

UNDERSTANDING LATTER-DAY SAINT MISSIONARY RE-ACCULTURATION

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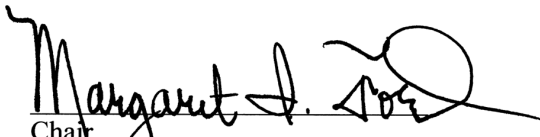
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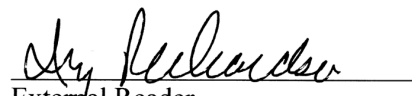
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Abstract

When a sojourner travels to a new place they often acculturate to their new surroundings and the host culture in which they are living. There is also a readjustment when that same sojourner returns home, changed by their recent experiences and acculturation as they seek a return to the familiar and their home culture. The term used to describe this adaptation to a new culture is acculturation. Acculturation often entails a loss of the familiar as well as a loss of personal history and a sense of belonging. Re-acculturation can be defined as the readjustment or transition to one's home culture after living abroad. Acculturation and re-acculturation reflect many of the same elements of adjustment and re-adjustment. Volunteer religious missionaries become sojourners as they experience living in new and diverse circumstances away from their home culture and again as they return home and experience re-adjustment. The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and their re-acculturation after completing a voluntary religious mission. The individual missionaries' lived experience of transition and re-acculturation were at the center of this research. The researcher used interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) as the qualitative approach for this study. Interpretive phenomenological analysis provided the framework through which the researcher obtained a detailed examination of the personal lived experiences of 10 returned Latter-day Saint missionaries. An analysis of findings indicated a lack of connection and need for connection, a progression of learning, growth and shift in identity, as well as an iterative process of perspective taking, meaning making, application and integration. In addition, a model that reflects the collective illustration of these finding was created and included to further illustrate the discussion.

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Chapter 1

Life is full of changes. In fact, it has been said that the only constant in life is change itself. Some changes we experience might seem small and inconsequential, while others might appear suddenly and shake us to our very core. Whatever form it takes, change is best described as a shift in the nature of our external situation (Bridges, 2009). Many consider change to have taken place when present conditions are altered in some way as to become different from what they once were. Bridges (2009) emphasized the importance of understanding transitions and the relationship transitions have to change:

It isn't the changes that do you in; it is the transitions. They aren't the same thing.

Change is situational: the move to a new site, the retirement of the founder, the reorganization of the roles on the team, the revisions to the pension plan. Transition on the other hand, is psychological; it is a three-phase process that people go through as they internalize and come to terms with the details of the new situation that the change brings about. (p. 3)

Volunteer religious missionaries become sojourners as they experience living in new and diverse circumstances away from their home culture. They are often required to make changes as they are called to serve away from home. These situational changes can become catalysts for personal, internal psychological transitions. Christianity is listed as one of the five main world religions ("World Religions," n.d.). It is estimated that over 33% of the world's population is Christian ("Christianity," 2015). Currently there are over 400,000 Christian missionaries serving worldwide ("Christianity," 2015; "Mission Stats," 2014). The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sometimes referred to as the LDS church or the Mormons, is a Christian church based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. In April 2016, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reported that the number of full-time missionaries serving from their church was 74,079 (Walch,

2016). This number accounts for close to 20% of Christian missionaries currently serving worldwide.

Latter-day Saint missionaries work with a companion of the same gender during their mission with the exception of couples who work with their spouses. Single men serve for 2 years and single women serve for 18 months. Couples serve between 12 and 36 months. Male missionaries are addressed as “Elder” followed by their surname and female missionaries are addressed by “Sister” followed by their surname. Single men are eligible for missionary service at age 18, and single women are eligible for missionary service at age 19. Most young adult LDS missionaries serve between the ages of 18 and 25, while senior couples with children, no longer living in the home, serve as senior missionaries from age 50 and beyond.

Missionary service provides many opportunities for change to occur in the lives of missionaries. As missionary service shapes their experience, missionaries undergo transition. One such transition occurs when missionaries return home after serving a mission (Rosenberger, 2016). While much has been written about the acculturation process that takes place when a sojourner adjusts to a new culture while living or travelling abroad, less research exists that focuses on the re-acculturation process of sojourners returning to their home culture (Andrews, 1999; Austin & Beyer, 1984; Leslie, 1999).

Acculturation is the result of groups and/or individuals from different cultures responding and adapting to changes and differences in their own cultural patterns after extended firsthand contact with a different culture (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Re-acculturation can be defined as the readjustment or transition to one’s home culture after living abroad (Martin, 1984). Missionaries recently returning from voluntary religious service often experience this transition of re-acculturation or re-entry upon returning home. Acculturation and re-acculturation share some of the same basic aspects including the maintenance of a sojourner’s original cultural

identity and the maintenance of the sojourner's relationships with both those from the home culture as well as the host culture (Berry, 2005; Szkudlarek, 2010).

A myriad of terms have been used to describe the phenomenon of re-acculturation, including re-entry, re-entry adjustment, cross cultural re-entry, cross cultural adaptation, repatriation, transition, cultural transition, sojourner adjustment, coming home, homecoming, reverse culture shock, return shock, and cross cultural re-entry (Adler, 1981; Altweck & Marshall, 2015; Bridges, 2009; Callahan, 2010; Gaw, 1995; Onwumechili, Nwosu, Jackson, & James-Hughes, 2003; Pitts, 2009; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010; Zhang, Zhao, & Xie, 2017). Each of the previous terms refers in some way to the process of adjustment that the sojourner undergoes during the readjustment to their home culture. Some of the terms listed above appear to describe a more extreme process of adjustment and transition.

A transition, or a return to familiar surroundings as a part of re-entry, is a process that may contain both positive and negative elements for the returnee (Adler, 1981; Sussman, 2002; Uehara, 1986). Re-entry adjustment is a real and sometimes debilitating process (Christofi & Thompson, 2007). The difficulties that the sojourner encounters during the re-entry transition often take a toll on the psychological well-being of the sojourner (Uehara, 1986). Martin and Harrell (1996) posited that an individual's adaptation to their home culture, or reverse culture shock, might be more difficult than the adaptation to a new culture because it is less expected. Sussman (2002) proposes in her review of the re-entry adjustment literature that an actual shift in the individual's cultural identity may take place as a result of the cross-cultural experience thus contributing to increased difficulty in the re-entry experience.

Missionaries have a history of being prepared for cross-cultural service. Missionary training centers or MTCs are centers devoted to preparing missionaries for their full-time service. Currently, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has 12 MTCs throughout the world.

These MTCs are located in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, England, Ghana, Guatemala, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, and the United States. There is less evidence of the preparation afforded this population concerning their subsequent re-entry. Missionary re-entry or re-acculturation is often twofold: one, involving a shift or return to the missionary's home culture after their recent adjustment to an away culture, which might have included economic disparities, changes in living conditions, and new cultural and social customs; and, two, involving a shift from spiritual growth while serving, to a return to home life and secular living (Andrews, 1999; Austin & Beyer, 1984; Hall, 2005; Hinckley & Hinckley, 2015; Leslie, 1999; Parker, 2006).

Statement of the Problem

Missionaries undergo many changes and transitions during their time of service. One of the most profound transitions missionaries undergo involves that of returning to their home culture. While missionaries can anticipate a release date, and know that they will be returning home, they are often unprepared for the readjustment this change brings (Olsen, 1991). Re-entry or coming home for a missionary often includes new roles, relationships, and in some cases a new identity. Routines and assumptions during this transition period are also in an altered state and can be accompanied by feelings of emptiness and confusion. Presently, missionaries receive training in acculturation to assist in their adjustment to the host culture in which they will be serving. Little if any research exists concerning the process of readjustment and re-acculturation for missionaries who undergo transition upon returning to their home culture (Huffman, 1986; Pirolo, 2000). Missionary re-acculturation, including under the surface issues that often accompany a missionary's return to their home culture, needs further study to gain insight into these often untalked about issues that can color a missionary's return to secular living (Rosenberger, 2016).

Conceptual Model/Theoretical Framework

In 1980, Bridges published *Transitions*. This was one of the first published works to explore the underlying and universal patterns of transition. His second book, *Managing Transitions*, was published in 1991 and is now in its third edition. It is an adaptation of Bridges' (2004) original work and transition model as presented below by Tremolada (2015) that provided the conceptual model and theoretical framework for this study.

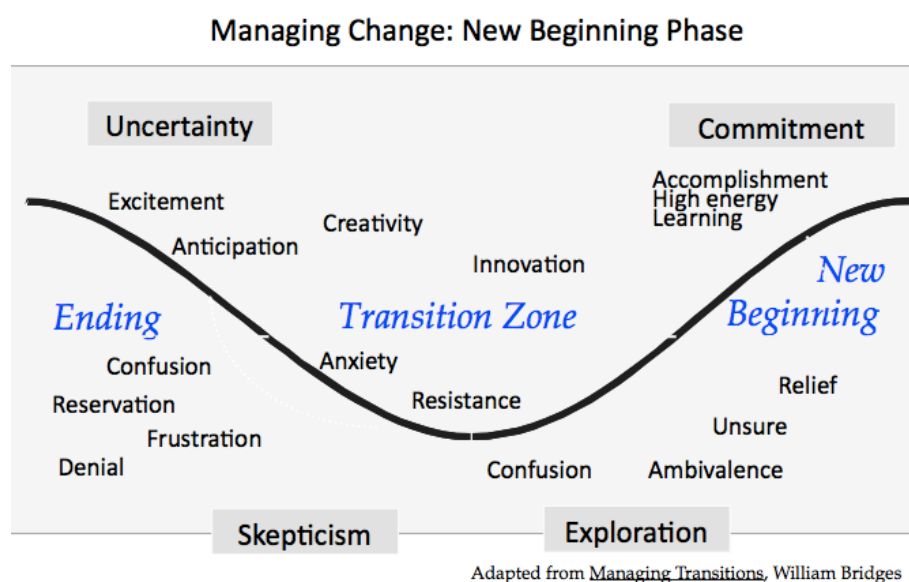


Figure 1. Model of managing transitions. Reprinted from *Bridge's Transition Model* by G. Tremolada, 2015, Retrieved from <https://frontlinemanagementexperts.wordpress.com/2015/07/03/bridges-transition-model/>. adapted from W. Bridges [2009]

Bridges' model adapted by Tremolada (2015) clearly depicts those aspects that precede and follow a period of transition. Uncertainty marks the ending of a present condition, which leads into the Transition Zone and includes aspects of confusion, reservation, frustration, and denial along with aspects of anticipation and excitement. Commitment signals the ending of the Transition Zone, which also marks the New Beginning phase or reaching the end of the transition and includes aspects of ambivalence, being unsure, and relief along with aspects of accomplishment, energy and high learning. Tremolada further delineates aspects of the

Transition Zone as including aspects of anxiety, resistance, and confusion along with creativity and innovation. For the purposes of this study the research focused primarily on the Transition Zone, which includes anxiety, resistance, confusion, creativity, and innovation.

Definition of Terms

Acculturation. Acculturation refers to the adjustment of an individual to a culture other than their home culture. According to Redfield et al. (1936), “Those phenomena, which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns” (p. 149).

Change. Change refers to a shift in the nature of our external situation, “takes place externally and will happen with or without our permission” (Canley, 2017, para. 1).

Christianity. Christianity is the religion which professes to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ: “The religion derived from Jesus Christ” (“Webster,” n.d., para. 1).

Culture. Culture refers to “the way of life, especially the general customs and beliefs, of a particular group of people at a particular time” (“Culture,” n.d., expression 1)

Full-time missionaries. Full-time missionaries are single young men and women in their late teens and early 20s, and older couples, who have elected to participate in religious or charitable work, often serving in this capacity away from home. Full-time missionary service can last between 18-36 months (Huffman, 1986).

Home. Home generally refers to the place where one lives permanently. According to Storti (2001):

Home is the place where you are known and trusted and where you know and trust others; where you are accepted, understood, indulged, and forgiven; a place of rituals and routine interactions, of entirely predictable events and people, and of very few surprises;

the place where you belong and feel safe and secure where you can accordingly trust your instincts, relax and be yourself. (p. 3)

Homecomer. The term homecomer is used to describe an individual who is returning to their home culture (Huffman, 1986).

Host culture. The host culture is the culture that is foreign or different from an individual's home culture or "the culture acculturating individuals move to" ("Host Culture," n.d., p. 1).

Re-acculturation. Re-acculturation refers to the readjustment of the sojourner to their home culture (Martin, 1984; Huffman, 1986).

Re-entry adjustment. Re-entry adjustment refers to the transition back to one's home culture after living in a foreign culture. It is the phenomenon of readjustment, wherein the homecomer "hopes in vain to re-establish the old intimate we-relations with the home group" (Schuetz, 1945, p. 369).

Spiritual growth. For Christians, spiritual growth is the process of becoming more like Jesus Christ.

Sojourner. A sojourner is a person who resides temporarily in a place (Oberg, 1960, 2006).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, sometimes referred to as the LDS church or the Mormons, is a Christian church based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. All LDS missionaries serve voluntarily, do not receive a salary for their work, and often work 10 hours a day, 7 days a week ("Mormons," 2014).

Transition. Transition refers to the period of adjustment that takes place after change has occurred. Uncertainty marks the ending of a present condition, which leads into the Transition Zone and includes aspects of confusion, reservation, frustration, and denial along with aspects of

anticipation and excitement (Bridges, 2009). The Transition Zone can also include aspects of anxiety and resistance along with creativity and innovation (Tremolada, 2015).

World religions. The five main world religions are Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, and Christianity (“World Religions,” n.d.).

Research Question

The overriding research question for this study was: What are the lived experiences of missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon returning home from serving a full-time voluntary religious mission?

Significance of the Study

Acculturation can be traced to times of antiquity. Inscriptions from 2370 B.C. show that written codes protected traditional cultural practices from change and were established by Sumerian rulers in Mesopotamia (Rudmin, 2003). Even Plato argued that intercultural adaptation or acculturation could cause social disorders and proposed minimizing acculturation by recommending that people should not travel abroad until after the age of 40 (Fisher & Lerner, 2005).

The concept of acculturation has been studied in the fields of anthropology and sociology. In 1898, McGee was one of the first to describe acculturation as the practical adjustment between groups of people. Thomas and Znaniecki (1918, 1958) studied Polish immigrants living in Chicago at the turn of the 20th century. They theorized that a group’s culture was defined by attitudes that were shared (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918, 1958). They called these schemas and proposed that these schemas were adaptable depending on one’s family, ethnicity, and occupation (Abbott & Egloff, 2008).

In 1936, Redfield et al. defined acculturation as “those phenomena, which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with

subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns” (p. 149). New Zealand-born anthropologist Keesing (1954), documented acculturation as cultural contact involving change. In 1960, Baal, emphasized the importance of education in the acculturation process. Norman Chance (1965) addressed acculturation as it corresponded to self-identification and personality adjustment.

Today, anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists maintain an interest in the phenomena of acculturation. Contemporary research has begun to look at the different strategies of acculturation. John Berry of Queens University is a leading researcher in acculturation. His work focuses primarily on the acculturative attitude styles. Berry along with David Born theorize about acculturative stress. Acculturation has also been studied in relation to self-worth and acceptance (Sue & Sue, 2005).

While the central aim of the study of acculturation has been to demonstrate the influence that cultural factors have on human behavior, a gap in the research literature is evident when it comes to re-acculturation. As early as 1945, re-entry adjustment was identified as a separate process from acculturation. Alfred Schuetz (1945) considered this phenomenon of readjustment as one of a homecomer who “hopes in vain to re-establish the old intimate we-relations with the home group” (p. 369). In 1987, Gary Weaver described the adjustment period that a sojourner passes through when returning home as *reverse culture shock* or *reentry-transition stress*.

