that includes females as leaders … [so that] the institution of education may be more accepting of female leaders" who, at the entry level, are primarily female (Morrison, 2012, p. 143). Mentoring women as educational leaders into educational administrative leadership positions should empower teachers and teacher leaders in a way that will also empower students (Noddings, 1992).

1.8. Ethic of care in leadership

Sandra Lee Gupton (2009) and Morrison (2012) maintain that providing assistance in the form of networking in mentoring relationships is beneficial when help is available to nurture, support, provide company and comfort as well as moving females forward in aspiring to the top positions (Gupton, 2009; Morrison, 2012). This could prove advantageous especially when noting Dogson's (1986) perspective that "in the field of

education there is a predominance of women in teaching positions, yet a minority of women are in administrative positions" (p. 28; see also Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Young & Grogan, 2008). Dogson also claims that "women in … education *do* need mentors for greater career mobility" (p. 33). "If women are to be successful both individually and as a whole, then they must strive to help each other" (Gupton, 2009, p. 11). Females have been known to work hard to maintain their personal ethics and values as a means of building confidence and courage (Gupton, 2009). Gupton (2009) asserts that the value placed on these tenets is important in education because they boost morale, equality, and global citizenship that are necessary for transformative leadership.

Transformative leadership, according to Shields (2013), requires a "critical approach" towards "critical analysis" for social justice by leaders in education who will elicit action (p. 11). As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Shields believes that the key tenets of transformative leadership are "optimism, hope, promise, and moral courage," which encourage a healthy attitude as well as the notion of doing what is right by taking the high road. In this way, educators do right by their students, and educational administrative leaders do what is in their best interest as well as their protégés.

We as educational leaders and educational administrative leaders "have to show [or model] in our own behaviour and way of being what it means to 'care'" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 237). In order to be optimistic and hopeful about the future so that we can live in a world that is promising, we need to be the ones-caring. We have to engage in dialogue that elicits critical action and reflection among those with whom we work, lead, or mentor (Noddings, 2012b; Shields, 2013). Noddings (2012b) believes that practice allows one to "demonstrate in their own work of leading or of mentoring that caring is important" (p. 239). She affirms that "trust and continuity are required for confirmation" which occurs when relationships are solid (p. 240). Further, she urges us to note that moral courage or "moral life [is] guided by an ethic of care" and must "attend to the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of caring relations" (p. 240; see also Shields, 2013).

Noddings (2012b) has four key tenets of moral education as an ethic of care: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237; see also Noddings, 1984, 1992, 2013b). M*odeling,* when genuine, builds up our character because we are able to "show in our own behaviour what it means to care" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 237). *Dialogue* allows

us to engage in a healthy reflective practice of critiquing our own actions to improve our ability to care; "we evaluate the effects of our attempts to care" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 238) and should be able to show care both independently as well as with the support of others. Another central part of moral education and the ethic of care asserted by Noddings (2012b) is that *practice* pushes our competencies of moral education towards a more compassionate and supportive means. Noddings (2012b) also reminds us that we learn to participate in caring with others through dialogue, discussion, demonstration, and practice. Finally, as stated earlier, *confirmation* affords the kind of trust and continuity that is inherent in building strong moral character in the self and others, teachers and students, mentors and protégés (Noddings, 2012b). "Moral life guided by an ethic of care must attend to the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of caring relations" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 240). Already, naturally caring relations do not need to be summoned; they take shape spontaneously and naturally. When caring is less natural and needs to be summoned, Noddings (2012b) suggests we turn to ethical caring. Learning how we "ought to be" is no longer questioned: ethical caring is what "is" because we have a "rootedness in care" and a "responsibility to one another" to act (Noddings, 2012b, p. 232). The kind of critical action that builds on the transformative leadership Shields (2013) demands will impress upon educational administrative leaders the notion of how an ethic of care must play a role in the mentorship of women in educational and educational leadership roles in support of their recruitment and retention.

1.9. Trends in leadership for women

Sheryl Sandberg (2013) encourages women to "dream big, forge a path through the obstacles, and achieve their full potential" (p. 171). She hopes that both women and men will work together to be supportive of each other to decrease the "pressure to conform" while expanding the potential for opportunities to lead (p. 171). Ann Darwin (2000) suggests that there is "much more to mentoring than giving advice" (p. 199). She adds that the "notion that mentoring is an exclusive activity undertaken predominantly by older males for younger males is no longer appropriate" (Darwin, 2000, p. 200). The status quo must be challenged by a "moral independence" that Noddings' (2012b) ethic of care theory espouses (p. 245). This is the kind of non-autonomous relation that takes hold even if the "ethic of care speaks of obligation [when a] sense of 'I must' do

something arises" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 13). In doing so, Noddings (2002a) says that the relation, whether it invokes a natural caring or an ethical caring ideal is when "the 'I must' expresses a desire or inclination—not a recognition of duty" (p. 13). Noddings is forthright about the fact that the "ethic of care as (she has) developed it is fundamentally relational; it is not individual-agent-based" (p. xiii). Noddings' ethic of care theory is "concerned with raising the moral level of relations" (Noddings, 1992, p. 120) which is key in my investigation of mentoring females into administrative roles in education with an ethic of care.

If educators can "draw effectively on women's traditions of care without claiming that women are inherently more caring than men or that all women are, by nature, inclined to care," and that "not all women have participated in the care tradition—any more than all men have participated in the military tradition" (Noddings, 2002a, pp. 37-38), then we begin to "acknowledge our growing recognition of the social and cultural dimension of learning" (Pachler & Redondo, 2012, p. 461). We aim for "significant, equitable, and meaningful change … and turn our attention to thinking and acting differently" (Shields, 2013, p. 6).

I believe we can engage in Shields' (2013) concept of transformative learning through engaging in Noddings' (2012b) pillars of the ethic of care: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). "The hard work of generations before us means that. … [w]e can close the leadership gap *now*" and as we look ahead, "there will be no female leaders. There will just be leaders" (Sandberg, 2013, pp. 171-172). Sandberg is a visionary in defining a hopeful trend in leadership, which I see as an additional motive for researching the mentoring of women into educational administrative leadership roles guided by an ethic of care.

Women are increasingly moving into higher "positions of power" but have been found to be "less capable or unwilling to reach out to each other and network, mentor, and seek mentors as naturally and eagerly as their male constituents" (Gupton, 2009, p. 12). This unwillingness can be due to a multitude of reasons, including the fact that many administrators are men who have not been known for providing mentorship with an ethic of care, especially towards women (Sandberg, 2013). For a man to "help a co-worker, it's considered an imposition and he is compensated with more favorable

performance evaluations and rewards" (Sandberg, 2013, p.45). But for a woman, the exact opposite is said to be true.

Richard Williamson (2010) refers to a school board in eastern Canada (and I believe it reflects the province in which I reside as well), when he states there is a critical need in his province to identify, train, and provide on-going support to newly trained and hired educational administrative leaders. "We need to stop telling [women], "Get a mentor and you will excel." Instead, we need to tell them, "Excel and you will get a mentor" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 68). Dogson's (1986) research suggests that the majority of mentors comes from mentors seeking out their protégés, which is important in career ascension because the "first and biggest hurdle in career advancement … is the progression from teacher to vice-principal" (p. 31). All of these findings lead me to my decision to marry Noddings' ethic of care theory with the mentoring of women seeking leadership in educational administrative leadership positions. This succession planning of educational leaders is prudent as it is a proactive plan at moving education forward by moving teacher leaders forward as educational administrative leaders. Such an effort can alleviate the pressures that women face in being mentored, especially from teacher leader to administrative educational leader.

1.10. The value of mentorship

Mentoring for healthy developmental relationships in education is thought to support career advancement and psychosocial development, which in recent years has focused on learners who are female (Mullen, 2012). Thus, the benefits of this kind of development lead to enhanced self-esteem and emotional support between professionals who may become more professionally committed together. In turn, this commitment gives rise to strengthened relationships so that when "leaders build and maintain [these relationships] with other members of the organization, [they] are good for the organization" (Gardiner et al., 2000, p. 140). Likewise, "leaders who care enough to share the kinds of information necessary for mentoring and who are generous enough with their time to follow through on the activities that are required to train others are good for schools" (Gardiner et al., 2000, p. 146).

Mentoring is a relational and developmental journey that is open ended, intentional, generative, creative and uncertain (Mullen, 2012). The relationship is often a

long-term professional one between a protégé and a more experienced mentor that is "critically supportive, [and] nurturing" resulting in what may be, "metaphorically speaking, an investment in the younger generation" (Mullen, 2012, p. 7). Mentoring can engage individuals, and groups in reciprocal learning, networking, and sponsoring towards capacity building (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012; Pachler & Redondo, 2012; Peno et al., 2016).

Mary Gardiner, Ernestine Enomoto, and Margaret Grogan (2000) suggest there is evidence that "in the past, women have not been mentored into educational administration as frequently as men have" (p. 147). Although this is not a gender study, it is important to better understand the context within which women may work in education. My writing will focus only on women because I want to conduct an inquiry into how best women can be mentored through an ethic of care to be teacher leaders who will always be inspired to "[care] about children and their communities … [as well as to] serve the needs of others" (p. 146). With this mindset, Gardiner et al. (2000) explain several reasons why women have not led in education in the same manner as men have because, even though women can lead and mentor men, women are not leading men as frequently as men are mentoring women (or men for that matter) (See also Sandberg, 2013).

Mentoring relationships most likely to be forged include those between like-minded individuals who have similar beliefs and attitudes about their work (male with male or female with female mentorship partners). Sandberg (2013) and Shields (2013) each share narratives about how women lead differently from men and suggest it is time to seek action on mentoring female educational leaders. Sandberg argues that "any male leader who is serious about moving toward a more equal world can make this a priority and be part of the solution" (pp. 71-72). Her initiative would be to increase more mentorship partnerships for women mentees as well as to improve on the numbers of women who are leading from or at least near the top because "different perspectives improve performance (pp. 71-72).

I am proposing that mentorship practices play an important role in the retention and recruitment of women into educational administrative leadership positions (Henry, 2008; Morrison, 2012; Peno et al., 2016) guided by an ethic of care. (Gardiner et al., 2000; Gupton, 2000; Noddings, 2012b). When mentoring deals "not only with knowing

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and doing, but also with the process of becoming" and has led to the "powerful impact on successfully integrating minorities, women, and other underrepresented groups into professions and into management and leadership positions within them", this is a turning point in the field of education (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012, p. 186). If women are always leading in such a way that they are advancing from the inside out, seeking change in education not just to advance in stature, but because they have the moral conviction to lead with an ethic of care and are leading not because they are different kinds of leaders, but "*because* they are women," then this is transformative leadership (Hall, 2009, p. ix; Shields, 2013).

Noddings (1992) emphasizes that "[a]n ethic of caring. … [i]s concerned with raising the moral level of relations" (p. 120). "Caring is the very bedrock of all successful education and … contemporary schooling can be revitalized in its light" (p. 27). When educational administrative leaders are ready to assume the task of "promoting critical consciousness in their teaching and learning," this will enact a heightened sense of self awareness for "ways of knowing and responding" for those who "aspire to … calls to action in schools" (Shields, 2013, p. 378). Initially, this task may be difficult or unclear, but as educational administrative leaders work together with educational leaders, the work becomes less "on "positions" and the "duties" associated with their job … [to] ultimately focus on "answering the call to lead" for a greater, more noble public good in support of students and their teachers and leaders (Shields, 2013, p. 369). For example, women will mentor and be mentored because they are women (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011). Women will be recruited into educational administrative leadership positions and then retained (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Morrison, 2012). Women will be mentored and guided by an ethic of caring (Noddings, 1992). It will be and is advantageous, in the field of education, to be led by women (Hall, 2009).

1.11. Looking ahead

Thus far, we have seen that much literature indicates a need to improve the status of the recruitment and retention of women into educational administrative leadership roles. My intent is to look at improving opportunities for women to ascend the ranks by supporting the mentorship of women with an ethic of care in the field of education. This dissertation takes an in-depth approach to understanding the notions that have been brought forward in this chapter, offering a more detailed picture of the

history of mentoring, the history of the ethic of care, their place in educational leadership from the perspective of women, and the limitations and challenges of each of these concepts in the field of education. By looking critically at the research by prominent scholars and researchers that already exists in these areas, I lay out my key questions and intent in investigating how mentorship practices play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care.

1.11.1. Being inspired by a higher calling

I cannot miss out on an opportunity to lead. This research is too important for my own personal journey and more importantly, for females in the field of education and for the future of educational leadership in general. I have a need to investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women in education and into educational administrative roles guided by an ethic of care. "Challenging the status quo … involves change" (Grogan, 2013, p. 115). The time is now to "recognize the myriad invisible and unaccounted for structural barriers to [females'] success, and help … collectively dismantle them" (Brabazon & Schulz, 2018). Tara Brabazon and Sam Schulz (2018) believe that "higher education should lead rather than follow social change" and that "to ensure that women occupy leadership positions … [m]entoring may help" (p. 14). After all, mentoring support for female educational leaders will allow the focus to shift over to "recruitment and selection [which] cannot be treated as lone concepts in isolation, but rather components of organizational governance and procedural structures within a school district" (Normore, 2004, p. 13).

It is important to note that there are potentially many good female educators who want to become educational leaders and educational administrative leaders. They are on the path towards trying to fulfill their own goals, and this journey should be a supportive one. Knowing that potentially many more female teachers and female teacher leaders have the capacity to develop the leadership skills to be successful educational administrative leaders leads me to believe that I have a professional obligation to support them in their quest towards developing into the best educational administrative leaders they can be. I recall my own journey and how insular and often tumultuous it felt. Now that I am an educational administrative leader, my quest as an educational administrative leader is to be the role model with moral courage who supports teachers and teacher leaders in their work with students in the school learning community.

Through a focus on guiding with an ethic of care, I feel I must encourage, support, nurture, foster challenge, inspire change, and instil a sense of duty within my teachers towards a greater capacity to lead as educators—whether it is for their students or with a protégé of their own. What keeps me grounded is my moral courage and what Shields (2013) describes as a way of knowing and a way of being, along with my personal lived experiences. My personal stories guide me and lead me to a higher purpose of supporting women in education because "women are not fearless" (Brabazon & Schulz, 2018, p. 14). "Women have been … marginalised … overlooked, over-worked" and under-supported in the contemporary education system (Brabazon & Schulz, p. 14). I am ready to delve into the challenges presented in my dissertation to support the recruitment and retention of women into leadership roles in education.

Chapter 2.

Mentoring of Women

2.1. Mentoring: A brief history

Mentoring has been observed for thousands of years, but only within the past three decades has it become popular in the field of education, especially in places such as Britain and North America (Colley, 2002; Clutterbuck, Kochan, Lunsford, Dominguez, & Haddock-Millar, 2017). While there have been signs of mentoring during the medieval period with knights as military officers working with the nobility, evidence of the more caring or the more nurturing mentor became more common during the early eighteenth century in Europe between knights and squires, and craftsmen and their apprentices (Clutterbuck et al., 2017; see also Garvey, 2017; Gay & Stephenson, 2010; Purkiss, 2007). The concept of mentoring was first mentioned in research literature in 1977 by researchers Gene Dalton, Paul Thompson, and Raymond Price, who were looking at the four stages of professional careers. They noted that mentoring had its origins in Greek Mythology (Dalton, Thompson, & Price, 1977; see also Daloz, 2012; Garvey, 2017; Leavitt, 2011; Varney, 2009). Looking back at least 3,000 years to ancient Greece and Homer's epic poem the *Odyssey*, the "original source for the concept of mentoring" as defined in Greek mythology is uncovered (Colley, 2002, pp. 259-260). "Taken from Greek, *mentor* literally translates into "enduring" (Varney, 2009, p. 128).

In the *Odyssey,* a character named Mentor is a skilled, wise, kind, trusted educator and guide who is a good practical problem-solver of personal dilemmas. During the Trojan War, Mentor, the son of Ulysses, has been granted the task of overseeing Odysseus' kingdom of Ithaca as well as protecting Odysseus's wife Penelope and young son Telemachus. Some twenty years later, the goddess Athena, disguised as Mentor, prepares Telemachus for his father's return. He would become the independent, wise, mature man that his father would need to help him slay Penelope's suitors. It is through the goddess Athena's active mentoring role of Telemachus that many people now associate Athena as important to educational leadership development of our protégés. Feminists view this active mentoring action as reflective of the important role females have come to play as mentors for youth in education. Athena, disguised as Mentor,

takes on this role as a personification of righteousness and wisdom. She is a role model who is nurturing, supportive, protective, and visionary in perceiving the true potential of her wards. This is the essence of mentoring that we have come to adopt in education today. (Barondess, 1995; Colley, 2002; Homer, trans. 1997).

In the original tales, Mentor was known to have been potentially violent: killing couples having illicit affairs because the men in these relationships had failed to meet the standards of the stereotypical dominant male role, and likely, those who did not possess dominant sexual tendencies (Colley, 2002; Daloz, 2012; Garvey, 2017). These lesser known aspects of the tales of Mentor's upbringing are arguably problematic, less satisfying, and more potentially misunderstood. While these challenges do not directly affect my work on the mentoring of female educational leaders through an ethic of care into educational administrative roles, I mention this to provide perspective through a more critical lens. The original tales were likely omitted in much of the literature on mentoring because an omission avoids "interpretations [that] can only offer a false philosophical foundation" (Daloz, 2012; Garvey, 2017, p. 15). Gender played a role during Mentor's time with respect to what behaviour was acceptable in society and by whom; gender continues to play a role in today's society with respect to females, especially in the field of education, which is a primary focus of mine in this dissertation.

Today, Mentor's impact still resonates in the field of female leadership in general because "Mentor is both male and female, mortal and immortal—an androgynous demigod, half here, half there. Wisdom personified" (Daloz, 2012, p. 20). Mentor as a female and as her Roman incarnation is Minerva, the goddess of the arts and professions who forms the historical basis for the present-day Minerva Foundation in British Columbia, Canada, a foundation helping women find success at work (The Minerva Foundation, 2001). The Minerva Foundation is a "unique career mentoring and coaching program for women who are re-entering the workforce, are in career transition, recently unemployed, under-employed, are new grads and are returning to work after an extended absence" (The Minerva Foundation, 2001, "Minerva Helping Women Work™," para. 1).

Reviewing the history of mentoring and the role that females played in mentoring in the past is important to help us understand the value of mentoring in the workplace today. This dissertation intends to investigate how Mentor's role as loyal supporter,

guide, coach, and visionary are still important today. Specifically, mentorship practices with an ethic of care can and should play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education. The role of mentoring, according to Greek mythology, was thought to influence every aspect of educational development of children like Telemachus, including his intellectual, physical, social, moral, spiritual, and administrative development. With the rise of the trades guilds in Europe between the 16th and 19th centuries, the concept of mentoring became much more practical: apprentices were cared for and taught the traditions of their trades. This arrangement shifted to a focus on the mentor assisting the apprentice with career development, which is more reflective of the roles of mentors at play in modern times. Mentors are thought to teach, open doors, coach, train, be positive role models, sponsor, protect, and develop the talents of their protégés (Clawson, 1980).

2.1.1. Contemporary history of mentoring

In 1985, Kathy Kram would begin to establish herself as a mentor in the workplace, as noted by Dawn Chandler, who wrote about her as well as interviewed the "maven of mentoring" in 2011 (p. 24). Kram's first stage in this field of research in education and business was about researching the traditional mentoring model—a mentoring relationship primarily between a more senior executive and a junior executive member. Simultaneously, Kram focused on women because of her personal experiences of not having had a mentor of her own, and from her own observations of the effects of gender on mentoring. She knew that "the multiple levels of authority and position that characterize hierarchical organizations create different responsibilities and perspectives which shape relationships at work" (Kram, 1985b, p. 16) Thus, mentors are in a perfect position to generally provide guidance, support, and sponsorship: for example, through the active promotion of lateral or alternative workplace opportunities of potential benefit to the mentee. Mentors are role models, counselors, coaches, and champions for future protégés (Kram, 1985b).

By the 1990s, research on mentoring was all about career advancements "designed for high-potential employees" (Chandler, 2011, p. 31). During the next few decades for Kram, mentoring was about focusing on peer relationships, their developmental networks, and scholar-practitioner relationships over the biological life cycle (Chandler, 2011; see also Kram, 1985b). In an interview with the "maven of

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mentoring", Dawn Chandler (2011) probed Kram on the path that mentoring has taken (p. 24). She (2011) learned how "[Kram] is so convinced that the developmental position of individuals in the life course, including the career and biological cycles, greatly affects relationships" (p. 31) especially because our workplaces feature much flatter organizations versus the marked hierarchies that were more prevalent when Kram first started her research in the field.

Flatter organizations put pressure on mentors to perform. The reality is that if the more senior mentor is "plagued with depression, anger, and decreasing self-esteem as a result of blocked opportunity," more senior mentors will very likely be "unable to contribute positively to" any others' progress and professional development (p. 17). Job satisfaction potentially limits one's own productivity, let alone the progression of others. Highly individualized tasks are another reason that make mentoring partnerships difficult when the "jobs that provide skill variety and opportunities for feedback and growth can influence relationships" and not always positively (p. 17). There is heightened pressure to perform when the role of the mentor has been to "teach, guide, coach, provide feedback, and [allow the protégé] to interact with, learn from, and gain exposure to potential sponsors and mentors" yet the mentors themselves don't have the confidence and knowledge to follow through adequately (p. 17). (Kram, 1985b)

This issue of the mentor's capacity to mentor, which I will discuss in a later chapter, has led towards a different approach to mentoring, especially when opportunity in a flattening hierarchy affects peoples' ability and willingness to engage in reciprocal mentoring relationships. Hence, Kram's more recent work focuses on "fostering mentoring in general in the organization" rather than on a one-on-one basis (Chandler, 2011, p. 31). Along with these considerations, other major changes that Kram believed would take place in the decade forward, since her interview in 2011 with Chandler about the future of mentoring, include an emphasis on "rewards and recognition of people involved in mentoring, and … experiments with peer coaching" giving organizations "an opportunity to innovate with these new forms" (Chandler, 2011, p. 31; Kram, 1985a).

Given the direction that Kram suggests mentoring is headed, it is feasible for mentorships for females to flourish (Chandler, 2011). I would like to explore the possibility of this flourishing through the work of this dissertation. I promote the role of mentor as someone who is supportive, nurturing, caring, and visionary. I aim to show

that it is possible for the mentor's role to be visionary and inclusive of an ethic of care in the field of educational leadership for women aspiring to be administrative educational leaders. Thus, it would be possible that the mentoring of females with an ethic of care improves the retention rate and the recruitment rate of women into administrative leadership roles in education. As I also believe that the basic premise of mentoring focuses on relationships between individuals, I aim to show that the mentoring of females into administrative roles in education with an ethic of care will impact succession planning in positive ways. There is promise that females can be more openly optimistic about opportunities to be recruited and retained into leadership roles in the field of education.

2.2. Influence of mentoring on education

According to James Clawson's pilot study published in 1980, numerous benefits are promoted by a successful mentor-protégé relationship. As well as creating "more rewarding and enlightening career-related experiences" (p. 163), other benefits include high levels of trust, respect, interactions, informal connections, openness, consistency in behaviour, and an orientation for the greater good in people. Yet there is still a shortage of women in educational administrative leadership roles (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011). Munawar Hasson (2011) expressed that "Researchers have illuminated [the] women's struggle to attain school leadership positions" and that furthermore, the transformation of taking on this professional role is "seldom addressed in leadership literature" (p. 1). Additionally, Sheryl Sandberg (2013) believes that "conditions for all women will improve when there are more women in leadership roles giving strong and powerful voice to their needs and concerns" (p. 7). This shortage of women in educational administrative leadership highlights a need to focus on better, or more careful and thoughtful, recruitment and retention of women into leadership positions through mentorship practices.

Hasson (2011) asserts that there are implications and recommendations she would make within three areas of educational leadership that focus on the transition from teacher (or teacher leader) to administrator: recruitment, preparation, and induction. She states that recruitment needs to be an "active, purposeful selection rather than self-selection, particularly by rewarding those who are compliant and agreeable (p. 161). Hasson believes that districts who actively recruit leaders who are critical thinkers,

innovators, and creative problem solvers see enhanced benefits such as a supportive staff with a positive culture and strong motivation and empowerment in its educators throughout the education system.

Preparation to recruit strong educational administrative leaders begins with having strong mentors who are able to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Mentors who help their protégés develop a disposition that is conducive to an educational leader illuminate the path and provide a preview of the challenges endured by educational administrative leaders. They provide guidance, support, and opportunities for reflection. In this way, Hasson (2011) proposes that aspiring leaders have the opportunity to "try on the role" (p. 164) to determine if this is a path worth taking. (Chandler, 2011; Hasson, 2011; see also Clawson, 1980; Luna, 2012; Varney, 2009).

The ability to induct strong aspiring educational administrative leaders into the profession begins first with training current leaders to be strong mentors so that they can be sure to forge strong, lasting relationships. Kram, during her interview with Chandler (2011), refers to relationships as important for success. Relationships between two people require time to discover common interests as well as a desire to learn and share ideas with one another to induce a sense of "mutuality and reciprocity" (Chandler, 2011, p. 31). Current educational administrative leaders must be able to facilitate not only their own growth and development, but also that of their protégés. A "lack of mentoring relationships may lead to stagnation, attrition, dissatisfaction, low morale, and burnout" (Hasson, 2011, p. 167) while a strong mentoring relationship leads to transformations in educational leaders that increases self-reliance, helps to eliminates unpleasant surprises, and allows protégés to survive and more importantly, to thrive. (Chandler, 2011; see also Hasson, 2011; Peno et al., 2016)

2.3. Influence of mentoring on leadership

The demands placed on educational administrative leaders in the profession have changed dramatically especially in the last ten to fifteen years (Chandler, 2011; Crippen & Wallin, 2008; Henry, 2008). Sylvia Henry (2008) concludes that "times have changed" and that the challenges faced by today's educational administrative leaders include greater accountability than ever before, especially with respect to the quality of instructional leadership at the school level so that every student is high-performing and

high-achieving (p. 1). Our students and younger educators have helped us to become more aware that "in the recent era of accountability, sanctions and 'prescribed improvement,' many have lost faith in other people who offer help" (Bossi, 2010, "ACSA Mentoring: What Have We Learned?" para. 8). Thus, Henry (2008) recommends that more research is necessary to gain a better sense of how to ensure that mentoring matters (see also Chandler, 2011). For example, research is required to discover more diverse views on mentoring and principal preparation and to determine suitable criteria for recruiting school leaders. Perhaps mentoring by school leaders should be mandatory for both the mentor and the protégé (Rhodes, 2012).

Recruitment of school leaders requires that these individuals are able to mentor teacher leaders and "help identify and assist talented aspirant leaders to make the journey towards [educational administrative leader] or another leadership role" (Rhodes, 2012, p. 248). This important statement reinforces the fact that there are many ways to move up and forward within an educational career. The vertical ascension is the most traditional route towards acceleration and promotion, but the lateral or horizontal move into positions unique to each school district—such as district mentorship leader or district level teacher, or leaders of curriculum and instruction or technology—are other ways to promote.

Recruitment of school leaders able to identify potential teacher leaders to mentor is key (Leavitt, 2011). Even though the programs are most often informal and not prescribed so "the process remains largely invisible," (Daloz, 2012, p. 23), Daloz (2012) asserts that "it is important for programs to recognize the potential of such people" (p. 23). Beneficial results of recruiting senior level educational administrative leaders include the fact that as mentors, they also stand to gain from the partnership in terms of heightened passion for the job, renewed interest in otherwise common tasks, and the ability to reflect on and articulate tips for growth and learning based on their own personal journeys (Daloz, 2012; Rhodes, 2012).

According to Carol Mullen (2012), mentoring is a "developmentally based" philosophical framework for better understanding human behaviour and cultural change within an organizational structure (p. 9). When mentoring is mandated through government policy, Mullen (2012) believes that it supports newer protégés in the classroom. However, one pitfall of this top-down kind of accountability through

mentorship is that it may interfere with the genuine process of teaching and learning. As well, "mentoring summons notions of civic virtue and goodness, [which illustrates that] it is useful as a political tool" in creating a sense of empowerment and entitlement (Mullen, 2012, p. 13). Tricia Browne-Ferrigno and Rodney Muth (2012) firmly believe that a critical aspect of research missing in educational leadership preparation programs is attention to the lived and learned experiences of those who are actively engaged in the process. They feel that "research on candidates in leadership preparation programs is woefully underdeveloped" and that we need to actively disseminate any information uncovered if our profession is to be legitimately professionalized towards an effort to make fundamental changes for students in the classroom (p. 17). Kram, in her interview with Chandler (2011), echoes similar sentiments for scholar-practitioners. Those who are academics who conduct research need to keep at least one foot grounded at all times so that their "research is closely linked with real-world concerns and build[s] partnerships with people in practice" (p. 31). She believes this happens best, as it did for her, when researchers partner with practitioners in the field.

Kram (1985b) worked hard to define what she felt were essential characteristics to promote change in the classroom for students by way of supporting the mentoring relationship. She charted the progress of these relations and acknowledged the advancements, the visibility it provided in front of colleagues, the recognition of the capacities of each person in the mentoring partnership, and the "acceptance-and-confirmation" reflective of the hard work of the partnerships (p. 47). She also conferred with these pairs about the increased satisfaction they felt in their work because of their experiences, as well as their "competence, confidence, and effectiveness" in their roles (p. 47).

Kram (1985b) determined these key characteristics could be illuminated in four distinct phases: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. Initiation is generally up to six months long, during which time the encounter develops into a relationship. Cultivation exists from years two to five, when there is receptivity allowing the relationship to grow more meaningfully while career functions and psychosocial functions peak. Career functions include a mentoring partnership that promotes challenge in the form of lateral opportunities such as sponsorship, coaching and exposure via networking. Psychosocial functions also emerge during this time and support the development of trust, competence, modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation,

counseling, and friendship. Separation is inevitable; it is usually between six months to two years when feelings of turmoil, unbalance, anxiety, and loss are buoyed by independence, autonomy, and anticipation for what comes next. Redefinition, the final phase of a mentoring relationship, may take up to several years after the last phase when the separation is complete. As Kram (1985b) explains, "While two individuals may achieve peer status, there is frequently ambivalence and discomfort as both adjust to the new role relationship" (p. 61). It is at this stage that the cycle repeats with the players taking on the same or new roles, during which time there is hope and renewal.

2.4. Influences of caring on mentoring

Martin Buber (1958) champions relations above all else, stating that the "relation is mutual" (p. 15) and that "all real living is meeting" (p. 11). Mentoring is about relations between people working together, such as when a mentor or the one-caring oversees the cared-for in an effort to guide, working with them to build support and trust (Noddings, 2013b; see also Noddings, 1984, 2012b). "This [process] recognizes that we become individuals largely through the relations to which we belong" (Noddings, 2013b, p. 118). Noddings (2013b) firmly affirms that care theorists generally "[posit] relations as ontologically basic and the caring relation as morally fundamental" where our attention is fully on the relation, not solely on the moral agent (p. 118).

Over the years, Kram, a scholar of mentoring, has held a similar view and wholeheartedly attests to the fact that:

> building relationships are [*sic*] critical. It is important to be self-aware, knowing what you need and want, and then scanning your environment to see who could be potential developers. … recogniz[ing] that all high-quality relationships have some degree of reciprocity, so [it is important to] think about how the other person might from [*sic*] a relationship with you. (Chandler, 2011, p. 31)

Every encounter carries the potential to learn about the self and others such as when the mentor acts "by taking time to show an interest in the mentee as a person" (Varney, 2009, p. 130). Consider the abundance of research on caring and mentoring as analogous to "standing on the shoulders of giants" (Clandinin & Hamilton, 2011, p. 1). This abundance of research, according to Jean Clandinin and Mary Hamilton (2011), "directs our attention backward and encourages us to consider our work as situated in

relation with those who have come before and to the history of the ideas we are using in our current research" (p. 1) on mentoring, on leadership, on female educators, and on the ethic of care. They conclude that by reflecting and taking a "look backward to understand the situatedness of our work in both more distant and more recent historical contexts in order to understand the forward trajectories of our present research," we can begin to move forward with intention (p. 1). Jim Varney (2009) further deduces that we may even begin to demonstrate a continued progression between self and other whereby "a professional level of caring about [the] noneducational issues" (p. 130) along with the educational issues are impacted in positive ways.

By promoting caring relations in the form of mentoring whereby the cared-for accepts the one-caring, reciprocally, there is purpose to continuing the relation and seeing it forward. Defining this purpose as journeys with destinations for educators such as mentors and mentees, Laurent Daloz (2012) emphasizes a "sense of movement and purpose to what often seem[s] without meaning, [which] help[s] them understand that confusion, uncertainty, and fear may be a necessary—even valuable—part of educational growth" (p. 15). Reciprocity, when mutual, provides space for the unknown to develop. The ambiguity is addressed together as the mentor and mentee "has to know *something*, but what we know is of value only as we are able to form it such that our [mentees] can make use of it for their own evolving ways of knowing" (p. 15). Thus, purpose is developed through caring relations in the form of role modeling, sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, counseling, and even friendship (Kram, 1985b). These are some probable ways and outcomes that the female educational leader I speak of can be mentored with an ethic of care to ensure that a succession of strong educational administrative leaders can thrive.

Kram (1985b) invests time into developing mentoring relations, and this effort has never faltered. Her resolve has only become stronger with time, which illustrates my ideal to marry mentoring and an ethic of care in support of female educational leaders striving to ascend the career ladder (Chandler, 2011). Evidence of the four major components of a moral education through Nel Noddings' (2012b) ethic of care theory (which was introduced in Chapter 1 and will be revealed in greater detail in Chapter 3) include "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). Due to the social or partnership nature of mentoring, Kram's series of mentoring functions share some of the same fundamental outcomes: role modeling, counseling, acceptance-and-confirmation,

and friendship. These serve to solidify the all-important mentor/one-caring and mentee/cared-for caring relationship (Kram, 1985b; Noddings, 1984, 2012b, 2013b).

Noddings' *modeling*, what Kram (1985b) describes as a key role in mentoring, expects an emotional attachment to form through the identification and transference of key aspects of the work to be shared and learned. As the relation is reciprocal, both parties benefit and stand to learn and grow from the partnership. Next, Noddings' *dialogue* or Kram's counseling are important steps in the mentoring partnership with an ethic of care process. Through active listening and the sharing of personal conflicts, questions, and challenges, the mentor is able to provide feedback while helping the mentee gain a sense of self-worth and competence. *Practice* is the third component of Noddings' ethic of care theory, which promotes the pro-social goals of working together to achieve a common goal. Kram calls this stage the friendship stage, characterized by social interactions that build trust and mutuality. The fourth and most critical stage of Nodding's ethic of care theory is *confirmation*, which is related to Kram's acceptance-confirmation stage. Both stages are loosely related to the benefits that are linked to respect, potential advancement or opportunity, and appreciation for the other. Kram's (1985b) mentees "derive a sense of self from the positive regard conveyed by the other" (p. 35) while Noddings' (1984) cared-fors are *confirmed*, meaning that the mentee is the best person she can possibly be (Kram, 1985b, Noddings, 1984; see also Noddings, 2012b, 2013b).

With the mentor/mentee relations brought together and supported by the theories of Noddings and Kram, both pioneers in their day, relations will flourish professionally. According to Daloz (2012), "mentors transmit wisdom" towards acceptance-confirmation (p. 18; see also Kram, 1985b, Noddings, 1984, 2012b, 2013b). With trust in our mentors as guides and supporters, mentors:

> embody our hopes, cast light on the way ahead, interpret arcane signs, warn us of lurking dangers, and point out unexpected delights along the way. There is a certain luminosity about them, and they often pose as magicians in tales of transformations. (Daloz, 2012, p. 18)

There is an inherent beauty and power when the relation that ought to be realized actually flourishes. As stated above, "relation is mutual" (Buber, 1958, p. 8) and reciprocal; this is how wisdom flourishes from natural caring for both mentor and protégé. "No longer based on superficial trappings, the mentoring relationship has the

potential to be transformed into something more profound and powerful" (Daloz, 2012, p. 124). This is how female educational leaders can thrive as they are mentored with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership roles in support of the recruitment and retention of strong, transformational educational leaders.

2.5. Types of mentoring

Daloz's (2012) statement carries such truth: "Mentors have been discovered everywhere that people need help learning something" (p. xxii). He says that mentors are those key people who are "committed to making an 'education of care' really happen" (p. xii). "Mentors, it seems, have something to do with growing up, with developing identity" (p. 20). Here, I focus on a variety of types of mentoring and look at the functions that have allowed mentoring to become popular or useful in supporting individual growth and development of female educational leaders. Due to the vast nature of research available in this regard, I have limited my work to the realm of mentoring as it relates to education, especially educational leadership.

As a result of this shift towards mentoring of protégés for career development, a variety of mentoring styles have been developed, such as *formal* and *informal* mentoring, *academic* mentoring and *non-academic* mentoring, humanistic mentoring, and mentoring for *inexperienced staff or faculty* versus *experienced staff or faculty*. Formal mentoring programs situated in the workplace include a designated mentor with protégé and have resulted in "career and attitude enhancement processes" (Bozionelos, Bozionelos, Kostopulos, & Polychroniou, 2011, p. 449). Research suggests that informal mentoring relationships include those forming outside of formal mentoring partnerships, such as with protégés once they have become more advanced in career development and are in a position to mentor protégés of their own and take on this role informally. The now-experienced employee takes on the behaviours and role of the more experienced person and projects mentoring behaviours onto the less senior employee. This exhibition of a paying-it-forward type of pro-social behaviour has been documented to show further enhancements in the productivity of the organization with benefits to the employee who was once mentored. These benefits include enhanced attitude, increased sense of pride, a sense of accomplishment, and career satisfaction (Bozionelos et al., 2011; Varney, 2009).

Academic and non-academic mentors support mentoring relationships in an academic institution. Academic mentorships are between faculty and students during class time, whereas non-academic mentorships exist between faculty and students outside of class time (Cox & Orehovec, 2007). Bradley Cox and Elizabeth Orehovec (2007) found that non-academic mentors were almost non-existent in their research study, even at a college that was well-funded to ensure that an intentionally designed program could be offered to foster meaningful interactions between students and faculty outside of class. Yet none of the relationships they studied contained all three of the ideal mentoring qualities of having direct career development support, emotional and psychosocial support, and role modeling. The result was that both students and their professors were "frustrated by the infrequency of interaction" (p. 357). However, Cox and Orahovec's (2007) final remarks included insights on the benefits of academic mentoring while noting that non-academic mentoring would require further research. They found that "when mentoring relationships grow out of functional and personal interactions, both students and professors benefit" (p. 360).

These qualities and benefit about mentoring are important to note in my research marrying mentoring with an ethic of care. Foundational to my research on females in educational leadership is the importance of having a respectful partnership between the mentor and mentee. My investigative goal is specific to the mentoring of women with an ethic of care in hopes that they already have, or will develop, the potential to successfully move into educational administrative leadership roles. With care theory and the notion of being caring already at play in education, this idea that relationships— including informal ones—are so important seems to show the first signs of the ethic of care in mentoring. These signs are significant in a realm that has shown infrequent faculty-student mentoring relationships, especially of a non-academic nature outside of class time (Cox & Orehovec, 2007). From informal conversations I have had with other educators over the years, many teachers of the K-12 system would be of the same mindset about the importance of forging relationships and building capacity outside of formal class time.

Research has endorsed theories about mentoring in education that are traditional in scope. Traditional mentoring theory has been widely researched and documented by researchers such as Ann Darwin (2000), Monica Higgins and Kathy Kram (2001), and Carol Mullen (2012). This theory assumes that mentoring is hierarchically structured,

leading to power differences (e.g. senior educational leader mentoring a junior educational leader); is systemically closed, thereby perpetuating homogeneity (e.g. involves only white males); and is developmentally closed like a "commodity to be traded and exchanged within a market economy" in education (Mullen, 2012, p. 14). Alternative mentoring theory, on the other hand, is changing our awareness of mentoring and the capacity that mentoring can reach (Mullen, 2012). Examples of alternative mentoring theories noted by Mullen (2012) include *collaborative mentoring (co-mentoring), mosaic mentoring, multiple-level co-mentoring*, and *synergistic leadership.* The approach of these theories focuses on a more egalitarian (e.g. peer to peer mentoring), non-authoritative, progressive way of learning that presents open solutions fostered by "satisfying but challenging learning environments" (Mullen, 2012, p. 15). Protégés may even have multiple mentors that enforce a two-way model of learning (Sandberg, 2013).

Although traditional mentoring and alternative mentoring theories differ in ideology, they overlap in theory and practice. Alternative mentoring theories are value laden and promote the values of collaboration, democracy, and shared leadership. Learning may be more humanistic or holistic, formal or informal, going above and beyond as a superordinate function of teaching and learning that allows space for risk-taking, experimentation, and the ability to learn from reflection and transparent feedback. (Mullen, 2012, p. 15) As leadership is more distributed in many districts, and the hierarchy—while still evident—is flattening, the need for a different kind of mentoring practice as suggested by alternative mentoring theories is likely more attuned with the needs of today's education sector and its female educational leaders (Chandler, 2011). As I will show, the other types of mentoring theories outline some of these more current and realistic examples of flexibility in mentoring types (see below): a flexibility that traditional mentoring theories lack. Traditional mentoring theories, on the other hand, are intended to offer career development support and psychosocial support; they do not include on-the-job skill development, competency development, nor an ability to reflect the changing global work environment in the field of education (Darwin, 2000; Leavitt, 2011).

Mullen (2012) proposes the next three alternative mentoring theories. Collaborative mentoring theory has been thought to unite individuals in a reciprocal exchange of dynamic learning while developing a relationship that promotes social equity. This is an extension of Kram's (1985b) original conception of mentoring involving

a synergistic and flexible structure of communal mentoring where mentor(s) and protégé(s) consistently exchange roles, facilitating a deeper and richer learning experience. The second flexible mentoring theory discussed by Mullen is the Multiple-level co-mentoring theory which encourages a climate of interdependence, commitment, and empowerment towards reform where stakeholders are not limited to specialty groups (i.e. teachers, school board members, community partners) and must work together towards systemic change and reinvented, authentic social cultural systems (Mullen, 2012). Mullen's third mentoring theory is one to note because of its connection to females. The Synergistic leadership theory of mentoring is "framed around feminist, postmodern interpretations of public schooling and administrator preparation" (p. 17). Here, leadership learning focuses on shared experiences for all cultures, particularly female, with a specific focus on leadership, decision-making, and power, based on the fact that the majority of individuals enrolled in university-level leadership preparation programs are female.

Another framework for leadership development also unites individuals in reciprocal change, but in a more real-time setting. Described by Donald Wise and Amber Jacobo (2010) and then by Christopher Rhodes (2012), socio-cultural and organisational learning theory focuses on the power of the working relationship and the changing nature of the role of administrative leaders in education. As Rhodes (2012) explains, "an external coach … can help the [experienced educational administrative leader] in developing new thinking to inform change and increase chances of improvement success" while working with a mentee (p. 251). Forging such an external relationship alongside the mentored relationship provides additional support for the mentor and thus, the mentee. This external leadership link helps the experienced educational administrative leader continue to learn and grow and "[translate] the learning into action" within the actual school culture in support of positive mentee, student, and staff achievement (Wise & Jacobo, 2010, p. 166). Wise and Jacobo (2010) express the view that socio-cultural and organisational learning theory are ideal because of the premise that Lev Vygotsky (Daniels, 2005) promotes, that learning in the "zone of proximal development" occurs optimally through actual engagement with others in real time when the task is neither too easy nor too difficult, yet challenging.

Darwin (2000) believes that mentoring is and needs to be more robust than just a venue for giving advice in the work setting. Especially with the onslaught of technological

advances and the fact that employees today change jobs numerous times over their lifetimes, having merely one mentor is no longer typical. According to Darwin, the stereotypical role of a woman as "mother" or as a woman with little power or little ability to get "ahead of the pack" needs to be reconsidered (p. 202). The notion that mentoring takes on a traditional or functionalist perspective of stability in terms of power structures, knowledge gains, career development, and positive psychosocial development between protégé and mentor is too static and is therefore unrealistic (p. 201). With changing dynamics in the workplace due to technological advances and changing societal structures such as mentoring partnerships including co-inquirers of technology between experienced and inexperienced users, increasing numbers of part-time positions in the workplace as well as changing retirement ages, Darwin's *Radical Humanistic Perspectives* might be more realistic. Her Radical Humanistic Perspectives is rooted in social justice processes that favour relationships inclusive of dialogue and a restructuring of "power relations and ontological commitments nested in mentoring" (p. 206). She promotes a "collaborative, dynamic, and creative partnership of coequals" in a learning organization founded in a socially just environment conducive to being vulnerable and open in a professional setting, with ongoing dialogue (p. 205).

The last two theories providing some insights with respect to the importance of relationships within a mentor-protégé partnership have a relational basis: Albert Bandura's 1971 *Social Learning Theory* which Carol Leavitt (2011) considers as a means to "explore the mentoring process and relationships" (p. 7), and Belle Ragins' *Theory of Relational Mentoring* framework. Bandura's Social Learning Theory promotes positive social relationships as it argues that individuals learn by direct experience, motivated by reinforcement in a kind of reciprocal influence process. When the social relationship between the mentor and protégé is positively affected, the protégé's new behaviour is beneficial for both parties. Attentiveness towards a mentor shapes the protégé's behaviour in such a way that leads the protégé to become more self-reliant, self-confident, and invested in the relationship (Leavitt, 2011).

Ragins outlines her theory of relational mentoring in an interview with Dawn Chandler and Rebecca Ellis (2011). She, too, has conducted extensive research in the areas of mentoring, diversity, and relationships. She advocates that the quality of the partnership between a mentor and protégé is key to maintaining a long-term relationship at work, although little is known about high quality mentoring relationships. She also

states that "experiences of men and women differ in the mentoring relationship … [and if] we don't look at these dimensions … then we assume they don't matter" (Chandler & Ellis, 2011, p. 489).

2.5.1. Benefits and limitations of mentoring

> Education must change our minds, charge our hope, and transform our souls, for in the end, real mentors care about our souls. … [M]entorship is finally about living and cultivating lives of depth, compassion and wisdom for ourselves, our students, and the world. (Daloz, 2012, p. xxviii)

Mentoring is about inner growth and identity formation. It is about *becoming*. Buber (1958), in sharing his beliefs about the importance of mentoring, writes about the importance of *becoming*. Becoming who we are meant to be, becoming someone we are capable of being with the support and guidance of the other, becoming a mentor, are the ultimate goals. "Through each process of becoming that is present to us we look out toward the fringe of the eternal *Thou*; in each we are aware of a breath from the eternal *Thou*; in each *Thou* we address the eternal *Thou*" (Buber, 1958, p. 6). Putting this in Noddings' (1984) terms, in relations between the one-caring and the cared-for, there is trust and natural caring because there is reciprocity and time taken to understand more fully the needs and wants of the cared-for. To reiterate, "relation is mutual" (Buber, 1958, p. 8); in this way, the mentor assists the mentee which specifically related to this dissertation, focuses on the female educational leaders who may take this opportunity to learn, grow, and transform. "I become through my relation to the *Thou*; as I become *I*, I say *Thou*" (Buber, 1958, p. 11). This is a benefit that transforms us from the inside out.

Mentoring is also about the fact that "mentoring is infused with leading" and "summons notions of … virtue and goodness" (Mullen, 2012, pp. 12–13). Still, virtue aside, there are limitations to mentoring, including issues with the imbalance of power. Simy Joy and David Kolb (2008) outline these limitations:

> Societies high on power distance[1] tend to value social hierarchies. They don't give the individual the freedom to do whatever they want or make [*sic*] own decisions. It is important for them to do what is socially correct and proper. (p. 76)

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[1] Power distance is officially one of four dimensions of culture as outlined by Geert Hofstede (1980) and his HERMES data that aim to deal with human inequalities such as those related to power and status "usually formalized in hierarchical boss-subordinate relationships" (p. 92).