Weaver (1987) wrote:

Few returnees anticipate reverse culture shock. When we expect a stressful event, we cope much better. We rehearse our actions, think through the course of adjustment, and consider alternative ways to deal with the stressful event. . . . At home, everyone expects the returnee to fit in quickly. They are much less tolerant of mistakes and have little empathy for the difficulties of reverse culture shock. Such problems are not expected or accepted. (p. 2)

Home has changed. The missionary has changed and adapted to another culture and now must readapt (“Reverse Culture Shock,” n.d.). Little if any research exists concerning the process of readjustment and re-acculturation for missionaries who undergo transition upon returning to their home culture. Olsen (1991) wrote:

“Coming home after serving my full-time mission was harder than leaving home had been,” said a young Canadian returned missionary. “I’m usually not an emotional person,” he added, “but during the first months after I returned home, I felt a great deal of emotion. Often, I didn’t understand my mixed-up feelings. At times, I would go to bed at night and cry. I was embarrassed and put on a front for my family and friends because I didn’t want them to know.” (para. 1)

Missionaries have a long history of being prepared for cross-cultural service but there is less evidence of the preparation afforded this population concerning their subsequent re-entry (Andrews, 1999; Austin & Beyer; 1984; Hall, 2005; Hinckley & Hinckley, 2015; Leslie, 1999; Parker, 2006). The goal of this study is to gain insight into and an increased understanding of LDS missionary re-acculturation. Through an in-depth study of the ascribed phenomenon, various aspects of re-acculturation as experienced and expressed by missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were uncovered and described. An increased understanding of re-acculturation has the potential to assist future return missionaries during their re-acculturation period. It will also provide increased data concerning re-acculturation and re-entry that applies directly to the missionary experience, thus filling a part of the gap that is evident in the literature concerning these events. There may also be an indication of re-acculturation in other populations returning to their home culture.

General Procedures

This study explores the lived re-acculturation experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This study used interpretive phenomenological analysis, or IPA, as a qualitative approach, which assisted in providing a detailed examination of the personal lived experience of LDS missionaries who have completed full-time voluntary missionary service. The researcher used purposive sampling, which includes criterion-based selection, and snowball sampling.

A call for returned missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who had completed full-time missionary service was sent via e-mail to LDS ecclesiastical leaders and Church members. The request asked interested individuals to complete a survey as well as invited them to share the survey link with any of their acquaintances who might also be interested. The criterion included male and female missionaries, ages 20-90, that had returned from voluntary full-time missionary service for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The researcher included young adult populations as well as family congregations. After completing the survey, respondents were asked whether or not they would be willing to share their experiences in greater detail with the researcher as a part of an interview process. Contact information was collected from those who acknowledged a willingness to continue. Ten participants were selected from this pool to further participate in the study (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012).

Once the participants for the study were identified and proper permission and releases were obtained, including permission to proceed from IRB, the interviews were conducted. The interviewing protocol used was a modified narrative method as described by Riessman (2008) and Josselson (2013). The researcher interviewed each participant once. The interviews were

audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. A Livescribe pen was also used to capture the interviews and linked with analytic notes taken during the interviews.

As an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I have my own views and values associated with voluntary missionary service and a return to secular living. Although I have not served as a missionary, I have had experiences with many associates, students, friends, and family members that have returned from full-time missionary service and have experienced re-entry and re-acculturation.

Limitations and Delimitations

An assumption is a belief, expectation, or consideration that is either tacit or explicit. At times, assumptions are easily discernible and, at times, they are hidden. Covey (1989) believes that, for most of us, “we simply assume that the way we see things is the way that they really are or the way that they should be. And our attitudes and behaviors grow out of those assumptions” (p. 32). Assumptions knowingly or unknowingly govern the logic of a communicator’s argument. It takes a bit of figuring and assessing to decipher hidden or less evident assumptions. The ability to separate the data of our experiences from our assumptions about that data is the ability to bring our subconscious assumptions and inferences to a level of consciousness. Once we are conscious of these assumptions, we are better able to view our experiences and the experiences of others from more than one point of view.

When conducting quantitative research, the researcher may include and exclude variables to eliminate, reduce, prove, or disprove assumptions. Yet, when conducting qualitative research, assumptions can be easily overlooked. Assumptions need to be uncovered and brought from the subconscious, to the conscious, so that multiple perspectives can be considered.

Whether we are aware of it or not, we always bring certain beliefs and philosophical assumptions to our research. Sometimes these are deeply ingrained views about types of

problems that we need to study, what research questions to ask, or how to go about gathering data. . . . The difficulty lies first in becoming aware of these assumptions and beliefs and second in deciding whether we will actively incorporate them into our qualitative studies. (Creswell, 2013, p. 15)

1. Because the participants of this study were only selected from the return missionary population of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the findings and assessments may not be generalizable to a larger population.
2. The researcher has not served as a voluntary missionary but is an active member of the ascribed congregation and has observed countless students and family members struggle through the process of re-acculturation. This may provide some bias yet also provide a deeper understanding of some of the issues.
3. While LDS missionaries return throughout the calendar year, this study included not only missionaries who had recently returned (6 months or less) from missionary service but also missionaries who experienced re-entry decades ago. Male and female LDS missionaries, 21-81 years of age, who had previously completed full-time missionary service while single, were used as participants in this study. One participant was a returned LDS missionary who served a full-time mission with his wife at the age of 63. The difference in the period of time that has elapsed since missionary re-entry along with the missionaries' ability to reflect and look back at these experiences might have been a factor in the way the missionary described their experience.
4. While the participants considered for this study had all completed full-time missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, there was potential differences in their ages at the time they served, the length of their service, and the missionary's

gender. These varying factors might offer differing and divergent perspectives about the re-acculturation experience.

5. Participants in the study may be reluctant to answer questions about difficulties concerning transition while currently undergoing the changes.
6. The data obtained will be limited to those missionaries selected for the study. While this researcher recognizes that this study involves a small pool of participants, the volume of data collected is less important to the researcher than the individual participant's narrative and sense making of the common experience.

Overview

This study describes the lived experiences of full-time proselyting missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and their reflection on their own transition period and their subsequent re-acculturation to their home culture. A deeper understanding of the individual sojourner's experience while in transition will provide insight into individual missionary re-entry transition and assist future missionaries in their own re-acculturation and re-entry transition.

Chapter 2

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of full-time proselyting missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission. Missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints take on the role of sojourner as they navigate periods of acculturation and re-acculturation. To undertake a study of this nature, it is important to review the current literature on acculturation, re-acculturation, and the theory of transition. It is also important to review the unique attributes of the missionary population and their associated religiosity.

Acculturation

Acculturation can be traced to times of antiquity. Inscriptions from 2370 B.C. show that written codes protected traditional cultural practices from change and were established by Sumerian rulers in Mesopotamia (Rudmin, 2003). Even Plato argued that intercultural adaptation or acculturation could cause social disorders and proposed minimizing acculturation by recommending that people should not travel abroad until after the age of 40 (Fisher & Lerner, 2005).

The concept of acculturation has been studied in the fields of anthropology and sociology. McGee described acculturation as early as 1898. He defined acculturation as the practical adjustment between groups of people (McGee, 1898). Shortly thereafter, acculturation was studied by Thomas and Znaniecki in 1918. Through their research, they came to believe that Polish citizens who had immigrated to Chicago at the turn of the century had undergone a kind of acculturation. They believed that culture was defined by attitudes beliefs and practices that were shared by a group of people (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918, 1958). They called these schemas and proposed that these schemas were adaptable depending on one's family, ethnicity, and

occupation (Abbott & Egloff, 2008). This researcher found it interesting that culture defined in this way was not considered fixed but instead could adapt and change.

In 1936, Redfield et al. defined acculturation as “those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns” (p. 149). New Zealand-born anthropologist Felix Keesing (1954) documented acculturation as cultural contact involving change.

In 1955, Lysgaard proposed a shift in well-being of sojourners when they traveled to a new culture. He created the U-curve model of emotional adjustment, which purported to graph a sojourner’s positive and negative emotional well-being over time during this adjustment (Smith, Peterson, & Thomas, 2008). Chen (2016) used Lysgaard’s model as a foundation for his work and described his understanding this way:

The U-Curve hypothesis has been commonly adopted to describe sojourners’ adjustment. It begins with a sojourner’s initial optimistic experience and high expectations, but then declines. After the downward stage, the sojourner experiences recovery towards better adjustment, at a level similar to the initial level. (Chen, 2016, p. 34)

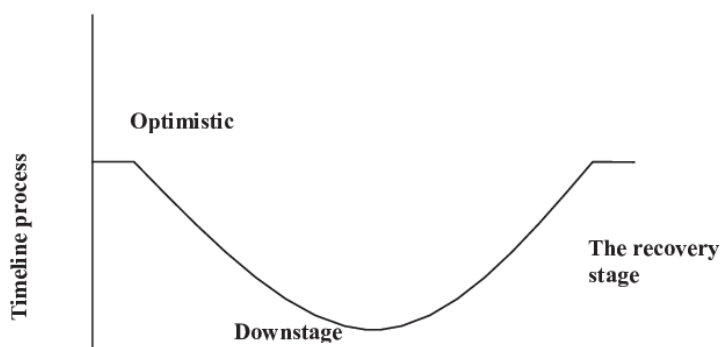


Figure 2. U-curve model diagram. Reprinted from “Utilizing the Findings of Intercultural Adaption Research in the Counselling of Malaysian Students in Japan” by I. S. Rahim, H. Hussin, K. Kaur, 2008, *Journal of Human Capital Development*, 1, 88. Adapted from S. Lysgaard [1955].

Lysgaard’s theory was tested for over 50 years with inconsistent support.

One longitudinal study tested the U-curve model and examined the cross-cultural transition and adjustment of a group of sojourners and their psychological and social adaptation (Ward, Okura, Kennedy, & Kojima, 1998). Participants were newly arrived Japanese students in New Zealand. The 35 Japanese students completed questionnaires, which monitored psychological adjustment including depression along with sociocultural adaptation, including social difficulty. The students answered questions at four time periods, within 24 hours of arrival in New Zealand, and at 4, 6, and 12 months in New Zealand. Findings appeared contrary to the U-curve model. Adjustment problems appeared greatest at the point of entry and decreased over time. According to Ward et al. (1998), “Neither psychological nor sociocultural measurements of adaptation demonstrated the popular U-Curve of adjustment” (p. 277). Instead participant’s adjustment problems decreased rather than increased between entry and 4 months in New Zealand with no significant changes at the 6- and 12-month testings (Ward et al., 1998).

Another study conducted by Chen in 2016 sought to determine whether or not the U-curve could be used to explain the adjustment of international postgraduate students. The 26 participants were first-year, full-time, postgraduate, international students studying at a UK university. Two face-to-face in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted to investigate, qualitatively and longitudinally, the adjustment of international postgraduate students. Participants were asked the same groups of questions in two separate interviews 3 months apart. The findings in this study suggested that

the U-curve model does not represent the experience of most international postgraduates, and the appropriateness of the U-curve hypothesis for understanding adjustment is challenged because international postgraduates usually encounter more diverse, complex, and uncertain situations while studying abroad. (Chen, 2016, pp. 47-48)

Today, anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists maintain an interest in the phenomena of acculturation. Contemporary research has begun to look at the different strategies of acculturation. Berry of Queens University has been a leading researcher in acculturation. His work has focused primarily on the acculturative attitude styles. Berry wrote:

Not all individuals undergo acculturation in the same way; there are large variations in how people seek to engage the process. These variations have been termed acculturation strategies. These strategies consist of two (usually related) components: attitudes (an individual's preference about how to acculturate), and behaviors (a person's actual activities) that are exhibited in day-to-day intercultural encounters. (Berry, 2005, p. 704)

Acculturation has also been studied in relation to self-worth and acceptance (Sue & Sue, 2005). A doctoral dissertation completed at the University of Denver addressed self-esteem, spirituality, and acculturation and their relationship with depression in a Latino population (Avila, 2014). Variables that affect Latino subgroups included language use, birthplace, length of time in the United States, attitudes toward family, gender roles in the family, social interaction with non-Hispanics, and cultural values (Avila, 2014).

In a study conducted in 2011, Yu and Wang investigated the acculturation strategies of Chinese students in Germany. They determined that “overseas students have different degrees of acculturation to the culture where they are living, and different degrees of acculturation result in different levels of psychological well-being and life satisfaction” (Yu & Wang, 2011, p. 190). Acculturation can be marked by physical and psychological changes that are due to the adaptation required by new cultural values along with a different diet, climate, and housing (Berry, 1997).

Acculturation is relevant to this study because re-acculturation is based on many of the same constructs as acculturation. Some of these similar basic aspects include the maintenance of

a sojourner's original cultural identity as well as the maintenance of the sojourner's relationships with those from their home culture and those from the host culture (Berry, 2005; Szkudlarek, 2010). When viewing a missionary population in particular, their acculturation to the host culture precedes their re-acculturation to their home culture. In 1960, Van Erring Baal (1960), emphasized the importance of education in the acculturation process, and Norman Chance (1960) addressed acculturation as it corresponded to self-identification and personality adjustment.

Culture shock

In the 1960s, Canadian anthropologist Kalervo Oberg coined the term *culture shock* (as cited in Lakey, 2003). The American Psychological Association (APA) defines culture shock as “loneliness, anxiety, and confusion experienced by an individual or group that has been suddenly thrust into an alien culture or otherwise encounters radical cultural change” (as cited in VandenBos, 2015, p. 275). Culture shock has been studied in business employees living and working overseas, military personnel, and students studying abroad. Oberg (2006) defined culture shock as “an occupational disease of people who have been suddenly transplanted abroad” (p. 142). Oberg wrote:

Culture shock is precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse. These signs or cues include the thousand and one ways in which we orient ourselves to the situations of daily life; when to shake hands and what to say when we meet people, when and how to give tips, how to give orders to servants, how to make purchases, when to accept and when to refuse invitations, when to take statements seriously and when not. Now these clues which may be words, gestures, facial expressions, customs, or norms are acquired by all of us in the course of growing up and are as much a part of our culture as the language we speak or the beliefs we accept. All of

us depend for our peace of mind and our efficiency on hundreds of these cues, most of which we do not carry on the level of conscious awareness. (Oberg, 2006, p. 142)

In addition, Oberg (1960) conducted research about the nature of culture and how it affects the individual. He used an adaptation of Lysgaard's (1955) U-curve model and described a euphoric or honeymoon stage similar to Lysgaard's optimistic stage, followed by culture shock, which included a combination of irritation, anxiety, rejection, and, sometimes, hostility (Oberg, 1960). The culture shock phase was followed by gradual adjustment and perspective, which was described as ending with feeling at home or adaptation and biculturalism (Oberg, 1960, 2006; "Stages of cultural adjustment," n.d.).

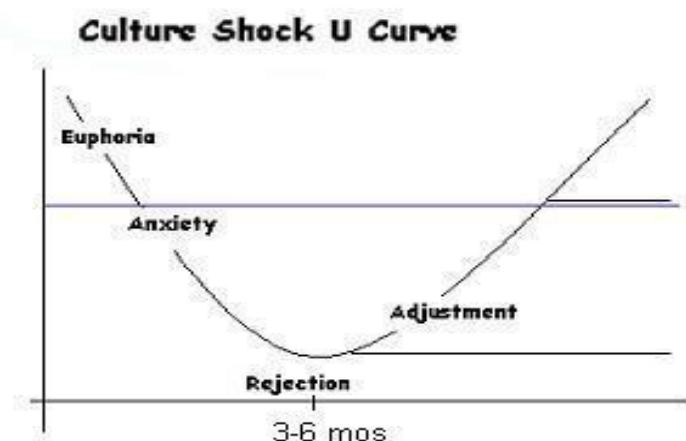


Figure 3. U-curve model diagram. Reprinted from *Culture Shock* by Charbot and Wanderlust (2012), Retrieved from <http://charbotandwanderlust.com/2012/11/12/culture-shock/> Adapted from K. Oberg [1955]

Berry (1997), theorized about acculturative stress or culture shock. Culture shock is not about a single stressful experience during just one trip. Culture shock is about the ongoing stress that takes its toll on the sojourner from having lived in a new culture over a period of time. According to Schmidt (2018), some of the symptoms of culture shock include: (a) feelings of sadness and loneliness; (b) feelings of anger, depression, and vulnerability; (c) feelings shyness or insecurity; (d) feelings of homesickness, and (e) feelings being lost or confused.

The UNC Greensboro International Programs Center advises students who are planning to participate in study abroad programs by preparing them to recognize the symptoms of culture shock during their experiences abroad. They list several personal characteristics that can help study abroad students cope with and diminish the effects of experiencing culture shock: (a) tolerance for ambiguity, (b) tolerance for ambiguity, (c) open mindedness, (d) ability to fail, (e) adaptability, (f) empathy, (g) being communicative, and (h) self-reliance (“UNC Dealing with Culture Shock,” n.d.).

For Dimarco (2000), culture shock meets the definition of one of life’s difficult transitions. It consists of “a loss of what was familiar and known, a loss of certainty, a loss of opportunities, and a loss of personal history and what used to be” (Dimarco, 2000, p. 5). When culture shock is extreme, it can also include a loss of a sense of oneself and a loss of perspective and hope. Professionals who work abroad and have experienced culture shock describe a yo-yo pattern. This yo-yo pattern is where the feelings of anxiety may lessen in time but then unexpectedly resurface (MacLachlan, 2016). Culture shock can be a part of any acculturative experience and does take its toll on the sojourner, often in a negative way.

Re-acculturation

While the central aim of the study of acculturation has been to demonstrate the influence that cultural factors have on human behavior, re-acculturation is most often evident when a sojourner reacclimatizes to their home culture. Re-acculturation can be defined as the readjustment or transition to one’s home culture after living abroad (Martin, 1986). The literature uses varied terms to describe this phenomenon, such as re-entry, re-entry adjustment, cross cultural re-entry, cross cultural adaptation, repatriation, transition, cultural transition, sojourner adjustment, coming home, homecomer, reverse culture shock, return shock, de-culturation, repatriation, and cross cultural re-entry (Adler, 1981; Altweck & Marshall, 2015; Bridges, 2009;

Callahan, 2010; Gaw, 2000; Onwumechili et al., 2003; Pitts, 2009; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010; Zhang et al., 2017).

As early as 1945, re-entry adjustment was identified as a separate process from acculturation. Schuetz (1945) considered the phenomenon of readjustment as one of a homcomer who “hopes in vain to re-establish the old intimate we-relations with the home group” (p. 369). John Gullahorn and Jeanne Gullahorn posed a later adaptation of Lysgaard’s work in 1963. Their work included an extension of the U-curve by creating what they called the W-curve hypothesis model (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963). This model extended the U-curve model to include a depiction of the sojourners emotional well-being when returning to their home culture. This replicates the U pattern to create a W. Their premise was that the adjustment process in returning home resembled Lysgaard’s initial model thus repeating the pattern he described during the adjustment by the sojourners upon their return to their home culture (Pedersen, 1995).

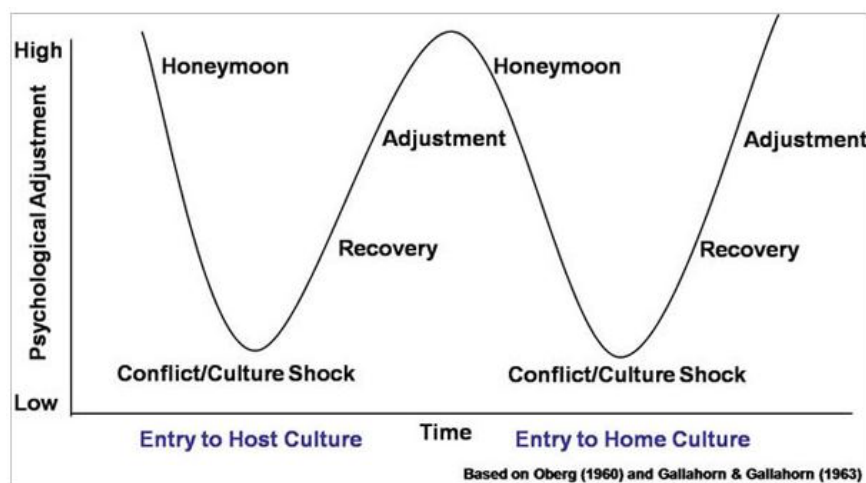


Figure 4. Curve model for cultural adjustment. Reprinted from *Akwaaba* by E. G. Wild, (2010), Retrieved from <http://evaghanawild.blogspot.com/2010/06/akwaaba.html>. Adapted from K. Oberg [1960], Gullahorn & Gullahorn [1963].

Gullahorn and Gullahorn’s (1963) model clearly introduces the idea that acculturation and re-acculturation can reflect the same elements of adjustment and re-adjustment. While there

have been fewer studies investigating re-entry adjustment and re-acculturation, more contemporary researchers also support this idea (Martin, 1986; Rohrllich & Martin, 1991; Uehara, 1986).

When a sojourner travels to a new place they often acculturate to their new surroundings and the host culture. Szkudlarek (2010) believes that there is also an adjustment when the same sojourner returns home changed by their recent experience and acculturation. He wrote:

While sojourners may undergo profound personal transformation during transition, they also learn and internalize a new spectrum of behavior responses, which are expected from them in the host-environment. Consequently, some of the home-country learned behaviors are forgotten and replaced by the host-country equivalent. As a result, the returning individuals have to relearn social skills often disregarded during their time abroad and regain familiarity with a set of home-country norms and behaviors.

(Szkudlarek, 2010, p. 4)

Another aspect that affects re-acculturation is the length of time away from one's home culture. Theoretically, the longer a sojourner is gone, the more acculturated they may become to the new culture (Knell, 2006). Those that experience a "high level of acculturation and integration in a new culture often experience more difficulties in re-entry" (Cox, 2006, p. 31).

Rohrllich and Martin (1991) investigated the impact of the sojourner's experience in the host country and its relation to the sojourner's satisfaction with re-entry. Participants in their study were asked to describe experiences and adjustment while living abroad as well as experiences and adjustment after returning home. There were 248 students who completed study abroad programs that completed the questionnaire. The findings of this study supported the premise that sojourners with previous transition experience reported a greater ease in adjustment both in adjusting to the host culture as well as their home culture (Rohrllich & Martin, 1991). The

study also revealed that students who were generally satisfied with their study abroad experiences had a lower satisfaction with re-entry experiences (Rohrlich & Martin, 1991).

The transition, or return to familiar surroundings, as a part of re-entry is a process that may contain both positive and negative elements for the returnee (Adler, 1981; Sussman, 2002; Uehara, 1986). According to Szkudlarek (2010), “Despite the fact that re-entry challenges have been widely documented . . . surprisingly few re-entry support practices have been systematically investigated” (p. 12).

Reverse culture shock

Reverse culture shock follows much the same pattern as that of culture shock. It too is marked by grief, frustration, withdrawal, confusion, and purposelessness (Knell, 2006). Reverse culture shock involves the process of re-assimilating into one’s own culture after living in a differing culture for a period of time (Gaw 1995). It can be experienced by any returning sojourner who has spent time away from their home culture and is marked by extreme aspects of re-acclimation. Things are not as they once were. Just as acclimating to a new culture must take place, so too must re-acclimation. At times this re-acclimation can seem extreme (Knell, 2006).

Research concerning cultural re-entry suggests that “reverse cultural shock” or “re-acclimation” is a more challenging experience than culture shock (Austin, 1983; Isa, 2000; Lakey, 2003). There remains a gap in the potential conclusions of this study because no analysis was completed that confirmed or denied any possible correlations between host culture adjustment and home culture re-adjustment.

Reverse culture shock has been studied in business employees living and working overseas, military personnel and study abroad students in relation to their return to their home culture, specifically in times of extreme transition stress or reverse culture shock (Berry, 2005; Gaw, 2000; Nielsen, 2010; Szkudlarek, 2010). In 1987, Weaver described the adjustment period

that a sojourner passes through when returning home as “reverse culture shock” or “re-entry-transition stress.” He wrote:

Few returnees anticipate reverse culture shock. When we expect a stressful event, we cope much better. We rehearse our actions, think through the course of adjustment, and consider alternative ways to deal with the stressful event. . . . At home, everyone expects the returnee to fit in quickly. They are much less tolerant of mistakes and have little empathy for the difficulties of reverse culture shock such problems are not expected or accepted. (Weaver, 1987, p. 2)

A study conducted by Gaw, *Reverse Culture Shock in Students Returning from Overseas* at the University of Nevada in 2000, examined 66 American students who completed their high school education outside the United States. These students graduated from international and American schools abroad and had since returned home to the United States and were enrolled as undergraduate students at a West Coast university. The purpose of the study was to assess the relationship between reverse culture shock and personal problems/concerns in college after returning from their study abroad programs. The study’s findings showed that overseas-experienced American college students might experience reverse culture shock and that it is likely to include aspects of “depression, alienation, isolation, loneliness, general anxiety, speech anxiety, friendship difficulties, shyness concerns, and feelings of inferiority” (Gaw, 2000, p. 101). Additionally, students experiencing reverse culture shock were documented as exhibiting aspects of disorientation, stress, value confusion, anger, hostility, compulsive fears, helplessness, disenchantment, and discrimination (Dimarco, 2000). With such an overwhelming series of potential symptoms, it is easy to see that reverse culture shock also meets Dimarco’s (2000) definition of one of life’s difficult transitions. It consists of “a loss of what was familiar and

known, a loss of certainty, a loss of opportunities, and a loss of personal history and what used to be” (Dimarco, 2000, p. 5).

Transition

During the 1960s, Meleis took an interest in the study of life transitions. While her work focused primarily on health issues, she determined that “changes in health and illness of individuals create a process of transition, and clients in transitions tend to be more vulnerable to risks that may in turn affect their health” (Meleis et al., 2000, p. 12). Also, in 1960, Kubler-Ross developed a model that explained the grieving process. Kubler-Ross (1969, 2017) proposed that terminally ill individuals would pass or transition through five stages of grief soon after they were informed of their illness: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, acceptance. This model was called the Kubler-Ross model for death and bereavement counseling, personal change, and trauma.

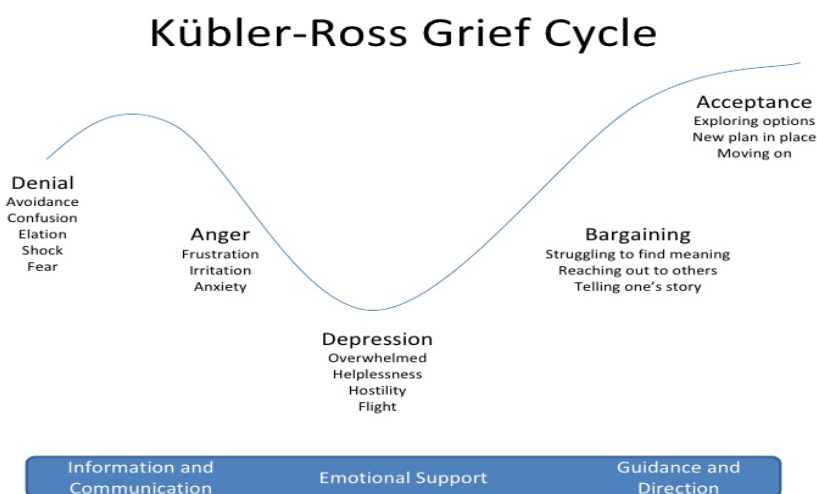


Figure 5. Kubler Ross Grief Cycle. Reprinted from *Reasons to be Cheerful* by T. Kent, 2016, Retrieved from http://tonikent.blogspot.com/2016_01_01_archive.html. Adapted from E. Kubler-Ross [1969].

From 1963 to 1971, Dr. Walter Menninger a psychiatric consultant for the Peace Corps conducted a study that addressed Peace Corps volunteers’ reactions to deployment experiences abroad. His findings mirrored those of Kubler-Ross’s (Wilkinson, 2016). In 1976, British

researchers Adams, Hayes, and Hobson published a book called *Transition: Understanding and Managing Personal Change*. This research confirmed the findings of both Kubler-Ross and Menninger and supported the theory of an observable process of transition not only in grief and bereavement but also in other life transitions (Figure 5, Adams et al., 1976). The change curve is based on Kubler-Ross's original work *The Five Stages of Grief*. This newer model adapted by Adams et al. (1976) expands Kubler-Ross's original five stages to seven and represents the transition cycle of "experiencing a disruption and gradually acknowledging its reality, testing oneself, understanding oneself, and incorporating changes in one's behavior" (p. 12).

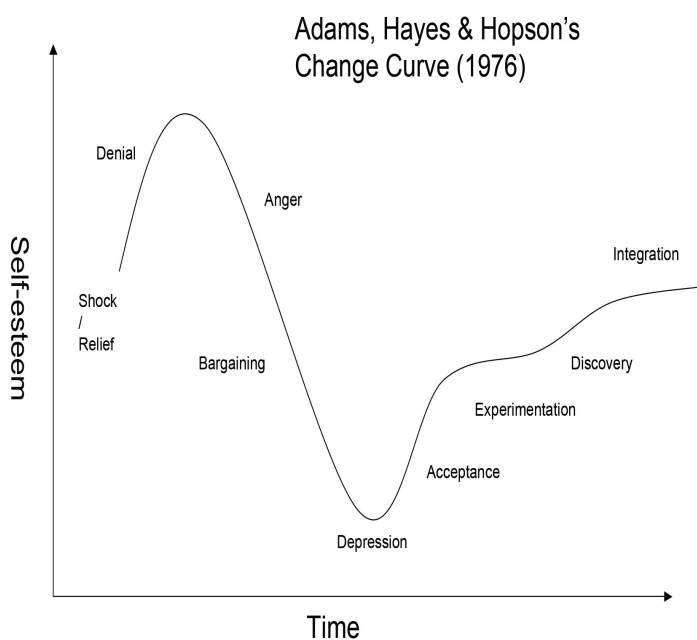


Figure 6. *Change Curve*. Reprinted from *Change Curve* by J. Adams, J. Hayes, and B. Hopson, 2012. Retrieved from <https://leadershipthroughchange.com/2012/12/10/using-the-change-curve-in-communication-during-change/print/>

In 1980, Bridges published *Transitions*. This was one of the first published works to explore the underlying and universal patterns of transition. His second book, *Managing Transitions*, was published in 1991 and now is in its third edition. Bridges' work focuses on the dynamic psychological aspects that lie behind change and accompany transition. His theory

involves a three-phase process: (a) Ending, Losing, Letting Go; (b) The Neutral Zone, and (c) The New Beginning (Bridges, 2004).

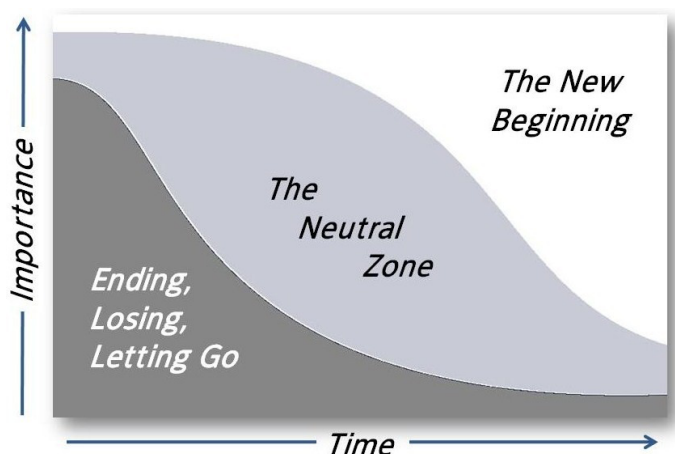


Figure 7. The three phases of transition. Reprinted from *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change* (p. 5), by W. Bridges (2009) Philadelphia, PA: Perseus Books Group [2009] William Bridges and Associates.

An adaptation of Bridges' (2009) original work and transition model as adapted by Tremolada (2015) was used as the conceptual model and theoretical framework for this study.