What this looks like for females may vary from the experience of males. Carol McKeen and Merridee Bujaki (2008) conclude that there is much work to be done in addressing how mentoring is different for females than males. The benefits for women from all forms of mentoring relationships (with female or male mentors) differs from what men gain from their mentoring relationships. This idea of mentoring *in a different voice*, which Carol Gilligan first wrote about in 1982, is important to consider moving forward:

> Research on gender and mentoring may be intended to develop policies and prescriptions for mentoring programs to maximize organizational effectiveness to enhance our understanding of gender and mentoring phenomena simply for the sake of knowledge, to aid individual women in maximizing their career success by encouraging them to learn ways of coping with corporate masculinity, or to foment change in the very patriarchal organizational and societal systems that now constrain women's achievements. (McKeen & Bujaki, 2008, p. 217)

In 1980, Geert Hofstede conducted a major international study looking at the cultures of different countries. He found that there are several dimensions of cultures consistent with cultural differences. Canada and the USA fall into a pattern familiar for western cultures, with a lower power-distance than eastern cultures common in many Asian countries. He also found that western cultures value individualism over the more eastern collectivism or group mentality. As well, Joy and Kolb (2008) put forward views about a loss of openness and desire to share information in cultures that value a higher power-distance: a dimension of culture more common to eastern countries such as in Asia. "While inequality in power is inevitable and functional" (Hofstede, 1980, p. 92), what is key is how the inequality is recognized. Thus, it is important to note that this dissertation is situated within what Hofstede would consider a western culture low power-distance individualistic society. This would suggest that in a situation between a mentor and mentee, the ideal situation would be a reciprocal one. The mentor in a reciprocal relation with a mentee who is seeking support would allow for the mentee to learn and grow by giving them the space to ask questions, observe, and reciprocate as necessary. Specifically, even within situations where there is a clear power-distance, there should be no fear of the mentee "disagreeing with their boss", "show[ing] more cooperativeness", or the mentor "seeing themselves [as managers who are] practical and systematic" and able to admit that they need support (Hofstede, 1980, p. 119).

A mentor is only as good as the lessons offered based on the intellectual, moral, and relational aptitude she holds as well as the values held within the societal unit. As

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Daloz (2012) notes, "the teacher [mentor] has to know something, but what we know is of value only as we are able to form it such that our students [protégé] can make use of it for their own evolving ways of knowing" based on our societal values (p. 15). According to Hofstede (1980), our western culture values individualism in terms of how people live together, work together, and the values they hold dear: values that impact the self over the collective. Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimension of culture is focused on independence and an organizational unit with only "moderate influence on members' well-being" and no expectations that the organization will look after its employees "from the cradle to the grave" (p. 238). Thus, since the mentoring of professionals has not typically been a cultural expectation until the 1980s when Kram's (1985) work on mentoring as well as Hofstede's work on the interculturalization of societies were published, there are discrepancies among the values we seek from mentoring. For Hofstede, gaining independence is the expectation for success. Kram, on the other hand, promotes a relational mentoring approach towards success. How we handle moral issues has individualistic overtones which, according to Hofstede (1980), is how Canadians and Americans promote and celebrate success.

The key to success in mentoring within a western culture which features an individualistic, patriarchal society is to determine the specific intended consequences: especially "if women and men differ in their underlying motivations, either for work itself or for their participation in mentoring relationships (McKeen & Bujaki, 2008, p. 216; see also Hofstede, 1980). By doing the work of mentoring, argues Julie Nyanjom (2018), there is hope "to encourage a mentoring culture at all levels of the institution. … to provide clarity on the self-development benefits that can accrue from mentoring" (p. 12). One of the benefits that Nyanjom (2018) points out is a strategic one, where both parties to the relation have the potential to learn and develop through "intrinsic rewards that may enhance the mentor's commitment to mentoring practice" (p. 12). Extrinsic and intrinsic rewards would far outweigh the pitfalls of a poorly mentored relation.

Alternatively, there are mentoring relations which are not well-matched or are too unbalanced, leading to feelings of abandonment, resentment, and increasing negativity about career prospects (Kram, 1985a). As well, some mentoring relations are not balanced because they lean to one extreme or the other. Johnson (2017) states that mentorships that "endure over time, becoming increasingly relational and mutual in nature are likely to involve greater attachment, emotional depth, and intimacy" however,

they "need not create ethical problems [as this] clearly require[s] a thoughtful response on the part of the mentor" especially since feelings of romantic or sexual attractions are not uncommon among professionals who mentor (p. 111). Mentoring can be time-consuming with delayed gratification, especially if mentors are not suited to the role. This can be the case when mentors are awkward with respect to emotional intelligence and social skills or lack these skills. Research does show, however, that "mentors strive to work competently and thoughtfully, with the best interests of those they serve in mind" (Johnson, 2017, p. 114). With respect to mentoring, what stands firm is that "putting what is needed into practice and making it a reality remains the challenge for those committed to effective educational administration" (Crippen & Wallin, 2008, p. 563). (See also Haddock-Millar, 2017; Johnson, 2017).

Julie Haddock-Millar (2017), McKeen and Bujaki (2008), and Rhodes (2012) assert that quality research is often costly and takes time. Haddock-Millar stated that mentoring research should be qualitative over the long-term because mentoring is part of a developmental relationship that changes over time and therefore, should be tracked over time. "An expectation might be that the mentee experiences significant change and gain[s] greater insight through enhancing the quality of their thinking[,]. … [especially if] the examination of change over time is important in order to determine longer-term development" (p. 59).

What has been challenging about finding mentoring research about females and leadership is a gap in the literature on mentoring during mid-career as well as late-career leaders in education (Crow & Grogan, 2017). Much of the mentoring research is about meeting the status quo where the more experienced educational administrative leader supports and guides the mentee by imparting what is known about the role itself. Instead, the research on mentoring should be more about taking the opportunity to opt for a "conception of a transformative view of mentoring" (p. 439). "Transformative suggests a fundamental change of perspective from maintaining the status quo to. … viewing mentoring as a learning tool" investing in the relationship and promoting the unveiling of the "development of identity" (Crow & Grogan, 2017, pp. 439-440).

There is much literature about the role that relationships play with respect to the benefits of mentoring. What has resonated with me about these views of mentoring is that an ethic of care is a critical component of mentoring relationships. There is a

connection between the mentor and mentee or the one-caring and the cared-for, respectively, which creates between the two, a vulnerable space for each player in the partnership to question and further develop their own educational values "result[ing] in [a] transformative learning experience" (Crow & Grogan, 2017, p. 441). While this description does not mirror Noddings' notion of the ethic of care theory, it is a step towards researching how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education. As a result of its focus on the relation in mentorship practices, I see a hopeful connection between marrying the mentoring of female educational leaders with an ethic of care as being critical in my investigation in support of the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education.

2.6. Current research in the field of mentoring

Research matters because mentoring relationships matter. Filtering through the copious amounts of literature illustrates clearly that the discussion about mentoring has been ongoing for more than three decades. Mentoring began as very traditional in scope, essentially people with experience and rank helping less experienced people in workplaces such as in business, healthcare, and education sectors. Since the notion of mentoring first appeared in the workplace, countless papers and a vast array of books have been written about traditional mentoring theories. In turn, this research has given rise to alternative and more robust mentoring theories. Of these mentoring studies and stories, I have chosen to focus only on those that have helped me to shed light on women's journey into leadership positions.

The current trends, findings, and directions are not surprising, but the vast majority of the mentoring research on women is geared towards mentoring beginning teachers, mentoring leaders that are already in the position of educational administrator, and mentoring aspirant educational leaders in higher education such as for superintendent positions. However, gaps in the literature for mid-career and late-career educational leaders in educational roles are clearly evident. Having little research to lean on means that what is available is much more critical to consider. To no surprise, the research points towards a need for a more detailed understanding of mentorship of females into administrative roles in education (Wallin & Crippen, 2008).

Much of the research on mentorship is outside of Canada and definitely not situated in my province, British Columbia. Some research indicates an increase in executive mentoring programs in the USA and in Europe for large organizations. But as Poulsen (2017) notes, "executive mentoring has received little attention in the research literature," likely due to the fact that "executives tend to keep their mentoring relationships very confidential" (p. 406). Further, executive mentoring has tended to be "voluntary, self-organized … and would generally be the direct manager seeing talent in a younger employee" where both members of the mentoring relationship were male (Poulsen, 2017, p. 407).

My focus is a different group of individuals: mentorship for aspirant teacher leaders who are female. I am particularly interested in pursuing research into female teacher leaders who do not realize they have the potential to aspire to leadership positions in education. This is where a gap exists in the literature, illustrating for me that more research needs to be encouraged in the field of education about women and for women. The hope is that my findings will add to the literature in a way that will make a difference in the classroom and be valued by both men and women within my profession about women and their roles in educational leadership positions.

There are substantially more women teaching in schools than men and more men leading in schools than women (Ballard, 2010; Vongalis-Macrow, 2016; Robinson, Shakeshaft, Grogan, & Newcomb, 2017). According to Kerry Robinson, Charol Shakeshaft, Margaret Grogan, and Whitney Newcomb (2017), the number of women teaching in schools is disproportionately high considering how the statistics favour males in top roles. Robinson et al. (2017) have found that "75% of teachers are women," but this percentage drops markedly for the number of women in educational leadership roles in administration (p. 2). They also note that more females than males have mentors, and that females teach for an average of eleven years before ascending the ladder, whereas men teach for only five years before they rise in the ranks. Also of interest is that as women ascend in rank, they have more diverse experience, laterally, than males do. Men teach, and then become secondary school principals before taking on the role of superintendent. Women teach for more than twice as long, and then become elementary principals before taking on a role at the central board office and prior to ascending to the superintendency.

As if these statistics were not disenchanting enough for women, Sandberg (2013) points out that "men have an easier time finding the mentors and sponsors who are invaluable for career progression" (p. 9). As an incentive to recruiting women into leadership positions earlier and retaining them in these roles, Tiffany Ballard (2010) recommends that because there are "few women mentors for current and future leaders", we need to make more of an effort to "mentor more females in the school systems to ensure that more women have the opportunities to become leaders" (p. 158). She found that men who mentored men became influential allies, highlighting the fact that women need more men and women mentors to be allies for them: to encourage them to take on leadership roles, to become educational administrative leaders, and to be positive role models for them (Ballard, 2010). The main challenge I see in this area is that men accept challenges whether they are qualified or not and know they have allies, whereas women wait until they are qualified, allies aside, and even then will act in solidarity, but only when the leadership skills prevail (Vongalis-Macrow, 2016). "Women leaders do not get an easy ride from women. Women have leadership expectations and will call these out if they are not met, irrespective of gender, sisterhood or notions of gender solidarity" (Vongalis-Macrow, 2016, p. 100). What is promising to push through these challenges, however, is that "mentoring initiatives have had a powerful impact on successfully integrating minorities, women, and other underrepresented groups into professions and into management and leadership positions" (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012, p. 186).

Women who aspire to the role must be actively recruited, inducted, and prepared for the role (Hasson, 2011). More focused research will allow each aspirant leader's role in working with a mentor to vary based on the leadership needs of the school district in question (Criner, 2012). Mentoring relationships must be chosen carefully with respect to gender. Will the partnership of protégé-mentor be female-female or female-male (Henry, 2008)? The relationships may include peer-to-peer, versus someone older acting as a mentor to a younger protégé, so the peer-peer mentoring relationships may become more frequent than it has been in the past.

Munawar Hasson (2011) believes that women must experience enhanced opportunities to integrate theory and practice, to preview the role and to be supported through substantial internships in an effort to help them "fulfill their visions for bettering the lives of children in schools" (p. 171). In addition, Athena Vongalis-Macrow (2016)

posits that "having more women leaders and greater exposure to female types of leadership practices enhances the prospects of attracting more women into leadership" (p. 91). She believes this to be the case because "it appears a nice fit that women are suited to higher education leadership and, therefore, should be more highly represented in leadership positions" (p. 91).

Mentoring, which facilitates growth and development of educators, should be led in part by principals who are trained to understand what kind of qualities are suitable in women who currently teach (Hasson, 2011). Up and coming leaders need to be able to meet the challenges in schools today (Criner, 2012; Henry, 2008). Understanding that this transformation from teacher, to teacher leader, to educational administrative leader is one that needs to be developed cautiously in an open, nurturing, forward-thinking, and well communicated fashion (Ballard, 2010; Hasson, 2011). One suggested means to cope with the intensity of identity transformations through mentoring is to be attuned to culturally based networks (Dingus, 2008).

Mentoring is about delving deeper into the lives of the protégé's professional identities as they discover what they are capable of and how they want to continue to learn and grow as professionals. My intent is to ensure this continues, guided with an ethic of care, especially where female educational leaders are concerned. Hassan (2011) iterates that "researchers have illuminated the women's struggle to attain school leadership positions, but the transformation of females making this change in professional roles is seldom addressed in leadership literature" (p. 1). Research on mentoring is thus necessary in support of female educational leaders. "Research is not only an outward endeavor, but it … [is also about] re-searching our own lives, knowledge, passions and practice" (Snowber, 2005, p. 346). I feel we owe it to ourselves to dig deeper in an effort to uncover a greater breadth of possibilities which will further shape our professional identities.

This dissertation addresses these issues and proposes a notion of mentoring with an ethic of care that will hopefully inspire and change the way women are being promoted into educational administrative roles. This dissertation, although not exhaustive, provides much credible and current research in the field with respect to women leaders: a major step in a very meaningful and necessary direction. "Leaders who care enough to share the kinds of information necessary for mentoring and who are

generous enough with their time to follow through on the activities that are required to train others are good for schools" and are good for students (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000, p. 147). This kind of thinking underscores just how important research about mentoring females educational leaders with an ethic of care really is.

As I have noted, mentoring is a practice that is historically rich, contextually driven, theory steeped, and developmentally based. Athena—Greek goddess of wisdom, handicraft and war—was seen as protector and champion of Telemachus. Her Roman equivalent, the goddess of wisdom, to this day promotes self-reflection by engaging in "learning dialogues" (p. 3), thought to be heroic and powerful because of her seniority in the hierarchy or school system. She was thought to bring out the virtues of humility and mindfulness (Clutterbuck et al., 2017).

My investigation into female educational leaders who are mentored with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership roles is timely. According to the literature on mentoring, there is a need for more research on organizational or peer-mentoring, mentorship for females, and "developmental opportunities to all participants within a co-learning and collaborative space" (Nyanjom, 2018, p. 13; see also Chandler, 2011). To encourage a mentoring culture means to prioritize relationships that foster confidence, identity, and vision (Daloz, 2012; Kram, 1985b, Nyanjom, 2018). "Mentoring is evolving and transforming. … There is no finite endpoint for the work. All involved and the initiative itself are constantly 'becoming'" (Kochan & Pascarelli, 2012, p. 195). Turning to Buber again, Carolyn Shields and Anish Sayani (2005) credit the value he placed on relationships, central to mentoring:

> In order to develop the relationships that lead to sharing within diversity[,]. … we do not become the other, but we are frequently changed in the process in some fundamental and powerful ways as we encounter and learn to understand the other. (p. 388)

2.7. Concluding remarks

"Mentors lead us along the journey of our lives. … [T]hey embody our hopes, cast light on the way ahead. … and point out unexpected delights along the way" (Daloz, 2012, p. 18). This is the kind of journey that female educational leaders should be taking further, hinging on an ethic of care. I am advocating for the mentoring of female educational leaders with an ethic of care so they can successfully ascend into

educational administrative leadership roles in education. This literature review on mentoring reflects a desire to see more women represented in educational administrative leadership roles (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Young & Grogan, 2008). Knowing that "people live and learn in relation to others," and having outlined that the mentoring relationship is key in supporting and guiding women in their careers as educators and educational leaders, it is time to focus on the ethic of care and its place in the female educational leader's ascension (Shields, 2016, p. 126). As Noddings (2013a) emphasizes, "persons as individuals are formed in relation" and the relation is about how "we should meet and treat one another—with how to establish, maintain and enhance caring relations" (pp. 10-11). When identified in this manner, the ethic of care has equally important ties to relations as mentoring does.

In this next chapter, I embark on my literature review of the ethic of care with emphasis on "the centrality of women's experience in care ethics" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 10). I consider the marriage of mentoring with an ethic of care for female educational leaders into educational administrative roles as a means of promoting a moral environment: relations flourish because natural caring can flourish (Noddings, 2013b). As Noddings (2013a) urges, "perhaps it is time. ... to work toward a world in which women's experience is used to guide humanity to richer, more peaceful ways of life, both personally and professionally" (p. 211).

Chapter 3.

Ethic of Care Theory

3.1. Introduction

Nel Noddings' first book, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, was released in 1984. Since this time, she has written extensively about the ethic of care as a moral philosophy in the field of education. Her ethic of care theory forms the basis for much of this dissertation because I am seeking to investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care. While the ethic of care theory is generally believed to have been introduced in 1982 by Carol Gilligan, a student of Lawrence Kohlberg (educational psychologist famous for his work on the stages of moral development), in her now famous book *In a Different Voice*, I seek to understand the ethic of care theory and its development with Noddings' perspective at the forefront of my work.

This chapter is intended to delve deeper into understanding the ethic of care as it applies to the field of education and female leadership. Beginning with a brief history of the ethic of care, I also look at what other notable scholars have to say about the ethic of care, with a particular interest in researchers whose work on the ethic of care is either still relevant or ongoing today with regard to its impact in society and especially in education. The scholars I refer to in this light include Sara Ruddick, Virginia Held, Michael Slote, and Martha Nussbaum. The order in which I introduce each of these scholars is loosely chronological as I try to understand the birth and development of the ethic of care as I come to terms specifically with Noddings' version of the theory. I begin with the founder, Carol Gilligan; move on to Ruddick, acknowledged mother of the ethic of care; and then follow up with Held, a feminist with close ties to the development of the ethic of care (Ruddick, 1983). I then branch out to Slote and Nussbaum, who discuss Noddings' ethic of care as it relates to their work on ethics and morality, and on ethics, feminism, and humanity respectively. In introducing these scholars, I work towards more fully exploring what Noddings refers to as her ethic of care theory to try and understand Noddings' ethic of care within the greater philosophical framework of education.

By reverting back in time, I believe I will better understand the philosophy of education and its impact on how I am now at this place in the present day wrestling with the notion of the ethic of care as a means of mentoring female leaders' ascension to educational administrative leadership. I aim to summarize some of the philosophy that has led to Noddings' theory of the ethic of care. In particular, I discuss the work of philosophers whom Noddings refers to, including Aristotle, John Dewey and Immanuel Kant. Kant plays an important role in Noddings' shaping of moral obligations as different from his way of making sense of moral rules as universalizable and absolute categorical imperatives. I intend to unpack his (six) *categorical imperatives* later in this chapter. I end my discussion of these philosophers by introducing Martin Buber (1958) because of the strong influence his work has had on Noddings and on me, especially in relation to his book *I and Thou* which was first published in 1923 and then translated into English in 1937. With this philosophical framework in mind, I introduce Noddings' extensive work and her focus on her ethic of care theory spanning from 1984 to the present day. I look at how more current researchers are incorporating her ethic of care theory into their investigations. Most importantly, I outline the four pillars of her ethic of care theory which I will detail further in my narrative inquiry chapter. Finally, to close out this literature review of Noddings' work and the ethic of care theory, I consider challengers of Noddings' work, including those better known in the field of education (some of whom Noddings responds to in her writings). By contextualizing Noddings' work in this way, I intend to give greater presence and weight to her theory of the ethic of care.

Before I begin my literature review, I offer a few thoughts on where I stand with respect to the ethic of care theory and why it is the focal point of my writing. As many graduate students working towards completing a dissertation will agree, finding a topic of interest that will fuel a desire to complete the research and writing can be a challenge. I had thought my interest lay in researching some aspect of professional identity. This, however, led me to realize that the reason for my desire to better understand the role of identity was the way I viewed myself as a professional: or more precisely, how others perceived me as a professional. I knew that my research had to make an impact in the field, which led me back to an experience I had with a superior of mine whose actions I did not fully understand. I needed help with actualizing my professional goals, and he was the only person in a position able to help me. Unfortunately, his response showed what I deemed as a lack of caring and a lack of support. Hence, out of this troubling

situation grew my desire to pair mentoring with an ethic of care for females like me desiring to move into administrative roles in education. I have had a strong desire to make sense of why one's professional identity is not automatically framed from a helping or caring standpoint in the field of education. Our rise through the ranks is certainly not achieved in isolation, and I want to better understand my role in supporting this kind of ascension for females (like me) in the field of education.

As a young adult, I had some personal experiences which changed the course of my life and put into perspective what mattered most and who I was. A family member's health condition really taught me how precious life is, and so I put family first and became the one-caring. This way of being naturally flowed into my professional life as an educator, and I found ways to show my students they mattered and that I cared about them. The more I read about caring, the more Noddings' work on the ethic of care seemed to be mentioned. Her theories resonated with me to the point where it felt as if I had written sections of her books. Her focus on the home, on parenting, on motherhood, on the challenge to care, and on moral education all helped me contemplate my moral obligation in certain situations. I have an understanding of the important connections that form between an adult and adult, a child and child, and an adult and child, both at home and at school. I understand that the culture of caring in each place impacts the development of healthy children into adulthood. I have a sense of why Noddings has rejected Kant's categorical imperative and his moral reasoning towards universalizability. Noddings' work has helped me make sense of what needed to change in order for my superior to have opted to mentor me. Noddings and various other important scholars both past and present have helped me reflect on my practice.

Thinking back, I found as an educator in meetings at the office that my voice mattered when it came to advocating for my students. Having formed important relationships with my students, I found the rules and reasons of Kant's categorical imperative of universalizability did not apply if there were extenuating circumstances that justified, for example, my student's attendance on a field trip even when the immediate behaviour warranted otherwise; or for students being in a position to pass the grade level, even though the students' attendance was poor, because they had somehow shown success in managing the content in other less traditional ways. In other words, the work of Noddings, scholars in the field, and philosophers of education including Buber has greatly impacted my view of the importance of the historical perspective as

well as current understanding of the value of relations. With these perspectives in mind, this chapter will serve to outline in depth the impact the ethic of care can have on the leadership of females in education.

Of particular interest to me is the fact that Noddings focuses on morality in the home and in schools. Her work has led me to Gilligan's work, both of whom discuss the different voice of the feminine views of morality. The field of education is a service-oriented and caring profession, so it is no wonder that Noddings looks at schools as a place where educators can foster environments that allow caring to flourish (Noddings, 2013a). She differentiates between the kind of caring that is generally expressed at home, a kind of natural caring that is "treasured in every facet of human life" and "may require monumental physical or emotional effort, but … does not require a moral effort" because it is generally "motivated by love or inclination" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 12). She also looks at caring in schools, which is likely better conveyed as "ethical caring, the relation in which we do meet the other morally … described as arising out of natural caring—that relation in which we respond as one-caring out of love or natural inclination" (Noddings, 1984, p. 5). An ethic of care is foundational to relations that matter, "motivated by our longing for and commitment to natural caring. … the motivating force behind ethical caring" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 13). Ethical caring should be intuitive, authentic, expressed by both males and females, and should attend to the objective of presenting a reciprocal relation in which the cared-for is in a position to become her best self (Noddings, 1984, 2013a).

Noddings' ethic of care as a way of being puts emphasis on the relation and more specifically, on dialogue towards *confirmation*. In relations with others, Dewey's (1938) notion that "education is essentially a social process," raises the bar for seeking quality human relations and the desire for natural caring, especially in schools, towards the actualization or *confirmation* of one's best self (Dewey, 1938, p. 58; see also Noddings, 2013b).

3.2. The ethic of care theory: A history of the scholarship

3.2.1. Carol Gilligan (and Lawrence Kohlberg)

In her book *In a Different Voice*, Gilligan (1982) describes an alternative approach to solving moral problems. She approaches her discussion of morality from the perspective of a theme of moral reasoning "based largely on the experience of women" (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 2012b, p. 771). For women in particular, her explanations of morality and an ethic of care have resonated with me (Gilligan, 1982; see also Monchinski, 2010; Noddings, 1992, 2013a; Rachels, 2003). Gilligan's moral realization came to light through her work as a student with Lawrence Kohlberg, an educational psychologist who researched the stages of moral development in what turned out to be a longitudinal study that spanned twenty years of interviewing eighty-four boys and men of various ages. In this study, Kohlberg created a now famous yet fictitious scenario called the *Heinz Dilemma*. The story was that Heinz's wife was stricken with cancer and needed $2,000 for a medication of which he had only been able to raise half. Unfortunately, the pharmacist rejected the $1,000, leading to Heinz's Dilemma. Should the husband steal the drug to save his wife?

Analyzing the responses in his study, Kohlberg concluded there are six stages of moral development throughout life: the Stage of Punishment and Obedience, whereby right is achieved by obeying authority; the Stage of Individual Instrumental Purpose and Exchange, whereby right is achieved when individuals act to meet their own and others' needs; the Stage of Mutual Interpersonal Expectations, Relationships, and Conformity, where right is achieved when social roles and relationships are fostered in a maintenance of loyalty and trust; the Stage of Social Systems and Conscience Maintenance, whereby right is achieved by performing one's duty for the welfare of not just the individual, but rather a larger group in society; the Stage of Prior Rights and Social Contract or Utility, in which right is achieved by preserving basic rights, values, and the legal systems of society; and lastly, the Stage of Universal Ethical Principles, wherein right is achieved by the most mature individuals who are capable of full actions of morality for the sake of humankind (Rachels, 2003).

Gilligan claimed that this study was flawed in that it portrayed hypothetical rather than actual events and likely resulted from actions formed by social influences. She

noted, for example, how men who decline to be drafted into the war are seen as being more feminine. She claimed that men would likely not decline being drafted into the war due to fear of societal pressures and the societal expectations placed on males. More importantly, however, Gilligan claimed that Kohlberg's study was glaringly missing females (Gilligan, 1982; see also Noddings, 1984; Rachels, 2003).

Gilligan's issue with Kohlberg's moral theory was that if women were to be judged by Kohlberg's six stages of moral development, women would progress only through the first three of the six stages because of how women approach moral problems like the Heinz study. Women see moral issues as "concrete human problems to be lived and to be solved in living" rather than as formulaic and abstract problems to be solved (Noddings, 1984, p. 96). According to Kohlberg, this would have been accurate because of how he saw the role that women had in the home rather than the workplace. Women's voices were inferior, hence, there was no urgent need for moral reasoning by women. As Gilligan has attested, women's voices were not inferior, merely different. Gilligan therefore revisited Kohlberg's study of morality to examine how women approach problems: that is, firmly invested in fostering and developing a caring relationship. Females progressed to stage three, which is centered on relationships where "morality is conceived in interpersonal terms and goodness is equated with helping and pleasing others" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 19). When faced with a problem, Gilligan (1982) found that women would approach the issue from a perspective of care and responsibility versus rights and rules. She inferred from this that women would choose to "tie the development of their moral thinking to changes in their understanding of responsibility and relationships, just as the conception of morality as justice ties development to the logic of equality and reciprocity" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 73). In short, individuals, especially women, use reasoning in unique ways to assess a relationship between themselves and others in an effort to maintain positive relations with them (Gilligan, 1982; see also Noddings, 1992, 2010).

Gilligan (1982) shares evidence of how differently a young girl and a young boy both respond to a question of morality: Is there more value in human life or being in possession of property or a drug? A man requires medication for his wife or she will die, but he does not have enough money to pay for the medication. The boy responds by stating that life trumps the right to property, so the husband must steal the drugs for his wife. This is a matter of life and death. The girl responds by stating that there is no way

the husband can steal the drugs because he would not be able to care for his wife in the future from a jail cell. The way to remedy the situation from the girl's perspective is to explain the situation to the pharmacist because once the story is shared, the pharmacist will understand and provide the husband with the medication he needs to save his wife. For the girl, preserving the relationship she had with *both* the pharmacist and the patient is of utmost importance in her decision. She asks questions, listens, fosters the relationship, and then makes her decisions. If Kohlberg believes that "an ethic of principle is superior to an ethic that emphasizes intimacy, caring, and personal relationships," then he is mistaken (Rachels, 2003, p. 164). These are likely the relationships that will not soon be forgotten by the pharmacist: the husband, his wife, and the girl trying to save a life (Noddings, 1984; see also Gilligan, 1982). Trying to exhaust all options available to the husband to solve the problem of saving his wife are human nature especially as relationships are fostered between the husband, the pharmacist and the girl.

Gilligan's (1982) uncovering of the different gendered voices in their resolution of moral dilemmas, such as the Heinz example, speaks to her resolve that there is not a "single mode of social experience and interpretation" but instead, there are two voices wherein when women speak "lies the truth of an ethic of care" (p. 173). Yet further illustrated in not only this example, but also through her studies and her interactions and conversations with women over the course of more than thirty years, Gilligan (2011) asks, "Why is the ethic of care still embattled" (p. 18)? She argues that our culture is gendered, living in relation to a patriarchy where being male is implicitly superior to being female. Thus, it is the male who rises to the top as the term patriarchy suggests. According to Gilligan (2011), patriarchy means:

> a hierarchy or rule of priests in which the *hieros*, the priest, is a *pater*, a father. In a patriarchal family or religion or culture, power and authority descend from a father or fathers, and human qualities designated masculine are privileged over those gendered feminine. (p. 19)

Through this patriarchal or gendered lens, "justice is aligned with reason, mind, and self—the attributes of 'rational man'—and caring with emotion, body and relationships— 'feminine' concerns that like women in patriarchy are at once idealized and devalued" (pp. 23-24). Gilligan notes that the different voice arises when women's voices are heard and not omitted. She raises the bar on an ethic of care that encompasses the voices of

women: "Within a patriarchal framework, care is a feminine ethic. Within a democratic framework, care is a human ethic. A feminist ethic of care is a different voice within a patriarchal culture" (p. 22). By "joining reason with emotion, [and] self with relationships", Gilligan believes we give greater value to a human ethic of caring (p. 24). This different voice of women is the relational importance that is depicted in an ethic of care as expressed by Gilligan, who has passionately urged us to "act now" because we have a deeper understanding and a heightened awareness of a new story to tell and a "capacity for empathy, mind-reading, and collaboration [distinguishing] us not as women and men but as humans" (Gilligan, 2011, p. 180).

Gilligan describes my own different voice and brings clarity to my feelings of moral reasoning where Heinz is concerned. I would be hard-pressed to steal for a loved one but if I could first try everything else in my power in caring for them, including sharing my emotional and heartfelt predicament with my family and then with the pharmacist, this is a sign of commitment to maintaining relationships within a moral objective of caring. I can appreciate how Gilligan takes care to articulate her resolve to better understand morality from the different voice of females: not from a gendered perspective, but rather, by recognizing the patriarchal underpinnings of our assumptions about morality. "Feminism is not defined as an issue of women or of men, or as a battle between women and men, the women speak of the tensions they experience in their relationships not only with one another but also with men" (Gilligan, 2011, p. 176). In this dissertation, my personal narratives seek to provide insight into the tensions in my relations with self and others such as those relations which have impacted my professional identity, my career as an educational leader, and those that continue to impact my work in my field of education.

3.2.2. Sara Ruddick

Another notable scholar who has contributed greatly to the notion of the ethic of care is Sara Ruddick. She is worthy of mentioning because she has been quietly considered the "mother" of the ethic of care theory since her first article in 1980 and a book of the same name in 1989, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace* (Ruddick, 1980, 1989; see also Noddings, 2010; Saunder-Staudt, 2011). Ruddick is instrumental in bringing to light a philosophical discussion on the concept of mothering—the catalyst for opening up discussions about an ethic of care, the importance of

relationships, and morality. She starts a conversation about the work of mothering: "a mother's thought—the intellectual capacities she develops, the judgements she makes, the metaphysical attitudes she assumes, [and] the values she affirms" (Ruddick, 1989, p. 24). Mothers are constantly asking questions, reflecting, prioritizing, observing, and noting virtues. (Ruddick, 1989; see also Noddings, 2010)

Ruddick (1989) identifies three basic demands of maternal care: preservation (for survival), growth, and acceptability. "To be a mother," Ruddick emphasizes, "is to be committed to meeting these demands by works of preservative love, nurturance, and training" (p. 17). She believes that women serve to foster the growth of children so that they are acceptable to society. The importance of caring relations arises once again, as Ruddick outlines that no matter the culture, the act of caring is voluntary. When it is "generous and thoughtful, this collective, self-reflective activity [of mothering] is a source of critical and creative maternal thinking" that encompasses a need to "protect, nurture, and train" (p. 23). The challenge Ruddick identifies is that mothers are seen as "a powerless group whose thinking, when it has been acknowledged at all, has most often been recognized by people interested in interpreting and controlling rather than in listening" (p. 26). It is a role that "only those who participate in [the] practice can criticize its thinking" (p. 25). Further, only those in maternal roles have the intellectual strength and "moral character of [the] practice as a whole" to criticize its thinking (p. 25).

While Ruddick's reasoning that having the lived experience of being in a maternal role gives power to powerless mothers may hold some truth, she undermines our capacity as humans to understand and to care. The bringing together of groups of females in their maternal role is not the only way to gain intellectual strength and moral courage to think critically about maternal roles and caring as a means to act. I do believe that Ruddick's desire to open up conversations about maternal caring especially for those whom have not experienced being in a maternal role will hear about how important care is, and why the capacity for care is rooted in maternal instinct. They will also hear that the maternal role is important and should not be so marginalized. Ultimately, Ruddick has described yet another example of how women's voices are not being heard, or if they are, they are not being heard with an openness or an understanding of women's place in a patriarchal society.

Ruddick's (1989) closing arguments in her first book about mothering remind us that women who "acquire a feminist consciousness and engage in feminist politics are likely to become more effectively nonviolent" (p. 242). As well, she advocates that "by increasing mothers' powers to know, care, and act, feminism actualizes the peacefulness latent in maternal practice" (p. 242). Feminism is "dedicated to transforming those social and domestic arrangements that deliberately or unwittingly penalize women because of their sex" (p. 234). By opening up the conversation about maternal instincts of caring, Ruddick reminds us that "feminists focus seriously on the ways that gender—organizes political, personal, and intellectual life" (p. 234). Hence, Ruddick claims that feminists, when they find themselves in close encounters with other feminists at a coffee shop, store, rally or government facility, or whether they are mothers or not, will "encounter the ideal of solidarity" in the quest for peace from war and thus, form a more connected and caring society (p. 240). "Unlike maternal thinking, which is rooted in particular passions and loyalties, feminism explicitly proclaims an ideal of solidarity", but the important distinction is that this "solidarity" does not reflect an attitude feminists have to any or all women (pp. 239-240). Because what does occur, is that oftentimes context defines the gathering of feminists in solidarity such as those who have suffered abuse (sexual, economic, racial).

I agree that the ties that bind are much deeper than being female or having a maternal instinct. Increasingly, as we are inundated with more (mis)information globally, both formal and informal, the potential exists for sociocultural, political, economic, and religious influences to potentially undermine our humanity and Noddings' ethic of care. The potential is real for women and men, feminists or not, to have less desire for or trust in engaging in solidarity in public spaces. As noted by Ruddick above, this lack of desire or trust is real, even when the general desire for peace from war and a more connected society is the desired outcome.

Just as riveting as Ruddick's theories about care were when first published is her conclusion: "the story [she has] told is not the only one. … It makes a beginning that, like birth itself, revives human hopes" of peace towards caring relations (p. 251). Indeed, this story is a complex one, or the ethic of care would not still be so embattled as claimed by Gilligan (2011). The story of feminism is a complex one, requiring a closer, harder look at how our culture comes to value peace and friendship. A truly connected and caring society, especially in a multicultural context such as the one in which I and so many of

us live, is formed on much more than gender: religious beliefs, heritage, socioeconomic status, and political views. Thus, I am looking to Noddings' ethic of care theory to help me make sense of the mentorship of female educational leaders with an ethic of care in the field of education because Ruddick is right: we must act now, in hopes for progress towards caring relations.

3.2.3. Virginia Held

Virginia Held, another individual widely recognized for her work on the ethic of care theory, is a strong advocate for non-violence. She outlines four primary features as being central to what she calls an *ethics* of care. First, an ethics of care values meeting the needs of self. Held (2006) asserts that we have moral rights to food and shelter as well as caring relations. In conjunction with caring for self, an ethics of care values meeting the needs of others; it deepens our satisfaction for daily living and progress. (Held, 2006)

Second, Held (2006) suggests that an ethics of care is seen as "a mosaic of insights" that "value[s] the way it is sensitive to contextual nuances and particular narratives rather than making the abstract and universal claims of more familiar moral theories" such as Kantian ethics, utilitarian ethics and virtue ethics tend to. Held's ethics of care accepts and "values emotions"; therefore, studying these feelings can be insightful (p. 10). Emotions such as sympathy, sensitivity, and anger can be cultivated and explained in the face of morality. However, from the perspective of care as moral theory, Held clearly illustrates that there is dissonance between care and justice. In other words, "moral inquiries that rely entirely on reason and rationalistic deductions or calculations are seen as deficient" of caring relations (p. 10). Instead, morality must take into account the caring relation because currently, those who exemplify justice fail to meet an ethics of care. Decision making that features justice as only being right or wrong will inadvertently segregate men from women even further because more women than men operate consistently from a caring ethic of valuing emotion; more women than men understand that decision making can be challenging because it often exists in a grey zone, like Heinz's dilemma earlier in this chapter.

This brings us to the third characteristic that Held (2006) makes about the ethics of care being opposed to dominant moral theories because of its tendency to favour

impartiality and the abstract. She provides clarity in showing that universalistic and abstractions of dominant moral theories cannot override the basic obligations that parents have to care for their dependents and to form actual relations with them. She further illustrates that a simple act of playing favourites among children belies dominant moral theories, leading to "potential conflict between care and justice, friendship and impartiality, loyalty and universality" (p. 11). To sum up this third characteristic, "the ethics of care recognizes the *moral* value and importance of relations of family and friendship and the need for moral guidance" (p. 12). This applies not only to females, but also to humans.

The last point that Held (2006) recognizes as central to an ethics of care is the notion that relations are often unequal, non-contractual (e.g. between parent and child and not by choice), and inclusive of obligations. She notes that the conditions for justice versus care need to be more morally congruous. Moralities are built on the notion that through life, we seek to become independent, autonomous, and rational—seemingly with no acknowledgement of our dependency for care at any stage of life. Held reminds us that there is a moral claim on care when it comes to children, as it is expected that children are cared for from birth, through infancy, and then through childhood into adulthood. Held considers an ethics of care as a moral theory that shows relevancy for private or familial good as well as for public good, such as in medicine, law, and international relations. If there is a group for whom justice is sought and is acknowledged by society, it is parents in care of their children.

Held's ethics of care has matured since its inception just a few decades ago. Noddings (2012a) agrees with Held (2006) that, "care ethics is concerned with relations and need" and values the virtues of caring emotions that have been marginalized because of their feminine qualities such as nurturance, patience, and humility (p. 109). Held (2006) adds: "The ethics of care does not accept and describe the practices of care as they have evolved under actual historical conditions of patriarchal and other dominations; it evaluates such practices and recommends what they morally ought to be like" (p. 39). She also asserts that "justice protects equality and freedom, care fosters social bonds and cooperation" (p. 15). In the absence of justice, the ethics of care may still prevail, and not just in the private sphere because "relations of care … (are) wider and deeper than relations of justice" (Held, 2006, p. 41).

Held (2006) offers a promising connection between her understanding of the ethics of care and a normalization of the practice of care, of how we can consider more inviting ways to take our knowledge and use it to guide how we ought to live our lives. She insists that in the public sphere, the government should be responsible for encouraging care of individuals in society within the individual nation towards globalization in favour of attentiveness (or what Noddings (2002) calls engrossment), responsiveness to need, trust, and a cultivation of caring relations (see also Noddings, 2010, 2012a, 2012b; Saunder-Staudt, 2011). The kind of caring typical of females ought to be part of dominant moral theory, therefore, this ethics of care should be "influential in society and even in global relations" because "humans are relational" (Held, 2013, p. 648). By forming caring relations, humans are more responsive, sensitive, attentive, and thus better able to foster trust.

The implications of such an ethics of care in the political and social realm, according to Held (2013), are critical in many areas, but particularly for my research about women in education seeking ascension into administrative educational leadership. I believe that in the public sphere, there is a general understanding that to care is an essential part of cultivating healthy relations. However, the dialogue about caring first needs to resonate with those individuals within the greater society who operate from a justice and equality standpoint. I aim to bring clarity to the justice-versus-care debate within the context of female educational leaders seeking recruitment into educational administrative leadership roles by way of being mentored with an ethic of care.

3.2.4. Michael Slote

Michael Slote is another philosopher who has contributed to the ethic of care theory through his work on the ethic of care and empathy. He is greatly influenced by the early work of Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984) and their introductions of the ethic of care and moral theory. Slote believes individuals are better people when they operate via an ethic of care. He responds favourably to the concept of the ethic of care because of its focus on the human connection or relationship; to me, this is of utmost importance in looking at the mentoring of females with an ethic of care in the field of education. In his earlier writings, Slote (2001) claims that females have a greater tendency to behave morally and to give care and thus, have a greater ability to grow morally (See also Noddings, 2002, 2010). Over the past three decades or so, Slote's philosophical thinking

about the ethic of care has been further extended and consistently attributed to feminist scholars, notably Gilligan, "founding mother" and Noddings, "pioneer" (2010; 2013, p. 2). He describes the ethic of care as "[giving] us a basis for understanding moral education … that emphasizes empathy in particular" (Slote, 2013, p. 3; see also Slote, 2001, 2010).

Slote's (2013) review of Gilligan's (1982) work about the ethic of care and females is informed by scholars both inside and outside philosophy including: Gilligan, Noddings, Held, Kant, and Dewey. Slote's comments about an ethic of care indicates that he sees the ethic of care "as a way of thinking (and feeling) very different from that which Gilligan, in her earlier days of writing, had attributed (mainly) to males" (Slote, 2010, p. 150). He has come to consider the different voices from Gilligan as two opposing voices: "the one that stresses feelings and our direct connection with others rather than reason and the [other] rational or conscientious application of moral rules or principles to moral issues" (Slote, 2013, p. 5). The one voice illustrates an ethic of care that is focused on thinking and feeling, while the other focuses on liberalism. The ethic of care, he believes, is not traditional in philosophical outlooks like those of "Kantianism, utilitarianism, and Aristotelian virtue ethics" (p. 5). In other words, Slote (2013) identifies that the ethic of care suggests that "it is morally better to be directly concerned about another's [or others'] well-being than refer to and be guided by principles or rules in deciding what to do about that well-being" (p. 18).

Slote (2013) proceeds to reference Bernard Williams' well-known hypothetical example of a husband saving his wife from drowning in water when alongside her is a stranger who also needs saving. Kantian liberal rationalism would suggest that the husband is morally obligated to save a life and that he would save his wife because of his love and devotion to her. However, Slote asserts that the ethic of care should be favoured because of its potential swiftness in making the call to save the wife from drowning. The Kantian model is a multi-step thought process which has the potential to resemble this scenario: firstly, a life must be saved, and secondly, is it my moral obligation to save my wife first and thirdly, yes, if I am devoted to her, I save her first. Care ethicists would reason that the decision-making process is already tainted because in the wife's eyes, the husband should not have to question whose life to save first and that the processing time it takes to work through the moral dilemma is unrealistic in a life and death situation. The process of "moral sentimentalism" whereby "feeling (directly) for

others rather than rationally grounded moral dutifulness or conscientiousness" should be the life-saving routine for the husband to save his wife from drowning (Slote, 2013, p. 18; see also Slote, 2010).

3.2.5. Martha Nussbaum

Less closely examined in Nodding's scholarly writings has been Martha Nussbaum's (1997) work on such topics as feminists, the law, and humanity. While the majority of Nussbaum's work is seemingly not as relevant, I do mention Nussbaum because of her focus on cultivating humanity, a topic to which she dedicates an entire book about reform in liberal education, which speaks to the ethic of care. In her book, *Cultivating Humanity*, Nussbaum (1997) refers to the classical Greek philosophies of Aristotle, Plato and Socrates in shaping the concept of the "world citizen" (p. 9). Nussbaum states that we are:

> drawing on Socrates' concept of "the examined life," on Aristotle's notions of reflective citizenship, and above all, on Greek and Roman Stoic notions of an education that is "liberal" in that it liberates the mind from the bondage of habit and custom, producing people who can function with sensitivity and alertness as citizens of the whole world. (p. 8)

Perhaps her vision of citizenship provides a different vision in which Noddings' ethic of care theory is also reflected.

Nussbaum claims that "intelligent citizenship" requires depth in three areas of capacity, providing a broad historical and cross-cultural understanding of the value of the ideal citizen (p. 11). The first is that we must aim to think critically about "the examined life" in the Socratic tradition, which is to question, to dialogue, and to justify the concept of ourselves and our traditions for living our lives fully as citizens. Socratic teaching is meant to "fulfill the promise of democratic citizenship" (p. 10).

The second area of capacity requiring the cultivation of humanity is for citizens to have "an ability to see themselves not simply as citizens of some local region or group but also, and above all, as human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern" (p. 10). The rise of citizenry or "narrative imagination" occurs when an individual can think critically and relate to self and other, and show empathy as well as to "understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed"

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may possess (p. 11). Nussbaum brings clarity to the fact that understanding with empathy is essential, leading up to a responsible act of judgment when necessary. Being able to make decisions in the context of who the person is and the person's history brings meaning and imagination to the relationship. This connection between humans is the caring relation that is so integral to Noddings' ethic of care theory. In relationships that are caring, dialogue between people will bring Socrates' inquiry and Aristotle's reflective insights forward. "Intelligent citizenship" is what Nussbaum (1997) believes that citizens of today need to be taught in schools (p. 11).

The third reason that Nussbaum (1997) believes it is important to be *cultivating humanity* arises from her insights on gender through her personal experiences, her education, her discussions with colleagues, and through her writing. Nussbaum believes that "Socrates' [mentor] dialogue with Polemarchus [student] and its modern counterparts shows us something else as well: that progress can be made through a reflection that seeks the common good" (p. 25). In historic fashion, just as Plato illustrates that a good moral dilemma can be debated (even if merely cerebrally), Nussbaum feels that feminism or gender roles need not play a role in humans becoming citizens of the world. Whether we are female or of a certain religious or ethnic minority, we should all be:

> seen and also heard, with respect and love, both as knowers and as objects of study, an academy in which to be a "fellowess" need not mean being called "courtesan," an academy in which the world will be seen to have many types of citizens and in which we can all learn to function as citizens of that entire world. (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 7)

Courtesan became Nussbaum's title when she was the first female to hold the Junior Fellowship, as *Fellowess* would prove to be too awkward. Times have since changed and the title *courtesan* is history.

Nussbaum (1997) holds an open and critical mind, much as she would have read that the Roman Stoics "are correct to find in all human beings the world over a capacity for critical searching and a love of truth" (p. 63). She believes that humans who are educated to become "intelligent citizens" (p. 11) experience and understand the complexity of human connections across gender, language, cultures, and that what is owned is "not better simply because it is familiar" (p. 62). Being critical and reflective requires "a sensitive and empathic interpreter" (p. 63). What certainly holds true in

Nussbaum's account of cultivating humanity extends back to the work of Socrates and Plato. Her interest in strengthening humanity through schooling is one that persists for the greater good of the public sphere by engaging humans in dialogue towards a shared respect and empathy for each other as citizens of the world. Noddings' ethic of care is able to combine Nussbaum's ideal of humans being bound to one another through relations of care in such a way that they seek confirmation to become their best selves.

I have included Nussbaum's work as a way of both reinforcing and enriching Noddings' ethic of care theory because, while they both value relations and dialogue which is largely cultivated in schools, I appreciate how Nussbaum offers insights into how history has shaped who we are and who we will become. We reflect this process through our ability to engage with self and others as intelligent citizens who can show empathy and cultivate a respectful humanity. Nussbaum articulates her bigger idealistic vision of who we should become with what resembles (for me) a real, hands on approach to achieving a respectful humanity. I would love to consider how, if Noddings and Nussbaum were to intertwine their work together more closely, the combined capacity of their idealistic visions could impact home and school relations, starting with encouraging our hearts and minds to grow together.

3.2.6. David Hume

Nussbaum's empathy and Noddings' caring are also informed by philosopher David Hume's morality of emotions. As Nussbaum (1997) reiterates, these ideas of feelings and morality "are not altogether new in the history of thought: many of them, for example, can be found in the work of Hume" (p. 197). Hume's (1751) work is important to this research because of his statement that "virtue is nothing but Conformity to Reason, yet, in general seem to consider Morals as deriving their Existence from … Sentiment" (p. 3). In her first book, Noddings (1984) considers Hume's resurgent philosophy about morality being founded on and rooted in emotions because of his thinking about morality as an active principle "which Nature has made universal to the whole Species. … For what else can have an Influence of this nature?" (Hume, 1751, p. 7). Noddings (1984) asks, "What is the nature of this feeling" (p. 79)? She follows this question with a suggestion that morality is based on two feelings: the first being the sentiment of natural caring and the second, of ethical caring. According to Noddings, natural caring precedes ethical caring because natural caring is "our longing for caring—

to be in that special relation—that provides the motivation for us to be moral" (p. 5), whereas the latter is formulated upon remembrance of the first kind of natural caring such as between mother and child. "I have a picture of those moments in which I was cared for and in which I cared, and I may reach toward this memory and guide my conduct by it if I wish to do so" (Noddings, 1984, p. 80). So in ethical caring, we "do not meet the other morally," but in trying to enhance our ideal of ourselves" we do "strive to meet the other morally" (p. 5).

In response to Hume's morality as an active principle or "active virtue," Noddings (1984) clarifies her perspective that an "ethical ideal" or "virtue" in response to the one-caring is relational. Noddings' ethical ideal "reaches out to the other and grows in response to the other" (p. 81). The desire to be moral is strong as is the inclination to care. This affirms a desire for engrossment in a natural caring way especially when the other is our child to whom we *want,* more than *ought* or *must*, care for our child especially when he or she cries at night. "To reject the feeling when it arises is either to be in an internal state of imbalance or to contribute willfully to the diminution of the ethical ideal" especially since "the source of my obligation is the value I place on the relatedness of caring" (p. 84).

Further, in response to moral action, Noddings explains that the internal emotions of care that bring forward ethical behaviour are universal. How we are able to care for and to be the one-caring depends on our "will to be good" as we are in a caring relation with the other (p. 103).

Hume and subsequently, Noddings have attested to the fact that "reason is [almost] slave to the passions" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 8; see also Hume, 1751). From an ethical caring standpoint, both believe that cultivating the passions gives rise to "pleasure in both social and ethical life" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 19) while "a thoroughly relational view puts less emphasis on moral heroism and more on moral interdependence" (p. 35). Behaving morally is more feasible when in relation with others who are pleasant in amenable situations, whereas behaving morally is less favourable when one is in relations with someone who is not pleasant in difficult situations (Hume, 1751; Noddings, 2003). The ability to cultivate the passion is what I seek to find to support mentoring female educational leaders into educational administrative leadership roles with an ethic of care. Fostering a passionate, mentoring community of relations

allows moral interdependence to thrive and become "part of our everyday moral obligation to develop and maintain an environment in which moral life can flourish" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 9). Mentoring is intended to bring out the important relations with others in favour of moral interdependence because experiences that support learning is key. My narratives will highlight this assertion in the fifth chapter of this dissertation.

3.2.7. Immanuel Kant

The modernist philosopher Immanuel Kant is often mentioned in Nodding's work in relation to morality and her ethic of care theory because of his contradictory and objective views of the moral theories I have already discussed. He is noted as being influential in valuing a more individualistic, utilitarian, and universalized perspective of morality (Noddings, 2012b). Kant's intuitions on morality outlined here illustrate these individualistic views. He believed that children are educated into adulthood to become independent and autonomous, capable of rational, moral actions through "nurture, discipline and instruction or cultivation" (Palmer, 2005, p. 63). But for Kant, the process is "on the basis of rational grasp of the moral law not on the basis of some natural desires" (Palmer, 2005, p. 62).

Kant's opposing views about Hume's impressions of experience and subjective knowledge were made clear in Kant's theory of moral intuitions, known as the *categorical imperative*. There are six common intuitions or imperatives of Kant's, introduced and translated by Scruton (1982) here, pertaining to my work on Noddings' ethic of care theory. The first intuition concerns *The Content of Morality.* Kant views morality as including a respect for self and others, whereby the law "regards all men as equal before the moral law" (p. 72). The second intuition is *The Force of Morality*—the motive of morality which "rules us absolutely and necessarily" (p. 72). For example, romantic interest and desire such as lust are wrong; thus, should a man consciously choose to perform an illegal act, the law will prevail. The third moral intuition is *The Good Will,* which guides all moral judgement of actions, ideally for good only. The next two moral intuitions are *The Moral Agent* and *The Role of Law*. The moral agent is one who acts with cause and reason. Of "reason and cause, intention and desire, action and passion, esteem and affection. … only a person has rights, duties and obligations; only a person acts for reasons in addition to causes; only a person merits our esteem" (p. 73). Next, the Role of Law shows the obligation that man has to dutifully act according to the

law, whereas *Reason and the Passions* is the final moral intuition highlighted by Kant, which brings to the fore our conscience which must balance the tensions between desire and duty by allowing or forbidding unlawful actions. Kant's intuitions of morality are intended to lead us towards "transcendental freedom" (p. 75). We are "empirical beings, bound by the laws of causality, and as transcendental beings, obedient to imperatives of reason alone" (p. 75). Kant (Scruton, 1982) positions his categorical imperatives in an effort to present a notion of universalizability of "principles and rules as the major guide to ethical behaviour" (p. 75).

Other scholars and I reject such a categorical imperative (Noddings, 1984, p. 5). Noddings (1984) believes that Kant's ideal that "any ethical judgement—by virtue of it being an ethical judgement—must be universalizable" should be rejected because of the fact that given a specific set of circumstances, everyone would be expected to respond in a typical manner (p. 5). Noddings "emphatically" rejects this notion based on "how we meet the other morally," which is not universalizable or rule bound but rather based on the "uniqueness of human encounter" and our commitment to a caring attitude (p. 5).

Noddings believes that Kant's ideal about how individuals ought to behave and how they ought to conduct themselves in a morally attractive manner is misinformed and therefore at odds with her view of relational caring. As Noddings argues, "Kant subordinated feeling to reason" so he felt that "only acts done out of duty to carefully reasoned principle are morally worthy" which means that "love, feeling and inclination are all supposed by Kant to be untrustworthy" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 14). From the perspective of an ethic of care, Noddings believes the opposite to be true. Love, feeling, and inclination are trusted emotions. An ethic of care avoids logic and reason. In fact, the "preferred state is natural caring; ethical caring is invoked to restore it. This inversion of priority is one great difference between Kantian ethics and the ethic of care" (p. 14). (Noddings, 2002a)

Noddings' ethic of care theory is a commitment to achieving an ethical ideal that is purely relational in search of being one's best self with the support of the one-caring. Clearly, a significant difference between Kantian ethics and Noddings' ethic of care is that Noddings' ethic of care is anchored in feminist perspectives. "An ethic of care is thoroughly relational" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 14). Noddings (2013b) expresses her beliefs by stating that "[o]ur attention is on the *relation,* not solely, or principally on the moral

agent" (p. 118). This means that "how good I can be [as the one-caring] is partly a function of how you the other [and cared-for]—receive and respond to me" (Noddings, 1984, p. 6). Either the one-caring "must" be attentive and show care, or the cared-for "must" be willing to respond or the relation is not adequate (Noddings, 2002a). Alternatively, Kant's "moral requirements are *categorical*" (Rachels, 2003, p. 121). Regardless of one's personal interests and desires, wants and needs, Kant suggests that only desire and reason are necessary to ensure moral obligations can be met (Rachels, 2003) without attention to or care for relations.

My commitment to Noddings' ethic of care, a relational theory, is about my seeking answers to my investigation in support of female educational leaders being mentored with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership roles. Seeking out our best selves with caring as the foundation is necessary for, as Noddings (2002a) argues, "a relational interpretation of caring [to push] us to look not only at moral agents but also at the recipients of their acts and the conditions under which the parties interact" (p. 14). Kantian ethics will not push even those with a "well-developed capacity to care [so] that they can establish caring relations in even the most difficult situations" because a caring ethic "eschews logic and reasoning" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 14).

3.2.8. John Dewey

John Dewey is relevant to this research not so much because of his direct contribution to the theory of the ethic of care, but rather because of his contribution to the philosophy of education and specifically, his ideas surrounding education, democracy, and morality. By illustrating how education, democracy, and morality are important to an ethic of care, I also aim to highlight Dewey's educational philosophy as it relates to my work on mentoring females into educational administrative leadership positions.

Dewey's (1938, 1944) work clearly reflects what many feminist scholars and educators such as Noddings (1984), Gilligan (1982), and Held (1984) hold dear about valuing relationships, care for self, and care for others. Regina Leffers (1993) states that likeminded "theorists believe that the caring, protecting, preserving, and repairing work that women have always done within relationships is something that we need to value and use" (p. 65). She posits that the highest level of moral reasoning in the ethic of care

is met when a woman is able to "consider the needs of both self and other and to be responsible to both" (p. 67). To that end, Leffers outlines aspects of Dewey's educational philosophy that reflect these same values of relationships and of care, which he discusses as being important both in the home and in the institutional setting.

Leffers (1993) examines "the values and principles that can provide us with a theoretical foundation for a universalized caring response" (p. 65). She looks to Dewey's work to add "insight and clarity" into what she calls the ethics of care (p. 64). She identifies three stages of development for moral reasoning in the ethics of care, beginning with mothering as a form of caring. The first level of the ethics of care reflects a mother caring for herself as a means of survival with little regard for the other because she feels a helplessness, a powerlessness, and a disconnect from others. The second level of the ethics of care proves to be more hopeful because at this stage, a mother has discovered how to help others; she is able to gain self-worth through her ability to help even though there is a lack of choice about whom she helps. The highest level of moral reasoning for Leffers' ethics of care is established when a mother is fully engaged in caring for self and universal others. This is similar to Dewey's vision of "life as it gets lived as an organic, contextually embedded whole, [and] it becomes meaningful and useful for life, learning, and growth" (Leffers, 1993, p. 70; see also Dewey, 1938, 1944, 1990a, 1990b). In this way, Leffers' (1993) theory of the ethics of care:

> can explain why the caring response at the highest level of moral reasoning in the ethics of care includes both self and other and also why it is capable of moving beyond particularity, including others who ostensibly exist outside of our individual human circles. (p. 65)

This caring response in practice is relationally achieved through human experience.

The basis of Dewey's philosophy is grounded in education, which is rooted in experience. Dewey has written extensively about the continuity of education throughout life and its importance as a social or communicative and relational process that occurs both in the institution and beyond. Within an educational context, pupils form groups and learn to care through human experience. Dewey (1938) asserts that "education is essentially a social process" (p. 58) to bring to light human experiences of care to be practiced. For Dewey (1944), there is significance in the nature of group formation and the resulting relations of caring "whether we permit chance environments to do the work, or whether we design environments for the purpose" (p. 19). "Each group exercises a

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formative influence on the active dispositions of its members" (p. 21) while simultaneously, the "social environment exercises an educative or formative influence unconsciously and apart from any set purpose" (p. 17). It is a necessity that the social environment be able to nurture the capacities of the immature" especially within the complexities of our society (Dewey, 1944, p. 22). Education, according to Dewey (1944), is "a fostering, a nurturing, a cultivating, process" of relations in social settings (p. 10).

Dewey believes success for the "immature" or pupil is dependent not only on the social environment, but also on the state or status of the group. As a result, certain actions are required for a social organization to provide purposeful aims to the subset of groups, cliques, or partnerships to avoid any potential for isolation and exclusivity. This principle brings us to Leffer's highest level of moral reasoning in the ethics of care wherein females are able to care for self and other: specifically, others who are not already a part of our social circles. For Dewey (1944), this means that "from a social standpoint, dependence denotes a power rather than a weakness; it involves interdependence" (p. 44). This dependence can also be seen as a form of immaturity, which Dewey (1944) is adamant about identifying not as a weakness, but as a starting place for individuals with a capacity for growth. In time, "purpose [can] grow and take shape through the process of social intelligence" (Dewey, 1938, p. 72). Seventy decades after Dewey shared his thoughts, I don't believe we represent this kind of moral reasoning as well as we should in our educational leadership culture, which is why I seek to investigate mentoring with an ethic of care for female educational leaders seeking ascension.

There is value in Dewey's (1938) philosophy because, as he asserts, "the ideal aim of education is creation of power of self-control" (p. 64) so that the "guidance given by the teacher to the exercise of the pupil's intelligence is an aid to freedom, not a restriction upon it" (p. 71). Dewey (1944) believes that learning does not occur through the direct conveying of beliefs and values, but rather within a social environment whereby the individuals are bound together in a "carrying on of an activity" or activities so that the "individual appropriates the purpose which actuates it, becomes familiar with its methods and subject matters, [and] acquires needed skill" (Dewey, 1944, p. 22). Each group must have similar interests or values as entry points into the group to maintain social connectivity. Indeed, acknowledging all participants and their interactions in the

group as equitable for the greater good of society is the social—as well as political, cultural and economic—aim of democracy.

The final guideline that Leffers (1993) provides in considering Dewey's writings about the ethics of care is his provision for "mak[ing] a case for reclaiming artful living into the undergoings and doings of our experience" to ensure that we are thoughtful about whether "we have separated art from life" (p. 71). Here, Leffers connects the "values, imperatives and purposes" of Dewey's philosophy of education, thus, making yet another case for the ethics of care as an aesthetic experience. In Leffers' (1993) view of Dewey's philosophy:

> When we analyze the process we go through when we infuse the quality of art into the experience of our everyday lives, including our relationship to self, others, and community, we get a very clear paradigm for behaviour. Dewey's model has at its matrix the individual, radically connected to everyone and everything. Because of this radical connection it is imperative that we strive to be conscious, to be awake in the fullest sense: viscerally, emotionally, mentally, and interactively awake. (p. 73)

This awakening embodies a deeper consciousness. Dewey (1944) describes this "value" as "the attitude of prizing a thing, finding it worth while, [*sic*] for its own sake, or intrinsically. … for a full or complete experience" (p. 249). Alternatively, Dewey illustrates that the "value" also means "a distinctively intellectual act—an operation of comparing and judging-to valuate. … when direct full experience is lacking" (p. 249). He proceeds to explain that while each of these two perspectives on "values" is distinct and important, to appreciate and realize the contributions or significance of both together is a higher priority and "at some phase of its development should possess, what is for the individual concerned with it, an aesthetic quality" (Dewey, 1944, p. 249). According to Palmer (2005), on Dewey, "social experimentation, rather than absolute principles" could lead to a kind of strongly moral democratic society that could best be exemplified in a social setting "to ground culture and aesthetics in common experience" (pp. 179-180). There is an aesthetic beauty and form in the achievement of human experience that is not only conscious, but also subconscious (Dewey, 1938, 1944; see also Leffers, 1993; Palmer, 2005; Pappas, 1993).

Dewey's philosophy of valuing the beauty of human experience embodies his care for people—a caring that can be extended to the situation of women in positions of lesser rank, power or influence as they are mentored into educational administrative

leadership roles. I imagine the value Dewey places on education as a social process to be an invitation for mentored relations for female educational leaders: relations aiming to achieve the aesthetic beauty and the lasting relations in a society that will sustain a healthy democracy. Ideally, the social environment purposefully and consciously engages the female educational leader in a social process towards becoming someone who instinctively, intrinsically, and for the greater good of society develops into a person with confidence and the freedom to find success:

> What we want and need is education, pure and simple, and we shall make surer and faster progress when we devote ourselves to finding out just what education is and what conditions have to be satisfied in order for education to be a reality … for a sound philosophy of education. (Dewey, 1938, p. 91)

3.2.9. Martin Buber

Whereas Dewey and Leffers envision the social process of relations as integral to an ethic of care, Martin Buber offers, a reciprocity of relations enriching my quest to better understand Noddings, her ethic of care theory, and the receptivity of relations. Noddings references Buber frequently because of his congruent beliefs and educational philosophies with respect to relations and moral life. Hence, she draws significantly from his work. Buber is most widely recognized for his work on existentialist thought, which Cohen (1983) explains briefly in this way: "In his philosophy of education, Buber tried to embrace the whole complex of man's relationship with his fellowman and with society, with creation, and with God" (p. 14). Buber brings to fruition his *I-Thou* and *I-It* relation, reflecting that of a teacher-pupil or Noddings' one-caring/cared-for relation. He believes that relationships exist at the heart of education and that maintaining dialogue within relationships is of primary importance (Cohen, 1983; Noddings, 2012b).

Buber's I-Thou and I-It relations are of primary importance for an ethic of care. I-Thou fosters a relation of reciprocity, openness, and personal involvement with *I* owning the strength of presence in the I-Thou relation (Audi, 1999). On the other hand, I-It fosters a different impersonal objective relation that is characterized by forces that are social, economic, or causal. As Robert Audi (1999) explains, "Buber rejects the idea that people are isolated, autonomous agents operating according to abstract rules. Instead, reality arises *between* agents as they encounter and transform each other. In a word, reality is dialogical" (p. 104). Buber accepts that I-Thou relations arise in a healthy

education that is "intent on fostering true dialogue" and "inclusion" (Cohen, 1983, p. 13). When the one-caring encounters and is able to receive the other and take on the perspective of both the one-caring and the cared-for, this is the relational process of inclusion as outlined by Buber (1958), even if the effort is one sided. This is the presence that *I* own in the I-Thou relation (Cohen, 1983; see also Audi, 1999; Buber, 1958; Noddings, 1984).

As Noddings (1984) stresses, "All caring involves engrossment" or receptive attentiveness (p. 17). In this arrangement, the one-caring is committed to the cared-for; through the commitment, there is receptivity because "when I receive the other, I am totally with the other" (p. 32). This receptivity becomes especially important as the cared-for encounters everything in its presence. The challenge, however, is that the "relation may obtain even though the cared-for does not hear the Thou 'in his experience" (p. 74). Obviously, reciprocity does not imply an identity of gifts given and received" (p. 74). Rather, Noddings claims that "the key lies in Buber's peculiar use of "experience." For Buber, "experience" points to the object-world of It:

> When we "experience" something, we have already made that which we experience into an object or thing. Thus, the cared-for need not hear my Thou in his experience; that is, he need not acknowledge it propositionally. But he must respond to it. (Noddings, 1984, p. 74)

Buber recognizes that the *I-It* way of being is our everyday or natural way of being towards the outside world, whereas the I-Thou receptivity is "marked off as an achievement, a moment of full participation in communion with another human being" (Palmer, 2005, p. 241). Therefore, engagement through inclusion is "essential to the [cared-for's] becoming" (Palmer, 2005, p. 239). This receptive attentiveness or engrossment by the cared-for towards the encounter or engagement in dialogue with the one-caring, Noddings asserts, at best leads to self-actualization, a powerful transition for the cared-for as learner. The one-caring or teacher in a role of affirming and encouraging the best in others is what Buber (1958) calls *confirmation* (See also Cohen, 1983; Noddings, 1984; Palmer, 2005).

In relations between teacher and student, the practical receptivity is the learning that occurs. Personal experience and story between the one-caring and the cared-for are practical means to influencing receptivity. "Under the guidance of an ethic of caring, ethicality is determined in part by the degree of receptivity one has effectively exercised.

This means that one must make an effort to receive the others involved in a situation …
but it also means that we must reflect upon that reception" (Noddings, 1984, p. 114).
During an encounter, "the student is infinitely more important than the subject matter"
(Noddings, 1984, p. 176). The ideal is engrossment that is practiced and influenced by
the teacher as the one-caring so that "mutual inclusion moves a relationship away from
that of teacher-student towards friendship" (Noddings, 1984, p. 67). In this friendship,
trust would also be critical. Later in this chapter, I will discuss in greater detail the
importance that Buber's philosophy plays in deepening engrossment or attentive
receptivity, and of framing the four pillars of Noddings' ethic of care theory.

3.3. The ethic of care theory: scholars revisited

I began this journey being open to better understanding the scholarly history of
the ethic of care theory. What has been most compelling from the work of Buber and
Dewey through to Gilligan, Ruddick, and beyond is the consistency in desiring to find
passion, peace, understanding, and empathy through relation and dialogue as well as
valuing experience and humanity. In summary, the different voice of women within the
patriarchal or gendered lens of our society are still stifled by maternalistic thinking,
emotions as a sign of an inferior view of femininity, and a morality that is unjust and
inequitable, which has further inspired me to act. Knowing the impact these challenges
have had on females and specifically, the females seeking ascension to educational
administrative leadership, tells me that my own story is not unique. I resolve to further
understand the significance of the female voice by finding ways to form relations that
matter, so that dialogue can prosper. In this way, we look no longer at men and women,
but at humans and caregivers who are citizens of the world and who share empathy,
respect, and joy. Using Nussbaum's (1997) language of "cultivating humanity," I see the
role of educational leaders as a vital one: to guide, provide vision, and teach our children
so that all of our tomorrows are brighter, more peaceful, and hopeful (p. 11). The ethic of
care "as a way of thinking [and feeling]" is guided by the moral principles of humanity:
including females and males in a world where empathy, patience, peace, and
understanding are fostered before justice, universalization, and independence.
Achieving this ethic of care should be the primary goal in the field of education (Slote,
2010, p. 150). As long as humans are engaged in critical, democratic processes, we will

be able—as Buber (1958) envisions—to reciprocally or mutually affirm the other, encourage their potentialities, and engage in confirmation of each other's best selves.

I end this section by also recognizing the importance of the philosophical history of education and the history of the ethic of care as impressed upon me by the philosophers and scholars I have reviewed in light of my desire to understand Nodding's ethic of care theory. In thinking about care, Carol Gilligan first shone a light on the different voice of females.

Gilligan's (1982) voice raised an awareness about the alternative ways to view the foundations of care because of a newfound "recognition that the categories of knowledge are human constructions" (p. 6). She brought to light how complacent we had been until we considered distinguishing between male and female voices. "The contrasts between male and female voices are presented … to highlight a distinction between two modes of thought and to focus a problem of interpretation rather than to represent a generalization about either sex" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 2).

I take from Ruddick her view of how care ethics are focused on the feminine, the work of mothering, and more importantly maternal thinking, in support of a positive "political, personal, and intellectual life" for peace (O'Reilly, 2009). As Ruddick (1989) puts it, "feminism [is about] a politics that is dedicated to transforming those social and domestic arrangements that deliberately or unwittingly penalize women because of their sex" (p. 234). By this, she refers to the lives of women as mothers who, on a daily basis, "think out strategies of protection, nurturance, and training" because they have the capacity for maternal thinking (p. 24). There was a time when females as mothers "almost always experience herself as relatively powerless" (p. 34). Additionally, there was an understanding that "if [a man] is undertaking maternal work, he is identifying with what has been, historically, womanly. What is so terrible–or so wonderful about that?" (p. 45). With this perspective in mind, it would be insightful to realize this conversation in the realm of educational leadership should we take some time to discuss it as men and women as mentors in educational administrative leadership roles.

Held (2006) reinforces for me the value of relations in adhering to an ethic of care as a moral theory that transcends the private and public worlds as well as the political social and global domains. She believes that "a caring person not only has the

appropriate motivations in responding to others or in providing care but also participates adeptly in effective practices of care" (p. 4). This shows our caring best whether we are at home or at work. We are showing "how we should live our lives" and "what we ought to do" as members of a caring and global society (pp. 4-5).

The caring ethic hinged on relations is a key concept that Held and Buber have in common. As Buber (1958) argues, "*I -Thou* can only be spoken with the whole being" (p. 3). Buber's thoughts on the importance of experience, dialogue and relationships are instrumental to my thinking about care and teaching or mentoring, particularly since "relation is mutual" (p. 15). His way of articulating the power of the encounter towards inclusion resonates with me. The teacher:

> must be aware of [the student] as a whole being and affirm him in this wholeness. But he can only do this if he meets him again and again. … And in order that his effect upon him may be a unified and significant one he must also live this situation, again and again, in all its moments not merely from his own end but also from that of his partner: he must practice the kind of realisation which [Buber calls] inclusion (*Umfassung*). (Buber, 1958, p. 132)

Dewey's (1944) work of valuing education and the social process is key to forging relations. His description of experience and finding aesthetic beauty in a strongly democratic and moral society plays an important role in my understanding of care for educational leaders, including working towards social change to support female educational leaders into educational administrative leadership roles.

While Nussbaum's (1997) focus is not on care ethics, her voice is valuable in my work on care: to use her words, in *cultivating humanity* (also the title of her book I am referencing). Her ability to actually cultivate humanity or citizenship from a historical perspective up to the present day is about being reflective and critical of the self, the self which is connected to other humans locally and globally. Nussbaum (1997) writes that "human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern" should have the capacity to care for self and others, and to be able to think and act while considering:

> what it might be like to be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have. (p. 10-11)

This understanding of care that Nussbaum carries coupled with the fact that she is a feminist scholar illustrates her ability to focus on women's studies as part of a larger discussion about humanity. The interconnected system of networks that identify the strengths of each gender have the potential to be transformative. She says that although humanity is about men and women together, she believes it is "dangerous not to consider [women's studies] as we strive to build a society that is both rational and just" (p. 221).

Similarly, Slote (2010) "emphasizes empathy within care ethics … placing an enormous emphasis on relationship(s)" (p. 147). He views morality for people (without gender) from the perspective of caring that is sentimentalist versus rationalistic "including feminist ideas and aspirations" (p. 147). He has written at length about the ethic of care and has supported Gilligan and Noddings in their work within his own. He sees clarity in how the ethic of care values Hume's "moral sentimentalist tradition that care ethics so frequently appeals to but that has long been eclipsed by Kantian liberalism and utilitarianism/ consequentialism" (p. 147).

Kant is an important figure in thinking about care ethics from the perspective of moral education. He believed that "moral rules are absolute," giving rise to his categorical imperative and a rich discussion on character education and virtues development (Rachels, 2003, p. 120). This discussion begins with what we now see as the impossibility of being a "moral agent" guided by "'universal laws'—moral rules that hold," (Rachels, 2003, p. 122) to the moral indoctrination of virtues development in schools and eventually moving towards a theory of universal justice and reasoning. The flaw in Kantian character education unveiled from the care perspective is the lack of focus on the importance of relations, according to Noddings (2013b) who leans on Buber to exemplify this perspective on caring: "We should start with neither the collective nor the individual but with the *relation*. … [because] we become individuals largely through the relations to which we belong." For Noddings, an ethic of care rests firmly on the principle that "relation [is] ontologically basic and the caring relation [is] morally fundamental" (p. 118).

Hume (1751) also discusses morality at length. This is important in my understanding of care because of his explanations of virtues as "Conformity to Reason versus his consideration of "Morals as deriving their Existence from … Sentiment" (p. 3).

Hume's virtuous sentiment "arises from Humanity" and engages in affections and emotions over logic and reason (p. 178). I understand that Hume embraces a kind of natural caring in his sentiments for which "there can be no ethical sentiment without the initial, enabling sentiment" (Noddings, 1984, p. 79). This recognition of natural caring gives rise to ethical caring as a "vision of best self" that is to be accepted in order to "sustain the initial feeling (of natural caring) rather than reject it" (Noddings, 1984, p. 80). Noddings (1984) asserts that "the virtues of one-caring [and t]he virtue described by the ethical ideal of one-caring is built up in relation" (Noddings, 1984, pp. 80-81). In such relations, the one-caring "reaches out to the other and grows in response to the other" (Noddings, 1984, pp. 80-81). This reciprocity prompts Noddings to examine obligation.

According to Noddings (1984), obligation is of no concern with respect to natural caring. However, "want" and "ought" play a different role where ethical caring is concerned. "The primary test lies in how fully I received the other" and the "completion of my caring in [the other]" (Noddings, 1984, p. 81). "Our inclination toward and interest in morality derives from caring. In caring we accept the natural impulse to act on behalf of the present other. We are engrossed in the other" (Noddings, 1984, p. 83). Ultimately, "the source of my obligation is the value I place on the relatedness of caring" (Noddings, 1984, p. 84). Obligation is governed by "the existence of our potential for present relation, and the dynamic potential for growth in relation, including the potential for increased reciprocity and, perhaps, mutuality" (p. 86). "Relation is fundamental in obligation" (p. 87). Later, we will see just how important this statement is in unpacking my narratives and linking obligation to care.

To sum up, these scholars offer a foundation for considerations of "care" that are compelling in helping me to complete my own stories of care. In reflecting on my own lived experience, I realize that something is still missing for me in considering these philosophers and their notions of "care". This need to resolve my understanding about care and my notion of care has led me to look more deeply into the issue of care, and ultimately to the work of Nel Noddings.

3.4. A brief background of the life of Nel Noddings, care ethicist and educator

When the tapestry of the ethic of care is magnified, revealed are the threads that run deeply through each of Noddings' books over the course of her more than 50 years within the field of education: including her thoughts on the school curriculum, school structure, teaching, happiness, the home-school connection, peace education, and moral education. Over the years, Noddings' thinking around the ethic of care as it pertains to the field of education in these areas has evolved to expand on the ethic of care theory introduced in her original book. She enhances our understanding of the ethic of care theory and its connection to moral education, feminism, peace education, and her own philosophy of education. Informing her work is her vast experience as an educator in the USA. Noddings was a former mathematics teacher and administrative leader in the K-12 system for 15 years. Various other posts she held included her role as an educator/philosopher for two years at the University of Chicago Laboratory School, her experience as an assistant professor of Education at Pennsylvania State University, her position as a visiting professor at the Teachers College, Columbia University, affiliated positions with Colgate University, University of Southern Maine, and Eastern Michigan University, and her longest tenure at the Stanford University Faculty of Education in various roles, from director of the teacher education programme to acting Dean (1977-1998; now as professor emerita). Her professional work has had a profound influence on shaping her work and philosophy of education, but is also proof of her belief about the value of our personal experiences: "who we are, to whom we are related, how we are related, how we are situated all matter in what we learn, what we value, and how we approach intellectual and moral life" (Noddings, 1992, p. xii). Her books reflect her role as a mother to a "heterogeneous family" (p. xii) of ten children (five boys, five girls; blood and adopted), a loving wife of over sixty years until her husband's passing, a mathematics educator, philosopher, theorist, and practitioner (Noddings, 1992; see also Palmer, 2007; Stone, 2006).

3.5. Nel Noddings' philosophy of the ethic of care

Nel Noddings, although not the first philosopher of the ethic of care theory, is a prolific contributor to the theory. In 1984, her first book, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to*

Ethics and Moral Education, was released and to this day inspires women, many of whom are feminists and educators. Noddings suggests that we live by an ethical approach based on natural caring within relationships with the self, intimate others, strangers, the environment, animals, plants, and ideas. She presents her thoughts on how an ethic of care should be guided by the formerly silent voice, the "mother's voice" (p. 1). She introduces a feminine and relational approach to a "moral attitude or longing for goodness" that is "rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness" (p. 2) rather than the longstanding masculine and moral reasoning of the father's voice "in principles and propositions, in terms such as justification, fairness, [and] justice" (p. 1).

I have already written at length about many of the important philosophies and ideas that have shaped Noddings' ethic of care theory, including but certainly not limited to the thoughts of Gilligan, Ruddick, Buber, and Dewey. Noddings has written prolifically about the fact that caring is fundamental to relationships between humans. Her ethic of care theory is relational. In an encounter, there is the one-caring or the carer, and the cared-for. The relation takes on one of two forms: natural caring or ethical caring. Simply put, natural caring is a practical, natural, empathic way of being social with others whom we know. Natural caring is "a form of caring that does not require an ethical effort to motivate it (although it may require considerable physical and mental effort in responding to needs)" (Noddings, 2002b, p. 2). Ethical caring is a more formal kind of caring that should be considered as a "sustain[ed] and expand[ed] community of natural caring" (Noddings, 2010, p. 18). "When it must be summoned, [it] is properly aimed at establishing or restoring natural caring" (Noddings, 2002b, p. 2). Natural caring is the organic connection formed between mother and child, whereas ethical caring may be a relationship that takes place between adult and child in public or between a mother and another child that is not her own. As Noddings (2013a) stresses, "ethical caring does not seek moral credit; it seeks a response from the cared-for that completes the encounter—a recognition that is usually spontaneously offered in natural caring" (p. 14). Thus, ethical caring relations apply to my research by providing hope and potentialities between an educational leader mentee and an administrative educational leader mentor.

The opening sentence of Noddings' first book written in 1984 is a statement about ethics. "Ethics, the philosophical study of morality, has concentrated for the most part on moral reasoning" (p. 1). Since then, Noddings (2002a) has continued to discuss the morality of caring in her subsequent books: "If we take the caring relation as a basic

good, then all efforts to establish, maintain, or enhance such relations have moral worth" (p. 87). Noddings outlines four perspectives on moral education (2012b). First, character education is the development of virtuous individuals who learn to develop these virtues of goodness both at home and in school. Scholars do not agree about what these virtues are because various groups value different virtues to varying degrees. Still, they may include virtues such as respect, loyalty, love, honesty, courage, kindness and perseverance. Another challenge lies in the teaching of character because the methods are wide-ranging while the outcomes are not consistent among children or even within children in different environments. In reinforcing her relational caring ethic, Noddings (2002a) notes that:

> Children are much more likely to listen to adults with whom they have established a relation of care and trust. Character educators recognize this, but their attention to caring relations seems secondary; promotion of the virtues comes first. … [C]are theorists invert these priorities; caring relations come first, and it is thought that the virtues develop almost naturally out of these relations. (p. 5)

The second perspective of moral education is Kohlberg's cognitive developmental theory with its Kantian roots. As I have discussed in this chapter, Gilligan (1982), a student of Kohlberg, was critical of this theory because his experiments focused on male subjects only. Her critique ultimately prompted the publishing of *In a Different Voice*, which focuses on the different moral and caring female voice. Kohlberg's theory emphasizes moral reasoning and is not without its flaws, as also discussed earlier in this chapter within the section on Kant, whereas Noddings (2006) sees "the ethics of care [as] a remarkable alternative to traditional, principled Kantian ethics" (p. 310). With the ethic of care, there is a focus on "developing the attitudes and skills required to sustain caring relations and the desire to do so, not nearly so much on the reasoning used to arrive at a decision" (Noddings, 1992, pp. 21-22). Kantian ethics, on the other hand, is about "the most important … objective knowledge"; thus, it is no surprise that Kant cannot find himself extending "into the subjective sphere" (Scruton, 1982, p. 12). For Kant, knowledge comes from experience and reason:

> The first [experience] provides content without form, the second, [reason,] form without content. Only in their synthesis is knowledge possible; hence there is no knowledge that does not bear the marks of reason and of experience together. Such knowledge is, however, genuine and objective. (Scruton, 1982, p. 17-18)

The third perspective that Noddings (2012b) brings forward is John Wilson's utilitarianism, whose primary goal is to raise "individual autonomous moral agents capable of applying the principles most likely to bring about the best effect" (p. 173). These moral lessons are "actively and explicitly" taught to children by their teachers and the adults in their lives in somewhat artificial and utilitarian settings (such as a classroom) (Noddings, 2012b, p. 173; see also Noddings, 2012b).

The fourth perspective of moral education rests on Dewey's Values Clarification program. "It emphasizes the process rather than the content of valuing; and it insists that values are manifested in action" (Noddings, 2012b, pp. 174-175). But there must be some value in something that has no bearing on how we actually live our lives.

In summary, these four theoretical perspectives on moral education "rely more on the character, attitudes, and moral resources of moral agents than on the application of principles in making moral decisions" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 236). The relational ethic of care is not a form of virtue ethics. Care ethics and relations develop first and precede virtue development. Virtue ethics is about an "emphasis on the character of moral agents" and focuses on roles and status of persons (Noddings, 2010, p. 133). Whereas "[c]aring is used most powerfully to describe relations" (Noddings, 2010, p. 133), Noddings (2010) states that virtue ethicists "[do] not consider the virtue of caring as the possession of an individual moral agent" which explains why we refer to individuals as having caring relations rather than being caring agents (pp. 133-134). People who care usually do so naturally and directly because they want to respond positively to those addressing them (Noddings, 2013a, p. 20).

Many of our most important relations arise naturally such as between mother and child, yet even this relation may or may not be caring (Noddings, 2010). No matter the relation, "when we do not feel like caring, and … we have to draw on our 'ethical ideal'— our history of caring and the high value we place on ourselves as carers" prevails (Noddings, 2013a, p. 20). Virtues result when a caring person regularly maintains caring relations. If we were to consider caring as a virtue and could label someone to be a "caring" person (the individual moral agent), it is "by reason of the relations she regularly establishes [such that she] must exercise certain desirable characteristics that might be called virtues" (Noddings, 2010, p. 137). The fact of the matter is that "the caring relation remains central to the fully developed ethic, and even the definition of caring as a virtue

depends on the regular establishment and maintenance of caring relations" all within the moral theory of a feminine ethic of care (Noddings, 2010, p. 138; also see Noddings, 2010, 2012b, 2013a).

Noddings (1984) and Gilligan (1982) illustrate that morality is based on caring relations, though morality has largely been viewed from a perspective that does not fully encompass how women reason but rather, how men reason. Both scholars discuss moral reasoning from the standpoint of how women approach encounters or dilemmas: an approach Gilligan (1982) specifically articulates is not inferior to that of men, merely different. She notes that women's "reasons often point to feelings, needs, impressions, and a sense of personal ideal rather than to universal principles and their applications" (p. 3). This idea reflects the thinking of David Hume (1751), who believed that morality takes root from feelings. He referred to this as the emotion of sentiments, including emotions such as empathy, sympathy, and caring. Also drawing from Hume, Noddings' (1984) ethic of care seeks to look at ethics from a feminine perspective of human caring. Otherwise, "we fail to share with each other the feelings, the conflicts, the hopes and ideas that influence our eventual choices (p. 8). Instead, "we share only the justification for our acts and not what motivates and touches us" (p. 8). Noddings acknowledges that there are great debates between gender and caring. When it comes to an ethic of care, these debates can be distracting so her advice is to focus on an ethic of care as a holistic means of leading a more caring life—to focus on shaping an ethic of care so that it has the potential to lead us in more thoughtful ways towards the greater good of humankind.

Noddings believes that the necessary conditions for caring require attention—perhaps better understood as *engrossment,* or receptivity, resulting in a caring response. The one-caring may not have experienced what the cared-for is feeling; however, a mutual understanding brings the relationship together for both parties in a caring encounter. If there is engrossment, it "need not be intense nor need it be pervasive in the life of the one-caring," but "all caring involves engrossment" (Noddings, 1984, p. 17). If the engrossment or receptivity between the one-caring and cared-for lead to a plausible receptivity because the one-caring acknowledges the needs of the cared-for in determining actions of care, there is caring. This is called motivational displacement. Motivational displacement involves a caring encounter that includes a reciprocity that is plausible and authentic. For example, when a teacher supports a student who is working

through a math problem, the teacher's reactions throughout the encounter as the student works through the problem is guided by the responses shown by the student. Thus, the goal of a caring encounter is reciprocity. Caring encounters that continue and become a succession of encounters allow the relation to grow, for "all real living is meeting" (Buber, 1958, p. 11). A caring encounter or meeting that is long-term grows the relationship and the cared-for. In this way, "caring will always depend on the connection between carer and cared-for" (Noddings, 2002b, p. 20; see also Noddings, 1984, 2002a, 2010).

3.5.1. Pillars of Nel Noddings' ethic of care theory

The mentorship of women seeking leadership in education with an ethic of care is not fully researched, understood, or developed. Hence, I am searching for meaning that will support women's development in educational administrative leadership using the framework of Noddings' ethic of care theory. As the literature already presented illustrates, much research and dialogue has helped me understand how the four main pillars of Noddings' ethic of care theory (Noddings, 1984; see also 1992, 2012b) are critical in helping me achieve this goal.

As philosophical educational thought continues to be challenged and questioned, it also advances. Noddings has written extensively on the theory of the ethic of care and has updated and refreshed her ideas to remain consistent with current thinking in the field. She encourages readers who have a deeper understanding of the ethic of care theory to embed justice education, social responsibility, and peace education into the education of children in an effort to provide children with a more peaceful future (Noddings, 2012a, 2012b). This process begins with solid educational leadership.

Noddings introduced the pillars of her ethic of care theory in her first book, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education,* in 1984. She sees the pillars as a way of "nurturing the ethical ideal–dialogue, practice, and confirmation" intended to "maintain and enhance caring" (Noddings, 1984, p. 182). These pillars form the foundation for my belief that the ethic of care theory is vital to the mentorship of women aspiring to educational administrative leadership roles. Thus, it is important to better understand Noddings' (2012b) pillars of the ethic of care, "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation) (p. 237) by also consulting the work of Buber, who is well documented in Noddings' ethic of care theory. To clarify, the connections I make

between Buber's philosophy and Noddings' ethic of care theory of morality are linked from an educational standpoint and support my work in educational leadership.

Noddings' development of her ethic of care theory is closely tied to Buber's existentialist philosophy, which serve as the foundation of Noddings' theory as grounds for moral reasoning. In her early writings, Noddings (2012b) evolved her ethic of care theory quickly to encompass the four pillars she advocates as being central to the moral objective of her relational ethic of care theory: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). "Everything we do … as teachers, has moral overtones. Through dialogue, modeling, the provision of practice, and the attribution of best motive, the one-caring as teacher nurtures the ethical ideal" (Noddings, 1984, p. 179). In a similar fashion, Buber (1958) writes prolifically about the importance of these four major components in his book *I-Thou*: in particular, how "reality is dialogical" and can be accepted when "reality arises *between* agents as they encounter and transform each other" (Audi, 1999, p. 104; see also Buber, 1958; Noddings, 1984). In fact, Buber (1958) elaborates on the notion that "language is consummated as a sequence" and thus, "the word of address and the word of response live in the one language" (pp. 102-103). In other words, Buber explains, "*I* and *Thou* take their stand not merely in relation, but also in the solid give-and-take of talk" (pp. 102-103). What comes of the dialogue becomes more significant as they meet repeatedly in reciprocity, wherein the one-caring becomes "aware of [the cared-for] as a whole being and [can] affirm him in this wholeness" resulting in a "kind of realisation which [Buber] call[s] inclusion (*Umfassung*) (p. 132). I make this distinction between Noddings and Buber's different views on the relation because Buber presents the dialogic relation of reciprocity with the potentialities of seeking confirmation of the whole being, while Noddings presents dialogue and confirmation as two separate entities. This distinction presents a challenge for me because dialogue and confirmation would seem to me to collaborate. Noddings herself recognizes that feelings such as joy and care are "triggered by receptivity, an openness to the other that is somehow reciprocated in an almost mystical fashion," but that there is no mystery or spiritual notions at play here (Noddings, 2013a, p. 14). This receptivity is central to the relation inclusive of dialogue and confirmation which intersects deeply at a common point.

In the Preface to her 2013 edition of *Caring: A Relational Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, Noddings highlights the fact that "little has been said, however, about

confirmation," a concept she adapted from Buber (Noddings, 2013a, p. 16). This indicates to me that dialogue and confirmation together, in caring relations, lead "toward a developing ethical ideal" indicative of the potentialities of our best selves (Noddings, 2013a, p. 16). When the one-caring helps the student undergo a "realisation of the best potentialities," the "I-Thou relationship now comes to an end or assumes the quite different character of a friendship" (p. 132). To better visualize the progression of Noddings' theory from modeling towards confirmation, I now discuss the four pillars of her ethic of care.

Modeling

Modeling, the first component of moral education from the perspective of Noddings' (1994) ethic of care theory, is central to caring. Noddings attests that as educational leaders, we "do not tell students to care" but rather "we show them how to care by creating caring relations with them" (p. 22). Further, we need to provide "adequate experience in being cared for" because this promotes an ability for the student "to be a responsive cared-for," Ultimately, for Noddings, "our role as carer is more important than our role as model" (p. 22).

Our role as carer or as the one-caring is about fostering a caring relation with the cared-for. It is important to note here, how important Buber's theories about relations reinforces Noddings' development of her own ethic of care theory. "One of the central principles of Buber's educational doctrine(s) comes into play—that of encounter, which is the focus of the process of education" (Cohen, 1983, p. 87). Buber expresses the significance of this encounter and the receptivity of this encounter through a concept Noddings terms *engrossment*, illustrating her acceptance of Buber's work and building on it. According to Buber, relations are reciprocal and when the one-caring receives the other, the cared-for, "there is more than feeling; there is also a motivational shift" (Noddings, 1984, p. 33). This shift is a sense of vulnerability, an openness that is engrossment: part emotional feeling and part intellectual work (Noddings, 1984). The one-caring creates space to allow the cared-for to transform and as such, is "so engrossed[,] is listening, looking, feeling" (Noddings, 1984, p. 34). Evidence of this engrossment or receptivity, according to Noddings, is when a student is solving a math problem and is stuck in an analytic mode. The student is often guided by the teacher to step back, take a breath, and stop thinking about the problem, which often assists the

student in solving the problem. This "receptive or relational mode seems to be essential to living fully as a (caring) person" (Noddings, 1984, p. 35). In the role of one-caring as the I in I-Thou of Buber's philosophy of relations, "Thou—being engrossed—is a necessary condition for the one-caring to be in a relation of caring" even when the cared-for "fills the firmament" but does not "hear the Thou 'in his experience'" (Noddings, 1984, p. 74). Buber (1958) attests that the one-caring must be "aware of him [or her] as a whole being and affirm him [or her] in this wholeness" because the cared-for responds in mutuality but is not necessarily aware of this kind of awakening (p. 132). The teacher as one-caring meets the student, the cared-for, unequally, because the one-caring is capable of *inclusion*, of giving to the student as the cared-for what is needed to build trust, intrinsic interest, and admiration on the part of the cared-for (Noddings, 1984, p. 177). According to Noddings (1984), Buber believes that this form of inclusion is the teacher's role to act as the guide and to influence because "the student is infinitely more important than the subject matter" (p. 176). This is a relation of caring between the one-caring and the cared-for.

While Noddings alludes to the pillar of *modeling*, she does not formally present it in her first book (1984). Modeling appears in subsequent books (1992 and later) and is vital in caring because we show others (teachers and students alike) "how to care by creating caring relations with them" (Noddings, 1992, p. 22). We also show others how to act as the cared-for through our ability to model morally appropriate behaviour as well as through our ability to explain our actions (Noddings, 1992). As noted in the example of the math student above, the cared-for "fills the firmament. … but does not hear the Thou "in his experience" (Noddings, 1984, p. 74). In Buber's case, the experience "points to the I-It of object world" because when something has been experienced by the cared-for, the experience has already been made into "an object or thing" (Noddings, 1984, p. 74). The important point to note in this encounter is that "relation is mutual (Buber, 1958, p. 8). The relation is maintained because "what the cared-for gives to the relation either in direct response to the one-caring or in personal delight or in happy growth … is genuine reciprocity" (Noddings, 1984, p. 74). According to Buber, it is the "total environment [that] educates the child," giving rise to experience and relations provided by the teacher as model (Cohen, 1983, p. 37).

In translating Buber's work, Adir Cohen (1983) states that Buber adopts the position that a teacher's role is not solely to impress upon the pupil his (Cohen's usage)

own views, but rather to be authentic and genuine in his ability to nurture, guide and influence, or to use Noddings' term to *model* the appropriate experience of inclusion. This inclusiveness is the distinctively non-mutual relation between I-Thou, one-caring/cared-for, or teacher-student, where the one-caring is fully connected to the cared-for and the "*presence* of the sharers in the experience of inclusion [is] characterized by complete and perdurable realization; its transactions, moreover, are unaccompanied by any outward signs that it is taking place" (p. 40).

Dialogue

The second pillar of Noddings' ethic of care theory is *dialogue*: intended to allow individuals to speak, listen, share, and respond. The ultimate purpose of dialogue is to "come into contact with ideas and to understand, to meet the other and to care" (Noddings, 1984, p. 186). Noddings matches my intent to consider the second pillar of her ethic of care theory as a way of mentoring female educational leaders as she draws again from Buber who, according to Cohen (1983), discerns "three archetypes of the dialogic relation" that help us expand on our notion of dialogue and its importance in relations of reciprocity (p. 40). First, Buber's version of (I-Thou) dialogue rests on the mutual sharing of experience and thoughts: "In this experience … we assume our spirituality … and give voice to our thoughts out of the fullness of our personal essence and existence" (p. 40). Buber is "convinced that authentic existence must be achieved through obedience to the will of the Spirit, whose command can be rightly understood only if we interpret it always with reference to the constant flux of actual circumstance" known as experience (Cohen, 1983, p. 11-12). He also believes that genuine, authentic existence comes through relationship of an I with a Thou. (Noddings' ethic of care theory saves this transference of essence imparted from dialogue and Buber's confirmation as her last pillar of *confirmation*.) Second, Buber defines the I-Thou dialogue as an inclusive model best understood from the perspective of an educator. The one-caring teacher transfers the essence of the world to the cared-for student so that the student may learn about the world through experience, observation, and awareness. The third and last dialogic model is a tangible reciprocity that is a confirmation of the "mutual realization … of the pupil's confidence in the teacher" leading to friendship and trust (pp. 41-42). These dialogic moments, although fleeting, disappear as quickly as they appear, and bear with them the profound significances of life (Kramer & Gawlick, 2003, p. 34; see also Cohen, 1983; Noddings, 1984).