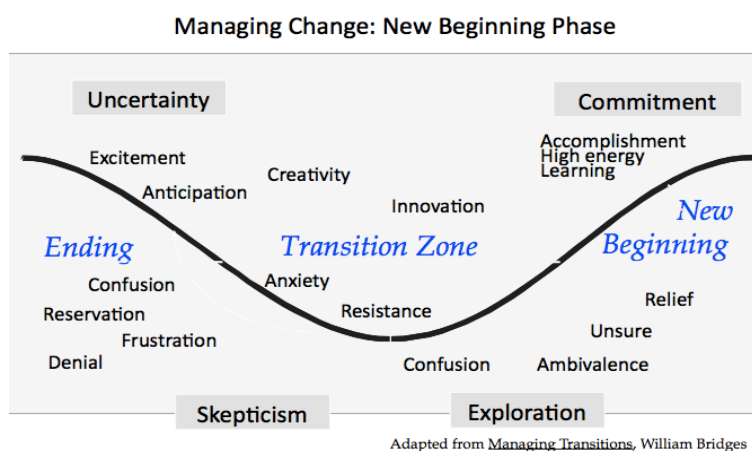


Figure 1. Model of managing transitions. Reprinted from *Bridge's Transition Model* by G. Tremolada, 2015. Retrieved from <https://frontlinemanagementexperts.wordpress.com/2015/07/03/bridges-transition-model/>. Copyright [2009] by William Bridges and Associates. adapted

Nancy Schlossberg (1981) published, "A Model for Analyzing Human Adaptation to Transition," in *The Counseling Psychologist*. Her contributions include the conceptualization of

transition assessment and how well an individual is able to cope with life transitions. Her work considers the four Ss: situation, self, support, and strategies (Schlossberg, 1981).

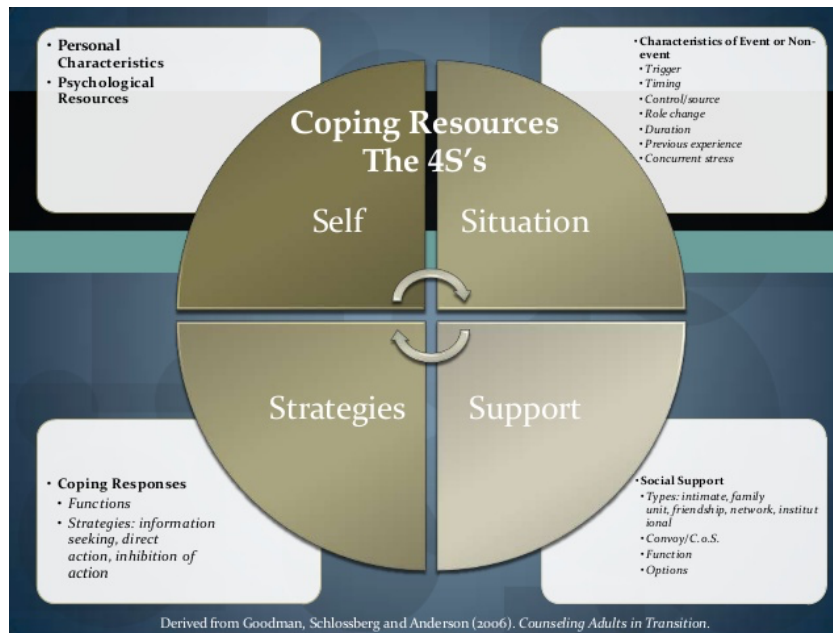


Figure 8. Transition theory: Coping resources the 4Ss. Reprinted from *Career Counseling A.I.* (2015), Retrieved from <http://career counseling ai.blogspot.com/>. adapted from N. Schlossberg (2006).

Most recently, Schlossberg (2012) published a book titled *Counseling Adults in Transition* with colleagues Mary Anderson and Jane Goodman. This is based on Schlossberg's original work and also incorporates some of the work done by Bridges.

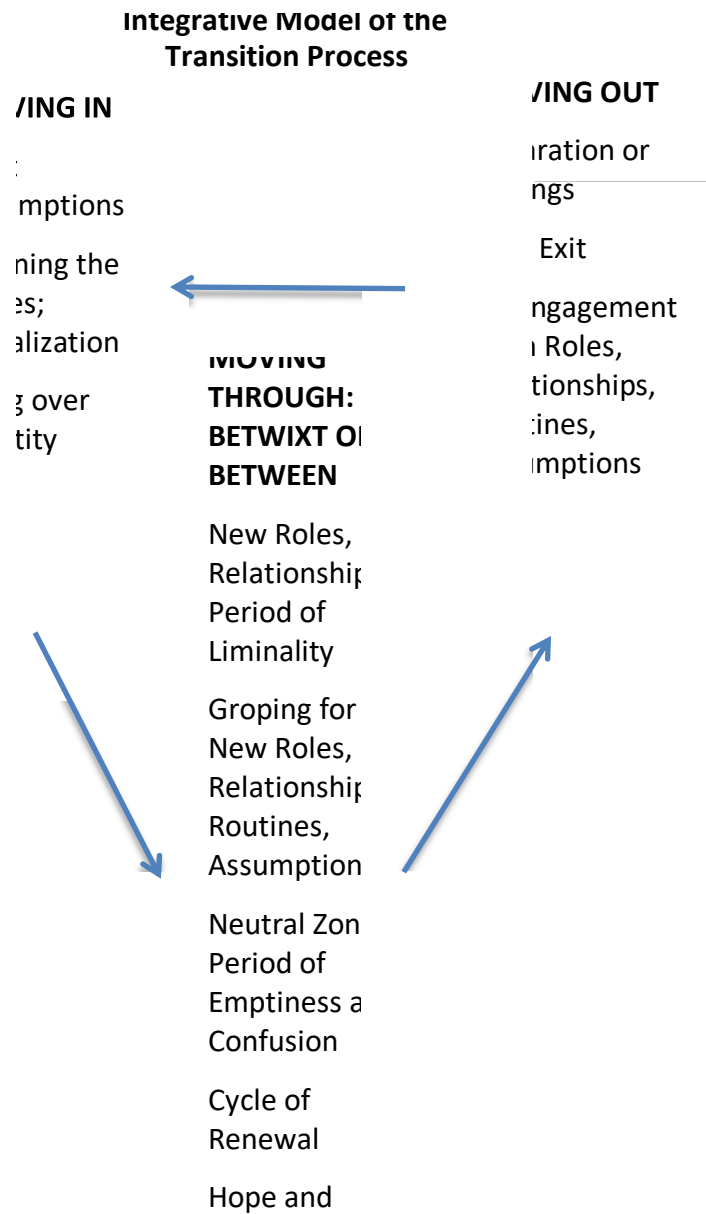


Figure 9. Integrative model of the transition process. Reprinted from *Counseling Adults in Transition* (p. 56). M. Anderson, J. Goodman, N. K. Schlossberg, 2012, New York, NY: Springer. Copyright [2012] by Springer.

Considering what those that have studied transition have discovered, it is evident that there are many elements that correlate between the body of research concerning life's transitions and aspects of acculturation, culture shock, re-acculturation, and reverse culture shock

Missionary Re-Acculturation and Transition

Missionaries have a long history of being prepared for cross-cultural service but there is less evidence of the preparation afforded this population concerning their subsequent re-entry (Andrews, 1999; Austin & Beyer; 1984; Leslie, 1999). Missionary re-entry or re-acculturation involves a shift or return to the missionary's home culture after their recent adjustment to an away culture. This often includes not only a change in living conditions and cultural and social customs but, a shift in spiritual focus, growth, identity, and confidence (Hall, 2005; Hinckley & Hinckley, 2015; Parker, 2006).

The following three descriptions are excerpts from an article by Ulrich and Ulrich (2016). They are actual thoughts and experiences as shared by recently returned LDS missionaries. Ulrich and Ulrich wrote:

Ryan loved his mission. He grew a lot, found deep satisfaction and meaning in his service, and was sad to take off his name badge. Now, driving a pizza delivery truck and studying chemistry feel pretty pointless, and he feels selfish having to think so much about himself and his future. He wonders, "How can ordinary life measure up to saving souls as a leader in the mission field?" (Ulrich & Ulrich, 2016, para. 3)

Ashley's mission wasn't entirely what she'd expected, and she came home with some regrets. There were many good moments but also lots of challenges and disappointments. She thought she'd be a spiritual giant by the end of her mission, but she feels like she's still just Ashley, with no idea what to do next. She wonders, "How can I find answers

about my future when I still don't have answers about my past?" (Ulrich & Ulrich, 2016, para. 4)

It is evident in each of these examples that re-entry to the home culture involves a transition period for the missionary. Feeling selfish, worrying about the future, and facing challenges and disappointments are all aspects of the missionary re-acculturation transition process (Hinckley & Hinckley, 2015; Rosenberger, 2016; Wilson et al., 2015).

Brigham refers to how goal setting as a part of missionary service helps to provide structure and measurement of progress for missionaries during their service and how upon re-entry to the home culture, a change in this habit along with a less structured lifestyle can add to the difficulty in transitioning. Brigham described some factors she believes can assist missionaries returning home, She wrote:

Another factor in maintaining self-esteem is goal setting. In the mission field, full-time missionaries are expected to set and reach goals. Their successes are measured. Because of this emphasis on goal setting, the transition from a highly structured to a less structured life can be disconcerting. (Brigham, 1978, para. 39)

Missionaries and third-culture children

Austin and Beyer (1984) refer to missionary re-entry and transition in their article, "Missionary Repatriation: An Introduction to the Literature." They agree that missionaries returning to their home country and culture often undergo a stressful re-entry period and that these problems of re-adjustment are largely overlooked. There has however been some research concerning the re-acculturation and repatriation of the dependent children of missionaries. The literature refers to these individuals as "third culture kids" or TCKs. This term was first coined in the 1950s by Useem & Useem (Cottrell, Useem, Useem, & Finn Jordan, n.d.). Knell describes the difference between cultures as "The first culture is the home culture from which the parents

come. The second is the host culture in which they live. The third culture is the shared lifestyle of the expatriate community” (Knell, 2006, p. 82). It might appear that the reference to the third culture refers to a mixture of the separate cultures an individual TCK has experienced. But instead it refers to the new culture that is created by the grouping of all those who share the experience of growing up outside their passport culture (Knell, 2006). Considering this definition, this author believes that missionaries returning to their home culture after serving a voluntary religious mission might in the same way create a new third culture of missionaries (TCMs), which includes all missionaries who have served and returned to live at home.

Missionary re-entry

Leaving the culture, which has come to seem like home for a missionary, can be unsettling. Rosenberger (2016) has this advice for missionaries hoping to survive re-entry transition:

I think the hardest part of re-entry is dealing with grief. When we leave our host countries we are losing a lot . . . It can seem that we are losing experiences and memories. Grief over this great loss feels like a death that no one knows about, a grief that is happening inside, silently. It is a grief that doesn’t get a funeral to be able to have closure and grieve with others. (pp. 118-119)

It is statements like this that relate to the original literature which focuses on transition and bereavement, even more closely to the process of transition for missionaries (Selby et al., 2009).

Spiritual aspects

Another element of transition and re-acculturation is also evident among missionaries returning from service. But this element has less to do with secular aspects and changes in living and more to do with spiritual aspects and the missionaries' relationship and perceived relationship with God (Parker, 2006). Uehara described this adjustment.

When Brandon returned home, it just wasn't the same. His family seemed lax about the gospel, and his former friends were into partying and drugs. The blessings he expected for himself and those he loved didn't all come about. He felt alone. He wonders, "How can I go forward in faith when my faith feels shaky and God feels far away?" (Uehara, 1986, para. 5)

It is evident by the above example that part of this missionary's struggle in re-acculturation and transition had to do with the change in the feelings and perceptions concerning his closeness to God. Returning to a secular lifestyle after becoming accustomed to the religiosity and spiritual nature of a mission can be a difficult part of the re-entry process for a missionary (Madsen, 1977; Taylor, 2016).

Summary

Volunteer religious missionaries are often required to make changes as they are called to serve away from home. These situational changes can become catalysts for personal, internal psychological transitions. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reported that the number of full-time missionaries serving from their church was 74,079 (Walch, 2016). The acculturation process that takes place when a sojourner adjusts to a new culture while living or travelling abroad, has been studied more frequently than research that focuses on the re-acculturation process of returning to one's home culture (Andrews, 1999; Austin & Beyer, 1984; Leslie, 1999). A transition or return to familiar surroundings is a part of the re-entry process that

may contain both positive and negative elements for the returnee (Adler, 1981; Sussman, 2002; Uehara, 1986). The experience of re-entry can sometimes be a debilitating process (Christofi & Thompson, 2007). The difficulties encountered during the re-entry can take a toll on the psychological well-being of the sojourner (Uehara, 1986). An individual's adaptation to their home culture or reverse culture shock might be more difficult than the adaptation to a new culture because it is less expected (Martin & Harrell, 1996). Missionaries have a history of being prepared for cross-cultural service and less preparation for re-entry. Little if any research exists concerning the process of readjustment and re-acculturation for missionaries who undergo transition upon returning to their home culture (Huffman, 1986; Pirolo, 2000). Missionary re-acculturation, including under the surface issues that often accompanies a missionary's return to their home culture needs further study to gain insight into and understanding of often un-talked about issues that can color a missionary's return to secular living (Rosenberger, 2016).

Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

Currently, there are over 400,000 Christian missionaries serving worldwide (“Christianity,” 2015; “Mission Stats,” 2014). The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, sometimes referred to as the LDS church or the Mormons, is a Christian church based on the teachings of Jesus Christ. In April 2016, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reported that the number of full-time missionaries serving from their church was 74,079 (Walch, 2016). Missionary service provides many opportunities for change to occur in the lives of missionaries. As missionaries’ experience change, they undergo transition. One such transition occurs when missionaries return home after having served a mission (Rosenberger, 2016).

A transition or return to familiar surroundings as a part of re-entry is a process that may contain both positive and negative elements for the returnee (Adler, 1981; Sussman, 2002; Uehara, 1986). Re-entry adjustment was described as a real and sometimes debilitating process in the phenomenological investigation of students who returned home after studying abroad conducted by Christofi and Thompson in 2007. The difficulties that are encountered during the re-entry transition often take a toll on the psychological well-being of the sojourner (Uehara, 1986). Martin and Harrell (1996) posited that an individual’s adaptation to their home culture or reverse culture shock might be more difficult than the adaptation to a new culture because it is less expected. Sussman (2002) proposes in her review of the re-entry adjustment literature, that an actual shift in the individual’s cultural identity may take place as a result of the cross-cultural experience, thus contributing to increased difficulty in the re-entry experience.

Re-entry, or coming home for a missionary, often includes new roles, relationships, and, in some cases, a new identity. Routines and assumptions during this transition period are also in an altered state and can be accompanied by feelings of emptiness and confusion. Presently,

missionaries receive training in acculturation to assist in their adjustment to the host culture in which they will be serving. Little if any research exists concerning the process of readjustment and re-acculturation for missionaries who undergo transition upon returning to their home culture (Huffman, 1986; Pirolo, 2000). Missionary re-acculturation, including under the surface issues that often accompany missionaries return to their home culture, needs further study to gain insight into and understanding of these often un-talked about issues that can affect a missionary's return to secular living (Rosenberger, 2016).

Research Question

The purpose of this study was to explore the lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission. Currently, there is a gap in the literature and research concerning this phenomenon and its relationship to the constructs and theories of transition and re-acculturation. The individual missionaries' lived experience of transition and re-acculturation were at the center of this research. There was one guiding research question for the proposed research study:

What are the lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon returning home from serving a full-time voluntary religious mission?

Research Setting and Context

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in New York on April 6, 1830 (History.lds.org). The 2016 statistical report concerning growth and status of the church, as of December 31, 2016, lists total church membership as 15,882,417 (Mormon Newsroom.org, 2017). Latter-day Saint missionaries serve voluntarily and do not receive a salary for their work and often work 10 hours a day, 7 days a week (Mormons, 2014). Statistical reports for this same

time period list 70,946 full-time missionaries currently serving missions for the Church (Mormon Newsroom.org, 2017).

Latter-day Saint missionaries work with a companion of the same gender during their mission with the exception of couples who work with their spouses. Single men serve for 2 years and single women serve for 18 months. Couples serve between 12 and 36 months. Male missionaries are addressed as Elder followed by their surname and female missionaries are addressed by Sister followed by their surname. Single men are eligible for missionary service at age 18 and single women are eligible for missionary service at age 19. Most young adult LDS missionaries serve between the ages of 18 and 25, while senior couples with children, no longer living in the home, serve as senior missionaries from age 50 and beyond.

Missionaries do not request their area of service and receive their assignments from Church headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah. They are sent to countries where governments allow the Church to operate. Prior to travelling to their assigned area, missionaries spend a short period of time at one of 12 missionary training centers, or MTCs located in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, England, Ghana, Guatemala, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, and the United States. A full-time LDS mission is generally either a proselytizing mission or, in some parts of the world, missionaries are sent only to serve humanitarian or other specialized missions.