Practice and Inclusion

I bring Noddings' last two pillars together based on Buber's views of inclusion of his I-Thou relationships of mutuality and make my own inferences about these relationships within the educational setting. The one-caring/cared-for "relationship of the genuine educator to his pupil" is an unequal one (Buber, 1958, p 131). However, "the one-caring sees the best self in the cared-for and works with him to actualize" *or practice* bringing out that best self (Noddings, 1984, p. 64). The one-caring meets students where they are:

> The attitude that is perceived by the cared-for as caring is generated by efforts of the one-caring at inclusion and confirmation. It is an attitude that both accepts and confirms. It does not "accept" and shrug off. It accepts, embraces, and leads upward. It questions, it responds, it sympathizes, it challenges, it delights. (Noddings, 1984, p. 67)

In this way, the one-caring acknowledges that practice is intended to allow individuals the ability to "work at developing the capacity for interpersonal attention" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 19) as we are being "reconnected to the other in appreciative relation" (Noddings, 1984, p. 189). According to Noddings (1984), "practice in caring is a form of apprenticeship" (p. 122). The mentor sees the student as more than just the student's qualities but more as the whole person. Together, they "live in the situation, again and again, in all its moments not merely from his own end but also from that of his partner: he must practise the kind of realisation which (Buber) call(s) inclusion" (Buber, 1958, p. 132). To clarify, inclusion is not empathy. "*Empathy*, for Buber, meant going to the other's side while giving up one's position" while 'Inclusion'" on the other hand, means that one is present at one's own side as well as on the other's side" (Kramer & Gawlick, 2003, p. 189). Being present in one's own being *as well as* gaining the presence of the other's being is inclusion. Kenneth Kramer and Mechthild Gawlick (2003) articulate the fullness of inclusion in this move of radical empathy: "This two-sided presence is the most intense stirring of one's being—concretely imagining what the other is experiencing, not as the content of thought, but as the ongoing process of human becoming" (p. 189).

Confirmation

Confirmation occurs, in Noddings' view, when a relation between two individuals allows the carer to help the cared-for see that together, they are able to attain a level of

goodness greater than any current level of achievement or being (Noddings, 1984). When a caring relation takes hold, "we confirm the other by showing that we believe the act in question is a full reflection of the one who committed it" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 26). By confirming the other, there is a greater good to be reciprocated. "It is wonderfully reassuring to realize that another sees the better self that often struggles for recognition beneath our lesser acts and poorer [naïve] selves" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 21).

Buber's expression of confirmation is different from Noddings' view of confirmation. As translated by Kramer and Gawlick (2003), Buber suggests that there is an existential authenticity between the one-caring and the cared-for. Buber also says that "[m]utual confirmation … is most fully realized in the act of "making present", the other (p. 197). To clarify, in "making the other present, we confirm the inmost self-becoming of our partners in dialogue" (p. 197). We understand that Buber's confirmation takes place because there exists "among three interrelated points or orientations in this kind of genuine dialogue", the points of acceptance, affirmation, and confirmation (p. 97). This dialogue is shown as a lead up to the "complex interaction [accompanied by confirmation] because it includes co-participation between persons in here-and-now (present) situations and also extends the promise to participate in future dialogue" (p. 197). To reaffirm, Buber's confirmation is the expression of mutually trusting interconnections that have led to "behaviors … accepting the other as a person … to specifically affirming the other in their unique(ness) … to validating the other's present stance and their direction of movement into the future" (p. 97). Without dialogue, the one-caring and cared-for do not engage in reciprocity towards a direction that realizes the cared-for's true potentialities. Noddings does not make the distinction that first, in confirmation, the one-caring takes on one's own side *as well as the other's side*, but she does intimate that dialogue is used to embody affirmation towards confirmation. "Confirmation … depends upon and interacts with dialogue and practice" while maintaining the "ethical ideal, on its nurturance and enhancement" in order to achieve one's best potentialities (Noddings, 1984, p. 196).

3.5.2. Conceptualizing the ethic of care theory: The writings of Nel Noddings

Since Noddings published *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* in 1984, the ethic of care theory has been subjected to academic rigour in the

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fields of education, philosophy, psychology, political science, library science, business, nursing, religion, and bioethics—with much debate between justice and caring as well as caring in the private and public spheres (Noddings, 2012b). In her first book and subsequent writings, Noddings (1992) has developed her theory on the ethic of care as it applies to education, which has many parallels with educational leadership:

> Many school people and public officials insist that the job of the schools is to increase academic rigor. In direct opposition, I will argue that the first job of the schools is to care for our children. We should educate all our children not only for competence but also for caring. Our aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people. (p. xiv)

Given this dissertation's focus on educational leadership, it is useful now to provide a brief chronological overview of Noddings' writing as it pertains to the ethic of care theory in education. My overview begins with Noddings' (1989) second book, *Women and Evil*, because this work helps us understand morality "from the perspective of women's experience" by facing our evils (p. 1). Noddings is convinced that:

> When we consider those things that matter most deeply to human beings–the meaning of life, the possibility of gods, birth and parenting, sexuality, death, good and evil, love, happiness—we may well wonder how the standard set of subjects became our curriculum. (p. 243)

Her aim is for all voices to be heard and for us to be deeply committed to "adopting a relational approach" because it "signifies that we care enough about each other to learn more about human relations" (p. 240).

Noddings' (1992) third book, *The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education,* reinforces her original plea to bring in her ethic of care theory into the classroom because we need a caring curriculum in schools. We need to "encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving, and lovable people" (p. xiv). Noddings believes there should be a "continuity of place, people, purpose and curriculum" for all student learners (p. xii). The curriculum should not be one of liberal education (e.g. traditional curriculum such as mathematics, science, English and social studies) but rather, an educational curriculum "organized around centers of care: care for self, for intimate others, for associates and acquaintances, for distant others, for nonhuman animals, for plants and the physical environment, for the human-made world of objects and instruments, and for ideas" (p. xiii). Noddings' directive is for a curriculum

of caring that is less narrowly prescribed than that for a liberal education but certainly not because she is against a traditional curriculum. Children need to be able to pursue their passions and interests—a directive which forms much of the basis for books including *Women and Evil (1989)* and *Educating for Intelligent Belief and Unbelief* (1993).

With the publishing of her fifth book, *Educating Moral People: A Caring Alternative to Character Education*, Noddings (2002a) expands on her ideas about the ethic of care theory, which in this publication she calls *care theory*. She differentiates her care theory from character education; at the time the book was written, the latter was the front-runner for contemporary programs towards a moral education. The most notable difference between the "care" of care theory and character education can be attributed to "relations," while the "care" of character education is the virtue of being "caring." Noddings (1992) reinforces that "a *caring relation* [or a relation of care] is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings—a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for" (p. 15). Care theory is "fundamentally relational; it is not individual-agent based in the way of virtue ethics," which are the theoretical roots of character education (Noddings, 2002a, p. xiii).

While character education and care theory both aspire to develop better people, to promote a moral way of life, to share stories (of heroes and their inspirational accounts), and to instill the virtues we value (e.g. honesty, compassion, loyalty, respect), Noddings' (2002a) care theory "depend[s] more heavily on establishing the conditions and relations that support moral ways of life than on the inculcation of virtues in individuals" (p. xiii). In other words, care theory does not "develop a model of moral education that can produce people who will behave virtuously … [but rather, will] concentrate on establishing the conditions most likely to support moral life" (p. 9). Care theorists can and should play an important role in shaping caring in schools so that a moral way of life is developed from the inside out, as internal modes of caring within a caring environment of external modes of caring. Hence, Noddings challenges us to shape schools into places where individuals are able to inherently be *good* because this is favourable. I further extend Noddings' challenge to reflect the leadership of schools as places where individuals are able to be inherently "good mentors" and therefore, "good leaders" because this is most favourable. She describes the fact that when we "take the caring relations as a basic good, then all efforts to establish, maintain, or enhance such relations have moral worth" (p. 87). Focusing mainly on the carer, Noddings explains

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"how good I can be depends at least in part on how you treat me; my goodness is not entirely my property, and the control I exercise as a carer is always a shared control" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 89). The ethic of care is about leading a moral way of life. Thus, knowing where to start is key: "relations, not individuals, are ontologically basic" (Noddings, 2013a, pp. 22-23).

Expanding on her notion of care theory, Noddings' (2002b) "concluding remarks" summarize the intent of her next book, *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy*, also published in 2002. Notably, Noddings advocates that "an ethic of care, private and public, works to create a world in which it is both possible and attractive to be good" (p. 302). She discusses *caring* as relational, starting first with encounters in the home and then moving out towards society: broaching topics important to her care theory such as natural caring and ethical caring, caring for and about ourselves and other selves, and the centrality of education (first in the home and then formally in school) as social policy. Noddings (2002b) believes that "school as well as home should be central to any adequate discussion of moral life and social policy" (p. 2) because we all desire to be cared for. Caring-for "signals a willingness to listen, to help, to defend, and to guide" (p. 26). Natural caring "does not require an ethical effort to motivate" such as between a parent and child, whereas ethical caring "when it must be summoned, is properly aimed at establishing or restoring natural caring" (p. 2). Noddings suggests that both men and women need to be better prepared to manage and sustain a home because the kind of caring relations developed between parent and infant(s) affects the ability of our children as they grow up. She says that the strength of a society comes from the well-being of its citizens (both male and female) who serve to improve everyday home life as a positive way to impact social policy because of their commitment and competence in caring at home. Starting at home with caring relations leads to caring relations beyond the home for the greater good of society. The development of such capacity that begins in the home is a "caring approach [that] implies shared responsibility" so that the practice of caring in the home leads to more robust caring relations within a better society (p. 247).

In the next set of books written by Noddings (2003), we are exposed to her first written reflections on a broader theme of peace education. Noddings (2003) addresses the ability to learn, but only when we are happy, in *Happiness and Education*. Noddings (2006) also seeks to empower teachers to instill in their students the ability to think critically in *Critical Lessons: What Our Schools Should Teach*. In this book, Noddings

discusses at great length the need for teachers to teach students to think critically about house, home, war, peace, nature, parenting, gender, religion, others and self. Students need to be self-aware of feelings, purpose, intention, articulation, motivations, and habits—asking why, along with each of these ideas, we will begin to understand how "internal and external forces affect our lives" (Noddings, 2006, p. 10). Noddings (2006) encourages us to ask questions such as "Why do I feel what I feel" (p. 10)? Why must I learn? What motivates me to learn? What habits do I possess to keep me from learning? What habits help me learn? Why speak? How do I know my voice is heard and that it is purposeful and clear?

Clearly, Noddings (2003, 2006) directs her writing at teachers and students in the traditional sense. However, I extrapolate her notion of self-understanding (2006) to include a mentor teacher and protégé student. If happiness is so critical to positive learning and critical thinking is fuelled by an increased awareness of self and connection to the other, then the "major conclusion reached by care theorists, who argue that those things we do to improve the relations of which we are part[,] will work for our benefit as well as that of others" (Noddings, 2003, p. 36) because "people get most of their happiness from personal relations" (p. 220). The challenges we face as children when trying to integrate ourselves into a group that we badly want to join is likely equal to that of adults aiming to weave ourselves into new circles, such as an educational administrative leadership grouping (Noddings, 2006). We continue to need the care, support, and wisdom of a mentor when seeking to belong to a group outside our current positioning. The lack of support to belong is another reason women continue to lag behind in administrative leadership positions in education traditionally dominated by men (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011).

Another book put out by Noddings provides a moral approach guided by maternal instincts for her ethic of care for global peace and justice (p. 2). In it, she considers the idea of men becoming more like women. *The Maternal Factor: Two Paths to Morality* once again brings to the fore Noddings' (2010) work on the ethic of care. By "searching female experience for the roots of morality," She also provides hope that a feminine ethic of care theory can be a realistic alternative approach to traditional moral theories, so that convergence of "traditional male ethics" and care theory can become a reality (p. 9). Just as I have been entertaining the idea of women successfully moving into educational administrative leadership roles, Noddings appeals to her readers to

ensure that "women [are] becoming more like men in professional life" in a world where it is realistic to celebrate the "possibility of men becoming more like women in peacemaking, tenderness and nurturance" (p. 4).

Noddings' (2012a) next book, *Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War* shines a light on how her ethic of care theory has value in schools and in a society where we seem to embrace peace and war. She continues her discussion of peace that has brought her focus on the ethic of care from the home and school into the greater society. She reminds us of the consequences of a crumbling moral identity and urges her readers to question the history of practices such as carrying guns in a society where there is an obvious desire to be surrounded instead by love, compassion, and peace. Moral philosophers need to be reminded of human nature and our natural tendencies towards altruism because "any moral system that ignores our natural tendencies is likely to be ineffective in guiding moral life" (p. 3). Noddings claims that we need to "explore how we might overcome the tendencies to which we object and make the exceptions (such as altruism between strangers,) the norm" (p. 3).

Almost two decades after the publication of *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* in 1984, Noddings (2013a) updates her original book and renames it *Caring: A Relational Approach to Ethics and Moral Education.* She acknowledges that the "ethics of care has grown substantially" and agrees with her critics that "*relational* is a better word" for her updated book (p. 10). At the time she wrote her first book, Noddings herself was wrestling with the notions of feminist theory and had wanted to highlight the centrality of the "woman's approach" to caring without losing her male readers (p. 10). In the updated work, she also applauds Gilligan (1982) for her work within, *In a Different Voice*, in which Gilligan introduces us to the "language of the mother contrasted with that of the father" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 11). She addresses the key notions that her readers had objected to, including the idea of "taking care" and the fact that "we have no obligation to care-for the starving children of Africa" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 11). "Taking care" is about caring, not caregiving: "it is concerned with how, in general, we should meet and treat one another—with how to establish, maintain, and enhance caring relations" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 11). There is reciprocity and mutuality in caring because of the focus on the relation. As well, Noddings points out that we "cannot care-for everyone," which was her intent in her original statement about helping others beyond our geographical borders and immediate existence (Noddings, 2013a, p. 11).

She clarifies that we "cannot care-for directly, but [we] can work toward establishing an environment in which caring-for can flourish" as we learn how to care-for by *caring-about* others (Noddings, 2013a, p. 12). In this regard, the "relations of natural caring are treasured in every facet of human life. Such caring may require monumental physical or emotional effort, but it does not require a moral effort" and there is certainly no interest in "moral credit" (Noddings, 2013a, pp. 12-13).

Noddings (2013a) asserts that even almost three decades later, after the publication of her first book, "there is still much work to be done on care ethics" (p. 211). The first notion of importance related to caring is a concerted effort needed for addressing empathy and *attention*, allowing empathy to flourish by beginning with more coherent language. "When we attend carefully, we often experience motivational displacement … [and] our motive energy begins to flow toward meeting the needs expressed by the cared-for" (pp. 213-214). The second point she feels we need to focus on, now more than ever, is "extending care ethics to the level of international affairs" beyond the home, the school, the community towards "a liberal theory of justice to address moral questions in institutional and international affairs" (p. 214). Another idea that Noddings ponders is that at "the global-diplomatic level, caring-about commits us to keeping avenues of communication open" in an aim to be "skilled in the practice of cognitive empathy … for empathic accuracy" (pp. 214-215). She remains focused on the need for care ethics to flourish in maintaining caring-for and caring-about relations because feminism is about pressing for "women's equality in occupational and political life in our male-dominated culture … toward a world in which women's experience is used to guide humanity to richer, more peaceful ways of life" (p. 217).

Everything Noddings (2013a) has reflected on in the updated edition of her first book is worthy of attention. While there has been favourable response to her work on three of her four components of a moral education—*modeling, dialogue* and *practice*—what comes as a surprise to me is that the last of the four components, *confirmation*, has seen very little response. Confirmation lies at the heart of the four components of Noddings' ethic of care theory, which sees students actualizing their best selves. This lack of response to confirmation means that we are potentially missing the mark and that we are unable "to confirm another, [because] we must know and understand the other's reality" (p. 16). Perhaps "this may be asking the impossible" (p. 16). Yet, to support females' ability to ascend and to achieve their best potentialities is to achieve

confirmation. This is the main motivation for my quest to promote Noddings' ethic of care. This is the gap that I am seeking to shrink, to shine a light on, and to bridge as I investigate the mentoring of females into administrative roles in education with an ethic of care. "The formation of caring relations is central in both teaching and life itself" (p. 16).

Not quite as outwardly hopeful and uplifting, Noddings' (2013b) *Education and Democracy: in the 21st Century* brings us back to the present. This book contains several themes that are important to review as we look to the changes that can be made by learning from our experiences during our past and the 20th century. The book centres on education, specifically on the moral, personal, and spiritual development of the whole child. Noddings revisits moral education from the standpoint of important historical figures in education such as Socrates and his teachings of the virtues of character education. She names Aristotle and his "indoctrination [that] is followed by critical reasoning on the virtues" (p. 117), then follows up by revisiting Kohlberg and his emphasis on character development in the form of moral reasoning and the rightful acts of "principles of justice" (p. 117). She outlines Kant's categorical imperative to "the trend in moral philosophy. ... toward a commitment to reasoning and universal principles of justice" and education's shift towards a more liberal education (p. 117). Liberalism has its "virtue ethics with its emphasis on character (that is) deeply anchored in a sense of community" (p. 117). More importantly, by reviewing a brief summary of each of these important philosophers' stance on morality, Noddings' ethic of care theory stands stronger as a relational and human ethic. Similarly, Buber (1958) takes the stage with his belief that relations are important to humans, including their relations with nature, spiritual beings and other humans. This connection from Buber to Noddings is significant because he also holds the belief that "the total environment educates" as outlined in Cohen's (1983) translation (p. 37). Highly influenced by Buber, Noddings' work speaks to how caring is relation and thus, seeks a "decent, respectful way of meeting and treating one another that is maintained by inclination, not by rules" (Noddings, 2013b, p. 119). Rules, assessments, penalties, and accountability all "encourage self-protective conduct—behavior that will stave off criticism and keep those in authority off our backs" whereas "when we emphasize *responsibility*, we pledge ourselves to respond with care to the needs of those for whom we are responsible and to encourage them to respond with care" (Noddings, 2013b, p. 119). The encounter between the one-caring and the

cared-for is impacted; what was abstract is now tangibly "concrete and immediate" (Cohen, 1983, p.37; also see Noddings, 2013b).

The environment within which an ethic of care flourishes is one that allows for natural caring to occur. By adhering to the four pillars of Noddings' (2013b) ethic of care theory, individuals achieve a level of caring and confirmation that seeks to achieve a personal best rather than superiority to others (p. 119). The teacher's beliefs inform the student's thoughts and actions through a "critical and appreciative appraisal of the past and, perhaps even more, from a cooperative and imaginative exploration of the future" (Noddings, 2013b, p. 15). Noddings (2013b) urges that education be more than the intellectual development of the academics but rather, a "participatory democracy capable of deliberation" towards cooperation, connection, balance and caring (p. viii).

Noddings' (2012b) *Philosophy of Education* (third edition) extensively examines what may be seen as a feminine ethic of care theory. Outlining the ethic of care theory in one consolidated section, Noddings reaffirms the notion of her ethic of care theory as relational and emphasizes a moral education for a more peaceful and caring existence. As the ethic of care theory is rooted in care, "we do not have to construct elaborate logical rationales to explain why human beings ought to treat one another as positively as our situation permits" because "the ethic of care dismisses the old distinction between *is* and *ought* as a pseudoproblem" (p. 232). She reiterates that caring manifests itself in two ways, natural caring or ethical caring between the one-caring and the cared-for: "The only universals recognized by care theorists are those describing the human condition … and the longing to be cared-for" (pp. 233-234). This longing to be cared-for leads up to the "centrality of moral education in the ethic of care" which has "four major components: modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). The final pillar of confirmation is, as Noddings would state, "the goal or attribute [that] must be seen as worthy by both the person trying to achieve it" and by the other (pp. 239-240). She says that "when we confirm someone, we identify a better self and encourage its development" (p. 239). Reaffirming the value of confirmation reiterates my main motivation for investigating the mentoring of female educational leaders with an ethic of care.

Noddings acknowledges that liberal feminists worry the ethic of care theory may undermine their work in demanding equality in the public sphere for women because of a

lack of clarity between caring as caregiving and caring as relation. However, she stresses that "caring is a moral way of being in the world, of responding morally to living others; caregiving is a set of tasks that can be done with or without caring" (pp. 113-114). She reminds us that "care ethicists want to *change the world* and acknowledge the contributions of both female and male experience" (p. 114). As a result of the years of research by scholars in the field who have been writing about their work on the ethic of care, this quote exemplifies my position now as I embrace Noddings' ethic of care theory. I seek to contribute in a small way to care ethics in the field of education as I investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into educational administrative leadership roles (Noddings, 2012a).

As a means of supporting the journey for women who are teachers wanting to become educational administrative leaders, I believe that mentoring by way of an ethic of care for women educators seeking educational leadership positions will prove to be beneficial. Hopefully, this dissertation will help my readers who are potentially educators, educational leaders, and educational administrative leaders understand why mentoring with an ethic of care is a sound practice for recruiting and retaining women who aspire to educational administrative leadership.

3.6. Challengers of Nel Noddings' ethic of care theory

Nel Noddings' ethic of care theory has been contemplated by many other theorists. Noddings "consistently acknowledges opposing views" and "explicitly addresses the difficulties that arise in her own analysis of caring" both politically and analytically (Palmer, 2010, p. 211). She has ultimately been the one who proposes that instead of just discarding her ideas as flawed, they should be considered as critically and intelligently as possible (Palmer, 2010). "Caring—far more than just a fuzzy feeling—is a moral way of life" (Noddings, 2012d, p. 56). Noddings' ethic of care theory has initiated intellectual debate about democratic and moral values and virtues. However, scholars such as Held, Nussbaum, and Slote have their concerns about the high priority placed on caring relations as outlined by Noddings and her ethic of care theory.

3.6.1. Michael Slote

Michael Slote is a prominent moral philosopher who has written at length about virtue ethics and sentimentalism. He has followed Noddings' work closely over the years and expresses both appreciation and criticism about her ethic of care theory. Slote firmly credits Dewey, and then Noddings to a lesser extent, as scholars who have been greatly influential in the areas of the aims of education and democracy, yet he believes "they go too far in rejecting traditionalist ideas and values" (Slote, 2013, p. 1):

> Care ethics tends to neglect certain values, certain traditional values, that is philosophically short-sighted to neglect. … human values are in tension with the values of caring and human connection/relationship that care ethics has primarily—and almost exclusively—focused on. (Slote, 2013, p. 2)

Slote (2013) feels that Noddings needs to recognize the tension that exists between an ethic of care and democratic and moral values. For instance, he explains that Noddings believes we should recognize the breadth of talent and creativity that humans display by recognizing and showing respect for this talent. Slote acknowledges that Noddings believes this is important for diversity in a society to ensure we are surrounded by artists, financiers, plumbers and salesclerks; a society cannot function with all individuals focusing on only one area of interest. If an individual is talented as a plumber, then this person shall be a plumber, but we cannot all be plumbers nor can we all be the best plumbers. Slote explains that this position, to honour only talent that stands out, may be viewed as elitist because it could potentially and erroneously reject the morally caring and democratic values that Noddings is actually trying to embrace. This elitism, in Slote's opinion, is therefore inconsistent with her ethic of care theory and requires a more considerate approach that requires Noddings to "articulate a plausible larger educational and social vision that incorporates the tensions and the values" (Slote, 2013, p. 2). If she believes that "the acknowledgement of any form of superiority is or can be a threat to democratic values," this would create "harmful results in schools and in society more generally" (Slote, 2012, p. 12). Slote's defense of this harmful notion is "to use the basic ideas of care ethics" by reconciling care ethics "and apply[ing] its basic notions—especially the notion of empathy—to issues that aren't specifically or exclusively ethical but that have a bearing on education" (Slote, 2012, pp. 12-13). Creativity and elitism are talents which we must earn and for which people can gain

merit. However, Slote insists we should teach humility in regard to these kinds of accomplishments because they still do rely on hard work (Slote, 2012).

Another clarification offered by Slote is that elitism short-changes the possibility and strength of creativity and its values when Noddings affirms talent as traditionalists do. Traditionalists, according to Slote (2013), overtly notice the breadth of talent or creativity in individuals from one end of the spectrum to the other, but he believes that Noddings needs to do a better job of blending this thinking with her care theory. Slote articulates how this issue can be addressed by better acknowledging the tensions that Noddings has already been wrestling with and applying it to her care theory. Slote feels that critics will be more able to understand Noddings' ethic of care theory from her perspective because they will not have had to wrestle already with these tensions. To accomplish this, Slote suggests we must revisit:

> values of caring and human connection/relationship that care ethics has primarily—and almost exclusively—focused on. … a fully plausible and convincing picture of educational values—of the aims and even the methods of education—can only emerge if we recognize the tensions or conflicts … and try to form a coherent ethical picture that does justice to both or all sides" of this traditionalist versus moral sentimentalist aims in education. (Slote, 2012, p. 2)

In this way, we can admire scientists like Einstein whose "work led to the atomic bomb" even though it "brought great dangers to the world" and allow us to continue to "admire his talent, his intelligence, his *genius*, and … his great achievements as a scientist" (Slote, 2012, p. 8). Thus, the same empathy evident in moral education:

> also leads us and helps us to inculcate an open mind, respect for others' views, and a willingness to learn from others that also constitute a kind of humility that everyone, but especially any artistic, scientific, or business "elite," needs if the fact of acknowledged differences in degree of talent and creativity is to fit in with our moral and educational ideals. (Slote, 2012, pp. 15-16)

This approach also constitutes a "care ethics approach to [Noddings'] moral education" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 237).

More positively, Slote (2013) believes that care ethics can successfully override "more traditional philosophical views like Kantianism, utilitarianism, and Aristotelian virtue ethics" to provide a "general account of human morality" because it "stresses feeling and our direct connection with others rather than reason and the rational or

conscientious application of moral rules or principals to moral issues" (p. 5). This is the same perspective that Held (2006), whose perspective will be featured in greater detail later in this chapter, takes in considering the ethic of care as "relational, rather than as the self-sufficient independent individuals of the dominant moral theories" of Kant (p. 13). However, unlike Noddings, Held (2006) is cognizant of the interpretation of dominant moral theories as shaping a "concept of the person developed primarily for liberal political and economic theory, seeing the person as a rational, autonomous agent, or a self-interested individual" only when the end result is self-serving (p. 13).

Slote (2013) has written at great length about ethics and believes that "caring has an important role in moral life," but whether caring should bear the "basis for all of morality" may be a challenge (p. 25). In working together, Held (2006) and Slote (1999) aim to find a common thread in the ethic of care that encompasses "all of morality" (Slote, 1999, p. 26). They state that caring takes on two forms: one is the intense caring for someone familiar; the other form of caring, displayed for unknown others in need, is the "general humanitarian caring or concern about people one only knows about" as part of a group such as a UNICEF organization (Slote, 1999, p. 26). They consider looking at these different forms of caring as approaches to a single vision of morality with elements of both the caring ethic and justice. Whether other philosophers view the moral life that Slote does, he argues against "involv[ing] justice and caring or simply two kinds of caring, [because] the caring ethicist will object to the idea of combining two such elements within a single theory or view" (Slote, 1999, p. 27). In reflecting on Noddings' first thoughts about morality in her first book and how accurate she is in *Caring: A Feminine Approach to ethics and Moral Education*, Slote (1999) comments that "if we really are concerned with the well-being of others, we are focused on them and their well-being, not on questions about our own moral status and that of our actions relative to certain moral rules or standards" (p. 28).

Slote's viewpoint (and very likely, the criticisms of Noddings' readers) about this section in Noddings' first book caused her to revisit her thinking. Noddings (2013a) has clarified caring's role in moral life by updating her thoughts on the fact that "good people are not guided by morals or rules, principles or standards" only (Slote, 1999, p. 28). This is the case because good people are guided by their immediate response "directly as carers (out of sympathy) or as faithful members of a community that espouses helping and not harming" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 20). According to Noddings (2013a), we know

this because good people "rarely consult moral principles when making decisions that result in the prevention of harm" (pp. 19-20). More important to note, however, is that good people "according to the ethic of caring, are not to guide themselves (solely) by the principle that it is right to act caringly, wrong not to; rather, they are to be directly concerned with people's well-being" as the initial response only (Slote, 1999, p. 28). This update on Noddings' thinking addresses Slote's closing comments on this discussion above that while an overall view of morality is ideal, "there are a host of objections"; that trying to find a "balance between caring and justice … would indeed be flawed if it had to function as an action guide for moral agents" (p. 28). Indeed, this process is unnatural in that it would "get in the way of genuine caring, interposing a fairly complex principle between the moral agent and those he or she cares about" (Slote, 1999, pp. 28-29). An ethic of care that is morally sound accommodates those to whom we are close and for whom we make decisions to provide caring actions. An ethic of care also accommodates people in general to whom we are not close and for whom we wish to provide humanitarian care and concern "within a plausible and promising ethic of caring" (Slote, 1999, p. 35).

A further clarification that Noddings (2013a) has since made regards her thoughts about how her view of "the ethic of care stands on a principle":

> Always act so as to establish, maintain, or enhance caring relations. But this claim is a confusion in types of principle. The principle as stated is a good *descriptive* principle; it tells us what an observer sees in watching caring relations. But carers do not normally consult this principle before acting; it is not a dependable *prescriptive* principle. People who care usually do so naturally and directly because they want to respond positively to those addressing them. (p. 20)

3.6.2. Virginia Held

Virginia Held is a feminist philosopher whose work on the ethic of care has prompted her to view Noddings' ethic of care theory with a critical eye. Held (2006) points out that there are feminists who critique the ethic of care theory because they feel it is "hostile to feminist objectives" (p. 22). She asserts that "conservatives claim to value care but often oppose women's rights and governmental social programs and resist women's progress" (p. 22). Liberal feminists, in particular, claim that when prioritizing equality between the genders, extra pressure is put on women when their role as

nurturers and carers is reinforced. This notion just emphasizes the stereotype of women and impedes the progress made to dispel this stereotype (Held, 2006).

While Noddings (2002a) acknowledges the belief that "women seem to develop the capacity to care more often and more deeply than men," she stresses that this is not because *to care* is an essentially feminine characteristic or that it is innate, but instead because culturally, females are "expected to care for people" (p. 19). Feminists are concerned that the concept of mothering and natural caring encompasses the patriarchal condition whereby women show care in the home and nurture relationships in the private sphere, while men shine in the public sphere such as in the workforce. Without a doubt, this stereotype "leaves [females] vulnerable to all forms of apparently legitimate patriarchal power" because we've lived within a culture of masculinity (Noddings, 2010, p. 6).

By considering ways to counteract these concerns, Held (2006) raises questions of her own about the ethic of care theory. Does it resemble any other ethical theory, especially those which are not feminist in nature? Could the ethic of care theory just be an extension of other philosophical thinking such as Hume's ethics or Confucian ethics? Held even questions how the ethic of care theory and morality figure into a given religion such as Christianity. Earlier in this chapter, I discussed how Nodding's ethic of care theory and Hume's morality are rooted in emotions which appear to be sentimental in their regard. To underscore this point, Held notes there are aspects of Confucianism that are engrained in a patriarchal matrix to which feminists are opposed, even if Confucianism is steeped in the values of virtues and relationships (Held, 2006; Yuan, 2002). Held (2006) also puts to rest the connection between the ethic of care theory and religion because while "moralities based on reason … can succeed in gaining support around the world and across cultures," morality cannot be explained by dependence on a specific religion for those who share a different faith or for those who do not adhere to a specific faith (p. 21). Morality has no boundaries. There are also no boundaries between the public and private sphere in the Confucianist ethic of care (Held, 2006). This understanding supports Held's notion about the potential of an ethics of care wherein "the ethics of care. … appeals to the universal experience of caring" because each and every one of us are generally able to recognize "the moral worth of the caring relations that gave [us] a future" (Held, 2006, p. 21). Held (2006) believes that by closely

examining historical experiences we afford ourselves the opportunity to understand how far we have come and what is yet to be considered.

In defense of the ethic of care theory, Held (2006) brings clarity to our need to understand the ethic of care through the lens of feminist ethics. A caring ethic is not only required, but it is also a responsibility shared by humans. As Held emphasizes, "it does not take the practices of caring as developed under patriarchal conditions as satisfactory, but it does explore the neglected values discernible through attention to and reflection on them" (2006, p. 22). She closes this argument by reinforcing her views on a feminist ethic of care:

> to include nonfeminist versions of valuing care among the moral approaches called the ethics of care is to unduly disregard the history of how this ethics has developed and come to be a candidate for serious consideration among contemporary moral theories. The history of the development of the contemporary ethics of care is the history of recent feminist progress. (p. 22)

Noddings' thinking, since her first book came out in 1984, has continued to evolve as she has taken time to consider others' viewpoints, as well as expand on her own mindset while adding clarity to her resolve about the importance of her ethic of care theory. Noddings (2002a) was already thinking about the traditionalist philosophical virtue ethics of Slote and clarifying her views on caring relations in 2002, referring directly to Slote (2000) and the fact that "Slote is right when he says that care theorists have backed off too quickly in acknowledging the need for justice as a necessary supplement to care" (p. 85). She identified that it was "my own error … in giving too little attention to "caring about" (p. 85). She has acknowledged that 'caring for' and 'caring about' are distinctly different in that 'caring about' might "deteriorate to political self-righteousness and to forms of intervention that do more harm than good" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 85). This is the case when I may show that I am 'caring about' someone in need of clean water in a developing country so I donate $5 to the cause. However, this good deed is not performed from the perspective of reciprocity as relations. Instead, this act of generosity illustrates 'caring about' and is "morally important because it [caring about] is instrumental in establishing the conditions under which 'caring for' can flourish" (p. 86). "This insistence on completion in the other is central to care theory, and it suggests a reason for not giving way on the present emphasis on [the] relation" versus justice debate (p. 86).

3.6.3. Martha Nussbaum and Michael Sandel

Martha Nussbaum, a liberal feminist scholar, and Michael Sandel, an American philosopher whose work is embedded in studying justice and morality, believe that what the ethic of care theory neglects to consider is that humans flourish from relations after they have distinguished themselves as individuals. Noddings contradicts this idea, stating that as children, we are dependent upon being cared for: "interdependent with others in thoroughly fundamental ways throughout life" (Noddings, 1984; Held, 2006, p. 14).

While Nussbaum is an open critic of aspects of Noddings' ethic of care theory, Noddings directly addresses these criticisms in her 2010 book *The Maternal Factor: Two Paths to Morality*. Noddings writes that "Martha Nussbaum, for example, accuses [Noddings] of recommending 'thoughtless giving'" in a relational situation lacking morality due to the fact that Nussbaum misunderstands Noddings' description of an experience of emotion and the associated potential lack of judgment and appraisal of the situation (p. 166). This criticism gives Noddings an opportunity to clarify and expand on her beliefs about her ethic of care theory and its ties to emotions. Noddings also reflects back to the profound impact that philosophers such as Buber (discussed earlier in this chapter) have had on her thinking about *natural caring*. Natural caring is a mutually caring process where the relationship between two individuals fluctuates in a natural manner between roles of being carer and cared-for. The recognition of a bond, a relation such as between mother and child, different from that of opposing players in a tennis match, elicits an intense and natural feeling and response. "All cognitive awareness and conscious assessment have been somehow built into the situation" (p. 168):

> When we recognize relation as ontologically basic to human life, we do not rid ourselves entirely of anguish or of a responsibility to choose (within limits), but we do open our minds and hearts to those affects that accompany a realization of relatedness. (p. 169)

Noddings has argued that "natural caring precedes and establishes a model for ethical caring" (2010, p. 169) because we want to be *good* and "we want to be *moral* in order to remain in the caring relation and to enhance the ideal of ourselves as one-caring" (Noddings, 1984, p. 5). Naturally, "as human beings we want to care and be cared-for" (Noddings, 1984, p. 7). At great lengths, we aim to "preserve the caring relation" by "maintaining and enhancing caring relations—attending to those we encounter, listening

to their expressed needs, and responding positively if possible. … [and] we try to do so in a way that will preserve the caring relation" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 13). We do this because this is "feminine in the deep classical sense—rooted in receptivity, relatedness, and responsiveness" (Noddings, 1984, p. 2) "out of love or natural inclination" as a mother with child would be (Noddings, 2013a, p. 25). When natural caring is not possible, ethical caring prevails with "natural caring [as] the motivating force behind ethical caring" (Noddings, 2013a, p. 13). Nussbaum sees this ethical caring as the springboard for "citizens who cultivate their humanity. … and above all, as human beings bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 10). We can achieve this level of caring not by segregating women from men, but rather by establishing "an outspoken and truly Socratic critical culture" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 205).

3.6.4. Grace Clements and Tony Monchinski

Contemporary scholars such as Grace Clements and Tony Monchinski have their own critiques about Noddings' ethic of care theory. They agree that Noddings has covered much ground with respect to the ethic of care theory and the fact that women were "moralized differently *because* of their gender" (Monchinski, 2010, p. 45). Furthermore, Monchinski and Clements are cautious about a general societal construction of the capacity of women to care by "accepting the view of care as being natural to women" (Monchinski, 2010, p. 52) because this implies that "men, or those for whom care is not "natural" cannot be expected to be caring" (Clements, 1996, p. 54). This assumption further illustrates that we falsely universalize all women when we defend the ethic of care as a feminine ethic (Clements, 1996). What is important to note here, however, is that "Gilligan and Noddings amended and clarified their views while maintaining that the differences between an ethic of care and other models. … continues to polarize its champions and critics" (p. 45). For Monchinski (2010), the following holds true:

> An ethic of care is often associated with women and feminists, it is not an ethic for women or feminists alone. It is an ethic that originated with feminists who were challenging the patriarchal order that oppressed women but has evolved with the potential to represent … all people. (p. 54)

Monchinski (2010) further believes that with respect to the ethic of care theory, "we are potentially on the verge of a radically democratic reconception of moral life, and if this ethic is realized in society and its institutions, [we will accomplish] truly democratic attainments in all aspects of our lives" (p. 54). In Noddings' (2012b) view, "given the scope of current work on care ethics, it probably is no longer appropriate to label it a 'feminist ethic'" because it has grown so rapidly over the past few decades (p. 236). Thus, for Noddings (2012b), the ethic of care theory maintains its strength as a relational ethic.

3.6.5. Sarah Hoagland

Sarah Hoagland, a contemporary philosopher focusing on women's studies, addresses the variations on Noddings' ethic of care as described by Slote, who presents a political, justice, and morally based ethics on caring; and by Nussbaum, whose work hinges on cultivating humanity by addressing such capabilities as emotions and broader questions about who we are, and how we can and should live caring lives. More importantly, however, Hoagland (1990) finds four faults with Noddings' original thoughts on caring as outlined in *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (1984). The first fault Hoagland believes Noddings has made is to state that caring is reciprocal. In fact, Hoagland believes caring is unidirectional such as in the case of a mother and baby. Hoagland states that this aspect of caring diminishes the value of the relationship. She argues that such unidirectional relationship is incomplete and is merely a relationship of dependency. Victoria Davion (1993) clearly supports Hoagland's concerns that a relationship requires reciprocity in which "we are equally prepared to be ones-caring when it is necessary—that neither of us expects to be cared for all of the time" (p. 165). Second, Hoagland faults Noddings for her viewpoint that when males are exposed to a mother's caring, they become dependent on this kind of caring and look for this in a wife; thus, males take on the kind of relational caring they received when cared-for by their mothers. Hoagland makes the point that the outcome is not controllable. Another criticism that Hoagland has with Noddings' ethic of care theory is that she believes Noddings' theory does not account for cases of care for others that surrounds enablement or a realization that sometimes, it is necessary to withdraw from a caring relationship because the relationship is detrimental to the supposed cared-for such as in a rape or abuse case. Finally, Noddings assumes a "non-judgmentalism of the one-

caring, but it is not possible to not judge. To state that one is not going to judge, evaluate, or assess (e.g. a heterosexual relationship or a lesbian relationship) is in itself an act of judgment (Hoagland, 1990, p. 111).

In the time since Hoagland critiqued Noddings' first book, Noddings (2012b) has further considered, written about, and updated her philosophy on her ethic of care. She reiterates and refines her work on an ethic of care and specifically writes about care and education as it pertains to moral education, with its four main pillars of "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p 237). The receptivity of a caring encounter or relationship between two people is about synergy (Noddings, 2012b). It is about critical thinking: being motivated to understand ourselves better, engaging in "caring forms of interpersonal reasoning," (Noddings, 2012b, p. 243) and gaining a deeper understanding of who we are as individuals (Noddings, 2012b). Her two most recent books are focused on an ethic of care that "accepts the reality of moral interdependence" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 245). She "begin[s] to address great universal aims such as happiness, existential meaning, what it means to be a moral person, and our role as individuals and members of various groups in promoting peace" as well as education for students, including aspiring educational administrative leaders (Noddings, 2012a, p. 154). In this way, Noddings infers that females have experiences in their lives—some positive, some not so positive—but by living with an ethic of care and a strong sense of morality, we have the potential to become stronger, more morally charged, and happier in our quest for peace, no matter what our circumstances.

3.6.6. Victoria Davion

Victoria Davion (1993), a feminist philosopher, maintains that Noddings does not consider an inherent moral risk with her ethic of care theory, which is about more than just engrossment in another, suspending judgment of the other, or taking on the other's goals as one's own in an effort to be the one-caring. Davion believes that we cannot expect to agree with others' choices or ideals or projects, or else we would not be able to engage in caring relationships with "people different from ourselves. … [which is] especially significant given the importance of respecting cultural differences in fighting against prejudices such as racism, xenophobia, [and] homophobia" (p. 162). Davion asserts that a caring relation must maintain a sense of moral integrity so that individuals will feel they have a right to choose to maintain a relationship or not. Morality or ethical

behaviour is deeper than in the sense of Noddings' one-caring; it is about having a clear set of values that are "more basic than care" (p. 162) so that one does not have to "betray oneself" and can instead, exhibit "personal autonomy" (p. 173). Davion concludes that integrity and autonomy are integral to an ethic of caring. She asserts that a "viable ethical theory must provide an ethical ideal rich enough to distinguish between good and bad instances of caring, and therefore must incorporate moral integrity and autonomy into its ethical ideal" (p. 174).

Davion (1993) provides many examples of how Noddings' theory is flawed. For example, she asks, do we really want to support and care for someone who believes in bigotry (Davion, 1993; Noddings, 1984)? Considering this statement, "Ah would just die if a niggah touched me!" (Noddings, 1984, p. 110), Davion questions Noddings' idea that "maintaining caring relationships is necessary for human survival to the idea that all caring relationships are good" and that relationships are "central to ethics" (Davion, 1993, p. 170).

What Davion is neglecting to highlight, however, is the bigger vision that Noddings' ethic of care theory supports a moral education. As Noddings (1984) herself argues, "one must meet the other in caring. From this requirement there is no escape for one who would be moral" (p. 201). Even so, Noddings' work has evolved since this time: in her latest books, written nineteen years after Davion's review, on *Peace Education: How We Come to Love and Hate War* (2012a) and *Philosophy of Education* (2012b), Noddings pushes us to consider that her ethic of care "rejects the notion of a truly autonomous moral agent and accepts the reality of moral interdependence. Our goodness is inextricably bound to that of others we encounter" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 245). Noddings reminds us that, "as teachers, we are as dependent on our students as they are on us" (p. 245). This mutual dependence is the key notion for my research on leading women through relational encounters or mentorships to "identify a better self and encourage its development" as they work towards becoming stronger educational administrative leaders (Noddings, 2012b, p. 239).

3.6.7. Hanan Alexander

Noddings' (2003) book *Happiness and Education* has been critiqued by Hanan Alexander (2013), a scholar in the Philosophy of Education. Alexander is convinced that

a "human agent who can choose freely to enter into [a] relation [that] is necessary to sustain the role of caring in education" (Alexander, 2013, p. 488) faces challenges: "Noddings' ethical stance draws on sources too thin to sustain her arguments and … she underestimates the significance of personal agency and community context as a key condition for caring and happiness as moral categories" (Alexander, 2013, p. 493). Alexander's issue is, as he puts it, "historical and conceptual, not personal or political" as he lays out his concerns. He questions whether "we can ever make sense of what it would mean to care or be cared for, and so what it might mean in this view to educate for happiness, outside of concrete moral communities" (p. 490). Alexander is right in stating that communities for moral education can be formed only together with others in caring relations (thus forming communities), which is why he admonishes Noddings (2003) for challenging the idea of freedom: "since without human agency the very idea of happiness or flourishing grounded in caring as a moral category makes little sense" (Alexander, 2013, p. 493). I believe that Noddings' promotion of her ethic of care theory as a relational one where the one-caring meets the cared-for in a caring relation addresses this critique. She states that "from this requirement there is no escape for one who would be moral" (Noddings, 1984, p. 201). However, Alexander makes the assertion that one can only be free to care if one has the capacity to care based on having had a decent upbringing, genetic disposition, and past experiences from which to draw. This notion, he believes, runs contrary to Noddings' belief that "a care ethic can be sustained" without entering into relation with an other (Alexander, 2013, p. 492), and so "education for happiness, therefore, needs to be as concerned with cultivating that capacity for agency as it is with our ability to care" (Alexander, 2013, p. 493). But, Alexander seems to miss the point that Noddings' ethic of care theory *is* relational. As discussed, she draws this principle from Buber, that relation is reciprocity. Relation *is* agentive:

> What the cared-for gives to the relation either in direct response to the one-caring or in personal delight or in happy growth before her eyes is genuine reciprocity. It contributes to the maintenance of the relation. (Noddings, 1984, p. 74)

Noddings confirms, "the hope should be that all children will learn to derive some happiness from doing the right thing" (Noddings, 2003, p. 36). Care theorists, like Noddings, work at promoting a fostering of relations of care because this benefits us all and is our moral objective in support of others including our youth.

Alexander (2013) does seem to concede his point as he concludes with the notion that we should be grateful to Noddings:

> [for] taking on an issue in educational thought of profound import, and for. … continuing to place caring relations between parents and children, teachers and students, and among friends, at the heart of educational practice, and for showing us the connection between caring and happiness. (p. 494)

It is acknowledgements such as Alexander's that encourage me in my quest to investigate the mentoring of female educational leaders centered around an ethic of care. My hope is that my research will prove worthy to women in the field of education looking to be mentored into educational administrative leadership. Despite the criticism, Noddings' theory is robust enough to carry my research, allowing me to investigate and find promise in my quest to determine how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education with an ethic of care.

3.6.8. Suzanne Rice

Suzanne Rice is a scholar in educational policy studies. Although she does not criticize an ethic of care directly, Rice (1993) speaks to one of the components of Noddings' ethic of care, *dialogue,* which in Rice's critique is discussed alongside narrative. She questions the work of Noddings and her co-author, Carol Witherell (1991), specifically around dialogue and narrative as a pedagogical framework in a school or learning context. Noddings' and Witherell's work is one of a selection of essays in a book titled, *Stories Lives Tell* (1991). Referring to their stories, Rice accuses them of having a discussion about dialogue and narrative that is too general, and that Noddings and Witherell "often refer to narrative and dialogue as a single educational paradigm" which does no justice to women (Rice, 1993, p. 88). Rice (1993) acknowledges that their point about narratives is basically about the experience of humans from a feminine perspective including relationships, emotions, and intuition: all in an effort to find *her* voice. Rice believes that this focus on "her" voice hurts females as the male gender becomes the favoured gender. Further, Rice (1993) asserts that dialogues about narratives are not interpreted deeply or fully, in part due to the limitations of the classroom for unearthing the tensions posed in the shared narratives. What she may reconsider, however, is that narrative inquiry requires the researcher to embed

themselves relationally with the participants. Clandinin (2013) has this to say about the work of narrative inquirers:

> Not only is the relational space between researchers and participants integral to understanding the composition or co-composition of field texts and research texts, but [*sic*] relationships are a central way of making sense of the temporal and contextual aspects of narrative inquiry. (p. 34)

In Noddings' defense, she is suggesting that the education system look at fostering mutually caring relations: "our objective in moral education is to establish a climate in which natural caring flourishes" so that we may "treat each other with care" just as [teachers] may "relate to [students] as we hope they will relate to each other" (Noddings, 2013b, p. 119).

Rice (1993) brings up the salient point that "narrative or dialogue may have miseducational consequences, as will likely be the case when certain students' narratives are suppressed or when they are excluded from dialogue" (p. 96). If not all students are able to share their stories, what are the unintended consequences? From this I infer the question: what about the stories told that remain uncovered and unquestioned between mentor and mentee? This is why I believe deeply in a need for an ethic of care, to build the relationship necessary between the mentor and mentee to meet over time again and again, to continually provide space and opportunity to allow for regular and genuine dialogue to flourish, along with the other three components of Noddings' ethic of care theory. In this way, the path to educational administrative leadership is thought-provoking and authentic, promoting ample space for learning and growth.