A typical day for a missionary from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints serving a proselytizing mission begins at 6:30 a.m. for personal study and the rest of the day is spent by following up on appointments and visiting homes or meeting people in the street or other public places. Missionaries are expected to end their day around 10:30 p.m. In some parts of the world, LDS missionaries are sent to serve humanitarian missions. Missionaries serving humanitarian missions are often sent to developing countries (lds.org Humanitarian Services,

2017). Humanitarian missionary service might include developing relationships with leaders in the government and community in which the missionaries are serving, training local leaders, and providing leadership in local wards and branches. There are no current statistical reports that describe the total number of returned missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints living in the general population.

At the end of the period of service, the missionary returns home. An official in-person release is given by the missionary's home congregation ecclesiastical leader and is often accompanied by a letter of thanks sent by the President of the mission in which the missionary has served.

Research Design and Methods of Data Collection

Participants

The population of interest for this research study was full-time proselyting missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who had completed a full-time voluntary religious mission. The sample was selected from LDS missionaries who responded to an invitation to complete a preliminary online survey shared through e-mail and social media. Table 3.1 describes the number of potential interview participants and the frequency of their responses to 14 descriptors of transition as described by Bridges (2009) in the selected theoretical framework. Additionally, three "other" fields were provided for respondents to include possible self-initiated descriptors not constituted in the ascribed theoretical framework (see Appendix A).

Table 3.1

Participants and their Frequency of Experiencing Transitional Elements

| | Frequency of Experiencing Transitional Elements | # of Potential Interviews |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Higher frequency | 385 |
| 2 | Moderate frequency | 1024 |
| 3 | Lower frequency | 770 |
| 4 | Both less frequent or not at all and more frequent or always (Ping Pong) | 582 |
| 5 | Total number of participants that completed the survey | 2,761 |

A more detailed description of methodology used to determine the category frequency is further outlined in Chapter 5. Ten participants (five male and five female) were selected. One male and one female were selected for in-person interviews from the following five categories:

1. those who responded to survey questions about their re-acculturation experiences as experiencing transitional elements more frequently, as described by Bridges (2009) in the selected theoretical framework;
2. those who responded to survey questions about their re-acculturation experiences as experiencing transitional elements in moderate frequency, as described by Bridges (2009) in the selected theoretical framework;
3. those who responded to survey questions about their re-acculturation experiences as experiencing transitional elements less frequently or not at all, as described by Bridges (2009) in the selected theoretical framework;
4. those who responded to survey questions about their re-acculturation experiences as experiencing transitional elements that were both less frequent or not at all and more frequent or always, as described by Bridges (2009) in the selected theoretical framework; and
5. those who responded to survey questions about their re-acculturation experiences as experiencing transitional elements as described by Bridges (2009) in the selected

theoretical framework, and additionally were considered outliers by subsequent descriptors contributed in their survey responses.

Research participant eligibility was based on the following criteria: (a) an LDS missionary who has completed a full-time voluntary mission, (b) was between the ages of 19 and 85, (c) missionary service was completed a maximum of 65 years prior, (d) was willing to discuss the experience of transition and re-acculturation after their return and complete an in-person interview, and (e) was classified as demonstrating a disposition in one of five categories. It is important to note that participants were selected from those that responded to the on-line survey.

Criterion sampling is a sampling technique that qualitative researchers use to ensure participants qualify as knowledgeable and experienced with the phenomenon under investigation (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The researcher purposefully sampled participants to ensure each participant could provide in-depth knowledge about the phenomenon by selecting participants with vivid details and experiences with the phenomenon (Braun & Clarke, 2013). At the completion of the survey, the researcher selected to interview one male and one female missionary who fell within the range of each of the five dispositions described above. Selected participants' e-mail addresses and phone numbers were obtained from the text box provided for willing participants at the end of the survey.

Each selected participant that was interviewed received a formal invitation to be interviewed either by e-mail or phone. This formal invitation thanked them for indicating their interest through the survey to participate further and provided additional background information about the proposed study. A second informed consent was obtained in person prior to beginning each of the 10 in-person interviews (see Appendix B). Participants reviewed the document before indicating their willingness to participate in the research study and were offered a copy of the

consent form for their records. The researcher reiterated once again how participation in the study was completely voluntary and consent could be rescinded at any time during the process without consequence. It was a priority for the researcher to conduct the interviews in person where possible.

Survey

The survey yielded 2,777 respondents. Of this total 1,620 were male and 1,157 were female. There were 1,059 who indicated that they would be willing to be interviewed and 586 that indicated that they might be willing to be interviewed. This produced a total of 1,645 respondents for potential interviews.

The survey remained open for a period of 30 days. Research participants were selected throughout the survey period. The researcher reviewed the survey responses in batches of 50. There was no need to solicit additional survey respondents. Three men and five women were selected from those that indicated a willingness to be interviewed, and two men were selected from those respondents that indicated that they might be willing to be interviewed. The preliminary survey included demographic information as well as questions concerning missionary re-acculturation (see Appendix A). At the end of the survey participants were given the opportunity to indicate their willingness to participate further in the research and provide their email address.

The online survey solicited participant's demographic information along with answers to questions concerning initial discovery about aspects of LDS missionary re-acculturation (see Appendix A). A request to complete the online survey was sent via e-mail to leaders in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and Church members. Those receiving the invitation to participate in the on-line survey were invited to share it with other interested parties who met the criteria for this study. The online survey served a three-fold purpose. It provided

demographic information about returned LDS missionaries. It provided answers to some initial discovery questions about the missionaries' re-acculturation experiences as outlined in the theoretical framework selected for this study, including open-ended questions where the respondents had the opportunity to add additional sentiments not listed as a part of the theoretical framework. It also provided a pool of potential participants from which the study's interviewees were selected.

Interview protocol

Qualitative researchers employ semi-structured interviews when they want to ensure each participant is asked the same series of questions but want flexibility to probe or ask questions that may be prompted by a participant's response (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The researcher created an interview protocol as described by Josselson (2013) and Riessman (2008) regarding the modified narrative method (see Appendix D). Interviewees were asked questions that allowed them to reflect on their preparation and call to missionary service, describe their first impressions and reactions after arriving in their assigned field of service, reflect on and describe at least one joyful and one difficult experience that occurred during missionary service, and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of approaching their return to home.

Questions within this section were formulated and conveyed to assist participants in describing their experiences prior to re-acculturation and helped to place each participant firmly in the personal narrative of their own experience surrounding their own missionary service. This, in turn, prepared the participants to answer questions that primarily focused on the purpose of this study, which is to explore the lived experiences of LDS missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.

By creating this type of interview protocol, participants were able to describe their experiences after returning home from their missions. Areas of discovery included the

missionaries' own perception of their return to a more secular lifestyle, their perception of self, the role their family, friends, and ecclesiastical leaders played, their perceived changes in home life, any unresolved experiences that occurred during their missionary service, and the role that the host country where they served might have played in their adjustment to home (see Appendix D).

Interviews were completed in person. A Livescribe pen was used during the interviews and linked with analytic notes taken during the interview. The researcher recorded each interview in its entirety and transcribed each interview verbatim. The researcher interviewed each participant one time. Each interview lasted between 60 and 120 minutes. The researcher encouraged each participant to speak candidly and honestly about their experiences (Alase, 2017). In addition, the researcher used a journal to record her thoughts, feelings, opinions, and reflections after conducting the interviews (Ortlipp, 2008).

Data Analysis and Synthesis

The researcher used interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) as the qualitative approach for this study. Interpretive phenomenological analysis provided the framework through which the researcher obtained a detailed examination of the personal lived experiences of LDS missionaries while either being involved in or reflecting on their experience of re-acculturation. Data saturation is the point at which data collection ceases to yield new themes or findings from participant responses, meaning the data are saturated (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Boddy (2016) conducted a meta-analysis of qualitative research and found participant numbers between the range of eight to 15 would be able to provide data saturation. As a result, the researcher recruited 10 participants to reach data saturation. Data saturation was reached at the sixth interview.

This allowed the researcher to examine the detailed experience of each participant especially concerning topics that were elusive and difficult to articulate. Transcribed interviews

were used for coding and analysis. By examining and interpreting the narratives of participants, the researcher better understood the phenomenon of missionary re-acculturation and gained a deeper understanding of the meaning participants assigned to the phenomenon by examining how people describe and narrate their experiences (Alase, 2017). As described by Smith et al. (2012), descriptive codes, analytic memos, and exploratory comments were used as the means of coding during the systematic line-by-line analysis of the participant's narrative. Further coding methodologies were needed to classify all of the data so it could be methodically compared (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, & Redwood, 2013). In addition, in vivo coding, process coding, anchor coding, emotion coding, value coding, and magnitude coding were used. Saldaña (2013) includes process coding as "appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies" (p. 96).

Analytic notes

During the 10 in-person interviews, the researcher took analytic notes with a Livescribe pen, which linked the researcher's notes with the place and time during the interview where the impression occurred. These analytic notes assisted the researcher in recording her impressions during the course of the interview. Reflecting on these analytic notes led the researcher to make decisions on which further coding methods to use.

Line-by-line analysis

Immersing oneself in the data is the first step in IPA (Smith et al., 2012). For this study, a verbatim transcription was followed by reading the transcription and then re-reading the transcription while simultaneously listening to the interview recording. During this stage, the researcher made note of anything of interest including referencing the analytic notes taken during the interview. The ideas, feelings, and perceptions expressed by one participant helped in the understanding and sense making from other participants and again assisted the researcher in identifying short phrases or words as apart of in vivo coding.

In vivo coding

In vivo coding employs the participants own words as a means for data analysis (Saldana & Omasta, 2018). Participant-generated sound bites allow the researcher to identify words or phrases that were prominent, meaningful, and reflective of the participant's lived experience with the ascribed phenomenon. In vivo coding was useful in highlighting the voices of participants as well as for its reliance on the participants themselves for giving meaning to the data.

Process coding

Process coding was used to identify the progression of the participant through the process of acculturation and re-acculturation. The process codes reflect the cycle portrayed in the W-curve model of cultural adjustment presented in Chapter 2 (Oberg, 1960). This model reflects approaching acculturation at the top of the first curve followed by the descent to acculturation at the bottom of the curve, to rise once again to approaching re-acculturation at the top of the second curve to once again drop to re-acculturation in the bottom of the second curve. Process coding was instrumental in identifying the place in each participant's sojourn in which the re-acculturation period began. Process codes included: (a) approaching acculturation, (b) acculturating, (c) approaching re-acculturation, and (d) re-acculturating. During process coding, the last stage of re-acculturation was further defined into four subprocess codes: (a) perspective taking, (b) meaning making, (c) applying, and (d) integrating. The identification and partitioning of this last process code is what led the researcher to further identify patterns that merged into some of the main themes described in Chapter 4.

Anchor coding

Anchor coding was used to link or anchor the participant's responses and emerging codes back to the research question. This was also used to confirm or support the previous process coding in identifying pertinent data as it led the researcher to a greater understanding of the

phenomenon. By considering the moments of approaching re-acculturation that led to beginning re-acculturation as a part of this step, the researcher was better able to use data reduction, as described by Miles and Huberman (1994), by selecting and focusing the data especially as it related to the statement of the problem and the overarching research question.

Emotion coding

Emotion coding was used to label or identify emotional states as described or recalled by the participants. Emotion codes were sometimes inferred or interpreted by the researcher.

After the coding and analysis phase of the research was completed, the synthesis phase began. During the synthesis phase, the researcher sought to make connections between aspects of the coding and analysis and the relevant literature and conceptual framework. Three emergent themes and patterns were identified. Outcomes and all relevant discoveries are articulated in the findings and conclusions sections of Chapters 4 and 5.

Limitations and Delimitations

This study is limited to participants selected from missionaries who have returned from serving full-time voluntary missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which may limit the generalizability of the findings of this study to other populations. Other aspects of missionary re-acculturation not evident in the LDS pool of participants might not be fully captured. The homogeneous nature of the selected participants and the small sample size of this study might also be considered limitations.

Summary

Through an in-depth study using interpretive phenomenological analysis as a methodology, various aspects of re-acculturation experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were uncovered and described. This transition or return to familiar surroundings as a part of re-entry is a process that may contain both positive and

negative elements for the returnee (Adler, 1981; Sussman, 2002; Uehara, 1986). Increased data about re-acculturation and re-entry, obtained through surveys and interviews about missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and their experience of returning home may provide a deeper understanding of the individual sojourner's experience while in transition and also benefit future return missionaries along with other populations struggling with re-acculturation and re-entry transition.

Chapter 4

Research Findings

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to gain insight into and understanding of the lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints during their re-entry and re-acculturation as they returned to secular living following full-time missionary service. To gain this understanding, interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) was used to answer the following research question:

What are the lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon returning home from serving a full-time voluntary religious mission?

The analytic process in IPA is characterized by flexibility in allowing codes to emerge from the data as well as an attention toward participants' attempts to make sense of their experiences (Smith et al., 2012). The analysis was iterative in nature and drew upon the following strategies:

- A close line-by-line analysis of the experiences, concerns, and personal understandings of each participant as reflected in the verbatim transcription of the in-person interviews and the analytic notes taken with the Livescribe pen.
- The use of in vivo coding, process coding, emotion coding, anchor coding, descriptive coding, value coding, attribute coding, and selective coding helped in the identification of emergent patterns, which then converge into one overarching theme supported by two subthemes.

Attribute Coding of Participants

A table has been created below that shows the attributes of each of the 10 selected participants that were interviewed. Attributes include: gender, frequency of the aspects of transition as proposed by the theoretical framework and collected on the survey, the place they

left from to serve their mission, the place they returned to after completing their missionary service, their age at the start of their mission, the length of their missionary service, the amount of time that had transpired since they returned home, their native language, their mission language, and the years in which they completed their missionary service. Pseudonyms have been assigned to protect the identity of the participants.

Table 4.1

Attribute Coding of Interviewed Participants

| | Participant (Gender) | Freq. | Left From | Returned To | Age at start of mission | Length of Service in months | Time since return In years | Mission | Native Language | Mission Language | Years Served |
|----|----------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Asher (Male) | High | UT | UT | 19 | 24 | 5 | Kiev, UKR | EL | Ukrainian | 2011-2013 |
| 2 | Frank (Male) | Ping Pong | ID UT | ID UT | 20 63 | 24 18 | 61 15 | Central States, USA; Kirtland, OH, USA | EL EL | English English | 1955-1957 2002-2003 |
| 3 | Melissa (Female) | Mod. | AZ | AZ | 20 | 18 | 4 | Bangkok, TH | EL | Thai | 2013-2014 |
| 4 | Jergen (Male) | Low | ID | ID | 19 | 24 | 20 | Rostov-na-donu, RU | EL | Russian | 1996-1998 |
| 5 | Cambria (Female) | Ping Pong | UT | UT | 23 | 18 | 39 | Houston, TX | EL | English | 1978-1979 |
| 6 | Josie (Female) | Low | UT | UT | 21 | 18 | 34 | Cocha Bamba, Bolivia; Lima, Peru | EL | Spanish | 1983-1984 |
| 7 | Delbert (Male) | Mod. | UT | UT | 63 | 18 | 6 | Lubumbashi, DCR | EL | French | 2011-2012 |
| 8 | Holly (Female) | High | UT | UT | 19 | 18 | .33 | Lubbock, TX | EL | English | 2016-2017 |
| 9 | Philo (Male) | Outlier | NZ | NZ | 19 | 24 | 8 | Tokyo, JP | EL | Japanese | 2003-2005 |
| 10 | Leslie (Female) | Outlier | ID | ID | 22 | 18 | 23 | London, ENG | EL | English | 1994-1995 |

Emotion Coding

In particular, emotion coding helped to bring to light the missionaries' unique understanding and expression of their individual lived experience as reflected through emotional context. Emotion coding was especially helpful in supporting common and contrasting aspects of the missionaries' collective experiences. Listed below are the main emotion codes, which emerged from the data.

Table 4.2

Main Emotion Codes

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Ambivalence | Fearful | Regret |
| Anger | Frustration | Resilience |
| Anticipation | Fondness | Relief |
| Anxiety | Grateful | Reluctance |
| Awkward | Grief | Reservation |
| Bitter sweet | Happiness | Resistance |
| Belonging | Hope | Resignation |
| Bereavement | Humility | Sadness |
| Blessed | Inadequacy | Scared |
| Compassion | Indebtedness | Self-Awareness |
| Confidence | Independence | Self-doubt |
| Confusion | Introspection | Shame |
| Concern | Loneliness | Skepticism |
| Delicate | Loss | Stupidity |
| Desire | Love | Tethered |
| Desperation | Mourning | Uncaring |
| Disappointment | Nervousness | Understanding |
| Disobedient | Optimism | Uncertainty |
| Disorientation | Overwhelmed | Unknown |
| Empathy | Pain | Unprotected |
| Excitement | Powerless | Unworthiness |

Themes

A series of themes emerged from the analysis and synthesis of the 10 face-to-face interviews. Codes and categories were reduced into two subthemes. Following the identification of the subthemes the researcher detected a reoccurring pattern or process. This led the researcher to identify an additional overarching theme. Both of the aforementioned subthemes supported the

revelation of the larger overarching theme, which in turn substantiated each subtheme. Due to their iterative nature, the subthemes and overarching theme are presented in the order in which they were first uncovered. Where possible, the missionaries' exact statements and phrases are used to highlight and support the thematic development.

Subtheme 1: Lack of Connection. Each of the ten participants expressed experiencing feelings of a loss of connection after returning home from their missionary service. Each participant described instances where they experienced a lack of connection with others and their surroundings including family, friends, their host culture, their home culture, their companions, and even their connection with God.

As previously noted in Chapter 2, students returning from study abroad programs often experience feelings of disconnection or isolation (“UNC Dealing with Culture Shock,” n.d.). The University Study Abroad Consortium, a nonprofit study abroad provider along with other American universities, have published statements about reverse culture shock and the possible side effects that might be experienced by their students after returning home from studying abroad (“USAC Re-entry,” 2018; “University of Iowa Reverse Culture Shock,” n.d.; “Penn State Global Support,” 2019). Missionaries and study abroad students often experience similar challenges as they adjust to their home culture after being away.

At present, Pennsylvania State University (PSU) offers over 240 different global study abroad programs. As a part of their global support, they offer strategies for successful re-entry. PSU offers this advice and support for its students during their re-acculturation:

Welcome back! So, you have successfully completed your study abroad program and have returned home. Chances are you had an incredible time in your host country and experienced tremendous personal and academic growth. Now that you're back, you may have noticed that you are feeling disoriented or disconnected from your friends and

family. Don't worry—that's normal! It's known as “reverse culture shock,” and it could take a few months to adjust back to life in the U.S. (“Penn State Global Support,” 2019, para. 1)

Study abroad programs are generally of shorter duration than the 18-24 months served by LDS missionaries. Yet, the occurrence and reoccurrence of this subtheme demonstrated that disconnection as a part of LDS missionary re-acculturation mirrors what is described in Chapter 2 and in this chapter as reverse culture shock.

Lack of connection with family. A lack of connection was observed within different areas of the missionaries’ life after returning home. The lack of connection with family was evident as an aspect that was tied to disappointment, worry, and grief. Frank described feelings of disconnection from his family after returning from his first mission and while serving his second mission. He expressed feelings of disappointment in not being allowed to help his daughter after she had twins. Even after serving a previous mission, he seemed surprised at these new feelings of disconnection.

Table 4.3

Lack of Connection with Family

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Frank | The hard thing is when you go on your mission you can't be a part of your family. I mean you can be a part by way of communication, but you can't be there for the physical support. Our daughter had in vitro and had twins while we were on our mission in Kirtland. I just figured for sure that they'd let us go home for a couple of weeks. But they said no. | Lack of Connection |

Similarly, Cambria describes a “bittersweet” feeling coinciding with her return to home and family. She felt some disconnection from her family and did not want to make them feel bad but her “heart was still in Texas.” The complexity of Cambria’s feelings imparted both a lack of connection with her host culture, as she felt she had left her heart there and a lack of connection with her family because she really did not want to come home.

Table 4.4

Lack of Connection with Family

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Cambria | I really knew what I was doing, and I really knew I was making an impact and then you've got to end it. It was hard. It was a really bittersweet feeling. When you come home, oh you don't want to make your family feel bad, but it was like my heart was still in Texas. | Lack of Connection |

Leslie had some extenuating circumstances occur while serving her mission in London, England. Two of her sisters were killed in a tragic accident. She was notified through proper channels and was given the option to return home for their funerals and then return to missionary service. At the time of her service, church policy did not allow for missionaries serving overseas to be reassigned to their same field of labor if it was necessary to leave the mission for a family emergency such as a death of an immediate family member as happened in Leslie's case. If she chose to travel home for the funerals, she would be reassigned to a mission that would be in the United States. This policy helps to keep the travel costs down for missionaries since the Church covers the missionaries' travel costs to and from their field of labor. Due to the support offered by Leslie's mission president as well as some of her home congregation, the funds were obtained and the permission was granted for Leslie to fly home while still set apart as a missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, attend her sisters' funerals, and then fly back to England. This example provides an interesting context through which to view the subtheme of lack of connection. Leslie credits her ability to return home for their funerals as the catalyst for beginning the grieving process. She believes that postponing this would have caused bigger problems if she had waited until after completing her mission and returning home. In such a heartfelt way, she described how losing her two sisters was certainly a loss of connection. After she returned home again, and upon completing her mission, she saw how her family had been able to continue their grieving process at a quicker pace. Yet, she was feeling it "fresh again" because she was home and the loss of connection with her sisters was even more evident.

Table 4.5

Lack of Connection with Family

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Leslie | What I know is that if I hadn't come home and been part of that funeral, I don't know how I could have completed the mission as well, I don't know how I could have gotten some of that grieving process going, and it would have all been postponed. Maybe it would have all been shoved down. Which could have worked, but then it could mess you up later a little you know. I mean, I've heard that that's not good to do. It's not good to shove it down and not deal with it because then it comes out later and more negatively or not necessarily in the best ways. Whereas, where I came home, I still had some adjustments. There was, my family which had moved on for 6 months, where I hadn't because I hadn't been there. I was still grieving, but I wasn't there being part of the family. And they were adjusting to the family as it is now, and the losses and I'm still feeling it kind of fresh again because here I am in my house again, without these important people. There were big holes. Losing my sisters left two big holes. | Lack of Connection |

While Frank, Cambria, and Leslie described experiencing a lack of connection with their families, their examples also portrayed that this shift was something that could be regained over time. Mission rules, the creation of a mission family, and extenuating circumstances all assisted in the acknowledgement of feeling disconnected with their family of origin.

Lack of connection with friends. During the interview process, the lack of connection with friends was also noticeable as a part of missionary re-acculturation. Being away for 18 months to 2 years created part of the gap, but, additionally, the missionaries who were interviewed expressed their own feelings of being cut off, unknown, not understood, uncared for, abandoned, and independent. Asher described his lack of connection from those who had been his friends while he was serving a 2-year mission in Kiev, Ukraine. Asher's poignant narrative depicts an overwhelming sense of loneliness. He is vulnerably aware of feeling disconnected from those around him. He expressed his deep sensitivity of not feeling understood and a prodigious sense of not being known.

Table 4.6

Lack of Connection with Friends

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Asher | I was fairly popular in high school. I had friends that I would hang out with all the time. But when I was on my mission, I felt kind of disconnected. (When I came home) I didn't have any friends. | Lack of Connection |
| Asher | But there was this feeling of disconnection with people I had known before [but now] there was this feeling of they don't know me anymore. | Lack of Connection |
| Asher | I was a person that they didn't know, and I felt like they weren't taking the time or giving themselves the chance to get to know me again. | Lack of Connection |
| Asher | When I went to school, I was still lonely because I didn't have any friends and I felt so different and I didn't feel like I connected to anybody and I lived in this entire differently world. | Lack of Connection |
| Asher | I didn't feel like anybody understood me | Lack of Connection |
| Asher | I knew it was impossible for people to really know this is what I went through. | Lack of Connection |
| Asher | I was desperate for somebody to talk to and be friends with and to feel like they cared about me | Lack of Connection |

Melissa's portrayal of feeling disconnected from friends was not as strong as Asher's, yet still a noticeable aspect of her re-acculturation.

Table 4.7

Lack of Connection with Friends

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Melissa | I didn't have the same dependencies on people, I felt very independent in my relationships with my friends, | Lack of Connection |

Cambria explains her feelings about saying goodbye to those she taught and baptized as she prepared to leave the mission field. These were friends that she had fellowshiped and prayed for while serving her mission in Texas. Part of her lament concerning this lack of connection stemmed from her realization that she most likely would never see them again. Later, after arriving home, Cambria expressed her feelings about her mission coming to an end and feeling like a part of her "heart was still in Texas."

Table 4.8

Lack of Connection with Friends

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Cambria | The hardest goodbyes are not always your companions you know, they are but, it's the people you baptize, and you see that have grown in the church and the people you've prayed for the one's you've taught how to pray. I mean that is a very, very hard goodbye because you don't know if you're ever going to see them again. | Lack of Connection |

Delbert revealed his loss of connection with his friends in the host culture where he served in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He admitted that he did not miss some of the other aspects of the host culture such as the lack of warm water and electricity. His thoughts and feelings also reflected his belief that the people who became his friends during his missionary service were well worth the socioeconomic hardships he endured.

Table 4.9

Lack of Connection with Friends

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Delbert | Yeah, yeah, even today we miss them. It didn't take me long to get accustomed to being able to take a warm shower and having the water work all the time and having the power on all the time. [chokes up] we miss them | Lack of Connection |

Lack of connection with companions. Having a companion by your side for almost every minute of every day during the entire mission and then almost at once having that companionship severed can seem like an abrupt change. Feeling suddenly alone, disconnected, afraid, and unsupported were just a few of the feelings described by the missionaries interviewed during this study. Young adult LDS missionaries are assigned missionary companions of the same gender with whom they serve during their mission. Senior LDS missionary couples serve with their spouses as their companions for the duration of their missionary service. Latter-day Saint missionaries are required to abide by strict standards of conduct during their missionary service. One such standard concerning companions is described here:

Stay Together. Never be alone. It is extremely important that you stay with your companion at all times. Staying together means staying within sight and hearing of each other. The only times you should be separated from your assigned companion are when you are in an interview with the mission president, on a companion exchange, or in the bathroom. Never make exceptions to this standard for activities that seem innocent but take you away from each other, including being in different rooms in the same building or in a home. Situations that seem harmless at the beginning can quickly lead to serious problems. ("Missionary conduct," 2010)

After serving in Cocha Bamba, Bolivia and Lima, Peru as an LDS missionary and observing the standard explained above for 18 months with her assigned companions, Josie described her adjustment upon returning home and her feelings of a lack of connection because her parents were giving her space and she no longer had a companion.

Table 4.10

Lack of Connection with Companions

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Josie | I remember feeling so alone. Really, really alone because you're used to having a companion all the time. And kind of my parents were giving me space, but it took a good 6 months for me to not to (pause), (sigh) A good six months for me to not look around for my companion. | Lack of Connection |

Melissa's illustrations were less extreme but also depicted the anxiety she experienced when she suddenly realized she was alone while shopping with her father and without her companion. She had returned home and been released from her missionary service, but the daily pattern set on her mission was still engrained and tough to break. Even being in her room by herself created some anxiety because she had not been alone for 18 months.

Table 4.11

Lack of Connection with Companions

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Melissa | We went to get food and my dad went to a different aisle and I freaked out. I was like, don't leave me. Don't leave me places. | Lack of Connection |
| Melissa | I just felt like I had to be with somebody and when I'm like alone by myself in my own room I'm just looking around like, what's going on. | Lack of Connection |

Cambria described her feelings of separation from her companion after coming home as if she was “disobeying a commandment.” She also described feelings of looking over her shoulder and thinking, “Where is my companion?”

Table 4.12

Lack of Connection with Companions

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Cambria | Um, well it felt weird to go places by myself. I was very uncomfortable; I was hauling my sister with me everywhere. My first date was horrible. I just felt like I was disobeying a commandment or something because I wasn't with my companion. | Lack of Connection |
| Cambria | I always felt like I was looking over my shoulder, where is my companion because that is such a strong rule and for good reasons, you know. | Lack of Connection |

Josie remembers her feelings of disconnection and being alone. She reminisces that it took her six months for her to not “look around” for her companion. Philo also describes his feelings of loneliness and fear of being left on his own and feeling alone all the time.

Table 4.13

Lack of Connection with Companions

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Josie | In the days that followed, I remember feeling so alone. Really, really alone because you're used to having a companion all the time. And my parents were kind of giving me space, but it took a good six months for me to not look around for my companion. | Lack of Connection |
| Philo | Then my mom was like, okay I'm running to the store and I'm like, wait don't leave me. I can't be by myself. And my mom's like, yes you can you're released now. And I'm like, but I didn't want to be left alone, [you] definitely feel like you're alone. You just feel alone, all the time. | Lack of Connection |

It was interesting to assimilate the descriptions of feeling lost without their companions as provided by the participants. These thoughts and portrayals conveyed a clear sense of vulnerability.

Lack of connection with the host culture. Adopting some of the customs and practices of the host culture is one of the observable behaviors assigned to acculturation. As mentioned earlier, acculturation precedes re-acculturation. Sometimes missionaries can become so enmeshed in their newfound culture that leaving the people, customs, and language behind provides a severing of what was and now is. This realization of a lack in connection with the host culture is evident in the excerpts that follow.

Jergen recognized a lack in connection as he traveled home from his mission in Russia through Lithuania. During a layover in the Lithuania airport, he recognized his first feelings of disconnection from his host culture when he was mistaken for a native Russian. While to some being mistaken as a native of their host culture might serve as a means of connection, for Jergen it revealed that, while to others he might appear to be native Russian, in fact, he was not. This experience substantiated Jergen's early feelings of a lack of connection.

Table 4.14

Lack of Connection with the Host Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Jergen | We took the train from Rostov back to Moscow and then we took the plane. We had a layover in Vilnius, Lithuania. Lithuania had been terribly oppressed by the Soviets. They were one of the first to break off during the collapse in the early 90s, and I remember in the airport there we only had a half an hour. I went to get some food, and I knew they didn't speak English, and I didn't speak Lithuanian, so I tried my Russian and I simply ordered some food in Russian, and you would think I had cast the worst insult that I could've hurled at them and they gave me these dirty and angry looks. | Lack of Connection |

Melissa described similar feelings of disconnection with her host culture after arriving home, which coincided, with her amazement at the lack of people, the unfamiliar sounds, and more luxurious homes.

Table 4.15

Lack of Connection with the Host Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Melissa | In Thailand you just got really used to hearing motorcycles and cars and so many motors all the time. And I got to America and I thought it's so quiet here. Where are all the people, why aren't they on the streets and like, oh they have a home with a roof. Yeah, so walking even just on sidewalks, going to parks, anywhere that people would normally be in. | Lack of Connection |

Asher shared his thoughts about how he experienced feeling charity from and for those he served in the Ukraine. He also expressed his surprise that this feeling was not present in his home culture after his return. He voiced his disappointment as he witnessed a lack of charity, respect, and caring. Once again, the theme of lack of connection was substantiated as Asher sought to re-acclurate to his home culture where people seemed the opposite of what he had come to expect.

Table 4.16

Lack of Connection with the Host Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Asher | I had spent 2 years getting, and I thought I had succeeded and gotten charity. And now people just didn't care about other people. And people were driving on the street and they would speed around everybody and go really fast and be really dangerous, let alone making somebody else get somewhere slower or make their driving worse. But they were being reckless and then there's a lack of respect and caring, just for people around you. And it's not like they had to all go out and serve missions. I didn't expect that from anybody, but I hoped that people would be good and kind and just care about people around them. | Lack of Connection |

In another example, Asher articulated how his profound loss of connection with his host culture would never be restored. He shared his despair of knowing that he would not be going back and that when he left his mission that connection was lost forever.