3.6.9. Carrie Nolan

Educational scholar, Carrie Nolan (2012) contests six aspects of Noddings' ethic of care: proximity, justice versus care, what if scenarios, self-sacrifice, the paradox of care and criticism, and gender. Nolan states that by "attending to the personal, the particular, is where we begin to care, but not where caring ends" (Nolan, 2012, p. 74). Nolan considers the aspect of proximity as important to caring in a way that Noddings does not address. Over time, caring for and being cared for requires a spatial closeness and a strengthening of the relation. Slote (2007) articulates this in a way that helps us to understand Nolan's perspective: when we are obliged to care for others, but the problem

is metaphorically distant as in "out of sight" and out of mind, or the problem lies too far "in the future," then the caring face-to-face relational encounter is unsuccessful (p. 27). This aspect of caring has importance for me with respect to my research because it reinforces the importance of care ethics as part of a spatially close face-to-face encounter: a requirement for women being mentored into administrative leadership roles. As we learn to care for others especially through proximity, we are potentially able to care-about others who are geographically or metaphorically distant.

Nolan (2012) questions the validity of caring as a means of deepening influence when the caring-about is geographically distant. She suggests that when we seek to help the needy by donating our time in a local soup kitchen, this kind of behaviour in which we are ones-caring has the potential to expand into a deeper and more meaningful relation versus our geographically distant ability to care-about those to whom we can send money to support famine's end in locations afar. Distant caring-about does not lead to a closer relation of caring between us as ones-caring and cared-for. This idea of deepening caring is important in my research because as mentors or mentees seek each other out, they first learn to support each other out of moral obligation and a desire to care and be cared for (Noddings, 1984, 1992; Nolan, 2012). Over time, the relationship builds and both one-caring and cared-for begin to care about more than just each other: "we will meet the needs at hand and learn to care *about* people in the bigger picture" (Noddings, 1992; Nolan, 2012, p. 73). Proximity supports the moral obligation of building of relations and in this regard, Nolan and Noddings are in agreement.

Nolan (2012) frames a question in her second objection to Noddings' ethic of care theory: Does care theory neglect justice? Nolan asserts that we "learn to care [rather than] learn and then care, [because] we learn through caring" (p. 77). She agrees with Held (2006) who states that we can have "care without justice" (p. 72) because it is "the most basic moral value" (p. 71). Nolan and Held (2006) both believe that "caring relations should form the wider moral framework into which justice should be fitted" (p. 71). Educative encounters are meant to be face-to-face and in person rather than abstract considerations of rules or justices that are neglected, rejected, or devoid of any contact or context (Nolan, 2012). If parents are divorcing and are fighting for the custody of their child, then is it the parent who is genetically bound to the child, or the parent who is the trusted caregiver who wins the custody battle? Given this example, it should be obvious that "caring relationships are needed for justice to occur" (Noddings, 2002;

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Nolan, 2012, p. 76). Every child deserves to be cared for and cared about by the parents (Noddings, 2002). Similarly, every female mentee deserves to be mentored through an ethic of care so that she is capable of being successfully recruited into an educational administrative leadership role.

If caring relations are built upon trust and a moral obligation to do the right thing, then the probable "what if" scenarios are ill-defined by Noddings' ethic of care, according to Nolan (2012, p. 77). This is precisely why Noddings (2012b) states that "the centrality of moral education in the ethic of care" is key to her "ethic's approach to moral education" (p. 237). Noddings' four major components of moral education work together to build character, a sense of self and an ability to care and be cared for.

Nolan (2012) introduces another aspect of care theory that is in conflict with Noddings' theory. Nolan herself says that "self-sacrifice can also be particularly challenging in the arena of education, where the educator is identifiably and unarguably the one-caring, with responsibility to be present and available to care for numerous students on a daily basis" but who receives no direct caring in return (p. 79). Nolan (2012) claims this lack of direct care is a critical question that needs to be addressed in the field of education because caring for others without being cared for is unsustainable for long. This is especially true for me because from personal experience, I have come to view educational administrative leadership as a lonelier venture when transforming from teacher leader to educational administrative leader. Therefore, this question is of great importance for my research. I recall not having access to my teacher colleagues as frequently to support me when I first became an educational administrative leader, and I had not yet formed caring relations with my new educational administrative colleagues. This is, in part, why I believe my work is so critical to the field of education. I believe there is a need for all educators to be cared for in a profession that should already be about caring for self and others (Noddings, 2002a).

If, as Nolan (2012) puts it, "caring encounters seem to support educative encounters" but educative encounters do not necessarily support caring encounters, how does an ethic of care allow individuals in a relation to be challenged, to learn and to be schooled [or mentored] while in a caring relationship" (p. 80)? Is the tension real? Nolan (2012) believes that while learning can take place in the absence of care, Noddings' ethic of care builds resiliency in individuals that increases community, inquiry,

and the potential to have sound educative encounters. Caring is not just about mushy, touchy-feely, lovey-dovey female emotions but a moral education based on "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation"; as stated earlier, these components build character, a sense of self, and an ability to care and be cared for (Noddings, 2012b, p. 237).

Finally, a long debated topic brought up by many scholars—including Noddings, Slote, Held, Gilligan, and Nolan—is the issue of gender and the ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982; Held, 2006; see also Noddings, 1984, 1992, 2002, 2012b, 2013b; Nolan, 2012, Slote, 2007). Noddings (1984) views the ethic of care from the feminine vantage-point first introduced by Gilligan (1982) with *In a Different Voice*, in which she noted that we as a society need to consider the female voice as different from that of men in our male-dominated society. Nolan (2012) asserts that we must conceptualize a different kind of society where women and men both have voice and "build and maintain relations through caring encounters as modeled in ideal mother/child relationships and ideal homes" (p. 82). She illustrates the point by issuing a challenge to men, to step up and to envision a care theory that allows women to continue to care and men to care more because "Care Theory invites us all to go above and beyond" (p. 81). Likely, this was Noddings' perspective as well. In *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (1984), she wanted to "acknowledge the roots of caring in women's experience, but using "a woman's approach" rather than "feminine" risked the complete loss of male readers" and their support (Noddings, 2013a, p. 10). Ultimately, Noddings (2013a) listened to her critics and agreed with them that the term "feminine" portrayed women in a less positive light when really, she was trying to convey that the "relation is more fundamental than the individual" (p. 10). Hence, Noddings renamed her book *Caring: A Relational Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* in 2013.

From whatever vantage point scholars are situated, the most important point is that the dialogue has brought attention to the different voices of women and must continue. I believe Gilligan (2011) is astute in noting that "pivotal to understanding care ethics" is a realization that a feminine ethic exists under a patriarchal framework, whereas what we should be striving for is a human ethic of care within a democratic framework that builds on the relations of men and women working together in harmony (p. 22). Thus, Noddings' ethic of care theory plays an important role in my investigation

of how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education within this kind of democratic framework.

3.7. Noddings' Ethic of Care Referenced in the Literature

While the last section illustrated that there are researchers who oppose aspects of Noddings' ethic of care, there are countless studies by researchers who reference Noddings' care theory in their work: including journal articles, theses, dissertations, and books. Noddings herself has teamed up with many other scholars at lectures, in journals, and in books to present on various topics having to do with education and care, ethics, peace, narrative, leadership, teaching, learning, and the like. Much of her research is related to the work of teachers and students together rather than the work of educators and administrators.

There is no direct evidence of research in the field that closely mirrors the work I have invested my time researching. As well, there is a lack of timely and relevant research. However, the important point to note is that aspects of my work are reflected in others' writings, especially those who reference Noddings as a well-respected researcher who has "contributed to a range of educational scholarship" (Palmer, 2010). Here, I highlight two papers that resonate with my work on the mentoring of women with an ethic of care as they become educational administrative leaders.

3.7.1. Anita Johnston

Anita Johnston's (2002) purpose for researching Noddings' ethic of care was to better understand how an ethic of care in an educational setting would be "embraced and practiced" (p. iii). Related to an ethic of care and through the use of narratives, her work focuses on the school's culture, leadership practices, and the school's power structure. Some common themes that emerge include "(1) continuity of purpose, people and place, (2) pursuit of academic excellence, and (3) exploration of gifts and talents" (Johnston, 2002, p. iii). Her guiding questions for her research are as follows:

1. What are the characteristics of the caring culture of this successful school?

2. In this school, what are the leadership practices that exemplify an ethic of care?

3. How are the organizational policies, programs, and procedures of this school impacted by caring power? (Johnston, 2002, pp. 141-142)

Johnston concludes that "in narrative … one finds that once the stories are told, there emerges a greater narrative that does not lessen the significance of the individual stories, but rather increases it" (Johnston, 2002, p. 136). This greater narrative is illustrated in the narrators' uses of terminology in their stories around care for and by the principal, who "works hard for them" as a role model would (Johnston, 2002, p. 148).

Johnston (2002) highlights the aspects of Noddings' ethic of care that are evident in her research. She has found that Noddings' themes of a caring culture and caring leadership practices are clear in the narratives she researched. With respect to Noddings' ethic of care, continuity and relations are consistently heard in favour of supporting students and their families. Significantly, Johnston sees that "the building and sustaining of relationships for the span of two and three generations had a profound effect on all the stakeholder groups" (p. 156) not just for quality relationships but also for "reaching their academic goals" (p. 157).

Her final thoughts on the future of a caring culture and leadership of schools convey a need for expansion on a "literature base relative to caring practices and caring leadership power" as well as a need for educators to continue to tell their stories because she feels that they are out there waiting to be told (Johnston, 2002, p. 170).

Johnston's (2002) work is important to me because she highlights Noddings' ethic of care and how the administrator worked to show leadership and mentorship capacity at his school. He became a role model for his students and staff by doing what was best for his students. I am hoping to take this ethic to the next level and, like Johnston, work not only with an ethic of care to support the vision of a school and its students and staff (Johnston, 2002). but also with an extended vision to develop female educators who have the potential and likely, the desire to be educational administrative leaders. As Johnston puts it, educators work in "horizontal and vertical teams to bring about coherence and continuity" of school programs (p. 160). The value of vertical and horizontal ascension for educational leaders is an aspect of educational leadership I will definitely speak to in this dissertation. Finally, Johnston focuses on the importance of narrative, a caring culture, continuity, people (relations), and place (environment): all

important aspects of incorporating an ethic of care for women who aspire to be educational administrative leaders.

3.7.2. Darlene Vink Vissers

Darlene Vink Vissers (1994) engages in discussion that resonates with me about her work with administrators who manifest an ethic of care. Some of the highlights of particular interest to me in fleshing out Noddings' ethic of care and its four components revolve around Vink Vissers' discussion about the values of caring administrators who operate with an ethic of care. Vink Vissers claims that the ethic of care is an authentic way of being in the education profession. It is "simplistic in principle ... [yet] not simple to enact"; it requires "constant effort, time, energy and commitment" (p. 160).

Vink Vissers (1994) also argues that although administrators have greater ease building relationships with teachers and students with whom they interact on a daily basis, building relationships with their peers and colleagues such as board members and trustees proves to be more challenging. This is of concern to me because of my desire for educational administrative leaders to work together to build capacity in female educational leaders. However, I feel I am on the right track because of confirmations by Vink Vissers (although the study is dated and I found nothing more recent) that "the ethic of care offers hope for educators" (p. 167):

> The ethic of care is difficult to achieve, and it is not a prominent way of leading in schools, however it has the potential to be transforming for all involved. The ethic of care requires that people make themselves somewhat vulnerable and open. It takes a sense of risk as administrators to allow the members of the school community to get to know you and to share autonomous leadership and power. (p. 165)

I feel I can apply the same conviction to the relations that I am proposing between educational leaders who are female and their mentors who are educational administrative leaders.

Vink Vissers (1994) concludes with her thoughts on why we need to be more mindful of who we are recruiting as administrators (educational administrative leaders) in our schools, how we are recruiting caring administrators to lead in our schools, and how our administrators ought to be leading in our schools:

The ethic of care challenges us to guide our actions by believing in others, to value people and relationships above things, to put this value into practice, to model it through our actions and decisions. Caring, honesty, placing people at the heart, taking the time to know people and understand their needs, and standing up for the rights of others, are the fundamentals of [Noddings'] ethic of care. This dynamic and challenging way of leading is worthy of consideration. (p. 168)

This is the basis for what could be an overhaul of many of our school districts' hiring practices and succession plans for educators, educational leaders, and educational administrative leaders. I am reminded of my critical goal of aiming to bring forth a model for mentoring women into educational administrative leadership with Noddings' theory of the ethic of care.

3.7.3. Nel Noddings herself

This brings me to my final article for consideration. Noddings (2001) reminds us that the need for care continues to exist today and exists beyond the tradition of care in which we "add women and stir" (p. 30). She believes that we need to "educate girls for the wider opportunities now available to them" (p. 29) so that the kind of caring that is learned in the home "serves to guide their lives as they wander forth and begin to re-shape the world" (p. 34). Need I articulate that the same kind of challenge is experienced by women already in the education profession: a profession that Noddings states is one of many related to a tradition of caring that "makes connections with almost every field of human endeavour and encourages a lively concern for the satisfaction of human needs" (p. 35). Who said satisfaction or happiness was not worth striving for at home or at work? I believe in building capacity for happiness just as Buber (1958) and Noddings (2012b) articulate. Through Noddings' component of her ethic of care, *confirmation*, the capacity building of an individual is a process of realizing the best this person can be. What better goal can one strive for as a female being mentored in the education profession? Perhaps this realization is an example of how one of my educational administrative leaders saw something in me when he suggested I join his staff. I am forever indebted to him as my educational journey took a different path from the very day I chose to realize that potential in myself.

3.8. Concluding remarks

Those who are to be recognized for helping me deepen my understanding of the philosophy of moral educational and the theory of the ethic of care include historical greats such as Socrates, Hume, Kant, and Dewey. In addition, the important figures that have shaped the history of the ethic of care and whom I continue to focus on in this paper, aside from Noddings, include scholars such as Gilligan, Ruddick, Slote, and Buber (See also Buber, 1958; Gilligan, 2011; Martin, 2011; Noddings, 1984, 1992, 2010, 2012b). This dissertation focuses on the key individuals who have helped Noddings shape her ethic of care into the care theory that resonates with me. As I share my narratives (see Chapter 5), I seek to unpack my personal experiences and make connections with the ethic of care theory using Noddings' (2012b) foundational pillars of "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). Here, I have found that Noddings and Witherell (1991) sum up my intentions well:

> The power of narrative and dialogue as contributors to reflective awareness … is that they provide opportunities for deepened relations with others and serve as springboards for ethical action. … leading to new insights, compassionate judgment, and the creation of shared knowledge and meanings that can inform professional practice. (p. 8)

I end this chapter with much hope that mentorship practices can play an important role in the recruitment and retention of female educational leaders into educational administrative leadership roles in education if these women are guided with an ethic of care.

Chapter 4.

Methodology

The intent of this dissertation is to investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care. Toward that end, I propose that a narrative inquiry, or more specifically an autoethnography of my personal stories, will allow me to gain insight into my experiences thus providing research findings on women who want to or should be leaders in the field of education. Further, I undertake a reflective analysis of these narratives, as required in an autoethnography, from the perspective of mentoring teacher leaders as well as from the perspective of an ethic of care theory. My goal is to understand better how to impact recruitment and retention of women as educational leaders in positive ways: helping women have successful, fulfilling careers with potential advancement opportunities into educational administrative leadership.

4.1. Philosophical framework and assumptions

In any research study, there are critical considerations to be mindful of with respect to ontological, epistemological, and axiological beliefs. My intention for conducting this research is to approach narrative inquiry as autoethnography, grounded in the principles of John Dewey's theory of inquiry while remaining committed to a pragmatic ontology of the experience (Clandinin, 2013). I will approach my inquiry into experiences from the perspectives outlined by Jean Clandinin (2013) and Clandinin and Michael Connelly (2000, 2007) on sociality, temporality, and continuity—providing the assumption that the interpretive framework of social justice will prevail (Creswell, 2013). This "practice of using social justice frameworks" values the ethical practices of researchers like me, "recogniz[ing] the importance of the subjectivity of [my own] lens, acknowledg[ing] the powerful position" I am in to potentially inspire change through a "call for action and transformation" (Creswell, 2013, pp. 34-35). As one who appreciates "contributing to knowledge this also means valuing the *particular, nuanced, complex, and insider* insights that autoethnography offers researchers … and readers" (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015, p. 103). The important step, however, will be to apply this

knowledge so that there is a call to action. For this dissertation, the call to action is a concerted effort to apply mentorship practices with an ethic of care in order to recruit and retain women into leadership roles in education. I offer more details about this call to action in the analyses in Chapter 5, followed by the conclusion and recommendations in Chapter 6.

Autoethnography will allow me to unravel my story, and a reflective analysis will help "provide a framework for understanding and operationalizing" the act of mentoring" (Nguyen, Fernandez, Karsenti, & Charlin, 2014, p. 1187) and making sense of the ethic of care as it relates to women in educational leadership. To enhance an understanding of mentoring and the ethic of care of women in educational leadership roles, my reflective approach will be twofold. First, I reflect on theory (concepts) and experience "not to find out about the world, but rather, to find out about people's (and my) concepts of the world" (Machery, 2017, p. 212) through my autoethnography. In this case, my hope would be to uncover, for this dissertation, definitions of mentoring and the ethic of care that are explicit and relevant for me. The second possible result of a reflective analysis will potentially be an unpacking of my analysis of my stories that allows a more explicit analysis of mentoring and of the ethic of care. Applying this reflective practice will aid my ability to take a good hard look at the theory of the ethic of care, as well, allowing me to reflect on both theory and its applications in my lived experience.

I am optimistic that my autoethnography will support my desire to find ways to increase the rate of retention and recruitment of women being mentored with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership. Autoethnography offers interpretations of human life; critical thinking about historical issues of social power, domination and societal culture; and the pursuit of new possibilities (Creswell, 2013; Morrow & Brown, 1994). Imagine the possibilities for women who are empowered and are educators and educational leaders wanting to become educational administrators. There is much to learn from the narrative of experiences lived and relived (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000), and my hope is that my autoethnography will enable a heightened awareness of the need for mentors to guide women towards educational administrative leadership with an ethic of care.

4.2. Autoethnography

Autoethnography, a form of qualitative research methodology, is about "the use of personal experience to examine and/or critique cultural experience" (Holman Jones, Adams, & Ellis, 2013, p. 22). It is "part of the trend toward reflexive, humanistic, and, in particular, autobiographical approaches to the writing of ethnographic accounts" (Reed-Danahay, 1995, p. 220). Choosing autoethnography allows me to "focus intensely on [my] own life circumstances as a way to understand larger social or cultural phenomena and … use personal narrative writing as a representational strategy that incorporates affect and emotion into [my] analyses" (Butz & Besio, 2009, p. 1665).

Autoethnography is relational. This fact is an important one in my decision to employ autoethnography as my methodology in this dissertation. Autoethnography is about the "research, writing, story, and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural" (Ellis, 2004, p. 18; see also Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). It is specifically about the personal accounts (auto) being researched culturally (ethno) and recorded or represented (graphy) in a form that is empowering because it is "an opening to honest and deep reflection about ourselves, our relationships with others, and how we want to live" (p. 10). As Stacy Holman Jones, Carolyn Ellis, and Tony Adams (2013) clarify:

> Autoethnography requires that we observe ourselves observing, that we interrogate what we think and believe, and that we challenge our own assumptions, asking over and over if we have penetrated as many layers of our own defenses, fears, and insecurities" as possible. (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 10)

This process is intended to "give us hope" as we "rethink and revise our lives, making conscious decisions about who and how we want to be" with ourselves and others (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 10).

The more invested I have become in this dissertation, the more this methodology speaks to me and made me even more excited to "analyze [my] own biographies as resources for illuminating larger social or cultural phenomena" (Butz & Besio, 2009, p. 1660). For mentoring women into roles in administration with an ethic of care, autoethnography becomes a promising "way of knowing" and a way for the inquiry of narrative to impact research and understanding about mentoring and the ethic of care in

educational leadership (Lyons, 2012, p. 2). I am hopeful about what is uncovered through this dissertation. We know that "[t]he stories we hear and the stories we tell shape the meaning and texture of our lives at every stage and juncture … to provide meaning and belonging to our lives" (Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p. 1). Further, Nel Noddings and Carol Witherell (1991) help bring clarity to the fact that "stories invite us to come to know the world and our place in it … (and) call us to consider what we know, how we know, and what and whom we care about" (p. 13). In Chapter 5 of this dissertation, I show how this process and experience impact me through analyzing my personal experiences. If through this process I can elicit change through "deepened relations with others and [have my narratives] serve as springboards for ethical action," this would be most inspiring (Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p. 8).

Autoethnography resembles the specific methodology of narrative inquiry. In the field of education, stories or narratives (including personal) appeal to practitioners like me because they lend themselves to a kind of wakefulness about the complex dimensions of lived experiences (Clandinin, Pushor, & Orr, 2007). This can be attributed to the fact that narratives are plentiful and they are accessible. "Narrative inquirers strive to attend to the ways in which a story is constructed, for whom and why, as well as the cultural discourses that it draws upon" which leads to the more intense reflection and questioning of personal beliefs, values, and cultural background of autoethnography (Trahar, 2009, p. 1). Autoethnography may be the "practice of doing this identity work self-consciously, or deliberately, in order to understand or represent some worldly phenomenon that exceeds the self" (Butz & Besio, 2009, p. 1660).

Autoethnography will delve into my personal stories and this identity work using "deep and careful self-reflection—typically referred to as "reflexivity," to "balance intellectual and methodological rigor, emotion, and creativity" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 2). By sharing my lived experiences, I intend to give voice to my stories, learn from my stories, and share what I have learned from this journey because of how autoethnography opens from within, eliciting vulnerability and reflexivity (Trahar, 2009). This learning will come from an in-depth analysis of my stories "as well as the larger cultural meaning" in my specific context with respect to the social, sociocultural, economic, institutional, and even political climate (Creswell, 2013, p. 73). I will tell my own stories in an effort to gain further insights into a possible phenomenon or culture: e.g. social or political in nature (Méndez, 2013). My hope is to describe the mentoring of

women with an ethic of care as a cultural phenomenon to help transition women more successfully into administrative educational leadership roles. A major goal of this dissertation is to make sense of my personal journey as a female in educational administrative leadership, have my findings impact my way of knowing and being, and contribute to the research that already exists.

4.2.1. Autoethnography: A brief history

Well before the emergence of autoethnography, ethnography first made an appearance during the last twenty-five years of the 19th century, when anthropologists began using the term to apply to "descriptive accounts of the lifeways of particular local sets of people who lived in colonial situations around the world" (Erickson, 2018, p. 38). Frederick Erickson (2018) notes that ethnography has Greek origins: "combining two Greek words: *graphein*, the verb for "to write," and *ethnoi*, a plural noun for "the nations"—the others" (p. 39). He further illustrated that "to the ancient Greeks, the ethnoi were people who were not Greek" which, to many xenophobic Greeks at the time, "carries pejorative implications" (p.39). This attitude is highlighted by a closer look at the Hebrew scriptures: *[e]thnoi* was the translation for the Hebrew term for "them"—*goyim*—which is not a compliment. Given its etymology and its initial use in the 19th century for descriptive accounts of non-Western people, the best definition for ethnography is "writing about other people" (p. 39).

The term auto-ethnography was first loosely used in the field of economics in 1966. In the USA, auto-ethnography began to take flight in the mid-seventies in anthropology and has since been shaped into the autoethnographic methodological tool I am using in this dissertation (Hayano, 1979). In 1975, auto-ethnography was first thought by Karl Heider to be "auto" for "autochthonous," as in a basic "account of 'what people do,' and 'auto' for 'automatic,' since it is the simplest routine-eliciting technique imaginable" to unveil accounts about one's own culture (Heider, 1975, p. 3). In 1977, Walter Goldschmidt questioned what we could learn from our past since our "culture is in constant flux"; within our past are revealed the vulnerabilities and strengths because "all ethnography, is self-ethnography" (Goldschmidt, 1977, pp. 293-294). Two years later, in 1979, Hayano further claimed that a trend was noted in conducting auto-ethnography as a means of delving deeper into one's self-identity as "ethnographers who have studied their own cultural, social, ethnic, racial, religious, residential, or sex membership group,

or a combination of one or more of these categories" (Hayano, 1979, p. 100).
Autoethnography had clearly emerged "in response to concerns about colonialism, the
need to recognize social difference and identity politics" because of a need to respect all
of the participants involved and to acknowledge that there were indeed "different ways of
learning about culture" (pp. 21-22).

In the 1980s, researchers in a variety of disciplines including sociology,
anthropology, women's studies, and gender studies looked beyond quantitative research
and "began writing and advocating for personal narrative, subjectivity and reflexivity in
research" because of their interest in "storytelling and enactments of culture" (Adams et
al., 2015, pp. 16-17). As well, these "scholars … began to consider what social sciences
would become if they were closer to literature than to physics" (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner,
2011, para. 2). Almost simultaneously with the birth of narrative inquiry, the 1990s saw
"more emphasis on personal narratives and the budding autoethnographic movement"
(Adams et al., 2015, p. 17). Since that time, scores of essays, journals, and books have
been published about autoethnography in a variety of disciplines including education,
"about the use of personal experience in research," which "better established a space for
emotional and personal scholarship. Thus, "autoethnography soon became the
descriptor of choice" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 17). But it is Deborah Reed-Danahay (1997)
who provides the first comprehensive historical overview of the term "autoethnography"
(Reed-Danahay, 2017, p. 1). As noted by Adams et al. (2015):

> Autoethnography [acknowledges] how and why identities matter and
> includes and interrogates experiences tied to cultural differences. …
> autoethnography is focused on the personal approach … [which]
> illustrates the investment researchers have … by being personally,
> emotionally, aesthetically, and narratively connected to a cultural group or
> experience, [so] autoethnographers may take more responsibility for and
> greater care in representing themselves and others. (pp. 18-19)

My desire is to have records of my own life connecting me more deeply to my
own identity as part of the narrative from which I will make my inquiry. Because
enquirers of personal narratives "study experience" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 37;
see also Clandinin, 2018; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Murray, 2018), "qualitative
research methods, particularly narrative and storytelling through my autoethnography,
are crucial ways of knowing" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 31). It is no wonder then that
narrative inquiry is grounded in Dewey's philosophical school of thought. Dewey (1938)

believed that "all genuine education comes about through [a quality] experience" and that there is no greater need in education than that of a sound philosophy of education (p. 25). As noted extensively in Chapter 3, he made great strides in engaging educators to think conceptually about the relationships among education, experience, and life (Dewey, 1938; see also Dewey,1944, 1990a, 1990b).

We learn about life from thinking about our ordinary lived experiences in education (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Hence, this dissertation serves to map some key experiences instrumental in my growth towards becoming an educational administrative leader, with a specific focus on how the concepts of mentoring and the ethic of care played a role in my experiences. But as Dewey (1990a) states, "The map is not a substitute for a personal experience" (p. 198). The map is instead:

> a summary, an arranged and orderly view of previous experiences, [which] serves as a guide to future experience; it gives direction; it facilitates control; it economizes effort, preventing useless wandering, and pointing out the paths which lead most quickly and most certainly to a desired result. (p. 198)

The map or, in this case, a narrative of experiences such as mine ensures that:

> Every new [educator] may get for his own journey the benefits of the results of others' explorations without the waste of energy and loss of time involved in their wanderings–wanderings which he himself would be obliged to repeat were it not for just the assistance of the objective and generalized record of their performances. (Dewey, 1990a, pp. 198-199)

This understanding is made possible because, in Dewey's (1944) words, "no experience having a meaning is possible without some element of thought" that has the potential of pushing forward towards a more insightful "foresight," "consequence," or "effect" (p. 145). This heightened insight would be seemingly more effective or efficient if, in the case of a female educational leader being mentored with an ethic of care towards becoming an educational administrative leader, we were to have greater foresight. This consideration may impress upon us a sense of control over what is to come along with a preconceived notion of a favourable outcome. "Hence," as Dewey (1944) argues, "the quality of the experience changes" and the "deliberate cultivation of this phase of thought constitutes thinking as a distinctive experience" (p. 145). At best, the discovery becomes continuous when what we do and the consequence operate in tandem.

Keeping Dewey's philosophy in mind about the importance of the relationships among education, experience, and life, I take heart in knowing that the map in support of females in education continues to be charted, with a rich history of important scholarly work by Noddings, Gilligan (ethic of care), Kram (mentoring), and their colleagues when I was still a young student myself. This scholarship and the insights of women such as Gilligan (1982), Noddings (1984), and Kram (1985b) during the 1970s and 1980s in the areas of ethic of care, moral psychology, and mentoring are instrumental in my quest to tie together my experiences in life, education, and literature to guide the way forward for a brighter future. These scholars assisted in my decision to conduct an autoethnographic inquiry into my narratives. Their writings and their work have shown the critical importance of giving voice to women, including women in the field of education (teachers, educational leaders). They highlight the importance of the educational journeys of women and the importance of scholarly research about women in which I, too, am invested (Gilligan, 1982; Lyons, 2012; Noddings, 1984).

The literature from past, present, and future must provide a sense of value and trust between researcher and audience for the revealing of raw emotions, intimate lived experiences, and heart-felt secrets. Value and trust open the researcher and participants to a vulnerability that is complex and potentially unsettling. In many cases, personal and professional experience are one and the same; there is no hiding. These realizations have strengthened my resolve to enlist authoethnography as the methodology to help me uncover my stories—a process that I hope will lead the way for women being mentored with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership roles.

4.2.2. Nature of autoethnography

Throughout the history of autoethnography, this form of qualitative research method has continued to flourish and mature (Holman Jones et al., 2013). Autoethnography is considered to be a human activity with the ability to offer "nuanced, complex, and specific knowledge about *particular* lives, experiences, and relationships" (p. 21). It is process driven because autoethnographers "use personal experience to illustrate facets of cultural experience, and, in so doing, make characteristics of a culture familiar for insiders and outsiders" (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 9). Autoethnography is relational and ethically values the role of the self and the others in personal narratives. As Ellis et al. (2011) note, this form of qualitative research "uses deep and careful self-

reflection—typically referred to as "reflexivity"—to name and interrogate the intersections between self and society, the particular and the general, the personal and the political" (p. 2). It is an intellectual, creative and rigorous endeavor that "strives for social justice" and an improved quality of life (p. 2). Also, the process of autoethnography ideally helps us focus on "human intentions, motivations, emotions, and actions, rather than generating demographic information and general descriptions of interactions" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 21).

Autoethnographers become observers of their own culture through an analysis of their experiences as told in their personal narratives (Ellis et al., 2011). This kind of inquiry into their own narratives is foundational to experience as life is to education (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). "Educators are interested in [telling stories and reflecting on] learning and teaching and how it takes place; they are interested in the leading out of different lives, the values, attitudes, beliefs, social systems, institutions, and structures, and how they are linked to learning and teaching" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxii). Educators are drawn to the investigating, the observing, the "participating with, thinking about, saying and writing the doings and goings-on of our fellow humans. … [as] lived experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. xxii). A narrative may be a personal narrative or life story of a "specific or significant aspect of a person's life" (Chase, 2005, p. 652), otherwise known as an epiphany or interactional moment or experience (Denzin, 1989). Such significance is made possible when autoethnographers "retrospectively and selectively write about epiphanies that stem from, or are made possible by, being part of a culture and/or by possessing a particular cultural identity" (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 9). That lives can be turned around by a single event, or series of events or epiphanies, may be transformative; it changes the life of whose narrative has been shared (Denzin, 1989, p. 22). Norman Denzin (1989) also refers to the epiphany as having the potential to provide greater meaning to a person's life through the reliving or retelling of an experience.

As narratives unravel, their purpose and focus are always present; however, they may and will shift, blur, and move over time because personal and professional boundaries are not static (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). "Sometimes, autoethnography stays focused on the inquirer" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 191). Narrative inquiry is, not surprisingly, associated with research in the form of social stories about minority groups such as individuals who have been through trauma (accidents, loss, harassment,

abuse); individuals who are marginalized because of their gender, sexual orientation, or race; and individuals who are vulnerable (children, teenage parents, the uneducated). A quick search of any institution's library database will bring up hundreds of research studies of this nature. By way of shedding light on the stories of the marginalized, or minorities and/or vulnerable people, Susan Chase (2018) asserts that, at the point of analysis of narrative inquiry, researchers seek to "change our perceptions" (p. 553) of these groups, to realize "how storytelling can change professional practices" (p. 554), to "treat narrative as a powerful tool for promoting social justice" (p. 555), and to facilitate social change. Some of these groups are those to which I belong because of my gender, my ethnicity, and potentially, my abilities; I will address these associations in the coming chapters through my narratives. This kind of inquiry into narrative helps with the conceptualization of my experience as a storied one on many levels towards growth, change, an "openness to experience" (p. 89), and also, a "reflexive relationship between living my life story, telling my life story, retelling my life story, and reliving my life story" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 71; also see Chase, 2018).

Engaging in autoethnography and reflexively reliving my life story will allow me the potential to impact social change. I would like to "draw on [my] own experiences to understand a particular phenomenon or culture" (Méndez, 2013, p. 280). I would like my autoethnography to allow me to "critique, make contributions to, and/or extend existing research and theory" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 36). Autoethnography will potentially give me a "new perspective on my own story. … [to] develop my perspective and professional identity" (Hayler, 2011, p. 99). My hope is that in questioning my own story, this methodology will allow me to seek answers about mentoring women in leadership with an ethic of care to affect recruitment and retention in the field of education—that women can move successfully into educational administrative leadership roles in greater numbers and strength.

To clarify, my dissertation is not a gender study. However, it is focused on women in the field of educational leadership. Chase (2005) defines women's place in research by considering the following kinds of research questions that potentially grow out of narrative inquiry. "What does it mean to hear the other's [female] voice? In what sense do–or don't–women's life histories and personal narratives "speak for themselves"? In what ways are women's voices muted, multiple, and/or contradictory"

(Chase, 2005, p. 655)? How does an experience come to be experienced and why does an experience occur (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)?

This dissertation fits well into the realm of eliciting social change for women in the field of education. Critical theory, according to Brian Fay (1987) makes this calling; this form of critical theory is the paradigm for empowering human beings to "come together, [become] energized, and [organize] itself" (Fay, 1987, p. 130) so this theory is able to achieve the call for social justice or "socially transformative action" (Fay, 1987, p. 205). The time to access the potential to emancipate and empower human beings' aim for practical ways to promote a clearer reflective capacity for transformative action is now. Because they know who they are and what they want, humans can rationally and freely determine how to benefit from "advancements in knowledge" without, for example, the constraints of social issues related to such groups of gender or class (Fay, 1987, p. 204).

4.2.3. Value of autoethnography?

What does the qualitative methodology of autoethnography offer us that other methodologies will not? Autoethnography lives at the heart of its experiences, at the heart of its stories and aims to make sense of "cultural norms, experiences, and practices" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 27). It "produce[s] aesthetic and evocative thick descriptions of personal and interpersonal experience" by "first discerning patterns of cultural experience evidenced by field notes, interviews, and/or artifacts, and then describing these patterns using facts of storytelling. … showing and telling" (Ellis et al., 2011). As Carolyn Ellis articulates (Holman Jones, et al., 2013), "I have also been interested in peoples' emotions and intentions and how they create meaningful lives and cope with the problems of living" (p. 17). Ellis adds:

> Autoethnography [feels] perfect to me because it [combines] my interests in ethnography, social psychology of the self and role-taking, subjectivity and emotionality, face-to-face communication and interaction, writing as inquiry and for evocation, storytelling, and my … [beliefs about] social justice and giving back to the community. (p. 17)

Autoethnography is "guided by the ideas, feelings, experiences, and questions we have in and about our lives" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 28). This ethnography of the self,

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a creative methodology, has gained ground in the field of qualitative research and digs at the personal stories and experiences to unite head and heart together as one:

> We seek an intermediate zone, a meeting ground where head and heart can go hand in hand, a rigorous and creative ethnography that is passionate, political, personal, critical, open-ended, enlightening, pleasurable, meaningful, and evocative. … [and we] want the conversation to continue. Can we keep talking? (Bochner & Ellis, 1999, p. 498)

About two decades ago, Art Bochner and Carolyn Ellis (1999) made the claim for legitimizing autoethnography as a qualitative methodology because of its creative capacity to engage us in a reflexive capacity to seek answers that impact our daily lives. The dialogue has continued and has thrived to the present day. Their work has allowed autoethnography to gain ground and so it "encourages a dialogic attitude under which a plurality of perspectives can flourish and be appreciated" (p. 485). As well, there are eager others like me: "researchers with new ideas [who] are continually being socialized into a pre-existing social and institutional world and are obliged to negotiate a working consensus under which tradition and innovation can coexist" (pp. 485-486).

Autoethnography shares similarities with other traditional qualitative methodologies such as narrative inquiry and phenomenology (Creswell, 2013). Creswell (2013) illustrates that ethnography and narrative inquiry focus on the social, while phenomenology focuses on storytelling, on lived experiences both inside and outside the particular situation considered. Narrative inquiry and autoethnography explore the life history or lived experiences of individuals, while phenomenology's aim is to determine the "essence of a lived phenomenon" (Creswell, 2013, p. 104). The "*essence* of the experience for individuals [is] incorporating 'what' they have experienced and 'how' they experienced it" from within (Creswell, 2013, p. 79). Ethnography, on the other hand, delves into the "studying of a group that share the same culture" to unveil how "a culture-sharing group works" (Creswell, 2013, pp. 104-105). Autoethnography, then, is the studying of my personal story and the cultures that have helped me to shape my life. It is more detailed than an autobiography in which the "researcher tell[s] about his or her background" (p. 54). Instead, autoethnographers further "[focus] on how individuals' culture, gender, history, and experiences shape all aspects of the qualitative project" (pp. 54-55). As stated earlier, autoethnographers are able to make sense of their personal experiences by interrogating their cultural experiences; this is what gives rise to clarity of

a culture for insiders as well as those looking in from the outside. Autoethnographers link influences specific to the researcher but tangible to the reader to social, political, economic, and institutional influences on culture (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 9). This form of narrative inquiry includes an "explicit effort to inform readers' understanding of some aspect of the social word [*sic*] that exceeds the autoethnographer's individual experience" (Butz & Besio, 2009, p. 1666). Autoethnographers instead, are interested in:

> acknowledg[ing] how and why identities matter and includes and interrogates experiences tied to cultural differences. Autoethnographers often foreground the ways in which social identities influence the research process, particularly in terms of what, who, and how we study; what and how we interpret what we observe and experience; and how we represent our observations and experiences of cultural life. (Adams et al., 2015, p. 19)

Autoethnography is not unlike narrative inquiry in that both methodologies seek answers from experience and from stories in a way that is respectful. As Trahar (2009) points out, "narrative inquiry … has evolved from the growing participatory research movement that foregrounds a greater sensitivity to social and cultural differences" (para. 5). As well, "narrative inquirers engage in intense and transparent reflection and questioning of their own position, values, beliefs and cultural background" as they specifically emphasize the re-telling of the stories of their participants and how best this may be achieved (Trahar, 2009, para. 19). Likewise, autoethnographers pay close attention to the values, beliefs, and cultural issues at play but further use "deep and careful self-reflection—typically referred to as 'reflexivity'—to name and interrogate the intersections between self and society, the particular and the general, the personal and the political" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 2). In other words, being reflexive through autoethnography means being able to "scrutinize [my] experiences of self/culture, to illustrate how [I as] the autoethnographer" can write who I was, who I am and who I am transformed to become for the reader or audience, in order to share what is learned through this research process (Adams et al., 2015, p. 30).

My hope is that engaging in this reflexive practice through my autoethnography will create a heightened awareness about "turning back on our experiences, identities, and relationships in order to consider how they influence our present work. … to explicitly acknowledge our research in relation to power" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 29). The power I refer to here is one that bolsters my identity as I see it, whether it be based in

gender, ethnicity, ability, privilege, or other potentially divisive identifiable characteristics. There is much to be considered as I investigate supporting women into positions of power and privilege within the field of education with an ethic of care within the context of dominant Western culture.

4.2.4. Benefits of autoethnography

Qualitative research is about "locat[ing] the observer in the world" in order to "transform the world" and "make the world visible" through such practices as dialogue, interviews, photographs, and personal journals in an attempt to "make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. 10). Specifically, my use of personal experience and life stories through these kinds of practices aims to achieve a better understanding of the mentoring of females with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership. My narrative inquiry seeks understanding of these concepts through a reflexive journey of my stories. This inquiry takes my experiences to greater depths by transforming the narrator's or my identity as it develops and changes over time, depending on how the people in my stories help me to create, extract, and then communicate meaning (Chase, 2005). Autoethnographic narrative inquiry "illuminate[s] the experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 124). By shedding light on the experience and "examin[ing] … experiences in the context of emerging and ever-changing relationships," I can "enter the world of others as much as I try to understand the self" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 671).

I am "starting where we are" in better understanding myself (Shields, 2011, p 385). This in turn "requires all of us, as leaders, to know ourselves—what guides and grounds us, what our non-negotiables are, what we believe, what we are willing to fight for, and what we are trying to accomplish" (Shields, 2011, p. 385). Thus, autoethnography is the means to help me rise to the occasion as a transformative leader, as one who will analyze my personal stories and experiences in order to aim to fulfill Shields' tenets which I quote as she has listed:

- acknowledge power and privilege

- articulate both individual and collective purposes (public and private good)

- deconstruct social-cultural knowledge frameworks that generate inequity and reconstruct them in more equitable ways

- balance critique and promise

- effect deep and equitable change

- work towards transformation—liberation, emancipation, democracy, equity, and excellence; and

- demonstrate moral courage and activism. (Shields, 2011, p. 384)

This intense kind of transformative leadership action holds promise through a concerted effort to "remain connected and committed to a position of autoethnographic engagement and humility inside and outside the story" by focusing on "experiences of exclusion, degradation, and injustice, and in so doing, create work that not only makes the case for change but also embodies the change it calls into being" (Holman Jones, et al., 2013, p. 675). Being inside the story and embodying the change is critical because this is where the "writings from the lived, inside moments of experience" as noted by the narrator are interpreted for meanings such as cultural significance (Adams et al., 2015, p. 31). This is also where I will analyze my narratives to consider whether there are instances of exclusion, degradation, or injustice, especially with respect to females in education being mentored with an ethic of care. I will close this dissertation with these actions in mind, seeking the hope and promise of courage to support women to be successfully recruited and retained into educational administrative leadership roles because they have been supported by mentors with an ethic of care.

The beauty of autoethnography is that, according to Nona Lyons (2012), there are positive outcomes that may potentially be achieved, such as the opportunity for me as I tell my story, to gain a heightened "awareness of the centrality of interpretation and meaning in [my] own professional development as well as in [my] discipline" (p. 19). As Lyons (2012) expresses it, I am the "practitioner … discovering important ways in which narrative provides an avenue of inquiry to deepen knowledge, for example, to uncover new ways of interpreting and understanding [my colleague's] ways of knowing and making meaning—otherwise hidden from view" (p. 19). Autoethnography is also beneficial because important "reflexive ethnographies document the ways a researcher changes as a result of doing fieldwork" (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 19). It has the potential to uncover a deeper understanding about how "research can be rigorous, theoretical, and analytical and emotional, therapeutic, and inclusive of personal and social phenomena" (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 40).

This is a tall order to which I have committed. I am fully ready to share my story in earnest because I do wish to learn from my experiences, to parse my experiences into tangible parts, to recognize the voice in my story, the influence of my voice, and the wisdom inherent in my stories. My audience has the potential to be moved by my heightened awareness of self, especially since my literature review indicates a need for research for women in the field of educational leadership. I serve to flesh out these details in more depth over the next two chapters because I have a story that needs telling and understanding. I am seeking "meaning making through the shaping or ordering of experience, a way of understanding [my] own or others' actions, of organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole, of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time" (Chase, 2011, p. 421), and inquiry into my narratives serves this purpose. I want to be able to focus on my life experiences in relation to others' within the context of my world, socially, culturally, economically, and even institutionally through my autoethnography. Therefore, this dissertation is a process of investigating my own experiences and being open to what comes next in helping me build on the future.

As Chase (2011) also points out, "many narrative researchers hope their work will stimulate dialogue about complex moral matters and about the need for social change" (p. 429). Narrative inquiry as autoethnography gives me permission to try to be part of this social change, beginning within myself. Holman Jones et al. (2013) emphasize how context is important in autoethnography for identity formation. "More specifically, in the context of embodied social relationships", it is important to note that "doing autoethnography is inherently and always already a labour of social theories; therefore, autoethnographers as intersubjective, social, and dialogical selves possess potential in rendering a critical impetus to promote social justice" (p. 565). Furthermore, "autoethnography is key in thinking of autoethnography as the praxis of social justice" which is "fundamentally *social*" and requires a closer examination of the "self who engages in social justice/responds to social injustices" with the other (p. 560).

Martin Buber (1958) knew the importance of the self and the other in the relation: "Relation is mutual. My Thou affects me, as I affect it"; as such, we are "built up by our works" (pp. 15-16). Holman Jones et al. (2013) also echo the importance of the self in relation to the other. They describe the central role of the self with other and how one would "affirm and accept each other's whole being, becoming more whole for

themselves and one another" by "directly fac[ing] their [similarities and] differences in narrating the relationship" (p. 569). This focus on acceptance teaches me as an autoethnographer the "importance of being fully present for each other" (p. 569). This "way of being in relationships," of being "relationship-centered" is, according to Holman Jones et al., the "foundation of social justice" (p. 569). Justice comes from having an ethic of care for and about the other, and in having the courage to naturally act morally for the greater good (Noddings, 1984). My hope is that this ethic will become more evident as my narratives unfold and as I seek answers to my investigation into how mentorship practices with an ethic of care can play a role in the recruitment and retention of female educational leaders into administrative leadership roles.

Qualitative narrative research is also paving the way for change in the field of education for minority groups (Chase, 2018). This dissertation addresses a potential minority group of females in education and seeks answers in support of women seeking advancement in educational leadership. I propose that this group of women needs to have their voices heard so that we can attest to the importance of being mentored with an ethic of care into educational leadership roles in administration. Thus, now is the time to be a woman in the field of education.

4.2.5. Purpose of autoethnography

My desire in conducting this autoethnographic study in the field of education is to answer important questions. What ought mentoring be? What ought an ethic of care be? Why and how should women be mentored with an ethic of care? Does the mentoring of women with an ethic of care support them in acquiring administrative roles in education? Storytelling and engaging with my lived experiences will allow me to gain insight into a specific phenomenon or culture, to potentially affect social change (even in some small way), and to shine a light on the identities of the characters at play through the autoethnography (Chase, 2018, p. 552; see also Chase, 2005, 2011; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Clandinin & Huber, 2010; Hayler, 2011). According to Chase (2018), delving deeply into the research at the "point of analysis" requires:

> ethnographic sensibilities: It opens up questions about the circumstances under which certain stories get told (or don't get told) in everyday life, what narrators (whether people or organizations) are doing in relation to

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various audiences as they tell their stories, and the social consequences
of their storytelling. (p. 553)

At the same time, there are some basic questions that should be answered or at least understood more deeply, such as: "What is my ethical stance" (Thomas, 2010, p. 656)? "What type of knowledge do personal narratives give us access to" (Chase, 2018, p. 551)? "What methods do I use to analyze and/or represent narrative data" (Chase, 2018, p. 551)?

Another, perhaps more practical, way to consider these questions as important is to consider asking for *justification* of this work on three levels. There is personal justification, the "inquiry in the context of [our] own life experiences, tensions, and personal-inquiry puzzles" (p. 438); there is practical justification, paying attention to the "importance of considering the possibility of shifting or changing practice"; and lastly, there is social justification, the "addressing [of] the so-what and who-cares questions important in all research undertakings" (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 438).

By gaining insights into these questions through the work of this dissertation, I aim to have a better understanding of the definitions and/or concepts of mentoring and of an ethic of care pertaining to women in the field of educational leadership. My ability to impact change in how we support women into educational administrative leadership roles will rest upon my ability to consider, for example, my ethical stance as I add to the literature with tangible research that seeks to change the behaviour of their educators in the field of education. This change in behavior will include women's potential ways of being and knowing how to lead as a mentor in a way that illustrates an ethic of care.