Table 4.17

Lack of Connection with the Host Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Asher | There's so much loss. I think it's hard to realize and you realize in some ways, but you don't really at the time, but there is so much that is lost, there's so much that is gone, and I think maybe a lot of it is dealing with it. You can never get those things back, but you have to move forward with just what you have instead. Because if you go on your mission you know its temporary and yeah you miss your family, you miss your place or what you did, but you always know that you are going back to it, but when you leave your mission its lost forever, so what you did is what you did and what you got was what you got. | Lack of Connection |

Lack of connection with the home culture. The severing between host culture and home culture is also evident from the opposite perspective. The enmeshment that can happen during missionary service can also create a feeling of lacking connection with the missionary's home culture after their return.

In a light-hearted way, Jergen described his initial feelings of disconnection from his home culture as he ventured out to the supermarket on an errand for his mother to buy cheese. He was surprised that there were over 100 kinds of cheese for sale. This indicated a loss of connection with something as simple as knowing what was available for sale at the supermarket in his home culture. He had been away for some time and had become disconnected with familiar abundances of home. In the second excerpt, Jergen again recognizes his lack of connection from the host culture and the "reverse culture shock" that "coming home" or re-aculturating was. He could see that it was harder to return home than arriving in the mission field had been. He stated that he was "homesick" for the host culture.

Table 4.18

Lack of Connection with the Home Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Jergen | I remember my mom asked me to go to the store and buy some cheese. I said, okay no problem. I go to the store and I get there, and I don't know what to do because there's a hundred different kinds of cheese and I'm used to going into the store and you get what they've got. And you're glad if they have cheese at all. [laughs] And my mom sends me to the store, and I go to Albertsons and they have a hundred different kinds of cheese and I don't know which one to get! | Lack of Connection |
| Jergen | But coming home the reverse culture shock was very strong for me. It was a lot harder to come home than it was to adjust to going there. In fact, I was even a little bit homesick coming home. I wasn't home sick going there, but I was a little bit homesick coming home. It was a lot harder coming back than it was going, to adjust. | Lack of Connection |

Melissa expressed confusion in adapting to her home culture after she returned home from her mission to find that she had changed but her home culture had not changed with her. This surprised her as well as caused some discomfort in adjusting to her new home. It is also clear evidence of a lack of connection with her home culture.

Table 4.19

Lack of Connection with the Home Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Melissa | I changed so much, and I came back to a place that felt like it was supposed to change with me, but it didn't. | Lack of Connection |

In support of this same theme, Holly described her feelings of things at home having changed and not being the same after her return. Yet she expected that things would not be the same instead of being surprised by the change.

Table 4.20

Lack of Connection with the Home Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Holly | It's very, very different. And it's in a completely different setting too. You just really cannot expect it to be the same. | Lack of Connection |

Lastly, Josie recalled feelings of confusion as her recently gained fluency in her host culture's language provided some struggle in fully connecting with her home culture because much of her vocabulary was now in Spanish. Imagine her discomfort as she sought to express herself in her native tongue to find that the words that came to mind were in that of her mission language.

Table 4.21

Lack of Connection with the Home Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Josie | There are some words that are in my brain more in Spanish then they are in English. | Lack of Connection |

Lack of connection with God. Missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are set apart by a laying on of hands before entering the Missionary Training Center and departing for their missions. During this setting apart, it is believed that an extra measure of the Lord's Spirit is conferred upon the missionary. When an LDS missionary returns, they are released as a missionary. Many of the missionaries who were interviewed described this release as accompanied by a feeling of a lack of connection with God.

Table 4.22

Lack of Connection with God

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Cambria | Oh, it was horrible, it's horrible, horrible to be released. Especially if you've served a great mission and you've had a great experience, you know. And I mean, it took me a really long time to take my nametag off and that is probably the hardest part of it all, is to have that mantle taken away. | Lack of Connection |
| Jergen | But we got home and first thing we did when we got home was call the stake president and he said come see me first thing in the morning and I remember him extending a release to me and physically felt like taking off armor, like I had a protection on me and I felt that come off of me. It's one of those things that you don't know what you've got until it's gone. I didn't realize it was there until it wasn't, and I could feel it coming off of me. | Lack of Connection |
| Leslie | I just remember gradually feeling different like I didn't have that mantle | Lack of Connection |
| Holly | Yeah. I expected it to be a lot harder. I've heard of several missionaries like actually feel the mantle being lifted. I didn't feel it necessarily all at once, but it was like, it was a few days after when I started going to the store with my mom and everything and I was looking at people and I was just thinking, that's not my calling anymore. It wasn't immediately recognizable. | Lack of Connection |
| Philo | You can't do everything perfectly. It's, you know, but I've always been that person that's like, if you're perfect and you do everything right, nothing will ever go wrong and you'll be . . . so when things did go wrong, I was just like, I'm doing something wrong or I haven't done something right or, and I attributing stuff to that that you just, like oh my gosh. This is overwhelming, but I think, yeah like definitely feel like a portion is mission. But then at the same time, you're just like, I understand that that was part of the missionary mantel but now there's a void. | Lack of Connection |
| Josie | [When you come home], I think sometimes there's some bereavement and there's some mourning for the loss that takes place. I just tried to read my scriptures as much as I did on my mission. It was different when you are alone though. It was very different. | Lack of Connection |

Different words were used to describe this feeling of loss of the extra measure of the Lord's spirit given to LDS missionaries, namely, mantle, armor, protection, and loss. Each missionary was doing their best to describe this feeling of a lack of connection with God. This is one of the unique aspects of re-acculturation that seems to play an important role in missionary re-acculturation. Notice as well the use of words like "void," "bereavement," loss of a sense of "calling," and "feeling different." There was also a common theme in their depictions that included the portrayal of this loss, taking place over a period of time.

Subtheme 1: Connection. Many of the participants interviewed in this study also spoke about the importance that new connections played in their re-acculturation. They referred to these connecting experiences as strengthening and healing moments in their re-adjustment to home. Brené Brown, a professor at the University of Houston who has spent the past 17 years studying courage, vulnerability, shame, and empathy deems the key to building true belonging as maintaining our belief in human connection (Brown, 2017). As noted in Chapter 2, Nancy Schlossberg's (1981) conceptualization of transition assessment and how well an individual is able to cope with life transitions depicts the four S's: situation, self, support, and strategies. The aspects of support that she described included "social support," which is further defined as intimate, family unit, friendships, network, and institutional.

Connection with family. Frank shared that his first order of business after returning home from his mission was to go to work with his dad. He stated that this was an "important" thing to do.

Table 4.23

Connection with Family

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------|
| Frank | When I got home, the first thing I did was get a job on a farm. I think it was importation and I worked right along with my dad a lot. | Connection |

Connection with friends. Asher gave a clear description of forging a new friendship during his re-acculturation. His description shows recognition for another's struggle, and how her struggle was different, but also that because of their individual struggles they "clung together" and needed a connection. As was stated above in Asher's many expressions of loneliness and feelings of not being understood, this new connection seemed to be a turning point in him being able to move toward understanding and growth.

Table 4.24

Connection with Friends

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|------------|
| Asher | This one girl, who sat behind me. I think, I was struggling with a lot more maybe than she was I was struggling with some things in different ways. We just clung together and needed that | Connection |

Frank spoke about the connection he made with church members anywhere he was stationed in the military after returning from his mission in the Central states in the 1950s. The Church provided “instant friends” for Frank and his family. He attributes these new connections as helping him adjust.

Table 4.25

Connection with Friends

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------|
| Frank | Well, I'll tell you what. To be a member of the church it's absolutely amazing. I mean, we would get to a new assignment and all of our nonmember, because we had nonmember military people who would say, how come you're so well adjusted, you have all these friends? So, the church made a big difference as far as the military, you know moving and things. We had instant friends wherever we were stationed. | Connection |

Connection with host culture. Generally, LDS missionaries travel directly home after completing missionary service with other missionaries who are being released at the same time. Jergen had a different experience in part because his family had travelled to pick him up from his mission and he was in their care. Jergen described his unique opportunity to spend some time in Germany on his way home from serving in Russia. He was allowed to do some teaching there and was actually able to use his fluency with the Russian language to teach some Russians that were living in Germany at the time. This afforded Jergen a chance to stay connected to his host culture even after leaving his field of service. His mastery of the Russian language also helped in providing this opportunity.

Table 4.26

Connection with Host Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------|
| Jergen | I traveled home with my parents. I would have gone home in a group with the two of them, but with my family being there, they went on their own and I went with my family about at the same time. We stopped in Berlin on the way because my stake president who had set me apart as a missionary was now serving as a mission president in Leipzig. So, we spent a night in Berlin and then drove down to Leipzig and spent 2 or 3 days with them there. The missionaries there had an investigator there in East Germany there were still, at least at that time I haven't been back since, but at least at that time there were still a lot of Russians. So, the missionaries took me to a couple of places where they had investigators that didn't speak very much German and I was able to help them by speaking Russian to these people. And so that was a good experience. | Connection |

Connection with home culture. Melissa reminisced about rediscovering carpet and comfortable furniture as she became reacquainted with the luxuries of home. Her 10 months in Thailand had changed her view of what had been taken for granted during her time in her home culture prior to serving a mission.

Table 4.27

Connection with Home Culture

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|------------|
| Melissa | I rolled on the carpet. Because we didn't have carpet in Thailand. I just laid on it, just enjoying it. I sat on the couch for really long because they also don't really have comfortable couches. I was just like, the amount of comfort here is surreal. | Connection |

Connection with God. As mentioned earlier, many of the missionaries who were interviewed described their release as accompanied by a feeling of a lack of connection with God. Yet they also shared feelings of seeking to renew those same feelings of being connected to God after returning from their service and seeking to have this power in their daily lives.

Philo, who served his mission in Tokyo, Japan valued the spiritual connection he felt by receiving a calling immediately after returning home from his mission. Being called to serve as

the ward mission leader in his home congregation helped Philo used some of what he felt he had learned during his missionary service.

Table 4.28

Connection with God

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------|
| Philo | So, I was called as the ward mission leader when I got home. And I thought that was awesome, I really got to know the sister missionaries in our ward. | Connection |

Other missionaries who were interviewed also referred to the importance of receiving a calling to serve in their respective wards and branches as soon as possible after their return home. They described feelings of being needed and being worthy as a part of this new opportunity for connection.

Jergen described how his commitment to maintain his missionary study habits after returning home supported his desire to keep the spirit of the Lord with him.

Table 4.29

Connection with God

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------|
| Jergen | I maintained those morning study habits that were part of the mission rules, it was required to do that for 2 years, now I wasn't required to do anything. But I maintained those habits . . . and that made a huge difference [in having the spirit with me]. | Connection |

Melissa also advised that “keeping the spirit” came by maintaining the habits she had set on her mission. She offered this advice as a way for others who might be struggling with their own sense of a lack of connection with God as a means of keeping that connection strong.

Table 4.30

Connection with God

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------|
| Melissa | You have to pursue your life's work, your education you know. It's okay to not be a perfect missionary anymore, but still strive to keep the spirit by doing the things you should, the habits that you've made, like habits and keep them. So that's the main thing because I think a lot of people they're just like, I just don't feel the same, I don't feel that spirit anymore, I don't feel that closeness to God and like he's working in my life. | Connection |

Holly illustrated an additional pattern as a part of Subtheme 1, wherein a lack of connection was followed by connection and then again by a lack of connection. Her lack of connection with the “spirit” began gradually after removing her missionary nametag after her release from full-time missionary service. This was followed by a renewed reconnection with the spirit during Sabbath worship or scripture study, only to have feelings of disconnection with the spirit resurface again later. This pattern contrasted her feelings and experiences while serving her mission in Lubbock, Texas where she describes her connection with the spirit as “very, very high all the time.”

Table 4.31

Connection with God

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--|
| Holly | It wasn't immediately recognizable, just like when I took off my badge and when I was released. But I started to notice that I wasn't feeling the spirit all the time especially when I did. So, when I was at church it was like the best day in the world and I could feel it so strong and everything. And when I would read the book of Mormon it would be amazing, but then it would go so low like it was almost gone. That was something I was not used to. I was used to it being very, very high all the time. | Lack of Connection Connection Lack of Connection |

It is apparent by the example above that part of Holly's struggle in re-acculturation and transition had to do with the change in her feelings and perceptions concerning her closeness and connection to God. Returning to a secular lifestyle after becoming accustomed to the religiosity

and spiritual nature of a mission can be a difficult part of the re-entry process for a missionary (Madsen, 1977; Taylor, 2016).

These clear examples as expressed by the participants describe instances where they experienced a lack of connection with others including their connection with God, as well as seeking connections as a part of their re-acculturation process. Leaving the host culture, which had come to seem like home for a missionary, can be unsettling. Ellen Rosenberger has this advice for missionaries hoping to survive re-entry transition:

I think the hardest part of re-entry is dealing with grief. When we leave our host countries we are losing a lot . . . It can seem that we are losing experiences and memories. Grief over this great loss feels like a death that no one knows about, a grief that is happening inside, silently. It is a grief that doesn't get a funeral to be able to have closure and grieve with others. (Rosenberger, 2016, pp. 118-119)

Bereavement, fondness, loss, mourning, and grief were all emotions conveyed by missionary participants. These feelings were associated with a strong sense of detachment from individuals and their host country after leaving the mission field. The missionary participants who recognized their own grief over these losses and disconnections, and who initiated new connections with their home culture, began to recognize and define personal traits and characteristics that would serve as evidence of their personal growth and learning and begin to shape a new identity.

Subtheme 2: Learning/Growth and Identity. In the second identified subtheme, each of these four participants voiced experiencing feelings of learning and growth as well as a shift in their identity after returning home from their missionary service. One missionary stated, "The MTC prepares you to serve a mission, but serving a mission is the MTC for the rest of your life!" In other words, the missionary training center prepares you to teach church doctrine and

understand mission rules, proper interactions with those you will teach and live with and among, along with specific work within your assigned field of service, including language and customs. Then, what you learn and come to understand while serving your mission can prepare you for daily living upon your return and assist you throughout the remainder of your life.

Of the 10 missionaries interviewed, seven completed missionary service in foreign countries different from their home country, three served within their country of origin, and six were required to learn a language other than their native language. Regardless of whether they served abroad, in a neighboring state, or learned a new language, every missionary who was interviewed expressed and acknowledged feelings of learning, growth, and identity upon their return home. These feelings of learning, growth and identity were embedded within the before missionary service and after missionary service expressions by the participants. Each missionary described what they had learned, how they had grown, and how it had changed them. Because the examples cited below reveal this subtheme within each missionary's individual experience they will be presented individually as distinctive stand-alone examples with no subcategories.

Holly reflected on how a mission helped her develop the characteristics of being more confident and outgoing. She described how her actions were different in the same scenario of riding the train to work before and after completing her mission to Texas. Holly is aware of her own growth as she encounters a previously familiar act of riding public transportation before serving as a missionary. She is cognizant of her increased confidence in interacting with strangers after serving her mission. This is evidence of her learning, growth and contributed to her perception of who she was and who and was becoming.

Table 4.32

Learning/Growth and Identity

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------------------------|
| Holly | I was a lot more outgoing, I guess. I talked to a lot more people and was a lot more confident when I did talk to people. I rode the train a lot to go to work before my mission and I would just stick my earbuds in and that was it. | Learning/Growth and Identity |

Josie described her own learning, growth and identity as she described not only how she perceives peoples and diverse cultures as well as the effect that becoming fluent in Spanish had on her view of others and her own identity. She sees her learning and growth as “a blessing.” She recognizes that her view of the world has broadened, and she has come to understand that people from other cultures think and feel differently. But nowhere is her learning and growth more evident than in her decision to use her Spanish language skills daily and in working to keep the connection gained on her mission with God. Her fluent use of Spanish and her belief that in a way she might be considered Argentinian not American signals a shift in her own identity by her willingness to be identified with a culture other than her home culture.