Holman Jones et al. (2013) "continuously and critically gesture towards how the present might be differently understood in its temporality, in its coming from the past, and in its look toward the future" (pp. 562-563). Our stories present the textures of our selves as parts of the whole community, the whole including the relations we embrace as we do more than accept the present. By accentuating the relationships of past and present through narrative, there is a more purposeful sense given to "identities, relationships, and experiences" which in turn urges us to consider the "questions, feelings, voices, and bodies" as intended by autoethnographers searching for "ways of doing and representing research" (Adams et al., 2015, p. 23). Certainly, connecting the

past with present and future challenges "autoethnographers [to] engage [in] the possible rather than settling in the actual" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 562).

One critical way Tony Adams (Adams, Jones, & Ellis, 2015) and his co-researchers reveal that autoethnographers are valued for their research is how they offer "insider knowledge of a cultural phenomenon [or] experience" (p. 31). They are able to understand, see, or experience a phenomenon from the inside, a perspective known as "insiderness" to which outsiders are not privy (p. 31). *Insiderness* is a perspective of the lived experience or moments the autoethnographers have that support the interrogation process of key inquiry questions such as the ones I have considered above. As well, autoethnographers have the insider privilege of having perspective on specific practices, cultural phenomena, and their meanings that could potentially shape the insights to be gained from research such as mine. These are insights that we cannot necessarily recreate or observe directly because the "experiences [have occurred] in their own time, uninterrupted by a researcher's presence" (p. 32).

The ease of collaborating to share narrative makes autoethnography and the inquiry of narrative useful. Bruner's (1990) extensive work on narrative and the interpretation of narrative reinforces his belief that meaning-making comes from the study of cultural psychology. He emphasizes how the human mind and lives are a reflection of culture and history. "One of the most ubiquitous and powerful discourse forms in human communication is *narrative*. Narrative structure is even inherent in the praxis of social interaction before it achieves linguistic expression" (p. 77). Bruner (1990) believes "narrative requires … four crucial grammatical constituents if it is to be carried out" effectively (p. 77). These four constituents are "a means for emphasizing human action … directed towards goals controlled by agents, a sequential order to events, a canonical sensitivity in the human interaction, and lastly, a voice or perspective" (p. 77). Given how narrative reflects the cultural underpinnings of our selves, he feels that "the human propensity to share stories of human diversity and to make their interpretations congruent with the divergent moral commitments and institutional obligations that prevail in every culture" (p. 68) provides crucial information that is critical in pointing the way forward.

Considering the importance of meaning-making is significant to this dissertation because as Bruner (1990) states, this is the basis to identity formation: "to show how the

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lives and Selves we construct are the outcomes of this process of meaning-construction"
(p. 138). To tell my story of how I have come to be an educational administrative leader,
and to reflect on this journey, prompts me to reflect on my personal and professional
identity. In my autoethnography, I will share my experiences, the goals that I set along
the way, my interpretations of my experiences, and the commitments that were made for
me and by me. I will seek answers in this dissertation by investigating how mentorship
practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative
roles in education with an ethic of care. If our human minds and lives come together to
create the kind of culture in which we live—and I am suggesting that we marry mentoring
and an ethic of care for women in the field of education—then it is obvious that I believe
there is a need for change. So my question is this: how ought I structure my narrative so
that I share experiences that encompass my story of being mentored with an ethic of
care into educational administrative roles that are suited to my potential and desire? I
fully intend to share my experiences in hopes of investigating how mentorship practices
with an ethic of care support women in their quest to becoming educational
administrative leaders. Thus my stories, I hope, will "continue to inform research practice
not because personal experience is better or more truthful or more generalizable, but
rather because it can humanize research and make research more relevant, accessible,
and meaningful to others" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 672).

4.2.6. Challenges associated with autoethnography

Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (2000) assert that there are risks and
dangers inherent in being the storied researcher. Many factors influence which stories
are reported, including the researcher's own "identities, lives, beliefs, feelings, and
relationships" which have encouraged researchers to become more transparent,
reflexive, and creative" in the way that research is conducted and shared (Adams et al.,
2015, p. 22). What is a story and what makes it worthy of telling? Who owns the stories
and what of the anonymous characters of the stories? What about the main character of
the story, notably, "I"? When "I" am "the critic," there is a "negative monitoring sense, the
possibility of stifling inquiry" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 182). Being alert to our
context, being cognizant of the "inside or outside of the culture" (Clandinin & Connelly,
2000, p. 183), being aware of the boundaries and what lies on either side of the
boundaries, is the "wakefulness" that Clandinin and Connelly reference throughout their

work (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, 2007). For example, there is an awareness or a wakefulness that comes from memories retrieved from childhood versus adulthood, or from letters versus memories or photographs. What elicited the photo being taken or what was happening just before or after the photo was taken (Bach, 2007; Clandinin & Connelly, 2007)? There is potential for a kind of negative wakefulness in remembering stories that are more painful or traumatic; not wanting to share them, some individuals have pushed the painful memory aside, or "in the face of trauma, individuals are often at a loss for words" (Murray, 2018, p. 7). There are also inner dynamics of consciousness at play about how and why memories are remembered and shared, based on the outer dynamics of culture, power, and relationships. Autoethnographic narrative inquirers press on, however, because wakefulness has fluidity; whether impacted positively or negatively, we continue to learn and grow from narrative inquiry and are mindful of the quest of the lived and the living (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

These are some of the pressures autoethnographic researchers face when fitting into mainstream research patterns. However, that boundary is being pushed, and autoethnographers continue to look for ways to challenge boundaries and to find their limits:

> No longer can we hide behind positivist ideologies or the power we, as researchers, might have over Others. No longer can we uncritically question or take the beliefs and practices of Others as our own, nor can we represent Others without their input. No longer can we think that we are the ones who should give the Others a voice or to articulate for them the knowledges of their lives and cultures. (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 31)

Autoethnographers have worked hard to earn credibility as qualitative researchers. This does require an element of trust, patience, skill, and vulnerability on the part of the researcher to be able to open up fully to uncover the lived, told, and retold truths of the story. also requires a conscious and genuine acceptance that the story is still worthy of telling. (Chase, 2018)

Another challenge faced by researchers of narrative inquiry and autoethnography is that over time, writers are "less confident of what they are doing and what they want to say than they were when they entered … they are less secure and at ease with themselves than they were as the field experience" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 145). Determining what is "story worthy" is critical to autoethnographic narrative inquiry

because the audience will interpret its own meaning. (Chase, 2005, p. 661). This vulnerability and awareness of bias (such as about the narrator, the researcher and/or the writer) that must be considered as well (Plummer, 2001). This places me in a vulnerable position as I share my innermost thoughts about my experiences transitioning from teacher to teacher/educational leader, and then to educational administrative leader. Any feedback and criticism that is relayed to me about my experiences can potentially be very personal and hurtful. "Narrative and storytelling, are crucial ways of knowing" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 31) and while the stories elicit a vulnerability, they are necessary for providing insight and knowledge about humans.

Autoethnography is a complex qualitative research methodology that serves to study certain cultural themes or groups in operation. It also aims to study the beliefs, behaviours, and issues facing these groups. In the case of this dissertation, I am starting from a place of "individual experience, though the experience is situated in a larger, macro-social context," with the intent to "engage [my] micro-level experience as it is intersubjectively embodied within a macro-social context" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 562). This is challenging work that considers, as Holman Jones et al. (2013) point out, how "each of [my] autoethnographies serves as a thread of the micro-social labor against social injustice, a thread that weaves together with others to actualize social change" (p. 562). My writing must reach and resonate with the readers for them to understand the need for justice and support of females seeking leadership roles. Then, and only then, might I be able to impart a sense of urgency upon the reader to expect that mentoring females with an ethic of care is the most moral choice. Readers must also see value in my quest to investigate and support females into educational administrative leadership by way of mentoring with an ethic of care in the field of education. The most effective means to convey this urgency is through autoethnography, which "serves as a critical mechanism for working with micro-social acts and sites of social injustice and towards productively ambiguous social justice in the spirit of *with* others" (p. 562). Because autoethnographic research is "feminist with its focus on lived, personal experience, its appreciation of difference and intersectionality and its valuing of rationality, emotionality, and multiple ways of knowing," this methodology also moves us towards an "activist-oriented, critical sensibility to understanding experience" and identity within specific cultural settings (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 673).

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Much of the literature on autoethnography, inquiry into narratives, and qualitative research is authored by Western writers and researchers, which means that the literature is informed mainly by "experiences, values, and desires" which "are not and should not be the sole interest … of qualitative research" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 674). This bias must impact our research since it lacks substantial "insights of non-Western storytellers" (Holman Jones et al., 2013, p. 675). While my literature review did not really uncover writings about this area of study in non-Western cultures, I also did not find any relevant research indicating that my research would not be valuable.

To safeguard autoethnographic researchers and participants, ethical research is of top priority. There are important precursory steps that allow the research to be safe, trustworthy, and sound for all involved (for this dissertation, the necessary steps were taken). For all interviews, the setting can be controlled and must be respectful and conducive to sharing personal, emotional (including traumatic), and intimate information without fear of judgment (Murray, 2018). The benefit of conducting an autoethnography of my personal stories (which is not common to other forms of narrative inquiry such as a study of an interview nature or of a rehearsed dance or depicting artist's renderings) is that my story is shaped by me. The external influences are not affected by others in the same way they could be through an interview, dance, or artists' exhibit. My research is unlike ethnography wherein the content of the sharing is shaped by the kinds of questions provided, the knowledge-base of the interviewee or participant, the probing questions presented, and the timeliness of the emotions, ideas, or visuals. If the questions are not prepared or used for prompting, or if the freshness of the story is dependent upon the length of the interview (whether it runs overtime, is cut short, or is completed over the course of several hours, days or weeks), then crucial information can be left out, missed, misinterpreted, and even seem inconsequential at the time of the presentation or interview. To go back in time during an interview is impossible, and to gain clarifying information is often not possible. In ethnography, there is an "awareness that the narrator is not simply telling their story in a vacuum but telling it to someone" (pp. 5-6). Also, to infer what an artist's intentions were and/or are is a complex matter that must be considered throughout the analysis phase of the dissertation and in the concluding statement. While these are not issues I need to contend with as I conduct my autoethnography, trustworthiness will be key. (Murray, 2018)

Trustworthiness is also a key area of complexity in qualitative research that requires some forethought and rigorous consideration in "grappling with their (research project's) subjectivities" (Cox, 2012, p. 135). It requires a level of sophistication in research to ensure that the findings are accurate, relatable, insightful, and useful, as well as reliable, valid, and generalizable (Ellis et al., 2011, para. 32). Cox (2012) admits that "[s]earch[ing] for disconfirming evidence at every stage [of the project], following up surprises in the field, and executing line-by-line analysis of transcripts" in the case of interviews, when appropriate, is time consuming, easily omitted intentionally or not, and may not always uncover or "determine whether the [interviewer/interviewee] is acting upon unconfirmed assumptions" that need to be challenged (p. 134). She clarifies exactly "how prior experiences and assumptions about the topic may affect [the researcher's] approach to the topic" (p. 134). Therefore, to avoid these challenges, Cox (2012) suggests a technique she calls "memo writing … [which] can help [researchers] identify the various pressure points" as "such reflective memos can provide the basis for conversation" and consideration throughout the research process in an effort to "interrupt those pressures" (p. 135). Often, this style or act of "writing personal stories can be therapeutic for participant and readers" (Ellis, 2011, para. 26).

To ensure that the research is sound and that the narratives told are truthful, Ellis et al. (2011) emphasize that "we acknowledge the importance of contingency" and that memory is "fallible"; that to be able to report out exactly how events played out and what language was used during the actual events at the time is not possible (para. 32). Instead, all that researchers can do is to "[seek] verisimilitude ... [and evoke] in readers a feeling that the experience described is lifelike, believable, and possible, a feeling that what has been represented could be true. The story is coherent" (para. 34). Beyond this, the story must help the researcher and reader seek a greater good beyond the scope of the research. In this case, the goal would be to investigate how mentorship with an ethic of care can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into educational administrative leadership roles, such that the findings are a positive, helpful, and hopeful addition to current literature in the field of education. Whatever comes of the research of this dissertation will be analyzed and discussed in the next chapter of this dissertation.

Another limitation of writing about the findings may be that my intent in writing this dissertation will not be received as intended. Readers' interpretations of my writing will be shaped in large part due to their past experiences, strategies learned, and their

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critical approach to decoding my text. The complexity of writing a narrative that is authentic and that sparks understanding in the reader is a task without guarantees (Atkinson, 2009).

What if "the researcher is using memory records" which may be inaccurate, incomplete, or embellished (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 141)? The stories told may "air dirty laundry" as the experiences shared may be embarrassing or shameful (Chase, 2005, p. 666). Chase (2005) questions whether this kind of behaviour or writing opens up the researcher to a vulnerability that may lead to undue criticism. Such undue criticism could diminish the authenticity and openness that is critical in any form of academic writing so as not to undermine the true intent of the study. Since this research includes storytelling, this means that the story can be told any number of ways, and detail that is left out or even details that are included all shape the direction this dissertation turns: including the emotions felt, the behaviours changed, the questions asked along the way, the questions answered along the way, the ways of being and the ways of knowing (Murray, 2018). The aim of this study is also to learn about myself, my life, as well as to gain clarity on my identity.

When telling stories, I am recounting past events using my sense of memory and reality (Lyons, 2012). All writing is risky, but a writer always hopes the risk is worth the intended reward. If I can spark dialogue in the hopes of eliciting change in the field of education about mentoring women in education with an ethic of care towards administrative leadership, then I will have impacted recruitment and retention in a small way for the better.

4.2.7. Intentions

"The future of autoethnographic research", according to Lyons (2012), "looks bright, yet we continue to strive to find the most effective means of stimulating more and better scientific educational research" (p. 27). Whatever the outlook, there is no doubt that the maturity that Chase (2018) has already found in narrative research is becoming realized, and that a continuum of growth and expansion of boundaries and searches for limits will continue to be sought. Chase speaks to the need for telling the story and more importantly, for analyzing what data is collected.

By the early 20th century, scientific concepts were considered definable *a priori*, and philosophical work involved finding the definitions for these concepts (Laurence & Margolis, 2003). To this day, when I consider mentoring and the ethic of care, I do possess basic or *a priori* knowledge of concepts including ethic of care or mentoring. In spite of this, I will attempt in this dissertation to make more concise our understanding of mentoring and its relation to ethic of care to positively impact females in the field of educational leadership. Likely, the reader's initial thoughts about mentoring and ethic of care will be redefined by the end of this autoethnographic journey. I hope to take my autoethnographic narratives and analyze them for the concepts of ethic of care and mentoring in order to delve more deeply to find a way if possible: to show that mentoring is more than the physical overseeing of a protégé by a superior and the imparting of knowledge from the superior to the protégé. The reader will hopefully see that mentoring with an ethic of care requires greater leadership capacity and further active development to support the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in educational leadership with an ethic of care. Yet likely, there is still much more to be discovered about mentoring with an ethic of care in the field of education.

In a "world where ethnographic texts circulate" in the form of stories with greater ease than ever, Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (2018) believe that "it may be that ethnography is one of the major discourses of the neomodern world" (p. xv). Hence, Denzin and Lincoln state that "we are in a postethnographic, postethnographer space" (p. xvi). With the narrowing of the "personal and institutional distance," they stipulate that "increasing sophistication of researchers," and the emergence of a strong presence of "global and local legal [court] processes," the postethnographer no longer has ownership over "the field notes we make about those we study" (p. xv). Further, Denzin and Lincoln are clear in stating that an "undisputed warrant to study anyone or anything" (p. xv) requires our respectful consideration. The postethnographer, as outlined by Frederick Erickson, is one who no longer plays an omniscient role, is one who can no longer speak neutrally about issues that were not even a consideration when I first began this dissertation (2018). Ethnography, especially with the ubiquity of technology, "is no longer a genre of reporting that can responsibly be practiced, given the duration and force of the critique that has been leveled against it" (Erickson, 2018, p. 59). As a result, for this research I sit in a precarious dual position of ethnographer and postethnographer because "the world that qualitative research confronts, within and outside the academy,

has changed" (p. xv). I intend to be intentionally critical in my autoethnography and analyses as I uncover my personal narratives about the mutuality of relations and proceed with an ethic of care (Buber, 1958). The sociocultural, sociopolitical realm shifts with the flattening of the hierarchy, increasing my need for a general heightened awareness (Chandler, 2011). I can welcome the transitions with respect to the developments in technology because there is a shift in how relations are being developed: a shift already directly impacting the field of educational leadership. By living the transition and feeling the "hybrid reality" of "performing my texts for others," I stay the course with an awareness of the cultural shifts around me as I complete this research about the mentorship of female educational leaders into educational administrative leadership with an ethic of care (p. xvi). I proceed critically because it is "necessary to continue to engage the pedagogical, theoretical, and practical promise of qualitative research as a form of radical democratic practice"; that is, I have to believe there is a place for my work in the field (p. x). There are no signs of research in autoethnography slowing down or remaining static, so the discourse initiated within and between the personal and public spheres must continue to be documented (Chase, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). As well, researchers of qualitative inquiry such as autoethnography and narrative inquiry are quickly adapting to the changes in technology that are allowing us to have greater input online, access information more quickly, and with greater ease (Lincoln, & Denzin, 2018).

This autoethnographic narrative inquiry will continue long after my dissertation is complete. This is a beginning. The stories and the experiences will continue, and they will be told, retold, and expanded over time. The study of mentoring females with an ethic of care, especially females in education, has grown into a passion for me, a life's calling, because of my own personal experiences. As a result, I will continue to reflect and to learn and grow as an educational administrative leader. I expect that when this dissertation is complete, I will have a greater understanding of what it means to be a mentor of educators and educational leaders who will be guided by an ethic of care.

My findings from this research will inform my relationships with my colleagues, future mentors, and protégés. I expect that I will hold myself accountable to what I glean from this research and use it in my own practice, share my findings with others, and seek to further enhance the recruitment and retention of females in education with a greater capacity as a mentor with an ethic of care. I expect that I will also be able to

engage in dialogue with my own future mentors, allowing me to build my leadership capacity to the fullest and open up opportunities for me to grow, learn, and share the wealth.

What is certain for me is that the critical inquiry has started. The dialogue is just beginning. I remember, and so I will never forget. My past is my future. I write about a mentoring and an ethic of care culture. I am performing a potential culture shift. "We no longer just write culture. We perform culture. … [because] we stand firmly behind the belief that critical qualitative inquiry inspired by the sociological imagination can make the world a better place" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018, p. xi). As Holman Jones et al. (2013) remind us, "autoethnography will continue to be a way for us to live and to write life honestly, complexly, and passionately" (p. 676), a life punctuated by "compassion, by solidarity and communion, by change and justice, and by hope" (p. 669).

Chapter 5.

Autoethnography and Analysis

5.1. Introduction

This dissertation came to fruition because of my own personal experience in ascending to educational administrative leadership. Out of this experience grew a desire to share my own narratives to conduct a reflective analysis of mentoring with an ethic of care for females into educational administrative leadership. I desire to understand more deeply a culture of leadership that values mentoring with an ethic of care. In order to do this, I delve deeply into my personal experiences to learn about myself and educational leadership, juxtaposed against the literature about mentoring and the ethic of care theory.

I see my experiences from four distinct phases of my life. The first phase is about my childhood as defined by my upbringing. The second is about my journey towards becoming an educator in the K-12 system, while the third phase is about transforming into an educational leader at the post-secondary level. The fourth phase is about my return to the K-12 system with the goal of becoming an educational administrative leader.

In becoming a teacher, I gained competence as an educator because I was challenged and more importantly, because I had support and guidance around me to accept and meet these challenges. This support and guidance mirrored my upbringing: a time when I experienced stability within the home, which undoubtedly helped me gain confidence in my identity as a female from a family of an ethnic minority. Having confidence in my identity as I entered the teaching profession led me to define my life as an educator, beginning by forging important relationships with key individuals with whom I worked. When I worked in the post-secondary sector, I gained insight into myself because of the care I received alongside the professional opportunities I was given as an educator turned educational leader.

When I first considered becoming an educational administrative leader, this journey was much different. There were significant mentors around me, but one in particular stands out and even spurred this dissertation because, for the first time in my life, I did not have the support and guidance I had come to expect both personally and professionally. There were signposts to guide me forward and people who supported me; however, there were times when I did not feel the confidence and sense of legitimacy that I perhaps should have in seeking ascension. My resolve in reflecting on this time in my career has been to explore the concept of mentorship with an ethic of care, in support of the recruitment and retention of females into leadership roles. I am also exploring mentoring with an ethic of care to examine lateral opportunities to support the professional growth of female educational leaders.

I investigate mentoring with an ethic of care by reflecting on key encounters that led to important relationships all through my career. These encounters, I believe, have impacted my current understanding of the importance of recruitment and retention of females into educational administrative leadership roles. Not all candidates are the right fit for educational administrative leadership, yet perhaps mentorship with an ethic of care has the potential to help these educators learn to develop skills to find success as leaders in other ways within the profession. By analyzing my experiences with respect to the literature on mentoring and the ethic of care theory, I believe I will find a clearer, deeper sense of purpose for how my experiences can inform the process of female educators shifting into educational administrative leadership roles. In this way, I hope to take steps towards creating opportunities for female educational leaders to be mentored into educational administrative leadership through an ethic of care.

Having focused on autoethnography as my methodology in Chapter 4, this chapter will apply this methodology to show how I seek answers to my question about the mentoring of women into educational administrative leadership with an ethic of care in support of recruitment and retention in the field of education. Clandinin (2013) expresses that these narrative will lay the foundation "beginning with [my] living stories" (p. 145). Further, he expresses how the elements of the relationships and community to surface from narratives "attends to notions of expertise and knowing in relational and participatory ways" specific to me so that this dissertation will also help me grow as an educational administrative leader (Clandinin, 2013, p. 13). According to Margaret Grogan and Charol Shakeshaft (2011), "narratives tell us that women leaders often stir

things up, that they bring a knowledge and understanding to leadership that cannot be found in textbooks" (p. 106). In part, this is likely due to the fact that "women are still significantly underrepresented in formal leadership positions" so the research is now beginning to catch up throughout the field of education (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011, p. 24).

When I began the process of bringing together mentoring and the ethic of care to better understand my potential role in supporting the recruitment and retention of females in educational leadership professions, I was unsure how the journey would unfold. However, I have been excited about this chapter and the opportunity to unpack the notions of mentorship of females alongside Noddings' ethic of care theory by reconstructing my lived experiences into narratives. I have begun this journey by considering my memories through Noddings' ethic of care theory: "from the care perspective [which] has four major components: modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" and unpacking my findings from this perspective (Noddings, 2012b, p. 237). During this process, though, I am alert to the tensions my stories may hold with respect to the accuracy of memories that I see relevant to my purpose, and the telling and retelling of my narratives. I will also look at how my lived experiences have been impacted by the informal mentorship of those with whom I have formed working relations.

5.2. Reiteration of my research question

Helping teachers achieve their best potentialities by considering what makes the journey of ascension possible is key for me. By exploring my experiences with mentoring with an ethic of care, and then attempting to tie this exploration to the theories found in the literature on mentoring and the ethic of care, I believe I will make some connections that may illuminate my understanding of the recruitment and retention process for teachers. Hence, I keep in mind the following question throughout this chapter in the presentation and analysis of my autoethnography: *How do my mentorship experiences with (or without) an ethic of care inform the recruitment and retention of women into educational administrative leadership roles?*

5.3. Framework of this chapter

My hope is to address this research question by exploring, through autoethnography, the link between Noddings' ethic of care theory and key experiences in my life from childhood to adulthood. I believe that tracing my personal journey is important because my assumptions and biases from childhood forward play a key role in my understanding of my research question and thus, the impact caring has had on me in the field of educational leadership.

5.4. Childhood: My personal identity

I can trace my experiences with mentorship through an ethic of care back to my childhood and the influence my mother has had on me and my development. Ever since I was young, my Mom has modeled for me what it means to be a genuine caregiver and nurturer of "that special relation—caring—(which) is felt most acutely" by those like me who are closest to her (Noddings, 1992, p. xi). As Noddings (1992) points out, "Not all of us learn to care for other human beings" (p. xi), yet I believe my Mom has learned to do this in caring for me. Caring requires "address and response; it requires different behaviors from situation to situation and person to person. It sometimes calls for toughness, sometimes tenderness" (Noddings, 1992, p. xi), and Mom seemed to understand this intuitively. My narratives about my close-knit relationship with Mom illustrate her role as the one-caring and mine as the cared-for to the extent that this became my norm and thus, my baseline for my caring relationships into adulthood.

5.4.1. Caring as natural human caring: growing up

"An ethic of caring has its source in natural human caring, and it seeks the maintenance and enhancement of that caring" (Noddings, 1984, p. 108). My Mom emulated this ethic throughout my childhood. I especially appreciated how Mom stayed by my side when I had nosebleeds in the middle of the night. I knew I should not be waking her because that was selfish; however, I would make just enough noise to wake her so that I would not have to sit alone suffering through my nosebleeds. I needed my Mom to help me get my nosebleed to stop, and she always came to my rescue. As my one-caring, she would remind me how to treat my nosebleed, talk to me, soothe me, and make me feel better about being jolted awake with a nosebleed. Mom would pack a bag

of ice for me along with a cold compress or wet towel for the bridge of my nose, my forehead, and the back of my neck to keep me cool. We thought that when I was overheated or breathing in the cold, dry winter air, this contributed to my long-lasting nosebleeds. Mom would hold the towel, the ice, and fill my nose with tissues so that I could just sit there, fatigued from a lack of sleep, with my head tilted forward, doing as little as possible, half asleep, just wishing and waiting for my nose to stop bleeding. She did all the tedious work as we waited together.

I easily slid into the role of the cared-for. Sometimes we would sit for an hour, and just as I would start thinking about climbing back into bed to read quietly because I did not want to lie down after these kinds of nosebleeds, I would sneeze, and we would start the process all over again. Eventually, I would get back to bed but, as I would not really get back to sleep, I would notice Mom checking on me repeatedly to make sure I had a sip of water or that I was all right and did not need anything. I repeatedly told Mom that she needed to name me *Mary*, for it was at these times I felt like *Bloody Mary* would be a more fitting name for me. Four times in my youth, we headed to the hospital's emergency ward for the doctors to stop my nosebleeds by firmly packing my nose. Mom was there holding my hand, helping me hold my nose, finding tissues, keeping me comfortable, and helping me answer questions for the doctors if she was allowed to, because talking with both my nostrils plugged was not very easy. Mom never complained about being tired, about having sore muscles or cramps in her hands after holding my nose in such awkward positions. She never questioned my neediness, not even during the days after when we visited the family doctor to unpack my nose and check on me again, or when she went shopping for ingredients from specialty shops to make me rich soups to drink (high in blood clotting ingredients and iron to help me build up my iron levels and strength again). My one-caring was always there to support me and to care for me in my times of need. Without a doubt, these caring actions and the quality time spent together made us closer because I knew I could count on my Mom in good times and in bad. Why else would I drink her soups that tasted terrible but that she insisted were good for me? Just as my Mom would do anything for me, I wanted more than anything to please her.

Our relation was reciprocal because I was a cooperative cared-for, doing just as my Mom asked and expected. This relation was just as a caring relationship should be, according to Nel Noddings, but it was also unequal (2010). "By and large, it is the parent

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… who is capable of inclusion; it is she who sees with two pairs of eyes. … the child may like, even love, the parent … but [s]he is incapable … of perceiving or understanding what the parent … wants for herself" (Noddings, 1984, p. 70). I love my Mom, but I do not recall thinking about what my Mom might need from me in our relation or what she may have gotten out of our relationship. I recall thinking that I should not wake her, but my need for her was stronger than my desire to do the right thing and let my Mom sleep. Mom never made me feel guilty for waking her, for needing her because upon reflection now as an adult, I know that she needed me to be her cared-for. This is why she could so faithfully be my one-caring. She knew what form of caring she needed to provide for me in these situations. She had a kind of "dual vision" (Noddings, 1984, p. 70) that allowed her to focus on my motives for calling her in the night, even though my act of waking her in the middle of the night may have seemed otherwise. Always, I would apologize for waking my Mom and would tell her to go back to sleep because I knew that was the right thing to do. Yet Mom never went back to sleep, and I fully let her be my one-caring as she looked after me better than I looked after myself. I needed my Mom, and now I understand that she needed me, too.

5.4.2. Caring as moral education: theory in brief

The narrative of morality displayed in my Mom's actions is what I see as the natural caring of which Noddings speaks. Noddings (2010) describes natural caring as our "preferred social condition" (p. 169) that resides at the core of care ethics—a caring which prompted my Mom to become such a light sleeper, who would readily and regularly get up in the middle of the night to care for me when I had a nosebleed or just check on me during the night, especially after I had suffered a bleeding nose. Her support was unconditional, even when it led to hours of sitting, waiting, and quiet patience. She worried about the root cause of my nosebleeds; thus, I saw specialists who did what they could to try and help me, even when it meant cauterizing my nose (which made it bleed as a result). If she worried that we might need to visit the emergency ward during my nosebleeds, she never let on because somehow, she knew that a return to the hospital would be too overwhelming for me. Mom did what she could to keep me calm and cared-for, and she seemed to come by this naturally because of her love for me and her need to care for me.

Care ethics is also "anchored in natural caring" (Noddings, 2012a, p. 97). However, this is not what I experienced on the playground when I felt as if I were explaining to everyone at school why my nose was all taped up. Generally not people I normally talked to, I suspected they were asking out of curiosity more than from a standpoint of natural caring. From a young age, I know I was taught that empathy looks and sounds like being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes and asking others when something is wrong: "What happened?" and more importantly, "Are you ok?" or "Do you need help?" Such empathy was indeed evident when I'd been to the emergency ward. However, less motivating for me as a cared-for was talking to others who I believed had no intention of forging relations with me because my friendships did not change after my nosebleeds. These others were peers I had never really talked to. These were peers who feigned a sense of caring that did not make me feel supported because their caring was superficial, based on curiosity, rather than deep, genuine lasting and natural caring.

Upon reflecting about this experience as an adult, though, I likely should have been more gracious about accepting their questions and their wonderment. Today I ask students, "What happened?" even when I have not really talked to them before because I do aim to be their one-caring in the moment, as an adult in the school they can depend on. But perhaps where I differ as the one-caring is that I support others as I foresee a need. If a student is using crutches, then perhaps they require an elevator key or a buddy to help with moving through the stairwell, or perhaps a head start to get through the hallways before the general student body. Thus, I am reminded of who I can count on to be in my corner when I need them to be. This reflection also emphasizes for me that "the desire to be cared for" is universal (Noddings, 2002b, p. 12).

On the playground, I had a circle of friends who empathized with me, stayed with me and walked with me, and took it easy when I couldn't play as we usually did. So when peers who were not in my friendship circles asked what happened to me after my return from the hospital due to my nosebleeds, this illuminates that such attention— those students talking to me—was not natural caring. That experience was isolating when I was not able to play because my friends had to put up with the questioning too. I knew who my friends were and more clearly, who my friends were not. These other students were likely curious and felt a need to ask for their own (possibly selfish) reasons to learn about why I looked as funny as I did. It is hard to talk when your nose is

all plugged up with what looked like one very long fettuccini noodle. To make matters worse, my nose was also taped up so everything would stay put. Still, on these occasions, I answered the questions they asked and shared my story. I half-jokingly laughed with my friends that I should have had a sandwich board on saying the reason my nose was all taped up! Upon reflection, my peers likely felt sympathy for me. In Noddings' terms, they felt "*sympathy*—'feeling with'—[which] more nearly captures the affective state of attention in caring" (Noddings, 2002b, p. 14). Such caring was undeniably fleeting, but perhaps a friendship would have blossomed from these additional encounters I faced.

By contrast, my relationship with my Mom continues to be an important one, reflective of Noddings' (2010) recognition that "relation [is] ontologically basic to human life" (p. 169). Considering our relationship and the perspective of a moral education that Noddings (2013b) proposes we aspire to, I believe we must "establish a climate in which natural caring flourishes" and exhibit a "decent, respectful way of meeting and treating one another that is maintained by inclination, not by rules" (p. 119). Beyond basic food, clothing, and shelter, natural caring ensures that "physiological and emotional needs are addressed simultaneously" (Noddings, 2010, p. 184). Just as Noddings describes the need humans have to preserve the lives of our pets when disaster strikes even at the price of suffering deprivation, my Mom fulfilled a similar kind of natural caring in her role as my one-caring. "In conditions of natural caring, we listen … [we] recognize the emotions others are experiencing, negotiate, and respond as positively as the situation and resources permit" (Noddings, 2010, pp. 184-185). I took for granted this level of caring that I received from my Mom but am now realizing the scope of this in later adulthood: that is, I received natural caring from Mom and not from the students I met while walking around the school after I had been to the hospital with a bleeding nose. Mom took steps to ensure my safety, to ensure my needs were met, and to ensure that I maintained optimal health given the circumstances.

5.4.3. Caring as motivational displacement

My Mom seemed to instinctively know what I needed as a child, but others in my schools whom I never talked to until I had a nosebleed did not. The relation between my Mom and me showed how natural caring can thrive between mother and child. Mom's actions were ones of care, whereas my schoolmates' actions, while empathetic, were

likely motivated by curiosity and possibly sympathy. They may have feigned an ability to show care during our brief encounters; only after I needed to go to the hospital to have my nose packed and taped up did they show any interest in me and ask what had happened to me. Considering that "attention—receptive attention—is an essential characteristic of the caring encounter," there needed to be a readiness between us to continue the encounter over the longer term, to allow it to flourish into something more (Noddings, 2002b, p. 17). Noddings called this *attention* "engrossment," whereby a one-caring like my Mom cared for me with an "open, non-selective receptivity" (Noddings, 1992, p. 15).

Noddings outlines that when there is attention which "characterizes [the carer's] consciousness in caring, there is also a feature we might call *motivational displacement*" (Noddings, 2002b, p. 17; see also Noddings, 1992), when the one-caring can feel (hear, or see), and anticipate what the cared-for needs and will want to act on this anticipation. In response, the cared-for will receive the action from the one-caring. The one-caring may feel a need to listen, to relieve the pain, or to offer something that will bring clarity or comfort to the cared-for. When these encounters are ongoing and reciprocated, each future encounter has the potential to become richer and more meaningful. Thus, an important goal of caring is to inspire growth: "A caring person is one who fairly regularly establishes caring relations and, when appropriate, maintains them over time" (Noddings, 2002b, p. 19). Over time, I gradually became more confident in the handling of my nosebleeds and learned to track when my nosebleeds were happening. (In fact, I have since realized that eating gingerroot caused my nosebleeds; this finding prompted me to learn to manage my bleeding nose by noting what kinds of foods contain gingerroot so that I could avoid these foods.)

5.4.4. Caring as moral education: Noddings' ethic of care theory, part 1

"Moral education from the care perspective has four major components: modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (Noddings, 2012b, p. 237). These components are evident from another experience when I was young: learning that I was hard of hearing. When I was six years old and diagnosed with a hearing disability, my Mom played an important part in how I found success at home and at school even though my life had been turned upside down. I clung to my Mom during this time. She

was not just a caregiver to me, but my one-caring who taught me important virtues such as kindness, compassion, generosity, patience, resiliency, and love. By showing me care and helping me to understand what it means to be cared-for, she supported me through an ethic of care.

From my perspective, to have my Mom caring for me did not seem to be a burden. Mom was happy helping me, her only daughter, except that I was no longer normal because I had been diagnosed with a hearing disability. My diagnosis changed my Mom's life as well because it meant that we spent more time together after that going to appointments, speaking with specialists, talking to my teachers together, and doing homework. Mom spent inordinate amounts of time *modeling* an ethic of care for me because of her devotion to me and the extraordinary amounts of time we spent together during the day: not only at appointments and after school but also baking and cooking for the family. If time permitted, on the odd occasion we would even play board games together. With everything in my life having been turned upside down, Mom continued to manifest Noddings' natural caring, the kind of caring that is genuine. Mom was "*present* in her acts of caring" for me (Noddings, 1984, p. 19). While her actions were "largely reactive and responsive," she was "sufficiently engrossed in [me] to listen to [me] and to take pleasure or pain in what [I or my doctors would recount]" (p. 19) about my diagnosis and treatment plan. Whatever Mom, my one-caring, did with respect to caring for me, the cared-for, is "embedded in a relationship that reveals itself as engrossment and in an attitude that warms and comforts the cared-for" (p. 19).

Mom had an enormous capacity to advocate for me because that is what I needed from her to carry on and have a "normal" childhood. Mom engaged in *dialogue* with my specialists about how my life was different because of my hearing disability. Mom met with my teachers to find out how I was progressing and to make sure that I had preferential seating and support not only from my teachers, but also from the student services (itinerate) teacher. Mom got to know my teachers well and volunteered for fundraisers and field trips whenever possible. Her connections with my teachers made a difference for me because I felt that everyone around me knew who I was and what I needed to thrive. Eventually, I was old enough and confident enough to approach my teachers myself because my Mom had modeled the example of how to describe my hearing loss. I would *practice* with my Mom's guidance as I tried to describe my hearing loss for others to understand so that eventually, I could share the same information with

my classmates on my own. I could also explain my hearing loss to strangers at the store if I was approached, or to my instructors in the local Parks and Recreation programs I signed up for. I learned to teach my friends strategies to work and play with me more effectively.

By watching Mom in action, I learned to advocate for myself. She modeled for me the courage to speak out and what being proactive looked like. By the time I was sharing with my peers about my hearing loss, I had heard my Mom describe my condition countless times to teachers, family, and friends. Learning along with me, she showed me how to transition from class to class with different teachers, knowing what we knew about my hearing loss. I learned how she described my hearing loss and what I needed to be successful. I learned to choose my seating carefully and to practice my daily speech therapy homework because my Mom showed me the diligence to persevere. As a result, I was a quiet and respectful student who loved school and who looked up to my Mom and my teachers for helping me do my best. I became a keen observer since my ears were not my strong point, and I learned to lip-read (which often worked to my advantage when we were not allowed to talk in class!). My life had changed, but I was still able to be successful because my one-caring held my hand through my transition from not being able to hear, to being able to hear with support from hearing aids and those around me.

As my one-caring, Mom continued to teach me important virtues such as kindness, compassion, generosity, resiliency, and love by showing me care and helping me to understand what it means to be supported and thus, to be cared-for. Learning to care is important because "caring is not in itself a virtue" (Noddings, 1984, p. 96). These virtues as described by Noddings (1984) show "our best picture of ourselves caring and being cared for" (Noddings, 1984, p. 80). It is "when we commit ourselves to obey the 'I must' [be the one-caring] even at its weakest and most fleeting", that the virtues considered as part of the "ethical ideal of one-caring [are] built up in relation" (Noddings, 1984, pp. 80-81). It reaches out to the other and grows in response to the other" (p. 80-81). My Mom showed me *kindness* by talking to me about my hearing loss to help me understand how life was different now. We looked at pictures and we looked at charts from my doctors. What mattered most was that Mom showed me kindness by not treating me any differently now that we knew that a series of unusually high fevers had

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likely caused my disability when I was six years old. I had a disability whether we were in public or at home, but that did not change her ability to be my one-caring.

If anything, in some ways life got better because Mom spent more time with me to help me transition and showed me kindness. She continued to take care of my needs, to show her love for me through her display of affection for me. I received hugs and kisses when I left the house and then again when I returned home from school after she had picked me up. Mom made time for me to help me with my homework and to visit specialists and my teachers at school as I transitioned to wearing hearing aids full-time. Mom also showed me *compassion* by helping me adjust to life with hearing aids. I had a special seat in the living room now. It was my Dad's chair, where I would watch television with headphones on. (I was allowed to sit in my Dad's chair!) Mom took the time each morning to put in my hearing aids even though she could not match up my ear molds to the shape of my ears very well. Mom showed me *generosity* by being so giving with her time. In school, I had to spend so much time focused on listening to what was said that I had trouble focusing on comprehending, as I never practiced this skill enough. (I continue to be challenged in this way as an adult now and must work extra hard outside of school and work to measure up to my "normal" peers.) As a result, I become exhausted more quickly than my counterparts. But Mom was always there to help me practice these skills as a student so that I would have greater success comprehending text and/or speech. So we practiced each night; I would read aloud to my Mom, and she would ask me questions, teach me strategies, and help me progress academically. Thus in class, I did what I could to ensure I was as successful as possible given my recent diagnosis. With Mom in my corner, it is no wonder that I developed a sense of *resiliency*. I have seen first-hand how life is full of ups and downs or challenges which, with hard work to overcome them, can lead to success. I miss out on all kinds of auditory cues and sounds or speech, but have learned the skills to overcome my challenges, the most useful being my ability to lip-read.

My Mom has taught me the power of being loved and of loving. She has not let me down, and she has been my rock. My Mom got to know my doctors and my teachers, including my itinerant teachers who specialized in working with hearing impaired students. They even came to my house to support me with my learning. In working with them, Mom showed her love for me through her proximity, her physical touch, and her description of me and what I could do just as any other child could! In these ways Mom

embodied Noddings' ethic, that "caring itself and the ethical ideal that strives to maintain and enhance it guide us in moral decisions and conduct" (Noddings 1984, p. 105).

My Mom seemed to recognize that caring is universal because she was kind and patient with everyone we met in dealing with my hearing disability. She knew that her role in supporting me to become independent was a vital one, especially with me learning how to live with a hearing impairment. "Confirmation … requires a relation," and it is this relation between my Mom and me that allowed her as my one-caring to "understand [me] well enough to know what it is [I was] trying to accomplish" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 21). Mom was able to recognize how it is "reassuring to realize that another sees the better self that often struggles for recognition beneath our lesser acts and poorer selves" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 21). I wanted to fit in and do normal things like my peers, and I was doing that using the foundation of caring my Mom had built for me. I learned important skills of communication, of lip-reading, of practicing my comprehension skills, and of actively listening to others when they spoke. By building in routines for me to practice all those skills Mom and those closest to me had modeled and talked about with me about my hearing loss, I learned the courage to be more independent, to enjoy reading, and to want to help others understand me better. The quality of my life had changed drastically, but my Mom taught me how to ensure it could still be purposeful and meaningful. This is what Buber calls *confirmation*: "the one-caring sees the best self in the cared-for and works with him [or her] to actualize that self" (Noddings, 1984, p. 64; also see Buber, 1958). "He [or she] must be aware of him [or her] as a whole being and affirm him [or her] in this wholeness" (Buber, 1958, p. 132).

I am indebted to my Mom for loving me unconditionally and for teaching me her ethic of care. Throughout my childhood, my Mom taught me that there are many opportunities in our daily lives to show an ethic of care. At the heart of this kind of caring is a moral education identified through Noddings' (2010) pillars of the ethic of care: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 244). My Mom taught caring in her relationship with me and I accepted her care which became my norm. For Noddings' (1984), an ethic of care "has its source in natural human caring, and it seeks the maintenance and enhancement of that caring" (p. 108). I was privileged to have my Mom as my one-caring. However, the impact of such caring on me and my abilities—and more importantly, on my expectations as an adult in the field of educational leadership

with respect to an ethic of care—has challenged me and continues to challenge me as a professional. I will attempt to unpack this later in this chapter.

5.5. Young adulthood: My professional identity

I grew up in a middle-class family raised by two loving parents of three children: my two elder brothers and me. As the youngest in the family, I was expected to follow in my brothers' footsteps and attend university. Born into an ethnic minority family, with one parent an immigrant who did not have much growing up, it was engrained in me that if I were to get ahead in society, I would need to be well educated. I earned a science degree from a local university but had no lasting passion for the direction in which this degree took me. I had a job that was fun, but it was not a career. I eventually found my interest, though, and was accepted into the teacher education program at the same local university. It was here that my life took shape, gained meaning, and gave me the independence that I had always craved.

Gaining independence as a young adult helped me forge a teaching career. I am a professional because I chose to become an educator. There was a time, however, when I did not feel comfortable being a professional and did not fully comprehend what that meant because I was young and naïve. Learning to become a professional takes time, experience, and wisdom, none of which I had earned much of yet. I had to learn to become a professional, and the course that took has been shaped in part by my upbringing. Being called *Ms. Jung* was for my elders, and I was not yet an elder. I still felt so young, not to mention that the staff continually commented on how young I looked! Not only did I feel youthful, but also I was the youngest child of three and had had a sheltered upbringing. As I've described, I spent much time with my Mom because of my nosebleeds and my hearing impairment, both of which impacted my upbringing and especially, my journey through school. But because my Mom and Dad raised me to value an education, I learned to want to succeed, to be respectful and respected, as well as to work hard through challenges. Hence, I came to earn the title Ms. Jung because of my work ethic in a profession that I loved. In return, I reaped the rewards of having students, many of their parents, and a whole staff to care about/care-for, to teach (with), and with whom to build community.

Having the desire to be independent and to own the title Ms. Jung was a large part of my journey towards becoming a professional. At an early age, I learned to be independent and to want to do things for myself, and I gained a sense of accomplishment in working hard to achieve goals of all kinds. I learned to put in my own hearing aids and to blow the confetti across the page as I said my "s"-sounds in speech therapy. Because I hated these exercises, I worked at accomplishing success so I would not have to keep doing them. I learned to play the piano even though my teacher did not want to accept me because of my hearing impairment. Thankfully, my Mom advocated for me and encouraged my teacher to take me on a trial basis—again modeling Noddings' ethic of care. Mom showed me the importance of building relations through dialogue and practice to achieve the important things in life. I learned that my Mom, my teacher(s), and I could work together for productive means. I also wanted to fit in. My brothers and my three cousins whom I grew up with all played piano and I wanted to be just like them. Hence, who I am is a direct result of my understanding of the world as I saw it based on how I was raised, my relations with others (family, friends, colleagues), and the person I have worked hard to become, largely through the journey I took that eventually led to my becoming a teacher.

5.5.1. Becoming a teacher: learning and growing

As a student teacher, I remember not being called by my first name but being addressed as another adult in the room, as a teacher. That caught me off guard; I could not get used to it. I also could not get used to calling my principal by his first name. In my culture, I had been brought up to acknowledge someone in such a position of authority using a proper title and surname. Someone in his position of power whom I had come to respect because he was so kind and gentle towards me needed to be called by his title and surname. He always took the time to speak with me when I saw him in the hallways. That was his last term as principal before retiring, and I now realize what an honour it had been to work under him. One day near the end of my practicum experience, when he was just one pair of eyes among five adults (including my two sponsor teachers, the student services English language learning support teacher, and my student teacher colleague) and forty students. He just happened to walk in as I was giving a lesson about something I don't recall, and at just that moment I had switched gears—jumping on a teachable moment without skipping a beat. I remember where I was standing and

where the adults were standing at this point of this lesson because it was a transformative moment. I also remember this lesson because one of my sponsor teachers wrote about this instance in my final teaching report. It was in that moment, upon further reflection, that I realize I had transformed into a professional deserving of the title Ms. Jung. With the support of my sponsor teacher, we could now together "recognize relation as ontologically basic to human life" and "open our minds and hearts to those affects that accompany a realization of relatedness" (Noddings, 2010, p. 169).

Noddings (2010) speaks of this "recognition of life-affirming feelings [and how it] underscores a point at the center of care ethics—the primacy of natural caring" (p. 169). I felt these students belonged to me and that I could do the teaching. But more importantly, I now *felt* like a teacher. I felt like my life had purpose because I had found these special relations with each of my students. "It is our longing for caring—to be in that special relation—that provides the motivation for us to be moral. We want to be *moral* in order to remain in the caring relation and to enhance the ideal of ourselves as one-caring" (Noddings, 1984, p. 5; Noddings, 2010, p. 169). As my students' one-caring, I now had the role of "respond[ing] in some positive way—I [would] have to consider exactly what I [would] do, and I may have to spend considerable time in assessing the likely effects of my well-intended choices" because my students trusted me to follow through in this capacity (Noddings, 2010, p. 171).

In these instances, Noddings (2010) asserts that where "I may have to overcome an initial reluctance to act on behalf of the other, or I may feel unsure about the desirability of maintaining or establishing a caring relation with this person [my students]," necessitating a need for me to "turn to my own ethical ideal of caring" to determine my next course of action (p. 171). Whatever the course of action, it was mine to determine, for I loved being the teacher to these students. I had become their one-caring.

5.5.2. Caring as natural human caring: learning and growing as a student teacher

I have shared an impactful experience in my journey to becoming a teacher. However, I believe that what led to this moment is the caring I received from my Mom as a child and from my faculty associates, Hannah and Danielle (names have been

changed), during my pre-service training and student teaching year. I have always had the desire to set goals and achieve those goals. So it would be no surprise to those closest to me that, when as a student teacher in my pre-service teaching and training year, I decided I would be a faculty associate one day, just like the faculty associates who taught me. In particular, I was in awe of two of my instructors for several of my education courses because they were so skilled at their craft. They seemed to enjoy working together and so together, they regularly reflected on their own teaching journeys by sharing their personal stories with us. They told some memorable tales! I recall Hannah as being very nurturing, kind, gentle, positive, and humble, as a mother would be. Danielle, on the other hand, had a more dynamic personality but was equally caring, kind, and positive. The term "motherly" definitely wouldn't fit as well in her case although I knew she cared. They were both passionate, impeccably dressed as a professional would be, intelligent and skilled. In my mind, I was drawn to Danielle who looked the part; I admired her wit and ability to lead so effortlessly. She was so impressive to see in action! In my heart, I felt connected to Hannah because she took such gentle care of me; she made me stronger and more believable as a teacher. Actually, both Hannah and Danielle were very successful, skilled, knowledgeable, well-spoken, and respected. I admired them equally.

This must be what informal mentoring is: to be affected to the core just by being in the presence of greatness. Certainly, it was about developing "competence and a sense of professional identity" at this stage in my career (Kram, 1985b, p. 145). Until I met Hannah and Danielle, I had not ever thought of what my future would be like. I had not thought about what I would want to be doing so many years down the road. I had not even considered whether I had the skills to follow in their footsteps or even the skills needed to move in this direction. I was instinctively drawn to their ability to work together so seamlessly. They were already mentoring me beyond the typical support and guidance that is expected for novice teachers, and I did not even realize it. They were the two who would "embody [my] hopes, cast light on the way ahead, interpret … signs, warn [me] of lurking dangers, and point out unexpected delights along the way" (Daloz, 2012, p. 18).

Hannah and Danielle were both cut from the same cloth. They were both so attentive with me in how they treated me: whether it was a walk to my car to ensure I was safe, or the eye contact they always gave me when I spoke with them during group

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discussions in class or during one-on-one conversations before class began. We laughed a lot in class, and I was not used to learning being so effortless and fun. I was not used to my informal mentors being so open and welcoming with the raw stories of their beginning journeys as teachers. Their body language was also open and welcoming; their stance was natural with fluid movements of their steps, hands, and eyes as they spoke, emulating the excitement in their stories of managing students. The fact that they would so respectfully put a hand on my shoulder when we were talking one-on-one (both of them, from time to time, to show they understood something I had said,) or that they appreciated how I had gone to a talk that their colleague had given the night prior, touched me to my inner core. They scaffolded our activities in class so I learned to feel safe in sharing my responses to our readings, to share my opinion about topics like the validity of giving out rewards such as stickers and candy to students for a job well done—and most of all, for me to present to the class about my hearing impairment.

I never thought I would feel confident enough to share my journey with others, but Hannah and Danielle helped me gain perspective. I could never have seen myself voluntarily being vulnerable enough to share with others about my hearing loss, but Hannah's questions and comments to me about my hearing impairment presentation made me realize just how impactful sharing my story could be in helping other educators work with students like me who had similar hearing issues. Hannah actually thanked me for sharing. She seemed like someone who knew everything, but in that moment I was teaching her something new. I was sharing something about me, and my one-caring was receiving me. She asked me what it felt like to share something so personal and private. She also wondered if I would share this same presentation with my future students. She certainly hoped I would. I responded hesitantly that I would consider it. Since then, I have done that presentation many times for my students in an abbreviated form. It feels empowering to share something about myself with my students to help them be more successful in working with me as their teacher. This experience of informal mentoring supported me to become my best self possible.

5.5.3. Caring as moral education: Noddings' ethic of care theory, part 2

This informal mentoring experience was the best way for me to enter into the teaching profession, with two faculty associates who both showed me natural human caring. They modeled, through their actions and words, what it meant to be the ones-caring. They spoke to me as if I mattered, using professional and caring dialogue. Hannah knew just what to say and to ask to make me feel valued after I opened up to her and my classmates with my personal story about my hearing impairment. My classmates would follow suit and respond in a similar fashion just as she had modeled for us. "The desire to be cared for is almost certainly a universal human characteristic. Not everyone wants to be cuddled or fussed over. But everyone wants to be received, to elicit a response that is congruent with an underlying need or desire" (Noddings, 1992, p. 17). I needed to be rewarded for stepping out of my comfort zone and sharing something that was very personal to me. I needed to know that what I had shared made sense, was valuable, and improved my relation with others. I loved how this process also increased my own sense of worth.

Together, Hannah, Danielle, and I were able to practice building a trusting relationship through their thoughtfully chosen caring actions towards me so that I would feel safe enough to choose assignments that would challenge me. Knowing I had a safe place in which to *play* was paramount to my success. For example, I chose to read a horror story suited to middle level students even though that was not in my nature. I pushed my boundaries, practiced a great deal (as hard as it was for me to read aloud due to a lingering self-consciousness from childhood that was connected to my hearing impairment), and found success. Noddings (1992) says that "when we confirm someone, we spot a better self and encourage its development" (p. 25). Hannah and Danielle consistently built up my safety net, and I surprised myself through the year by taking their assignments as starting points for seeking further challenges and ways to improve my skillset. As Noddings (1992) also points out, this kind of confirmation requires continuity. "Continuity is required, because the carer in acting to confirm must know the cared-for" (p. 25). In my own case, Hannah and Danielle did not know I was going to present my first video assignment on my hearing impairment. They did not know that I would choose a horror story to read aloud when my peers were choosing more mainstream books to read aloud. I was able to push myself to achieve my best because

of my mentors' continuing confirmation, which "lifts us toward our vision of a better self"; it operates simply when "a relation of trust must ground it" (p. 25). I would not use the adjective scary, spooky, or eerie to describe myself at all, but I could portray these emotions as a reader when I was challenged by my two faculty associates. Because of Hannah and Danielle, not only did I feel more confident about trying to raise the bar for myself, but I also felt safe in sharing my innermost fears and projecting a persona so different than the way I usually portrayed myself.

5.5.4. Caring as confirmation: growing and learning because of my servant leaders

I thrived under the leadership of my faculty associates Hannah and Danielle. We came together as a trio, and I soaked in as much as I could learn from them. I am not sure if they ever knew exactly how much I valued their way of being, their presence, and their support of me. I am sure the time they took to foster a caring relation with me, their cared-for, held benefits not only from the care perspective but also the servant leadership perspective. The more I reflect on our relationship, the more I am consistently drawn to their acts of caring service. They did not have to walk me to my car when it was late and dark. They did not need to encourage me to share my personal story with my students about my hearing loss. Yet they did. I came to appreciate these caring actions more than ever when, as a result, I finally felt safe enough to have the confidence to share *my* story with my student teacher colleagues. My story mattered to others in a way I never expected. My peers listened to me, and we continued to reference *my* presentation as they recounted stories of their own and how they knew now how to work with students who shared a disability similar to mine. My identity was starting to shine in a way I had never considered before. I was feeling happy, secure, and confident about my chosen profession. When my faculty associates supported my decision to become a teacher, their opinions mattered to me more than I expected they would. Though Heather observed my lessons in class more often, and she always spoke highly and positively of what I was trying with my students, I enjoyed and appreciated the way both Hannah and Danielle remembered my strengths. I also appreciated my conversations with them about how I got into teaching, including telling them that my Mom was a teacher from a family of teachers.

While my adult identity was being shaped nicely, my needs became clear. I needed validation from my superiors because I had been raised to respect authority and to desire and expect success. I also expected, as the cared-for in this professional setting, to receive natural caring from my mentors Hannah and Danielle. The notion that they were exhibiting servant leadership resonates with me because I feel that I have developed into this kind of leader today due to the important models I had as a child and as a young adult, especially them. I am drawn to a leadership style with a moral foundation that I believe Hannah and Danielle embodied and which transformed me. I became more confident about who I was as a teacher. I valued our relations because the "core motivation to serve" is strong in servant leaders, which reflects a "moral virtue of humility [that] co-exists with action-driven behaviour" (Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015, p. 13). Hannah and Danielle exhibited a caring kind of "balancing act between an overall humble attitude of service and behaviours that instill[ed] action and efficacy" (Sousa and van Dierendonck, 2015, p. 14). As a result, I was keen to follow in the footsteps of my faculty associates, and I now understand that my journey as a transformative leader and teacher began with my Mom in infancy and was solidified through my experience of working with Hannah and Danielle. The caring way in which Hannah and Danielle could raise my awareness of what I needed for confirmation was shown through their actions. They were attentive to my physical abilities and my cultural identity. They nurtured the beginnings of my leadership style as servant leader and my capacity to be more than I already was in their response to how I delivered on their challenges. By choosing to read a horror story, or sharing my journey as a child with a hearing impairment in the school system, I unveiled a vulnerable side of myself.

Without thinking about why I desired this sense of caring relation, I initiated a fundraiser for our cohort of teachers. Sure, I wanted to impress my faculty associates and to show them I could be a good teacher. More importantly, I wanted to do something for my student teacher colleagues whom I had come to know better personally and academically because we were together almost daily for a year. I brought us together to make beeswax candles and sold them to raise money for our graduation party, a celebration that was not traditionally held. We raised enough money for the party, and I had Hannah and Danielle to thank for how they brought me closer to this group—to the point of wanting to celebrate with them. Hannah and Danielle brought me closer to my student teacher colleagues in the intentional way they had us working together to

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support my growth as a beginning educator. They articulated what the challenges they posed were intended to accomplish and gave us space to try. Of course, this was cause for a celebration as we finished up our student teacher experiences. Twenty years later, I still keep in close contact and reach out to about 15% of this group.

I see Hannah and Danielle as servant leaders because not only did they operate with Noddings' ethic of care (with its four components: "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation") (Noddings, 2012b, p 237), but they also cultivated a trusting relation with me so they could support me in reaching our shared vision of me becoming a teacher. As stated by Robert Greenleaf (1991), a servant leader is one who puts caring first. "Care taken by the servant-first" kind of leader "make[s] sure other people's highest priority needs are being served" (p. 13). My faculty associates took on the role of servant-leader whereby "the servant always accepts and empathizes" (p. 20); whether they were modeling this consciously or not, I, the "potential servant-as-leader," learned from them to "emerge at [my] optimal best" (p. 31). In Greenleaf's terms, "people grow taller when those who lead them empathize and when they are accepted for what they are" (p. 21). Hannah and Danielle always tried their best to help me, showing empathy for me and my disability without judgment. My faculty associates served my needs in a caring manner through their "interest and compassion and concern" (p. 243). They made me want to be a better person: for me to reflect their skills using an ethic of care as servant leaders and to make this kind way of being part of my professional identity.

5.5.5. Caring perspectives: My first position as teacher

Being a teacher meant not only working with students but also with my colleagues. I had a job that required me to work within three different departments, and I spent most of my time connecting with two of the three departmental teachers. My main department head was helpful, kind, funny, and hard working. I could go to her at any time and she would be there to help me with resources, ideas, support, or a listening ear. I could ask her questions about planning or managing challenging students, and she had suggestions for me and binders of resources that I could review any time I wanted. She *modeled* Noddings' ethic of care in how she built relations with students and saw her students as whole children with lives outside of school: she supported a student when her parent was battling cancer by visiting her home and let her students eat lunch in the classroom. Students wanted her to be in their grad photos in June because she

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had earned their respect both as a teacher and as a person. I found myself gravitating to her in *dialogue* about our profession, and we had many conversations about pedagogy and students. I also found myself *practicing* the phrases she used with her students when she greeted them ("Hello my dear!" or "Hello [Name]," which I still do to this day), asked them questions, and taught them. She used their names, asked them about school and about their friendships, and was openly professional yet friendly with them. She treated her students with respect and trusted them to pick up supplies from her car without her when she had gone shopping. She helped me become my best self by believing in me and encouraging me to challenge myself as a continuous learner. With her support, I was connecting with my students while bringing our department together with others. For example, with the music department, we invited local senior citizens into our school for a variety of different events through the school year. My events made the local papers every year, and my connections with my students and the staff grew stronger as we came together to serve the wider community.

By contrast, I also had a secondary department head because I had a teaching load that required my involvement with three different departments each semester. As an academic and driven person, I tried my best to make this situation work but it was extremely tricky. We did not get to know each other very well. I was intimidated by him— not just because he was tall, but because he was not welcoming. I could not find a way to connect with his departmental staff in the same way I did with the music teachers. I know that I did not see my secondary department head very much because with meetings at the same time, I could not be in two places at once. Even though I had no desire to be at those meetings since he was not welcoming, I would attend when I could. Still, he treated me as an outsider because he believed the department should have hired only teachers who majored in the subject area. His resentment was for the principal's decision to bring me into the department, but I bore the brunt of it. I was privy to this information based on conversations I had with some of the other teachers in the department when I investigated what I had missed at our department meetings. It couldn't be helped: I attended my main department meetings more regularly because I taught five or six of my eight classes in that department, and only one in each of the other two departments. Checking in to find out what I missed did not make up for being absent from meetings. Thankfully, I was not required to attend the meetings with my third department head.

I learned the hard way what was appropriate to do in this department very quickly. I delayed giving a test by one day and found out through the grapevine this was not acceptable. I held tutorials for my students after school and opened it up to any students willing to attend, but learned this was also not a favourable move on my part. I had a different philosophy from my department head, which caused friction between us. I tried to talk to him to apologize for not following departmental procedures, but he never reached out to me. I wanted his respect and for him to like me because this was how I was brought up. But I never felt I belonged, even though the course I taught in his department was one of my favourite subject areas to teach. From my perspective, his responses were always curt and professional, not warm and kind. I went to him only when I needed to and tried my best to adhere to procedures as best I could. It was unfortunate that he could not speak with me directly about his issues although they were beyond my control since I was teaching in his department out of need. I was asked to teach this course, and as a beginning teacher, I could not refuse if I wanted to get my career started.

5.5.6. Caring is reciprocity: learning and growing in mutuality

Nel Noddings' (2013b) chief "objective in moral education" for a better way forward "is to establish a climate in which natural caring flourishes" (p. 119). I experienced this in my relations with my main department head at work between my one-caring and myself as the cared-for, as well as with my mother, Hannah, and Danielle in which natural caring flourished. Noddings' ethic of care theory has illustrated my one-caring's role in helping me reach my best potentialities, and I have outlined how my ones-caring helped me achieve my best potential. "Here [with these ones-caring for me], there was a need to learn how to initiate and maintain stable and satisfying relationships … in a way that nourishes bodies, minds, and spirits" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 117).

In response to my secondary department head as one-caring, I would quote Noddings (2002a), but in a different sense: "How good I can be depends at least in part on how you treat me" (p. 89). Natural caring did not flourish here. I had no desire to attend meetings or to be caring towards him because every time I tried to belong by doing what those in the department were doing, or to attend meetings and try and keep up, I was not well received. Even borrowing resources made me feel two feet tall

because I was told that they were someone else's materials that bore someone else's name. Perhaps I had no right to them, but I had nothing else as a beginning teacher for the subject material at this level with this age group. This experience did not meet my desire to be cared for which I believe clearly stems from my upbringing and my initial foray into teaching. My Mom, Hannah and Danielle were kind and caring. My main department head was caring and always so positive. Here, "the desire to be treated with respect that is so characteristic of mature persons" was what I was seeking but failed to secure (Noddings, 2002a, p. 88).

My secondary department head was not modeling an ethic of care for me and appeared to choose not to do so. We did not have discussions about work or otherwise. He made no time for me and provided me with no support as a beginning teacher. There was no practicing of ethical behaviour: for example, making available new subject material in the form of notes or hand-outs for me to make my own and provide to our students. Certainly, there was no confirmation from him to lead me towards my best potentialities. Thankfully, this came from elsewhere. Noddings does not talk specifically about the impact my secondary department head on my ability to teach well and which certainly did not exude the leadership qualities of a servant leader. He did not meet my need for resources or respect my reasons for hosting tutorials for our students. From an ethic of care standpoint, he should have supported my quest for resources, and he would have tried to understand my professional decisions (such as not to have my math test on the same day as the rest of the department).

Thankfully, however, support came from elsewhere. Noddings (1984) does not talk specifically about the impact of not having natural caring in all relations, but obviously I was still able to achieve my best potential through other caring relationships. What helped me through this time was having a main department head on whom I could depend and who supported me through my teaching issues around planning and students. She urged me to continue to ask teachers in the minor department for help with resources until I found someone who was willing to help me. We kept it quiet, and I was extremely appreciative of the gesture. This certainly was not a way to build a trusting relationship with my minor department head, but I was in survival mode and did not need to ruffle any more feathers. I had no idea how my minor department head would have reacted if he had known I was not creating my own lessons from scratch. As the cared-for, I had come instead to care for my main department head rather than my

minor department head. My main department head was my one-caring person who was instrumental in propelling me to act. While I was without question the cared-for, I was able to be the one-caring at times as well. I had grown fond of my main department head, so it made sense that I would also be able to "contribut[e] to caring" (p. 180). We shared a mutuality which is what my main department head "need[ed] most to continue to care" (p. 181).

Since "relation is mutual" (Buber, 1958, p. 8), my one-caring helped me survive my first years of teaching. I would receive her ethic of caring and in return, she would "need confirmation in order to nurture [her] own ethical ideals" (p. 196). Having developed a relation of mutuality, I responded "to [my] one-caring through both pursuit of [my] own goals and attributions of caring motives" (p. 196). I listened to her because she, too, had a challenging staff member with whom she worked. His actions caused her emotional stress, and she was unable to reason with him. Having a conversation with him was the conduct expected of professionals such as ourselves, but conversation only made matters worse, which was unsettling. She tried to avoid him and had already sought the support of the principal and the union representative because her face-to-face conversations with her co-worker went unresolved. Though there was no easy solution, time did help heal wounds; the other staff member did seem to ease off. My presence was supportive and while the tension was still there, her fear had subsided somewhat.

During this time, I "fill[ed] the firmament" (Noddings, 1984, p. 74). I was the cared-for "giv[ing] to the relation either in direct response to the one-caring … in genuine reciprocity" (p. 74). Caring-for allowed me to contribute "to the maintenance of the relation and [serve] to prevent the caring from turning back on the one-caring in the form of anguish and concern for self" (p. 74). Our relationship turned to friendship. We were committed to supporting one another and were able to pursue projects of significance because we were each others' ones-caring and cared-fors. Everything my one-caring focused on where I was concerned had "moral overtones. Through dialogue, modeling, the provision of practice, and the attribution of best motive, the one-caring … [was able to nurture] the ethical ideal" (Noddings, 1984, p. 179) and her natural goodness.

5.5.7. Caring as ethical caring: questioning, learning, and growing

According to Noddings (1984), a natural state of goodness felt by the one-caring "guides our thinking implicitly" (p. 49). "As I care for others and am cared for by them, I become able to care for myself" (p. 49); thus, our relation with others comes full circle. My case of the unsupportive department head illustrates when Noddings' (1984) "natural caring—that relation in which we respond as one-caring out of love or natural inclination" does not prevail (p. 5). Instead, ethical caring persists where we may understand how we ought to act or respond, and we have a choice to accept or reject the "obligation" to act. When my department head and I failed to connect and our relation failed to take shape, this illustrates when the obligation is not a natural inclination and the action is one of rejection. If given an opportunity for natural caring to flourish, one might think it's no contest—that one would accept the relation as one-caring. Instead, the "potential for present relation, and the dynamic potential for growth in relation, including the potential for increased reciprocity and, perhaps, mutuality" was lost (p. 86).

According to Noddings' ethic of care theory, the modeling I was exposed to previously by my Mom, my faculty associates, and even my main department head was clearly evident. They made time for me and showed me in their acts, consistency as my ones-caring. "The desire to be cared for calls forth in most well-cared-for people a moral response (Noddings, 2002a, p. 88). But in the situation I described with my minor department head, this did not happen. Whereas Noddings insists that "we must show in our daily actions, what it means to care" through dialogue, practice and confirmation (2013b, p. 118), none of these pillars of Noddings' ethic of care theory were reflected in my relation with my minor department head. We did not have a trusting relation that allowed dialogue to flourish. We did not spend time together for him to support me through practicing an ethic of care. We certainly did not know each other well enough for my supposed one-caring to confirm me as the cared-for. Missing from our relation was the "ethical ideal [which] … springs from … the longing to maintain, recapture, or enhance our most caring and tender moments" (Noddings, 1984, p. 104). Noddings (1984) reveals that with a lack of commitment such as between my minor department head and me there is no natural or ethical sentiment where, "an ethic of caring [is able to] striv[e] to maintain the caring attitude" (p. 105). Therefore, "the one-caring must be maintained, for [this individual is] the immediate source of caring" (p. 105).

My minor department head needed to ensure that "caring itself and the ethical ideal that strives to maintain and enhance it guide us in moral decisions and conduct" (Noddings, 1984, p. 105), while I needed to realize that "my Thou affects me, as I affect it. We are moulded [as the student] and built up by our works" (Buber, 1958, p. 15-16). Neither of us made any attempts at receiving the other beyond my initial outreach and our necessary meetings. He was my superior and he had a different leadership approach than mine of caring, serving, and supporting. Hence, the relation never took flight; an ethical form of caring by my one-caring failed to flourish. My questions about how to connect with my superior went unanswered, which was troubling for me because I wanted to fit in, to be accepted, and was willing to work hard to achieve these goals.

5.5.8. An absence of care in a tiered system

The kind of stability I had at my school where my teaching load was spread across three different departments—my first school where I was a teacher with a continuing contract—gave me the strength and the courage to move forward and seek other opportunities. My main department head was able to meet me "directly but not equally" as my one-caring (Noddings, 1984, p. 177). She was committed to me and knew what I needed in order for me to be successful. As my one-caring, she was there for me. "The one-caring sees the best self in the cared-for and works with [me] to actualize that self" (Noddings, 1984, p. 64); hence, I became a stronger and more confident teacher with all kinds of experiences from which to draw upon, and a glimmer of hope to become a teacher leader. When the timing was right, I would move to a new role in a new school with a new principal (educational administrative leader) with whom, as I quickly found out during the interview process, I seemed to share a similar educational philosophy.

This would become the school where I would actually make the transition from teacher to teacher leader and seriously consider becoming an educational administrative leader. I now had experience as a teacher at two different levels (middle and high school). I had made my mark in different ways at the secondary level, such as by hosting seniors' dinners which connected me with the community, by serving as acting department head, and by coaching track and field, among other things. I would make my mark at the middle level as well. I would teach on two different teams and join various school and district level committees, such as educational technology and social justice. I

would also connect my students with buddies within a local inner-city school. Thus for me, it made sense that the next logical step in my career was to consider becoming an educational administrative leader. For this to take shape, I needed the endorsement from my second educational administrative leader. I would have worked for three years by the time it came for him to support my professional goals. But as my one-caring, this second educational administrative leader did not endorse my professional goals, and this ultimately impacted my confidence as an educational leader. As Kathy Kram (1985b) suggests, we "need to assess the value of educational and structural change strategies that have been proposed to create conditions that encourage mentoring" and the positive development of educators (p. 207). For me, this experience illustrates an opportunity for experienced educational administrative leaders to learn about being mentors who build capacity through an ethic of care, particularly for beginning and midlife educators.

When I began this teaching position, I was excited about learning from my new principal educational administrative leader as we seemed to hold similar educational philosophies. This connection took root quickly at my interview as we discussed the important pillars of middle school. This meant that I talked about my role as part of a team, building exploratory skills in my students, and connecting within the community. But to my surprise, even though we had hit it off so well at my interview for the posting, not everything went according to plan. I was focused on my role as teacher and did not look outward as much as I should have. I worked hard to build valued relationships with the staff and certainly with students, including parents as necessary. But I did not notice at the time that my focus was narrow. I spent most of my time engrossed in supporting my students and the other three classes in my team, so this is where my energy was spent. Partly due to these professional choices, my one-caring did not generate efforts to care for me and to confirm me and my best self, efforts that Noddings (1984) describes as:

> The attitude that is perceived by the cared-for as caring is generated by efforts of the one-caring at inclusion and confirmation. It is an attitude that both accepts and confirms. It does not "accept" and shrug off. It accepts, embraces, and leads upward. It questions, it responds, it sympathizes, it challenges, it delights. (p. 67)

These acts needed a mutual relation to flourish.

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My principal educational administrative leader had welcomed me to his school, so I settled in quickly. I joined a team of two other new teachers who were also new to the school, where we were challenged by a group of very active and unfocused students on our team. This situation quickly forced the three of us to bond and get creative with our unit plans, scheduling, and team activities to foster the close-knit, respectful culture we were seeking. In other words, my relations were stronger with my teaching partners than with the principal because my energy was spent at the teaching-team level. As it turns out, this was the kind of process my educational administrative leader fostered because it was his preference. I was disappointed, though, that I did not work as closely as I had hoped I would with him.

My principal educational administrative leader was a nice person with whom I worked for three years before he was relocated to a different school, but we had not found a better way forward as per Noddings' ethic of care theory. Focusing on my team and teaching my students meant that my one-caring was my distant superior. The process at this school was to work through student issues as a team before bringing it to the office level, but beyond that were essentially two more levels to the top of the hierarchy. On this one occasion, I was particularly frustrated because a student on our team, Andy (not his real name), who had been challenging us and who was well known to my superior because we had been talking about this student with him, was off his game and had come running full speed down the hall, smashing a sign as he blazed on by, yelling something inappropriate. One teacher spoke briefly with him, and then Andy proceeded to charge ahead, hitting something else. My superior was present for Andy's outburst because our team members and I just happened to be speaking with him in the hallway after school had let out. Upon witnessing the incident, we now managed to calm the student, and I asked my superior if he could just check in with the student, too, and could he please have a chat with the student since he was present at the time and could help with a follow-up meeting. The response I received was merely a reminder of the process. With all due respect, he knew our team of teachers was frustrated, that there were issues running deeper than the superficial behaviour we had just witnessed, and that we were struggling to get to the bottom of those issues. But in that moment when my superior rejected my request, Noddings' (2013b) ethic of natural caring did not flourish and I felt my student, my team members, and I had been isolated and

abandoned. It takes a village to support a child, and one member of the community chose not to connect at that point.

I eventually joined the dots, though, and have since made an effort to better understand his position. I can see why he was so intent on committing to the process he had set in place although it was not the response I would have made. Our philosophies were starting to diverge. "Caring cannot be achieved by formula. … it requires different behaviors from situation to situation and person to person" (Noddings, 1992, p. xi). When my principal educational administrative leader stayed true to his process, I was left dejected and feeling unsupported. I had obviously not done my due diligence in meeting my superior in forming a relation; having had no really important dialogues with my superior would ultimately leave me seeking that universal desire to be cared for. For him not to reciprocate that "caring response [which] is fundamental in moral life" is an experience that has never left me (Noddings, 2002a, p. 149). He never committed to our relation in ways that I had become accustomed to with my other informal mentors. My principal educational administrative leader truly valued a tiered system and was insistent on staying true to his beliefs. Athena as Mentor from Homer's epic *The* Odyssey were not players in this scenario.

5.5.9. An absence of care: the emotional toll on my learning and growth

My principal educational administrative leader had just been reassigned to a new school when the posting for new potential candidates interested in educational administrative leadership came out. Knowing what my professional goals were, I knew it was time to ask for support from my superior. Although my connections at the school were strongest within my team because that is the climate he had fostered, I now needed to lean on my principal educational administrative leader because he was my ticket to achieving my career aspiration. The posting outlined that I would need my principal educational administrative leader to act as my referee, and he had most recently been my direct superior for three years. I knew that he was someone whom I had looked up to because he was a nice person, although there were some frustrations along the way. He was also in a position of power, able to guide and support me through the process, which would be beneficial for me. He knew I was a dedicated worker and

that the middle years were important to me as an educator who thoroughly enjoyed working with my students. He was the ideal candidate to act on my behalf.

I made the call, congratulating my former principal educational administrative leader on his new assignment. After some small talk about his new school, I proceeded to explain my career aspirations and my desire to throw my hat in the ring such that a reference from him would be ideal. His response to my request was that he would not be able to help me out. I wondered why and asked him as much. Was it because he was busy with his new school or he did not think I was ready? I also explained that I wanted to put my name out there because this was something I wanted for myself. He said he did not think the timing was right but did not elaborate on whether it was about his new job or my skillset. I felt I would be a solid educational administrative leader should I be awarded the role, but understood he had his opinion and was welcome to it. Hence, I resorted to Plan B: I asked for him to be my supporter and mentor to help me determine some next steps towards my professional goal. To this request, I received the shock of my life—a plain and simple—"No." There was no explanation. To my request for a referral instead, there was no response, just awkward silence on the other end of the phone. I somehow mustered a polite thank you and good-bye. He may not have agreed with my goal to become an educational administrative leader, and if he did not think I was ready yet, that was fine, and I said as much. I felt, however, as if someone in his position in schools should want to lead members of his staff to attain loftier goals as I did. He should have wanted me to achieve my best potential and attain a level higher than where I currently stood.

After the phone call I felt dismay, sadness, and defeat. I am glad I was alone at that time; my whole body was shaking, and I could not focus on anything in the room. It was as if I had been teleported to another world because I was present but not grounded. I felt emotion but there were no tears; I was too shocked by what had just transpired. Perhaps I had not heard him correctly. If only that were true. I felt as if everything in me became this useless, lifeless weight—a whole ton of weight. I was standing but eventually fell into my chair. My body felt heavy and I did not move for a long time. Thankfully, no one was around to witness this immensely vulnerable moment of shock and dismay. I needed to process what had happened because I had not thought to prepare myself for this outcome. Perhaps my former leader wanted me to have more experience in leadership roles, such as with student teachers or at the

elementary level where I had not yet had my own class. Perhaps he thought being a department head was an ideal step towards educational administrative leadership. Unfortunately, I did not have this opportunity under his reign. Perhaps he had personal reasons for not meeting me in relation. But he never elaborated on any of his reasons, and I was too hurt to bring up the subject again. Rejection was hard. I am not sure what I was supposed to think. I did not know what to think except the worst outcome possible, that I would never achieve anything more. I would not amount to anything greater than what I had already achieved.

I see now that having a variety of other leadership experiences such as being a department head and supervising student teachers would bode well for me in becoming an educational administrative leader. But at that time and in that place, I was left disheartened.

Moving forward from this situation was difficult, but I have since gained perspective. I was at a loss for how to proceed, but have learned to take a step back and understand that his perspective was different from mine. Most importantly, I did not know what it is like to be a principal educational administrative leader. All I know is that at that moment, I vowed never to let anyone I worked with feel this way. Frozen. Defeated. Unworthy. Hopeless.

This experience has framed my thinking and has illuminated my biases as an educational administrative leader. It was not just the ideal of me looking up to my superior as one-caring that had been shattered, but it was also about me realizing that his perspective in this narrative had significance too. He could have had personal issues or stressors in his life that would not allow him to support me. After all, he was at a new school now and experiencing new challenges. I had made some assumptions in what way and how he should help me work towards my professional goals, but he had other ideas or other ways of leading or being that I was not privy to. My reaction to our phone conversation was largely one of shock because I had not stopped to consider a variety of perspectives and potential outcomes to my request. My thinking had been youthful, shallow, narrow-minded, and insular.

I would like to believe that my superior will have forgotten about that conversation because it means that he did not give it the same weight and importance that I did. As

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well, likely he never intended to hurt me intentionally. I feel as if he should want his teachers to flourish and had valid reasons for not supporting me without explanation, even when asked. Perhaps he had been a principal educational administrative leader for too long and had forgotten what it was like to be in my position. Or, perhaps, he had his own alternate vision and thought that I should stay in the classroom. I wonder if he found satisfaction in his job. Clearly, speculating on his intent in a position for which I have no understanding because I have never been a principal educational administrative leader was counterproductive for me. I see now that I was not ready to have a mature relation with him. "Mature relationships are characterized by mutuality" (Noddings, 1992, p. 17). What we had was not a mature relationship because we lacked a mutual receptivity; our relationship lacked trust, respect for honesty, and open reciprocity.

He did not know me as well as I thought he did, and I own that. I built my strongest relations with the teachers on my team. This is why there was no confirmation of some higher ideal that he saw as being the standard for which to strive. "One must meet the other in caring. From this requirement there is no escape for one who would be moral" (Noddings, 1984, p. 201).

The fact that I allowed my emotions to become so raw for so long really illustrates for me just how much I wanted to do something that I felt I would be good at. The hurt and regret taught me that having a second conversation with my superior about my desire to be the best educator I could be was warranted. For me, it has taken courage to ask someone in a position of power for something because the request comes from a place of vulnerability. I am a proud person who would rather take extra time to figure something out on my own than to ask for help. I was also young, in my early 30s, with a confidence that comes with youth; now, that confidence had been shattered. Since then, I have matured and gained the courage to step up. I have grown into a more confident individual with a stronger professional identity which has helped me see that I needed to step up and meet my superior where he was at. I needed to confront my fears, let him know how I was feeling, and ask him questions about why he acted as he did. I needed to live Noddings' ethic of care theory and meet my principal administrative educational leader in mutuality through dialogue. I should have modeled, through my dialogue with him, my need for practice to seek confirmation of my professional goals.

I have never regretted the paths my career followed, as I have focused on the healthy relationships and satisfaction in connection with each role I have held. I continue to learn and grow by always reflecting on my past experiences. I also continue to learn more about myself in reflecting on the choices I have made and the encounters I have had with others. After my first eight years of teaching, I was at a pivotal point in my career, more determined than ever to attain my goal of becoming an educational administrative leader. My metamorphosis towards educational administrative leader was yet to take shape.

5.5.10. Caring as moral education: Noddings' work and her ethic of care theory

"How good I can be depends at least in part on how you treat me. My goodness is not entirely my property, and the control I exercise as a carer is always a shared control" (Noddings, 2002a, p. 89). Whether my principal educational administrative leader who said "No" and declined to help me knew it or not, our relationship changed that day. I feel he did not operate as my one-caring because he did not choose to support me with my request for professional help and advice. He did not seem to want any part in helping me to achieve my best potentialities. Natural caring did not seem to flourish, nor did he seem to feel obligated to support me, guide me, or care for me. Hence, I lost faith in our relationship because he seemed to have failed me. The relation was no longer mutual, especially since he seemed to do nothing on his end to make it better or to change his response. I had opened myself to a vulnerability that I had not displayed so deeply before. I had invited him to learn of my professional career aspirations, and he apparently chose not to commit to helping me.

This encounter damaged me in many ways. I have had to work past not having the confidence to ask for help with my career aspirations for fear of being judged or shut down again. I have found it difficult showing vulnerability by asking for support or mentorship. It now seems unfortunate that I did not tell my parents, but it has been so long since it happened that I would feel silly telling them about how this affected me and still affects me, even though I know something was missing from my relationship with this educational administrative leader or the path my life could have taken may have turned out differently. Likely, my Mom would have found a way for me to move forward and to lift the weight off my shoulders. "An ethic of care has its source in natural human

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caring, and it seeks the maintenance and enhancement of that caring" (Noddings, 1984, p. 108). In that sense, my parents would have supported me and helped me work through what was so painful about that encounter. I wish that my superior could have seen the real me, that he could have supported me in my quest to be something greater than myself in that moment:

> Under the guidance of an ethic of caring, ethicality is determined in part by the degree of receptivity one has effectively exercised. This means that one must make an effort to receive the others involved in a situation, of course, but it also means that we must reflect upon that reception. … The cared-for should have "filled the firmament". (Noddings, 1984, p. 114)

The one-caring should have at least "sensed what the other (cared-for—I) was feeling" (Noddings, 1984, p. 114). But my superior was seemingly not capable of knowing I had a dependency as a teacher seeking his approval and thus, his support. I needed him to endorse my professional goals, and his response impacted my personal identity. I had no idea who I was in that moment when my needs failed to match those of my superior during our phone conversation. I second-guessed my future as an educator because what I expected to gain from my phone conversation with my superior played out differently from how I imagined it. Because I never got to tell him exactly how I felt, the experience robbed me of my confidence and joy in learning and of growing. I never had the opportunity to hear from him and to know his innermost thoughts. There was no closure for that phone conversation and that relationship. I own the mistake, now, of not asking questions because that meant no closure to that time in my life.

Imagine the impact a mentor could have had on supporting the younger me. As Kram (1985b) expresses it, "the mutuality and reciprocity of a mentor relationship" in an organization "should realize that both newcomers and midcareer employees benefit from these developmental relationships" between mentee and mentor, allowing "for creative expression of those with experience and wisdom to share (p. 195). Modeling along with "dialogue, practice, [and] attribution of the best possible motive. … are essential in nurturing the ethical ideal" of Noddings' caring ethic (Noddings, 1984, p. 124). In hindsight, however, my principal educational administrative leader did not model for me how to help me "fill the firmament" (Noddings, 1984, p. 176) let alone become "infinitely more important than the subject matter" (p. 176). My one-caring never found a way to show care, nor did he find a way for care to be "summoned by a concern for the ethical self in situations where it does not arise naturally" (Noddings, 1984, p. 75). As the cared-

for reflecting on this situation, I see that I could have fought harder to meet my superior. I should have asked questions and met with my superior on another occasion after the fact. But I did not. "In dependent relations, the greater responsibility belongs to the one-caring" (Noddings, 1984, p. 76) but he chose not to oblige, and so to this day I live with the regret of not demanding answers.

What did come of this situation is that I chose to become the one-caring who meets the other in relation. I chose to support up-and-coming educators, educational leaders, and potential educational administrative leaders—especially those educational leaders who seek my support:

> As soon as the cared-for must consider the needs and motives of the one-caring, he becomes one-caring himself or he falls into a life of inauthenticity or he becomes an ethical hero—one who behaves as though cared-for without the sustenance of caring. (Noddings, 1984, p. 76)

Being a caring mentor has become my life's work. I have written reference letters, had discussions with colleagues about their professional goals, and encouraged others to seek ascension. I work hard to learn about the motivations my colleagues have for ascension and base my reference letters on actual observations and truths that I believe will support their application for ascension. Every colleague I have worked with has strengths. If there are shortcomings, I have been open to a frank conversation about next steps and finding other ways to feel fulfilled in our work. I seek lateral ascension, not only vertically, but also laterally.

5.6. Adulthood: My personal and professional identities merge

5.6.1. Being mentored with a caring ethic of reciprocity

Knowing where to turn after losing faith in my own abilities because I was not supported in a way that I had expected meant putting the past behind me (not that I ever forgot) and being open to finding my own opportunities. I stayed true to myself and my desire to continue to move forward as a learner and became a faculty associate. When I started my career, I knew I wanted to follow in the footsteps of Hannah and Danielle. I

have never forgotten this dream to become an educational leader and take a step closer to becoming the administrative leader that I so keenly wanted to be.

My experience as a faculty associate was definitely the richest professional development opportunity, as well as the most relationally powerful and most positively rewarding time of my career. I thrived on the change, the leadership opportunities, and the connections I was making. I was touched by one individual in particular to whom I owe so much gratitude. He became my informal mentor: getting to know me, providing me with opportunities of a lifetime, and entrusting me to meet challenges beyond my wildest imagination. Working with him opened my eyes to what I had seemingly been missing in my relationship with my last principal educational administrative leader. My heart, wounded by the lack of support from my last principal educational administrative leader, began to heal because of my mentor's presence and his wisdom. This is the ethic of caring mentorship I wanted for all educators, not just me.

This mentor, although informal, was the epitome of Noddings' ethic of caring. He was the consummate role model. He looked the part, dressing well in a suit. He acted the part, as he was so gentle and kind. He also embodied the role of lifelong learner. He worked hard for long hours because like me, he loved his work. He was successful, and he passed so much of his wisdom on to me. He took the time to get to know me and to learn about how I came to be an educator. He was genuinely happy to meet my parents at an open house event I had organized because he genuinely cared about me and saw something special in me. My mentor shared his stories with me about his life journey: from an immigrant child who did not know the language to humanities teacher, then professor, then director of programs in the Faculty of Education. He shared with me his love for soccer and how it always brought together individuals from all walks of life because all that was needed was an open space and a round(ish) ball. He was one of a kind with a desire to bridge gaps for children so that they could all have an equal opportunity to learn.

This same positive outlook allowed my informal mentor to consider hiring me to start up a new international module of student teachers overseas. He met with me regularly, asking me for my opinion on all aspects of the program. We talked for hours about work brainstorming and solidifying plans. He listened carefully to me and I, too, listened carefully to him. He observed, as did I. Our relation was mutual and built upon

trust, honour, and respect. After our meetings, he would send me off with a list of tasks to complete until I would report back to him the next time. "Practice in caring is a form of apprenticeship" which I took on wholeheartedly (Noddings, 1984, p. 122). My (informal) mentor responded to my emails promptly and made time for me when I knocked at his door with questions and updates. He entrusted me to work with him in recruiting student teachers and provided me with a solid budget to oversee the new program. We had talked so much about our ideas and opinions that I knew I could carry out my work; I knew exactly where he stood on all matters relating to this module of student teachers, and he knew what my priorities were for the student teachers with whom I would be working closely.

My mentor had a strong and kind presence for a man of great stature, and he earned my respect. For the first time in my life, I was feeling intense joy from my work. I slept very little each night, yet was refreshed and ready to begin again with each passing day. I had a renewed love for baking because it was no longer seen as motherly and feminine but rather, as a caring act of sharing which would lead to the building of relations (as breaking bread leads to increased dialogue between people). "Sometimes … emotion supplies us with the special motive power we need: increased physical strength, cunning, or patience. … We do not choose the increase in physical strength … from fear; instead, we choose to transform the world" (Noddings, 1984, p. 143). I had met with my own confirmation of my best potentialities. I had my confidence back and a zest for life that I never knew existed. My mentor allowed me to work overseas, to travel, to learn, and to grow with my student teachers, with whom I forged strong relations. We travelled, lived, and worked closely together for one semester and became lifetime friends. I felt alive, useful, and cared-for.

When my mentor came to visit me and my group of student teachers overseas, he worked with us on pedagogy. He also shared meals with us and allowed me to be his one-caring. I arranged his accommodations, business meetings with the school's owner, and a special dinner outing with our student teachers. I loved being able to reciprocate by doing something small that would make his business trip run more effectively and efficiently. "What [I] the cared-for [give] to the relation either in direct response to the one-caring or in personal delight or in happy growth before [his] eyes is genuine reciprocity" (Noddings, 1984, p. 74).

5.6.2. Caring as confirmation: coming full circle

I found my voice as a faculty associate because I had the support of an informal mentor. I felt alive and secure in my role as an educational leader to my student teachers because of my mentor. According to Noddings (2006), "confirmation can only be performed when a relation has been established" (p. 113), and I had my mentor to thank for this. He took the time to engage in regular dialogue with me on topics about my interests (baking, card making, music) and his interests (soccer, family, traveling). We talked at length about my work with student teachers. He gave me space to practice working through the organizational pieces associated with starting up a new module of student teachers: from the application process, to the booking of airline tickets, to the accommodations, the travel itinerary, and pairings with the school associates overseas. For me, this work embodies Noddings' notion of trust: "The one doing the confirming has to know the one who is confirmed well enough to make a reasonable, honest judgment of what the other was trying to do" (p. 113). He saw my best potentialities and helped my best possible self to flourish.

Noddings (2006) asserts that "the way we treat others affects—and affects deeply—their own moral behavior and growth. We are morally interdependent" (p. 114), a state requiring that we "listen attentively to one another" (p. 118). By leaning into the conversations I had with my (informal) mentor and by taking a seat at the proverbial table, I became my true self. I found my identity, and it was confirmed by my mentor. I had never considered before that my professional and personal identities were one and the same. I had found a "commitment to confirmation as a central component of moral life" that "reminds us constantly that how good I can be depends at least in part on how you treat me" (p. 118).

I was cared-for by my mentor and was able to return the favour as one-caring when my mentor visited me overseas. The fact that I was able to do this illustrated just how far I had come as the cared-for to the one-caring. I acted in reciprocity. It was as if I had waited all my life to become a faculty associate and in doing so, I was blessed with a devoted mentor who brought out the best in me. I had found a way to infuse my passions with my professional career. I showed an ethic of care in my actions, including baking and making cards with special messages for those with whom I worked. The fact that I loved to bake did not mean I was meek and feminine. Instead, it meant that I could

listen deeply and then serve my community, those I would come to care for because they were in my immediate orbit.

This connection I had with my mentor was professional, respectful, and growth-minded. I became known for my assets—my baking, my card making, and my care for others. I believe this made me a good leader because I grew up as the cared-for and learned in my early professional life how to reciprocate as the cared-for as well as the one-caring. By taking the time to listen to others, to observe and to act, I was taking a page from my mentor's book. Upon reflecting on my leadership style, I became the servant leader. "Servant leadership provides ongoing resources, support, and encouragement to individuals engaged in the change process" (Preedy, Bennett, & Wise, 2012, p. 77). I had undergone a transformative process from an educational leader ready to become an educational administrative leader because of my experiences as a faculty associate for a new module overseas. Now I too was supporting transformations just as I had learned from my ones-caring: my Mom, Hannah, Danielle, and now my most recent (informal) mentor. I was engaging in relation with my student teachers and guiding them towards their own transformations from student teacher to teacher. I was building up my student teachers and encouraging them, along with their students, to become changemakers.

My confidence was back. The experience with my former principal administrative educational leader was no longer a painful memory, for I had moved forward and thrived because of Noddings' ethic of caring. I was finally free to "take from this a correction, not to my memory but to my understanding" of my own potentialities (Westover, 2018, p. 334). It does not matter that I am hard of hearing, or that I have terrible nosebleeds, because I have been surrounded by ones-caring and I am cared-for. I will always seek a "moral education … to establish a climate of natural caring that flourishes (Noddings, 2013b, p. 119). I have learned to be the one-caring.

Chapter 6.

Conclusion

Professionally, for almost as long as I can remember, I have been intent on investigating the recruitment and retention of females who are mentored into educational administrative leadership roles with an ethic of care. I now reflect on my qualitative research methodology of autoethnography as the backbone of my research and conclude with my final remarks about the saliency of this dissertation. I consider the significance and limitations of my autoethnography as well as possible directions for future research. Finally, I offer my own reflections about the future outlook for female educational leaders who are seeking ascension into educational administrative leadership roles.

This study has allowed me to deepen my understanding of the qualitative research and literature on educational leadership and educational administrative leadership from the perspectives of mentoring and Nel Noddings' (2013b) ethic of care theory. I began my research with the intention of improving leadership practices in the field of educational leadership, especially in the areas of mentoring, ethic of care theory, and female leadership. In conducting this research, I reaffirmed Noddings' conviction that there is "a decent, respectful way of meeting and treating one another" where "we treat one another with care because we want to do so—because we value a climate of care and trust within which to do our work" (p. 119). Building the leadership capacity of teacher leaders within a climate of caring is one important aspect of school leadership of primary concern, along with "culture, leadership, teaching, and professional growth and development" (Brien & Williams, 2009, p 29).

What this looks like in practice can and should be initiated in a way that Noddings (2013b) states as "our objective in moral education" which is "to establish a climate in which natural caring flourishes" (p. 119). My narratives allowed me to reflect on this possibility and showed me that in those relations in which I felt cared-for and the relation was mutual, I achieved my personal best. There was evidence of modeling, time for dialogue, and space for practice, all leading to confirmation. Upon reflection, my experience with being confirmed was foundational to my identity formation as an

educational leader. My narratives relating to Hannah and Danielle, my main department head, my informal mentor at the post-secondary level, and undoubtedly my Mom all represent my confirmation as a better person and educational leader. My work with my minor department head and my principal educational administrative leader, whose "No!" caught me off guard, were devoid of Noddings' caring ethic and did not support any level of confirmation of my best potentialities. My current place and standing exist because I have considered my narratives as following a path consistent with Noddings' ethic of care theory. Hence, this investigation has merit as a way of understanding how mentorship with an ethic of care can play a role in the recruitment and retention of female educational leaders into administrative roles in education.

6.1. Mentorship with an ethic of care: the significance of my autoethnographic inquiry

I am reminded of how I came to this place of research through overcoming an experience that was emotionally trying. As I outlined in the last chapter, my superior, who was in a prime position to be my mentor, instead left me feeling dejected, abandoned, and alone after refusing to support me in my professional goals. Since I have never forgotten this experience and how it affected me, one aim of my dissertation has been to make sense of this experience and allow it to inform my practice moving forward. To have given myself permission to work through a difficult part of my past, I have taken action through the telling and retelling of my own narrative. "This notion of sharing one's inner leadership experiences is counter to the dominant educational administration culture" (Beatty, 2009, p. 165) under what Carol Gilligan (2011) would call a framework of patriarchy, and I understand why. Exposing my narrative in a public forum like this and setting myself up to be vulnerable, to be judged, and in my worst nightmares, to be potentially disregarded, is terrifying for a perfectionist like me, especially since there are no guarantees my research will prove fruitful outside of my personal sphere. Beatty (2009) describes this dilemma:

> Tradition has it that leaders leave their integrated selves at the door in order to gain entry to the leadership league. However, to be prepared for the challenges facing today's school leaders, we need nothing less than emotionally grounded and connected leaders. (p. 165)

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In this spirit, I have felt obligated to take action. By writing this dissertation, I have realized the need to overcome my fears and insecurities, as well as my need to be on the receiving end of Noddings' caring ethic.

Beatty describes the caring characteristics of leaders whom we want to follow as having:

> well-grounded emotional security [that] emanates from a mature and sensitive sense of self and genuine respect and care for the other. … Leaders who instill confidence in ourselves encourage us to acknowledge our vulnerability and admit to our needs to know. This is the learning readiness moment that all teachers look for. The learning leader lives for these moments, too, and knows how to create them. (Beatty, 2009, p. 165)

When I and Thou, in mutual relation, as teacher and student, or mentor and protégé come together and bring out the best potential and realizations of the protégé and awaken or "affirm him in this wholeness," Buber calls these moments of *inclusion or Umfassung* (Buber, 1958, p. 132). In inclusion, the one-caring begins "experiencing the other's side in a relationship [which] is at the core of human interactions. … when one imagines what the other is feeling, thinking, and experiencing without giving up the felt reality of one's own activity" (Kramer & Gawlick, 2003, p. 187). In a similar vein, Noddings (1984, 2013), whose work was strongly influenced by Martin Buber, believed that when a natural caring relation empowers the one-caring to allow the best and full self to be brought out in the cared-for, we achieve confirmation: the fourth and vital component of her ethic of care theory.

I emphasized in my analysis of my narratives in the last chapter that I own the path that my professional life has taken and continues to take because I *am* my upbringing. My need for an ethic of care, my insecurities, my fears, my hopes, and my dreams are all embedded in who I am because of my relation with my parents, especially my Mom. As a result, I have come to expect that the level of caring that I received from my Mom and my closeness with her is a result of the respectful mutuality our relation has formed. When I was unable to meet the other in caring at the K-12 level with my minor department head and definitely, with my principal educational administrative leader, I missed a potential opportunity to be mentored with an ethic of care towards ascension to an administrative role in education. I did not meet that principal administrative educational leader in mutuality. Michael Slote's (2007) idea that

the spatial closeness I should have experienced in relation with my superior should have had the potential to become stronger as we developed empathy for one another. I may have missed out on the close face-to-face encounters necessary for this kind of relation to develop. Hence, there was no potential for the guidance, engrossment, and confirmation that I felt I needed to feel secure, happy, and competent as an educator—a far better state than feeling abandoned, lonely and isolated. My insecurities stemming from childhood caused me to retreat rather than move into encounters with my superior. Yet, according to Noddings (1984), "nothing is more important in nurturing the ethical ideal than attribution and explication of the best possible motive. The one-caring holds out to the [student] a vision of this lovely self-actualized or nearly actualized" self (p. 123).

What was evident in each of my narratives is that the presence of a one-caring in my life, particularly being connected to a significant other whom I have considered to be my informal mentor, allowed me to flourish and to be confirmed. Who I have become, my identity, has been shaped by my informal mentors and those who have cared-for me. My personal and professional identities converged as I was mentored by my two faculty associates and then by my mentor at the post-secondary level. Their influence by way of Noddings' (1984; 2012b, p. 237) four components of the ethic of care—"modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation"— has been instrumental in helping me become the educational administrative leader I am today. As well as my Mom (my first caring mentor), my informal professional mentors have had an impact on my identity that is deep and far reaching: making me a better, more caring educational leader. "What is needed is openness and humility in leaders: leaders who understand that they are learning too and are given space by those they lead to make mistakes as they learn" (Beatty, 2009, p. 153). Thus, I recommend that mentorship be considered as a relation between a mentor and a cared-for mentee, a relation that fulfills Noddings' ethic of care theory and brings out the best potentialities in the cared-for though a reciprocal relation with the one-caring.

I have experienced the lack of caring and the detrimental effect this has had on my understanding of how to ascend to the position of educational administrative leader. Knowing that "caring is morally better and more praiseworthy than being cared-for," it makes sense that I should want to pair mentoring and an ethic of care together (Slote, 1999, p. 34). Laurent Daloz (2012) illustrates a major point I have been trying to make in

this dissertation: that there is value in mentoring with an ethic of care. Mentors need to be present "everywhere that people need help learning something" (p. xxii). The best part of this notion is that Daloz, too, believed that "it is central for all of us [who are struggling] to construct an education of care" (p. 5) so that our students have the opportunity to try "growing up, with [a chance at] developing identity" (p. 21). As the one-caring, the teacher "has to know *something*, but what we know is of value only as we are able to form it such that our students [as the cared-for] can make use of it for their own evolving ways of knowing" (p. 15). Bringing the one-caring and cared-for together through dialogue, again and again, is vital to the potentialities of the cared-for: that is, achieving Noddings' confirmation.

6.2. Significance of the mutuality of relations towards dialogue as confirmation

"What the cared-for gives to the relation either in direct response to the one-caring or in personal delight or in happy growth before her eyes is genuine reciprocity" (Noddings, 1984, p. 74). When I was at the post-secondary level, I knew I had been gifted with a special relationship with a mentor, albeit an informal mentor. I was very grateful for his efforts, the time he took to meet with me face-to-face, and for the opportunities I was provided. But something more eternal to have come from this relation, including the ones I had with Hannah, Danielle, and my Mom, is the continued influence that is having a major impact on me to this day because of my relations with them from years past. I have become a broader thinker and a more confident individual: an educational administrative leader continually in search of a mentor whom I can meet in reciprocity. Also, now that I am back in my own school district working in the K-12 system, I know I have more opportunities before me that I will openly and willingly take into consideration.

In analyzing my narratives, I see a consistent pattern of behaviour. I continually seek a mentor in my professional life because at my core is a desire to be cared-for, to be matched reciprocally in dialogue that is face-to-face. Clearly, my upbringing instilled in me a respect and a need for care and dialogue, even though I may not have reciprocated the dialogue very skillfully. Noddings (1984) asserts that "dialogue is a common search for understanding, empathy, or appreciation. It can be playful or serious, logical or imaginative, goal or process oriented, but it is always a genuine quest for

something undetermined at the beginning" (p. 23). She also states that because dialogue is one of the core components of her ethic of care theory, that "dialogue permits us to talk about what we try to show" and it "also provides us with the knowledge of each other that forms a foundation for response in caring" (p. 23). Dialogue is critical for allowing us to "know the other well enough to see what he or she is trying to become" (p. 25). In short, dialogue is necessary for confirmation of my best self. However, I was denied this with my principal educational administrative leader because I never took the time to meet him in reciprocity. There was no encounter towards engagement and thus, no dialogue towards confirmation. Hindsight has been critical in allowing me to move forward.

6.3. Limitations of my autoethnographic inquiry

Any research project faces challenges, and this dissertation has proven to be no different. Similar to a quantitative research project wherein sources of error are noted, a qualitative research project uncovers results and issues requiring further serious consideration. In this section, I review the issues arising with respect to my methodological approaches, Noddings' ethic of care theory, and mentorship for females in educational leadership.

For my autoethnography to be taken seriously and more importantly, for my narrative voice to be honoured, it must be viewed in a "spirit of cooperation and collaboration and mutual self-respect" in an arena where I have continually been aware of the ongoing need to "confront and work through the criticisms" of the methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. x). The biggest risks, aside from putting myself out there to be vulnerable, have revolved around ethics and anonymity, ownership and memory, and fact and fiction. Jean Clandinin and Michael Connelly (2000) are correct in naming ethics as something that is "never far from the heart of our inquiries no matter where we are in the inquiry process" (p. 170). Indeed, "ethical matters need to be narrated over the entire narrative inquiry process" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 197; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 170). I received ethics approval from the University Research Ethics Board with the intent of leaning more on my mentors, but after writing several drafts, I decided that this is my personal story to tell. I chose to approach my narrative with caution, honesty, and integrity, especially with respect to those who played important lead roles in my life. I felt this approach would be less disruptive to the mentors and would allow me to focus on

the intent of my dissertation: to investigate how the mentoring of females with an ethic of care in the field of education could support their recruitment and retention into educational administrative leadership. The other voices, although key players in my dissertation, might have distracted me, or deterred me, or disassembled my narratives. I feared that in reaching out to other participants, I would lose the authenticity of my narratives and that "some aspects of the inquiry [would] no longer be able to be negotiated" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 170). In the end, this was my narrative to be told—in my different voice.

As well, I have altered the names of my subjects or I do not use names for my subjects. As my research deals with real stories and real players, I am safeguarding my human subjects to ensure they are not compromised or that my own integrity as a researcher is not jeopardized as well. This decade-long journey has been a labour of love, and I do not want to jeopardize my findings or my memories; my memories are my stories that clearly reflect who I have become.

I am fully aware of the fact that "relationships may be terminated" and that "ownership concerns blur": "Do [I] own the story because [I] tell it?" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 176). I do own the version of the story I am telling. But what about my memories? Clandinin and Connelly point out that "it makes a difference if the memory is an adult account" (p. 183) rather than a child's account, especially if the memory is recalled in childhood versus adulthood. Temporally, the memory is in question: "the conditions under which the memory is recalled make a difference as well—in a conversation … and so on" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 183). There is a temporal continuity to my memories occurring in adulthood and remembered in adulthood, which explains the clarity of the emotions I recall experiencing, especially in relation to the negative memory where my supervisor declined to support me and ultimately, my professional goals. My memories have "temporal dimension and address temporal matters; they focus on the personal and the social [second dimension] in a balance appropriate to the inquiry; and they occur in specific places [third dimension]" (Clandinin, 2013, p. 58; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 50). My lived experiences of the past are now recollections rather than exact duplications of my past; according to Clandinin (2013), this bears importance as to how I, the narrative inquirer. have chosen to recount them.

6.4. Methodological significances: the findings of my research

In Chapter 4 (Methodology chapter), I discussed the importance of using autoethnography as inquiry to seek answers to my investigation on how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative roles in education through an ethic of care. I posed questions that, in exploring my life experiences or lived experiences, I wove into my personal stories. Further, by featuring autoethnography in the studying of my personal stories, I was able to delve into the cultural perspectives that have shaped my life. I am finally in a position to consider the influence that culture—in the form of social, institutional, economic and political situatedness—has had in my investigation. My goal has been not only to employ a theory of mentoring females with an ethic of care, but also to put theory into practice within the field of educational leadership.

Also in Chapter 4, I wrote about my desire to test the ethic of care theory: whether it builds on the capacity that humans have to not only create mentoring relationships but also to help ensure they are lasting and supportive (Thompson, 2008). I completed extensive literature reviews of the ethic of care theory and mentoring and used this as the foundation to look at my own lived experiences. I can attest to the fact that by working through the two concepts in a reflective fashion, I have reconstructed for myself, on the most fundamental level, what both the ethic of care theory and mentoring theory instill in humans at their core. Humans have a universal need for care that is reciprocal and interdependent, rooted in relation that is best served dialogically. In grappling with my literature reviews and my narratives, I came to the conclusion that the "relation is ontologically basic, and the caring relation is ethically (morally) basic" (Noddings, 2012c, p. 771). In addition, I experienced the impact of Buber's (1958) wisdom that "relation is mutual," (p. 8) and so "I and Thou take their stand not merely in relation, but also in the solid give-and-take of talk" (Buber, p. 103). I need not look any further than my mentor at the post-secondary level from whom I have gained so much because we engaged in mutual relations that led to a trusting, open, genuine friendship.

Having the fundamental capacity to engage in mutual relation and attend to dialogue makes sense, especially when the relation means taking shape again and again as the meetings progress. It is in this way that the cared-for builds capacity,

becomes her best self, and actualizes potentialities that are so integral for female educational leaders seeking ascension. In the most receptive relations, inclusion is achieved because the one-caring has committed to the teacher and confirmed her in friendship. In the case of the receptive relation that Buber (1958) describes where the one-caring experiences the "other's side in a relationship … at the core of human interactions" known as inclusion or *Umfassung*, inclusion means meeting in friendship (Kramer & Gawlick, 2003, p. 187). When inclusion or confirmation is experienced, I believe that the next step, ascension, becomes possible. Ascension equates to finding happiness and satisfaction: as my narratives indicated, I had opportunities to extend myself laterally and vertically, which helped me gain confidence in my identity as an educational leader and as a person. When supported by a mentor with an ethic of caring, this kind of success builds the inherent desire for career advancement, which in turn supports my goals of recruitment and retention of female educational leaders into administrative roles in education.

I now address the three key questions directly related to my dissertation that I brought up in Chapter 4. What ought mentoring be? What ought an ethic of care be? Why should women (specifically female educators and educational leaders) be mentored with an ethic of care? In considering these questions again as my research concludes, I first recall when Noddings (1984) started writing about the ethic of care. She addressed the fact that natural caring begins in the home between mother and child, and parent and child. From there, she has been purposeful in the maintenance of her ethic of care theory in the home and at school. So, too, my narratives began with my lived experiences: first in youth, then as an adult, a professional working in the field of education. Mostly, I have shared through my narratives the difficulties I had in moving towards educational administrative leadership. This knowledge, in conjunction with my literature review on mentoring and on the ethic of care theory, has further outlined the importance of mentoring using Noddings' ethic of care to help women feel more supported and confident about themselves in seeking ascension. I am also aware that in my literature review, I mentioned a discrepancy concerning the number and the route taken by women in education versus the presence of women in administrative leadership roles in education in an historically patriarchal system (Gilligan, 2011; see also Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Morrison, 2012). Thus, I have framed this dissertation's quest in an

effort to investigate how mentorship practices with an ethic of care can, in a more democratic way, support women in leadership in education.

The focal point of my investigation has been influenced by Noddings (1984), who was greatly influenced by Buber (1958) on nurturing the caring relation so that it flourishes reciprocally. With these influences in mind, I argue that mentoring ought to be about forming naturally caring relations between the mentor and the mentee so that the mentee has the support and guidance to develop a professional identity that is visionary. The ethic of care ought to be about building natural relations between the one-caring and the cared-for so that the cared-for can actualize her potentialities (Buber, 1958). Knowing that "in care ethics, relation is ontologically basic, and the caring relation is ethically (morally) basic" (Noddings, 2012c, p. 771), it makes sense to bring together mentoring and an ethic of care in the field of education to support the recruitment and retention of women into educational administrative leadership roles in schools. Both mentoring and the ethic of care together function, as I have intended, to build relations in our leaders in education that ultimately supports caring of self and other at the school level. Further, the ethic of care serves to bring out the "full range of human talents and interests" of female educational leaders in an act of confirmation, the fourth component of Noddings' (2015) ethic of care theory (p. 232). I believe this actualization of potentialities in our educational leaders, for women particularly, will ensure that "in everything we do as teachers, we keep in mind the unifying purpose of producing better adults," adult leaders who are their best selves (Noddings, 2015, p. 235). This realization of one's best self is the true purpose in mentoring women with an ethic of care. The actualization of potentialities opens opportunities for female educational leaders to ascend vertically to educational administrative leadership opportunities, or move laterally to other opportunities. Knowing there is value in mentoring female educational leaders with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership roles, I have considered ways to look at achieving this in the school system as a means of impacting social change and creating a positive shift towards transformative leadership.

The bigger question now is: How might women be mentored with an ethic of care? In answering this question, I refer to the analyses of my autoethnography. Socially, economically, institutionally, and even politically, my narratives have situated me in a position to view how this kind of culture such as a patriarchal culture has impacted who I have become. My analysis has also shed light on the quest that I have

embarked on in completing this dissertation. I understand how my upbringing has been at the center of my growth; I have learned more about who I am and how my achievements are related to my upbringing. I see how my needs are related to what I hold dear and to what I have earned in my professional life. In my narratives, I spoke of how my mentor at the post-secondary level instilled in me a stronger sense of personal identity and professional identity, but more importantly helped create my newfound identity, encompassing both my personal and professional identities as one and the same. Recall that in the last chapter, I articulated how this impacted me. My revelations were freeing and foundational to the work that I have outlined in this dissertation, to support female educational leaders towards their ascension to educational administrative leadership by bringing out their best potentialities. I understand and, more importantly, have experienced that "all real living is meeting" (Buber, 1958, p. 11). Specifically, I mean that ongoing relations in which the cared-for is *mentored* by the one-caring are essential for an ethic of caring to flourish. This is how Noddings' (2012b; 1984) four components of her ethic of care theory can not only start in relation, but also continue in relation through the "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" of her ethic of care (p. 237).

This dissertation has been about wanting to learn from my own lived experiences to help ensure women are mentored with an ethic of care to become their best selves through relation, which is dialogic. I fully realize the ultimate need for dialogue within relations. Thus, I am steadfast in my resolve that mentors should want to possess a moral obligation to "find a mode of response that will keep the door of communication open. Instead of meeting the expressed need, the carer's objective is to maintain the caring relation" (Noddings, 2012c, p. 772). This moral obligation will come from meeting the other in caring because "from this requirement there is no escape for one who would be moral" (Noddings, 1984, p. 201). This is the process by which women should be mentored: embodying an ethic of care in a mutual relation of reciprocity. This process also embodies the human caring ethic that Gilligan (2011) speaks about because it falls within a democratic framework that values reason and emotion, mind and body, self and relationships, men and women: not just "homogeniz[ing] differences in the name of equality" but rather bringing out the different voices which are so "integral to the vitality of a democratic society" (p. 22).

6.5. Empowering promise

"Promise implies hope, possibility, and future action" (Shields, 2016, p. 146). Carolyn Shields' book *Transformative Leadership* tells a compelling story of a group of friends playing a game of Monopoly. The friends have been playing for some time, have purchased all the properties available, and have built houses and hotels on their properties. In come two more friends who want to play; they urge the first group to start over so they can participate fully too. Instead, the game continues, and the two newcomers immediately find themselves in over their heads paying rent, having missed the opportunity to become property owners. Their second call to start the game over is again turned down. As much as this is just a game, this scenario reflects the challenges of real life. This kind of position is what Shields calls the deficit model, a difficult place from which to rise. In maintaining the status quo, the newcomers cannot gain traction since the landowners have created a situation that operates from a place of injustice, inequity, and poverty.

There are parallels between this game and my own game, or story of my life. I tried to join the Monopoly game, but I was not given a place in the queue since I was not already friends with those playing the game. Only when the deficit is considered and understood can the inequities and the injustices be addressed. In maintaining the status quo, female educational leaders are operating from a place of inequity and injustice. What I am trying to change in the field of education with respect to the recruitment and retention of female educational leaders is this deficit model, which lacks a caring ethic. The woman's different voice is also a deficit "within a patriarchal culture" that lacks a democratic vision and "maintain[s] a patriarchal order" (Gilligan, 2011, p. 22). Operating from a democratic position of humanity requires a restart of the game of life because "care and caring are not women's issues, they are human concerns" (Gilligan, 2011, p. 23).

Educational (administrative) leaders need to change the lens through which recruitment and retention decisions are seen. When female educational leaders can see themselves as being successful educational administrative leaders in schools without fear, insecurities, or doubt that they belong, then real caring and learning can take place. This constitutes the kind of transformative leadership with which difficult decisions need to be made and requires the moral courage for educational administrative leaders to

step up. I was trying to shape myself to fit into the game of Monopoly, but then I came into the hands of informal mentors with whom I became colleagues with genuine friendships. They helped me become stronger and more confident as a person, and thus helped me learn to find a space in the queue so I could play the game. But what is needed is for the game to be played differently, to actualize all women's potentialities through an ethic of care so that we have the opportunity to start a new game that is just, equitable, and satisfying. Only then can we focus again on hope, possibility, and future action (Shields, 2016).

6.6. Considerations for Noddings' ethic of care and mine

My narratives have further helped me understand how my place as a woman and others like me in higher education is important and can be enhanced through mentoring practices. "What right do we have to educate, to disturb another's universe, much less to "promote their development" (Daloz, 2012, p. xxv)? I have been investigating not only Noddings' ethic of care but also mentorship for female educational leaders to "promote their development" as quoted by Daloz (2012), who questioned the purpose of mentoring and has been touting its saliency for several decades (p. xxv). Hence, I am ready to "Be Big!" as someone once said to me at the post-secondary level. My ideal in thinking big is not unlike Noddings' (2013b) expectations set out in her book, *Education and Democracy in the 21st Century*. I echo Noddings' (2013b) sentiments that "people seek success and satisfaction" as well as happiness and that we can achieve this by educating the whole person (p. 116). I originally researched Noddings' ethic of care because I saw myself as someone who values care. Raised as my Mom's cared-for, I learned to be caring: someone who is respectful, thoughtful, helpful, and kind. However, somewhere along the way I did not receive the kind of caring I would have appreciated, and that experience has led me on this decade-long journey.

I believe that based on a reflective analysis of autoethnographic narrative inquiry into my life, this work is not only necessary but is also important. I want us as educational (administrative) leaders to promote a moral education that fulfills Noddings' ethic of care theory; this pathway leads to an entire culture that values natural caring, models natural caring, encourages dialogue, informs the practicing of natural caring, and always confirms the best version of ourselves as females. It is no surprise that Noddings (2013b) has earned recognition for her decades of work on her ethic of care theory and

its place in schools and in the home. But if this were the norm, Daloz's question about the necessity of promoting the development of educational leaders would be moot. Culturally, if we as a society value natural caring, ethical caring, and Noddings' four components of a sound moral education, we will engage in reciprocal encounters and seek our best potentialities with the support of the many others we meet in mutuality throughout our lives.

Being critical of our past and imaginative with our future is how Noddings (2013b) sees the way forward for educators. Her ethic of care theory, influenced by Buber, has been powerful for my own growth. Thus, writing this dissertation has allowed me to better understand the integral place that relations have had in my ascent as a professional towards educational administrative leadership and more importantly, towards a culture of humanity. Lois Zachary's forward in Daloz's (2012) book, *Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners,* emphasizes how Daloz had come to the realization that "most adult educators were practice-rich and theory-poor" (p. vi). But Zachary sees Noddings as an exception. Noddings' scholarly work has spanned more than thirty-five years of imploring school leaders like her to engage with her ethic of care theory. She has had a unique vantage point as wife, mother of a diverse family, teacher, administrator, speaker, professor, influencer and mentor in promoting her ethic of care theory. Hence, the way forward that I envision is to start bringing to light the humanity in the theory of Noddings' ethic of care and mentoring in a way that educators, parents, and adults can understand. Only then will I be able to make an impact on female leaders and their futures in the field of education.

My work serves to focus on actuating Noddings' (2013b) ideals, specifically for female educational administrative leader hopefuls. Following Noddings' four components of a moral education, I include a few assertions of my own based on findings from my narratives. My ideal, like Noddings, begins with educating the whole person: whether teachers, parents, adults, or children. My objective is the same as Noddings' (2013b):

> We treat one another with care because we want to do so—because we
> value a climate of care and trust within which to do our work. Life in happy
> families and friendly communities is characterized by natural caring, and it
> is the condition we cherish. (p. 119)

Ideally, the guardians of all children (the recipients of care) would not only know how to allow natural caring to prosper but would also be morally obligated to accommodate such caring.

If relations are the cornerstone of Noddings' (2013b) ethic of care theory in support of natural caring, then imagine if the whole of society can respect ourselves and each other in a way that encourages relations that prompt us to be at our caring best. As adults, we are morally obligated as carers to model simple and regular acts of care on a daily basis. This is Noddings' first component of her ethic of care theory. The modeling of this caring mode ought to be genuine, "a reflection of our moral selves" (p. 119). As for superiors and teachers, we must go one step further to ensure that our mentees and students are responding with care. The caring messages we impart through our body language, our choice of words, and our effort in meeting the other are all factors in seeing natural caring emulated by others. Solid theory makes sense of the practice of caring, and practice brings awareness to why caring makes good sense. Thus, Noddings' theory of the ethic of care forefronts the fundamental need for caring relations in life—at home and at school.

Noddings' second component of her ethic of care theory asserts that we must meet the other in dialogue that is open and genuine. While she does not articulate that dialogue is the mainstay for taking the important steps towards confirmation, this became clearer for me as I analyzed my narratives. From this process, I understood that I did not always achieve confirmation because the dialogue was either unnatural, inconsistent, or incomplete. What is needed is honest, authentic, and consistent dialogue, important for inspiring imagination about the future and being creative about the path forward (Shields, 2016). My ideal would see a mentor paired with a cared-for to ensure that dialogue was the mainstay of the relation in order to give confirmation a chance. When dialogue between the one-caring and the cared-for begins, there is no direction given. Instead, the direction can be shaped only by the dialogue that ensues between the two people because they are potentially fully present. "The partner in dialogue is more important than the topic" (Noddings, 1984, p. 120), and this partnership is nurtured through face-to-face interactions. Dialogue that is genuine stimulates the intellect, critical thinking, and creative thinking. It is also reciprocal, needs nurturing, time to develop, and practice. When dialogue leads to opportunities for the other to practice caring, this is a chance for nurturing to take shape. Maintaining an openness while

stimulating intellectual and social competencies through dialogue leads the cared-for to practice caring and actualize potentialities. Enhanced in the relation, confirmation through dialogue stimulates the best to arise in the cared-for. The goal is not perfection, fear, rejection, or abandonment, but rather a stronger and more reciprocal caring relation of trust, and friendship such that the cared-for becomes better than who they are currently (Noddings, 2013b).

6.7. Instilling a caring mentoring relation for female educational leaders by challenging the status quo

Expressing vulnerability in a society that has valued patriarchy, power, and status has been a reality for me. By taking what I have learned and directing it towards supporting the mentoring of females with an ethic of care, I seek to normalize their desire for professional assistance as well as their career aspirations. Promoting situations that foster Noddings' four components of her ethic of care is key to ensuring that dialogic partnerships between the one-caring and the cared-for work towards confirmation. Bringing out our best selves is the beginning of supporting the recruitment and retention of female educational leaders towards administrative roles in education. Rather than focus on what is not going right, we are challenged with focusing on what can go well. However, the reality is different:

> characterized by principals' use of clinical supervision, a deficit model, to identify teacher weakness and prescribe expected improvement. Teachers who performed well received evaluations that would enhance career mobility through promotion; those who did not were documented and recommended for dismissal. (Brien & Williams, 2009, p. 10)

This describes an evaluative process used by a human resources department, putting undue pressure on both parties to conform. Instead, a process of evaluating teachers should be about "shaping the conditions for informal mentoring to occur in organizations and for structuring formal programs effectively" in support of female educational leaders (Chandler, 2011, p. 25). Shaping the future of our educators and educational leaders should be a regular part of the professional development process that begins with dialogue between educational administrative leaders and educators and educational leaders. Instead, part of the evaluative process in my school district consists of supervisors completing teaching evaluations, thus creating a power imbalance. We could redress this imbalance if professional development were to shift towards natural

caring and Noddings' ethic of care. If a human resources organization were to operate more consistently from a caring leadership perspective rather than from a deficit model, natural caring could flourish. Finding ways for the cared-for or the one evaluated to lead and to actualize potentialities should be the normative goal. Prompting educators to aspire to educational leadership by supporting their lateral ascension based on their personal goals is the starting point for actualizing greater potentialities. This kind of lateral ascension should be modeled by educational administrative leaders who are also supported to ascend laterally, based on their professional goals.

In order for educational administrative leaders to model lateral and vertical ascension, they must have opportunities to do so. In my narratives, I spoke of the rich opportunities I had to ascend laterally, which was integral to my ascension to educational administrative leader. However, I spoke of my feelings of withdrawal when I returned to the K-12 system from the post-secondary level because the opportunities to ascend are more limited. There were very few opportunities to lead aside from teaching, partly because fewer options seem to be available beyond moving from one teaching assignment to another, and from school to school at the various levels. While there are many teaching assignments, there are relatively few ascension opportunities. I fully acknowledge that building relations takes time, so being stationed in a school is important to foster relations, including mentoring relations. Building educational leaders also requires a change in the status quo that supports a stronger future succession plan for the organization. I do envision a way to start the conversation about making a change to the current system to alleviate some of the pressures experienced by educational administrative leaders: one of them being that the main ascension opportunity for female educational leaders in my district is to become an educational administrative leader. But to ascend both laterally and vertically, especially beginning at the educational leader level, more needs to be considered.

The numbers alone tell the story. Simply put, there are many more teaching jobs than educational administrative leadership jobs. For those educational leaders who were to enter into educational administrative leadership in their thirties, this could potentially mean that for another thirty years of their careers, they could remain in this role if they chose to. (Likewise, for those educational leaders who were to enter into educational administrative leadership in their forties, this could potentially mean that for another twenty years of their careers, they could remain in this role if they chose to.) Thus, to

alleviate this kind of pressure to try and ascend, I reflect on my positive experiences with mentors at the post-secondary level and provide promising alternatives. I feel we need to be creative and find other ways for educational leaders to ascend, to be challenged, and to experience the kind of confirmation that has informed my identity and practice. As illustrated by my reflections in working with my minor department head, making what feels like the right decisions may not always be the popular decisions or the accepted choices even though the intentions are genuine.

Any kind of change needs to be planned out carefully in consultation with the partner groups because change, in general, is difficult. Change is often hard because of the fear of the unknown or in many cases, because some will feel the system is not broken and does not require fixing. With this in mind, my recommendations consider the analyses of my narratives and the importance of relations to bring about change, especially with respect to dialogue as simultaneous with confirmation. Dialogue is the way forward. Consultations with partner groups and dialogue with the others affected is a solid way forward towards desired outcomes for succession planning in support of female educational leaders being mentored with an ethic of care into administrative roles in education. Sharing ideas, leaning in, listening, and responding to others' experiences around their desired professional goals can lead the way for change. Starting small is helpful. Pilot groups are less fearsome as these groups are less finite and indicate that there is room for growth and learning. Such groups are ways of modeling Noddings' ethic of care and giving permission for the dialogue to take place. By practicing through pilot programs and by actively reflecting on the process, the potential for confirmation is heightened.

A way to infuse Noddings' ethic of caring into the school system is to emulate the experience when I had a strong mentor supporting me at the post-secondary level. I envision the same kind of structure at the K-12 level. This means introducing a way to balance the benefits between having time to build relations between mentors and mentees and increasing the availability of opportunities possible for educational leaders. More attention must also be focused on increasing opportunities for educational leaders to learn and grow. Currently, for the vast majority of educational administrative leaders, accepting leadership roles means this is what they will do until retirement. Yet for the majority of the teachers in the system, little does this current structure provide

opportunities to model critical thinking, creative thinking, or innovation towards a brighter future. Nor does it model an ethic of care from a transformative leadership perspective.

To begin, if entry level educational administrative leadership roles were a shorter fixed term, such as three years with an opportunity for renewal, more women would likely be interested in and able to commit to trying out the role. The benefits of being in the role would certainly prompt dialogue between the one-caring educational administrative leader and the newly appointed cared-for educational administrative leader. This shorter turnover for the entry level role would support best practice as the one-caring could work to find ways to confirm the cared-for in a new environment. This new environment could also encourage a growth mindset because the leadership role would be a new one. At the end of the term, educational administrative leaders would have an opportunity to transition in a variety of different directions, including a return to teaching, a contract renewal, or an ascension through the ranks of management leadership. This more flexible movement would allow for a greater influx of new energy and fresh ideas at each level of the education system. As well, educational leaders would possess an increased understanding of and a deeper empathy for the successes and challenges that exist in the education system and its operations at each level in support of doing what is best for students overall. Taking on the challenge of leadership would likely become less daunting if the commitment is flexible with more potential for change, depending on the individual's goals and capacity. Moving in and out of these various roles engages leaders at various stages to be both the one-caring and the cared-for.

Having greater opportunities to feel success, to experience confirmation, and to engage in reaching their best selves will help build a culture of caring that develops passionate educators who are happy, satisfied, and capable of leading in the classroom and beyond. The breadth of experience these educational leaders have will lead our students in inspiring and ideal ways. I have set the stage for Noddings' ethic of care to transpire as "practice in caring is a form of apprenticeship" (Noddings, 1984, p. 122) that can actually be applied at various levels: between educational leader and entry level educational administrative leader, or between entry level educational administrative leader and principal educational administrative leader. The constant is that "dialogue and practice are essential in nurturing the ethical ideal" especially as the one-caring mentor confirms the cared-for and friendships form (Noddings, 1984, p. 123). This model

provides the framework for Noddings' ethic of care to succeed with a focus on dialogue towards confirmation of female educational leaders' best selves.

As well, this model has potential benefits for private and public spheres. In the private sphere, more opportunities are available on a regular basis for educational leaders to ascend, bringing greater satisfaction and quality of education to our youth. For the public sphere, this model increases the breadth of experience our educators have in teaching our youth, leading to a culture of care as well as attracting quality educators into a system that will be sustainable moving forward. The creation of opportunities naturally allows caring to flourish because the investment is in building relations of care in a forward-thinking, growth-minded environment. Stagnation is not a word that should be associated with education, thus, a structure modeling Noddings' ethic of care can help ensure both vertical and horizontal ascension opportunities with an expectation that the superiors are the ones-caring. This kind of dynamic and fluid framework gives rise to mutual relations rich with dialogue.

6.8. Hearing women's voices

Before I began my research, I already knew my voice was different from the voices of my co-workers. Carol Gilligan first iterated in 1982 what has become even more apparent to me in sharing my narratives and that I have voiced throughout this dissertation: "My interest lies in the interaction of experience and thought, in different voices and the dialogues to which they give rise, in the way we listen to ourselves and to others, in the stories we tell about our lives" (p. 2). Gilligan (2011) listened to many stories told by others and:

> realized that [she] had aligned [herself] with a cultural standpoint from which women's questions, however great, were for the most part beside the point. Writing *In a Different Voice*, [she] broke this alignment, divorcing [herself] from ways of speaking that portrayed men as humans and women as different. (p. 16)

Gilligan realized that women's moral compasses are aligned differently from men's. She theorized that women care about others differently in the way we listen and respond. She garnered attention by describing that "this ethic of feminine goodness was holding in place so-called normal, everyday conversations in which men spoke as if the omission of women was irrelevant or inconsequential and women overlooked or excused

the omission of themselves" (p. 17). I am that woman Gilligan describes, and this dissertation is my action: to bring awareness of women's ability to care as the way forward.

From my perspective, there remains still so much work to be done mentoring women with an ethic of care into educational administrative leadership roles and above. Without a doubt, we need more equity for women who want to lead. Kerry Robinson, Charol Shakeshaft, Margaret Grogan, and Whitney Newcomb (2017) note that if 75% of women are teachers, then the rate of female educational administrative leaders who become superintendents should be higher than it is. The higher the rank, the lower the rate of females entering the role. Note that while women are "receiving mentoring much more than in the past," (p. 1) more needs to be done specifically to inspire women to aspire to higher education roles. The work of Robinson et al. (2017) also:

> confirms that there are a variety of paths to the position providing opportunities for women who have not necessarily had the typical teacher/principal/central office administrator trajectory. … Men are four times more likely than women to serve in the most powerful position in education and both women and men of color are still grossly underrepresented. (p. 1)

According to Robinson et al., women who are successful in their ascension to educational administrative leadership and move ahead to superintendent were teachers for eleven years: more than twice as long as males, who teach for five years before becoming elementary school principals, then move into a central board office position and then into the role of superintendent. Males are teachers, then secondary school principals before they enter a superintendent role: taking a leaner, shorter path to the top ranks in three steps instead of four (Robinson et al., 2017). At the same time, there could potentially be different reasons behind males' and females' different time frames towards ascension. I would be interested in delving deeper into the research about women entering into higher educational administrative roles such as superintendent, professor, or dean of education.

I am also curious about the ascension to superintendent and the ascension to the post-secondary level. While the transition to the post-secondary level was a positive one for me, my return to the K-12 level was met with more angst and trepidation. Were there a stronger partnership between institutions, this transition could be a strength rather than

a barrier as it was for me. Suppose Noddings' ethic of care were infused into the system such that the post-secondary and K-12 system were players in their own partnered relation, owning both roles of one-caring and cared-for between the highest-ranking leaders of both institutions. This process could open up dialogue between the two institutions, leading to an actualization of potentialities at both levels. In that way, where caring truly flourishes, the two players could be truly creative in thinking critically about succession planning in support of students.

The intent of this dissertation has been to investigate how mentorship practices can play a role in the recruitment and retention of women into administrative leadership roles in education with an ethic of care. I see a way forward towards this goal by affirming that mentorship and Noddings' ethic of care theory go hand in hand—that they have relations in common. The research I have presented illustrates that supporting women in educational leadership fields is worthwhile, as is supporting women through mentorship (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011; Chandler, 2011).

6.9. Using Noddings' ethic of care theory

I have been advocating throughout this dissertation for the mentorship of females into educational administrative leadership with an ethic of care. In analyzing my narratives, I am better able to comprehend the impact my mentors had on influencing my path to educational administrative leadership. I continue to move forward, mindful that mentorship's "influence on leaders are [*sic*] both personal and professional in nature" (Crippen & Wallin, 2008, p. 561) because the important interactions between the mentor and mentee focus on building sound relationships and building capacity. Knowing that "the most valuable relationships almost always occur when an intrinsic connection is made on a personal, rather than on a formally imposed level" is not surprising (p. 563).

Carolyn Crippen and Dawn Wallin's argument about the value of deep relational connections is of critical importance to my research and the future of educational leadership because it sheds light on the truth about mentoring. Mentoring is most beneficial when the mentor and mentee form a natural relation, when the relation is not forced and the outcomes are expected. Noddings' (2012b) ethic of care theory does support the centrality of relations wherein a mentoring relation would embody this notion of relational care. The "centrality of moral education" is found in the relational ethic of

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care comprised of the four components of "modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation" (p. 237). If we as a society can "[accept] the reality of moral interdependence," then natural caring reigns (p. 245). If we can raise the bar on educational leadership capacity of our educational leaders and confirmation of who will be our best and brightest, female educational leadership has the potential to flourish. To achieve this goal, "moral life guided by an ethic of care must attend to the establishment, maintenance, and enhancement of caring relations" (p. 240) built on trust and continuity. I personally understand the power in this statement now, having been the recipient of such deep, inspiring, moral, natural caring.

Buber (1958) also attested to the importance that "All real living is meeting" (p. 11). He believed that "I become through my relation to the *Thou*; as I become I, I say *Thou*" (p. 11). It is here that we become our best because the relation is mutually reciprocal. As Noddings (1984) explains, "when I care, when I receive the other … there is more than feeling; there is also a motivational shift" (p. 33). Exposed is a vulnerability to care by both parties when "the one-caring is engrossed in the other" (Noddings, 1984, p. 33). "But this engrossment is not completely characterized as *emotional* feeling [as t]here is a characteristic and appropriate mode of consciousness in caring" (p. 33). This consciousness on the part of the one-caring as mentor serves to support, challenge, and provide the cared-for with guidance towards a vision.

Noddings (2012b) maintains that we've all been cared-for and understand the value of being cared-for as it is "the root of our responsibility to one another" (p. 232). However, if the desire to care were absent, this is not natural caring:

> Ethical caring does have to be summoned. … The main point to consider is whether an ethic of care can lead us to a less violent, more caring way of life. … We do not have to construct elaborate logical rationales to explain why human beings ought to treat one another as positively as our situation permits. (Noddings, 2012b, p. 232)

I see natural caring as the ideal in mentoring of female educational leaders with an ethic of care. According to this ideal, we live in a society that values an ethic of care because our culture permits only the greatest good there is. There is no greater good than peace in a society where there is a mutual relation between the one-caring and the cared-for. This mutuality will allow the one being cared-for to have the opportunity to always be at her best and to be able to strive for her best.

6.10. Future research

6.10.1. Transformative leadership

Carolyn Shields (2016) is resolute that transformative leadership involves actual social change. How do I relate this notion to my dissertation now that I am nearing the conclusion of this work? I have advocated for female educational leaders to be mentored into educational administrative leadership with an ethic of care. I have uncovered my own truths in my narrative inquiries about the importance that mentorship has played in my own professional and personal lives. How do I promote this knowledge and the confirmation of female educational leaders towards ascension in practice? I stand by Jane Martin's (2011) insistence that "large scale changes can have small beginnings" and that now is the right time to encounter this "small beginning" (p. 16).

These small beginnings start with articulating the value of "developing people" (Shields, 2016, p. 17). The critical work comes in bringing Noddings' (1984, 2012b, 2013) ethic of care theory forward into praxis. Modeling, dialogue, and practice will enable the mentor's role as the one-caring to be "providing individualized support/consideration," "intellectual stimulation," and "an appropriate model" (Shields, 2016, p. 17) to the cared-for. My small beginning starts with me modeling Noddings' ethic of care theory with my family, students, staff, and the parents with whom I relate. I am present when I am speaking with them in all ways, such as in my body language, tone of voice, and genuineness. I share my narratives and engage in relation with others. I make a concerted effort to come together with the other(s) face-to-face, in dialogue about everyday things, about students, as well as their larger visions. I seek opportunities for the other(s) to shine in ways that are in line with their professional goals as they and I see them. After all, the cared-fors do not know their actual potentialities until they experience engrossment and motivational displacement towards inclusion. I give the other(s) space to practice being their best selves, and I seek confirmation of the other(s); I embody the others' sides while reveling in my own presence, which I own as the one-caring in mutual reciprocity. In addition, I will practice my skills of dialogue with my superior(s). I will make it a priority to meet my superiors as the cared-for, one-to-one, face-to-face and will honour my commitment to myself to engage with them on a regular basis in authentic ways that support my happiness, satisfaction, engagement with my work, and especially, my relation with my superiors. From here, I hope to have gained

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friendships and the confidence to expand my horizons and seek change beyond my school or beyond my current position. My next ascension awaits, whether lateral or vertical.

Shields (2016) believes that "developing people" (p. 17) and starting small will bring forth an opportunity to "critique and challenge existing beliefs, values, assumptions, structures, and practices" (p. 27). This focus on leadership in education, she hopes, will provide a "new, more equitable, more inclusive, and more socially transformative theory of leadership" that considers interconnectedness, interdependence, global awareness, equity, justice, public and private good, the redistribution of inequitable power, and the one tenet likely embedded within each of the preceding: moral courage (p. 40).

6.11. Reflections

6.11.1. Happiness and Satisfaction

Thanks to my mentors, I have much more wherewithal now to fully grasp the depth at which I experienced the highest degree of Noddings' ethic of care: confirmation. The experiences I have had made me stronger, more skilled, and more confident: hence, I was able to reach out and ascend to an educational administrative leadership position. Though I have felt vulnerable in sharing my personal stories, especially the ones that hurt because it is not in my nature to share in this way, I know I chose the right topic and methodology. I am now stronger for having taken this course in search of answers to support the different voices of females like me. The journey has been transformational.

I have a greater understanding of my investigation and know that this was the right path for me. I am encouraged by my research and am grateful to Noddings for her work on the ethic of care theory: especially her way of linking home life and school life, as well as personal life and professional life, using the concept of care. Her work reminds me why I set myself on this path. I am inspired to find ways to recruit the best educational leaders who are female and to retain the best educational leaders who are female. I believe that Noddings' objective of a moral education to ensure that natural caring prospers also ensures we become our best and that we strive to continue to

achieve our best. Furthermore, we educators must take this path together as both the one-caring and the cared-for. While we may not be in the best position to be the one-caring, especially when we are just entering the profession, we are primed to support the long-term vision for a healthy educational leadership community or family.

What I have a greater understanding for now, thanks to Buber's (1958) work on mutuality and reciprocity of relations and Noddings' (2013b) work on the ethic of care, is the importance of relationships. While cultivating relationships may not look the same in any two environments, supporting females with an ethic of care is essential, beginning with the modeling of natural caring.

It is important to me and, in fact, it has always been important to me to fully engage with my work. I see the connection even more clearly now between my master's research and my doctoral research. My initial graduate work studied job satisfaction of teachers. I believed that I would find discrepancies in satisfaction rates of teachers among the various levels of education (elementary, middle, and secondary), and was pleasantly surprised that this was not the case. Generally, I found that teachers experienced satisfaction in their work at all levels from K-12. This dissertation has taken that work and moved it forward in search of assisting educators, specifically females, to gain momentum in their work towards advancement to educational administrative leadership. This means we need a systemic change in how we view our work together in support of our colleagues not just at the post-secondary level, but also at the K-12 level. I am curious as to whether confirmation is common at the K-12 level for female educational leaders and if so, whether or how we need to ensure its prevalence.

6.12. Recommendations

Educational administrative leaders, like all high-ranking leaders, hold positions of power. They also have a duty to implement policy (Creswell, 2003). My recommendations for future research and directions are based on the knowledge I have uncovered from this dissertation and attempt to put into practice. Recall that my initial intent in conducting an autoethnography, including the attendant reflections on that narrative, was to support females who are intent on becoming educational administrative leaders and who are mentored with an ethic of care.

In considering my initial intent, I am also reminded of my desire to support the recruitment and retention of females into educational administrative leadership roles over the long term. Hence, I turned to Noddings' ethic of care theory, well suited to an environment that values the relational ethic and for supporting female educational administrative leaders being mentored into higher educational leadership roles, including the superintendency. Giving females a stronger voice throughout their educational career will help mitigate the decline of females in administrative roles as one's rank increases and perhaps align the ascension of females and males more equitably (Robinson et al., 2017).

More work also needs to be done to communicate the benefits, including increased opportunities, of having mentoring relations in the K-12 organization. I have outlined my thoughts on how mentoring female educational leaders with an ethic of care, together with opportunities to ascend laterally as well as vertically, builds a culture of innovative, happy, successful people. We can be cared-for by the one-caring in a reciprocal relation; we are also the one-caring for another cared-for (Noddings, 1984) as a means of giving back to the profession in an effort to build capacity of the best, for the best, over the long term.

As Chandler (2011) notes, "organizations are a lot flatter. Hence, a broader organizational focus on skill development and professional and personal development not necessarily linked to advancement are much more valuable" as a starting place for enhancing personal satisfaction, confidence, and feelings of competency in our roles (p. 31). A more relational mentoring culture within the K-12 system, as well as between the K-12 and post-secondary sectors of education, would possibly result in a greater aspiration to diversify laterally and vertically within the entire field of education. I believe this to be the case because, had I not sought a lateral challenge outside the K-12 system, I might have missed the influential mentoring I had at the post-secondary level. My experience represents a start towards ensuring equity for women regardless of gender, race, or ability—giving our society the opportunity to move beyond the traditional-centric model that has favoured men in the past (Morrison, 2012).

6.13. Concluding remarks and final thoughts

This experience has been a wonderful, slowly cultivated, lovingly sown passion—the fruits of my labour, a labour of love. I am indebted to my personal and professional family for the support I have received to achieve my highest goal yet. It has also been a gift to have a firmer grasp of the impact my upbringing and my family has had on the shaping of my professional life. I have been able to make connections between my narratives and my actual experiences as I consider how to move forward from here.

My vision of mentoring women into educational administrative leadership positions with an ethic of care provides hope for the recruitment and retention of women into key top administrative leadership roles in education. I know that, increasingly, there is a heightened awareness of the inadequacies towards ascension of women into leadership positions, including superintendent (Robinson et al., 2017). Ken Brien and Raymond Williams (2009) are on the right track when they say that "a focus on creating the future means constantly questioning well-established values and making way for new practices" (p. 19). This is the right time, they argue, to invest in educational leadership: "Changing purposes and contexts call for a new organizational paradigm, a redefinition of educational leadership, and a reconsideration of the education of teacher leaders" (p. 19). Thanks to my confirmation by my mentor, I am ready for the next stages of educational administrative leadership and the associated research that will allow me to be my best in pursuit of caring for others on their way to being their best. This is a worthy legacy—not only for me, but also for our collective body of administrative leaders in the field of education.

I have used my past to inform my present. Now, I present my own voice and my own beginnings with hope to be a change-agent with the moral courage to be a transformative leader who no longer needs to sit quietly as I have for the past ten years. It is my turn to take social action for other female educational leaders, especially those who do not yet realize their worth, to become educational administrative leaders in their own right. My journey has never been a lone one, and I am hopeful it will continue with others: *I and Thou*. I am hopeful my struggles can prompt a transformation of how we view recruitment and retention of female educational leaders. Mostly, I am hopeful my awareness will help transform not only female educational leadership, but also our school communities and way of being towards finding our best selves.

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