Table 4.33

Learning/Growth and Identity

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|------------------------------|
| Josie | What a blessing to get to know diverse cultures and peoples and see that they think and feel differently. | Learning/Growth and Identity |
| Josie | I decided, when I returned from my mission that I would always pray in Spanish so that I would never lose that language that I had fought long and hard to gain. | Learning/Growth and Identity |
| Josie | So, I speak Spanish so fluently that sometimes people ask me where I’m from and I’ll always say Argentina because they have blonds in Argentina and they’ll believe me until we part and then I’ll say, I’m really from Utah. | Learning/Growth and Identity |

At the time of his interview, Frank had been home from serving his mission in the United States for over 61 years. Yet still evident and perhaps because of him having a longer time to

reflect on his re-acculturation, Frank identified the learning, growth and identity obtained through missionary service as pivotal in his choice of a career as well as being selected for high level security clearance within the armed forces. As reflected in his statement “I had no idea,” meaning Frank didn’t know that the three full colonels even knew he was a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints let alone a returned missionary. Yet, by this time Frank had assimilated all that he had learned, along with the ways he had grown, and what he had become. Evidence of his shift in identity was also marked by his emotional response as he expressed that he would not compromise who he had become.

Table 4.34

Learning/Growth and Identity

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|------------------------------|
| Frank | I can remember when I made the choice then to stay in the military, I wanted to go regular army because I was ROTC reserve and so I appeared before a panel of three full colonels and they interrogated me for about an hour and the first guy, the first colonel said, you’re going to this school where they teach you how to recruit and train and dispatch spies, and in reality, this would be the CIA type, only it’s the army. And so, I was in the corps and this guy said you’re LDS, you’re a returned missionary I had no idea you know. Yeah, you’re a returned missionary and what if you have to compromise yourself in order to have to recruit somebody and accomplish the mission? And I looked at him [pause] I looked at him [choked up] and I said, if I have to compromise my morals, you don’t want me. | Learning/Growth and Identity |

Some of Leslie’ learning, growth, and identity stemmed from the understanding and meaning she obtained as she processed the death of her sisters. She recognized this same need in others and described a willingness to do her part in processing what she could. This self-reflective process led her to become changed by what she was learning.

Table 4.35

Learning/Growth and Identity

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|------------------------------|
| Leslie | I can just tell you from my experiences and from what I feel and think about, and from what I had experienced with so many people, grief is important to deal with when it's fresh, at least to deal with as much as you can in your situation. | Learning/Growth and Identity |

Overarching Theme: Perspective Taking/Meaning Making/Application and Integration. Following the identification of the two main subthemes, the researcher detected a reoccurring pattern or process. This led to the identification and description of an additional overarching theme. The researcher noticed a cyclical pattern emerge repeatedly from each interview which included examples and descriptions provided by the missionaries about individual shifts in perspective wherein they compared themselves before their mission, acknowledged the learning and growth that had occurred during their sojourn in the host culture and compared the “old me” to the “new me” after their return. In every case, this “perspective taking” mode was brought on by the missionaries’ return to their home culture. Following perspective taking came the “meaning making.” This is where the missionaries sought to assess, value and adjust their understanding of what they had experienced and sought to make meaning of the new interpretation of what they had learned.

Quite often in the interviews the researcher observed this cycle of perspective taking and meaning making repeat itself. At times there was a struggle to make “application” and allow integration to take place. As is evident in the last example cited with Frank, it is obvious that his words not only reflected his learning/growth/and identity, but also that his ability to integrate what he has learned into daily living had taken place. Many excerpts shared above could be used to support the elaboration of this theme. In addition, the following three examples seem to rise to the top as they portray the final overarching theme.

In the following examples, Delbert describes this transformative process of perspective taking, meaning making, application and integration. Delbert served his mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. He served as a senior missionary at the age of 63. Prior to his experience in the Congo, Delbert had only travelled outside the United States one time on a short trip to Mexico. In the first excerpt from the original transcript Delbert undergoes self-examination as he illustrates his shift from the old me to the new me as he describes being homesick for home while in the Congo, but then being homesick for the Congo after arriving home. Delbert's perspective of what is "home" had shifted. Delbert's feelings about home also reflect the ideas of Szkudlarek (2010) when he wrote:

While sojourners may undergo profound personal transformation during transition, they also learn and internalize a new spectrum of behavior responses, which are expected from them in the host-environment. Consequently, some of the home-country learned behaviors are forgotten and replaced by the host-country equivalent. As a result, the returning individuals have to relearn social skills often disregarded during their time abroad and regain familiarity with a set of home-country norms and behaviors.

(Szkudlarek, 2010, p. 4)

This researcher observed repeatedly among participants that not only were new spectrums of behavior responses learned during the missionaries' sojourns, there was less of a desire to relearn those skills once they returned to their home culture and more of a desire to integrate and adopt the learning and growth they had achieved during their sojourn as a part of their daily living and re-acculturation.

The second excerpt depicts Delbert's shift to meaning making. Not only has his adaptation to new culture provided insight for living, but after his return home, he assigned value and meaning to some of the differences in his home culture. Delbert's ability to assess his own

sociocultural assumptions prepared him to act upon this new insight. He was supportive of his African family learning English for business but did not want them to adopt the cynical stance of his home culture.

The third excerpt begins the shift to application. Delbert identifies the characteristic of humility in his words “They have almost nothing. . . . They were so grateful for almost anything they had. I think that was a surprise to me that they could be that happy. And their life is hard.” Underneath this thought as it is applied to Delbert’s own re-acculturation is: “My life is easy compared to theirs; I should be able to be happy too!” Delbert is not only assessing what he has learned; perspective taking, comparing it to his own circumstances and home culture, meaning making he is now exploring and trying on a new role as well as building competence and self confidence in the changes he is making.

In the last excerpt, Delbert sums up his true feelings which notes a shift in identity and an integration of not just new knowledge and understanding but a also a revised interpretation of the meaning of his own experience to guide his future action.

This is probably because of my accountant nature, that everything has to be documented and proven. . . . You can’t prove spiritual things. . . . When we were there as set-apart missionaries we were much more susceptible to that. It’s a lot easier to forget that when you get back into the world.

Delbert has reintegrated into his life this new grasp of meaning on the basis of his shift in perspective and the meaning it now has in his life. The pattern of this last overarching theme repeated itself over and over again in interview after interview. Sometimes it shifted back and forth between perspective taking and meaning making several times before application and integration were incorporated.

Table 4.36

Perspective Taking/Meaning Making/Application and Integration

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|---|--------------------|
| Delbert | But just coming home was really a wonderful experience because everybody wanted us to come home. And it's interesting, when we were in Congo we were homesick for home. Things that reminded us of home would make us a little choked up and a little bit homesick. But then when we got home, we got homesick for Africa. | Perspective Taking |
| Delbert | Oh, just the beautiful people. It's just...so, so beautiful. So, so, they're almost pure, so faithful. I mean, they don't have anything and so they have their faith. They're happier than we are. They would say in the English club, English class, they'd say, oh we want to go the America, we want to be like Americans. And we'd say, no you don't, you don't. Yes, you do need to learn English because it is the language of business and if you want to be successful in business you need to know English, it's the language you need to know, but don't become cynical and doubting like Americans. | Meaning Making |
| Delbert | They have almost nothing. They have the gospel and that was important to them. Those that were really converted, and most of them were, some of them weren't, but not too many, but they had the gospel and they had their faith and they were so grateful for anything they had. That's, I think that was a surprise to me that they could be that happy. And their life is hard. | Application |
| Delbert | Yeah, and it's, I just, I think if there was one thing it was just, and I think we tend, I tend to be, this is probably because of my accountant nature, that everything has to be documented and proven. And you have to be able to see it and you have to have the backup documents to prove it. You can't prove spiritual things. You just can't prove, I mean they're real and when we were there as set-apart missionaries we were much more susceptible to that. It's a lot easier to forget that when you get back into the world. We were protected from the world on the mission. I think most missionaries are. | Integration |

Jergen, who served in Russia during the 1990s, offers another clear example of the final theme of as he describes the process he underwent as he considered his changed view of money and its worth. In the first excerpt, Jergen compares the equivalency of 950,000 Russian rubles to 200 U.S. dollars. He then examines himself and what he has to live on when he compares his \$200 a month living allowance to the \$40 a month some of his investigators lived on. Through his own critical assessment, this description shows a shift in Jergen's perspective about money.

The second excerpt demonstrates how Jergen continues to make meaning of his new-found perspective. Jergen's assessment of what he threw away was also something that would

also feed another hungry person. He tried to throw better things away so that the person going through his garbage would have something good to eat. This provided the basis for greater intergroup understanding as he clearly demonstrated empathy as a part of his actions.

Application of Jergen's new understanding and altered meaning is evident in two separate examples. The first evidence of Jergen's application and integration of his new perspective is evident in his description of his sister "eating half of her dinner and throwing the rest in the garbage," followed by his emphatic exclamation, "What are you doing!" These statements when viewed within the context of Jergen's previous expressions about the disparity in monthly living expenses between missionaries and locals, along with him actually throwing away better garbage so those scavenging for food would have something better to eat, and now an exclamation of distress after his sister threw away perfectly good food that will not end up feeding anyone, clearly shows the transformational learning and growth that has occurred. This is evidence of Jergen's exploration and seeking to implement provisional roles and increase self confidence in these new roles.

The second example, which provides evidence of application, is Jergen's description of his father's desire to travel from Idaho to Russia to "pick him up" from his mission visit the host culture and then return home together. The price tag of \$20,000.00 seemed abhorrent to Jergen. "I'd been serving these people that didn't have anything and I couldn't see my dad spending 20,000 dollars to go on a trip to come and get me" and then his disappointment and powerlessness when after communicating his feelings about his father coming, he did it anyway. "I was upset, but they came anyway." Once again, this example provides evidence of Jergen's exploration and seeking to implement provisional roles and increase self-confidence even though his wishes were not followed Jergen asserted his new found understanding about the value of money and its uses especially within the context of rubles to dollars and Russians to Americans.

Lastly, Jergen reveals true integration as he reflects on his past missionary service and his current life:

It really was the best 2 years up to that point of my life. I learned and grew more in those 2 years than the previous 19 combined. It shaped me and directed the rest of my life, the 20 years that will follow. At my point in life now, a mission is right in the middle.

These words reflect the final overarching theme of this research in such a profound way. In his words, there is evidence of his learning, his growth, and a shift in his identity. Also manifest in this narrative is his perspective taking, his meaning making, his application and most expressly, his integration.

Table 4.37

Perspective Taking/Meaning Making/Application and Integration

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Jergen | I was living on 950 rubles a month. 950 thousand, which almost made me a millionaire, but it was roughly the equivalent of \$200.00. And I was teaching people who were living on \$40.00 a month. | Perspective Taking |
| Jergen | I'd spent 2 years watching my back window as old ladies dug through the trash to get food. Occasionally I would throw food away, so they would have something good to find. | Meaning Making |
| Jergen | And I see my sister eating half of her dinner and throwing the rest in the garbage and I'm like, what are you doing?! | Application |
| Jergen | I was really against it because my dad spent \$20,000 to come visit and here I'd been serving these people that didn't have anything and I couldn't see my dad spending \$20,000 to go on a trip to come and get me and I was upset, but they came anyway | Application |
| Jergen | It really was the best 2 years up to that point of my life. I learned and grew more in those 2 years than the previous 19 combined. It shaped me and directed the rest of my life, the 20 years that will follow. At my point in life now, a mission is right in the middle. | Integration |

In this third and final example, Leslie described the thoughts and feelings that surrounded her sisters' deaths and her opportunity to return home for their funerals. Leslie poignantly expresses the events including time with her family and friends, the funeral services, and how meaningful it was to be allowed to return and finish her mission.

In the first excerpt, Leslie described those tender moments alone with her family and her sisters' bodies as they prayed for a clearer perspective during this tragic time in their lives. In the next excerpt, Leslie derives her own meaning and how this "final opportunity to express love to the only tangible part" left of her sisters contributed to her own healing process.

In the third and fourth excerpts, Leslie begins to make application of what she is learning, and the comfort derived from the support derived from others. She also shared how her presence and opportunity to speak and testify at the funeral assisted in her experiencing a confirmation that her sisters lived on.

The researcher was moved by Leslie's final description and powerful portrayal of being allowed to return home and how this allowed her to begin the grieving process and begin her healing. She also expresses being able to "put away denial" and witness Christ's love. She expressed her gratefulness for experiencing in a profound and real way what she had been teaching on her mission. While she recognized the challenges that faced her just one week later as she returned to England, she had begun integrating what she had come to know through this experience and completed her missionary service in England.

Table 4.38

Perspective Taking/Meaning Making/Application and Integration

| Participant | Original Transcript | Theme |
|-------------|--|--------------------|
| Leslie | My family spent time in the viewing room with the bodies of my sisters before others came and we prayed and held hand and knew for ourselves that, [through tears] that the spirits of our loved ones were somewhere else. | Perspective Taking |
| Leslie | Seeing their bodies was for me a powerful realization of this and a final opportunity to express love to the only tangible part of them which we had. It all contributed to the healing process for me. A funeral has an amazing spirit about it when carried out in the right way. | Meaning Making |
| Leslie | What a source of comfort to grieve openly with loved ones. Some of them had driven far to pay their respects. So many friends and church members had been so gracious, and I truly felt the presence of my two sisters at that special meeting. | Application |
| Leslie | I gave my talk at the funeral and strengthened others who saw my presence as a missionary at home as a testimony of the importance of the family in God's plan | Application |
| Leslie | For me, having the choice to go home and return gave me the tools I needed to begin grieving and start healing. A natural process which I know has to happen, but for me so far away it wasn't even starting. I was able to put away denial and face the reality instead of putting it off completely. I witnessed the pure love of Christ through countless acts of service from neighbors, church members, and friends. I felt answers to my prayers and the prayers of others on behalf of parents and surviving sisters during this time when family members are so close and need one another. Upon returning to England a week later I faced many challenges, but I knew my sisters were cheering me on and other's prayers were felt, and I completed an honorable mission and I felt happy about this. It was important to me to finish my mission, but I don't know how I would have coped, or what would have happened had I not come home, or if that opportunity had never been presented. I'm grateful for the opportunity to do what I felt was right and to be allowed to return and complete my mission. | Integration |

The experiences described by Delbert, Jergen, and Leslie provide clear examples of the depiction of the culminating and overarching theme which included the cyclical pattern of perspective taking, meaning making, application and integration. The shifts in perspective, wherein missionaries compared themselves before their mission, acknowledged the learning and growth that had occurred during their sojourn in the host culture and compared the old me to the new me after their return are evident in the examples provided above. In every case, this perspective taking mode was brought on by the missionaries' return to their home culture. The

processes of perspective taking and meaning making provided the context wherein application and integration could occur.

Summary

In answering the research question concerning understanding lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon returning home from serving a full-time voluntary religious mission, ten 1.5- to 2-hour interviews gave rise to two subthemes and one overarching theme. These themes described patterns that were evident in each of the missionaries' narrative of their personal re-acculturation experiences after returning home from full-time missionary service. Each of the 10 participants described a myriad of emotions that revealed patterns of connection and lack of connection. The rich experiences expressed by those interviewed also articulated a progression of learning and growth, followed by a shift in each of the participants' identities as a part of their re-acculturation experiences which characterized the second subtheme. Participants also made clear an overarching theme which included the cycle of perspective taking, meaning making, application, and integration that in turn was supported by the two previously identified subthemes. The cycle put forth in the final overarching theme also exhibit several common facets of Mezirow's (1991) 10 phases of transformative learning, of what they had experienced and sought to "make meaning" of the new interpretation of what they had learned. Chapter 5 will provide an integrated portrayal of the findings and recommendations that are a result of the analysis and synthesis of the transcription of these 10 face to face interviews and their thematic development.

Chapter 5

Findings and Recommendations

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to gain insight into and understanding of the lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints during their re-entry and re-acculturation as they return to secular living following full-time missionary service. The discussion contained in this chapter helps answer the broad central research question of this study: What are the lived experiences of missionaries of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon returning home from serving a full-time voluntary religious mission?

This chapter includes a discussion of the major findings and recommendations as they relate to the literature on acculturation, re-acculturation, transition theory, and missionary re-acculturation and transition. The major findings as described in Chapter 4 included:

- Subtheme 1: Lack of Connection/Connection
- Subtheme 2: Learning/Growth/Identity
- Overarching Theme: Perspective Taking/Meaning Making/Application and Integration

The connections these findings have to transformational learning theory will also be included as a part of this discussion. Chapter 5 will conclude with the limitations of this study, followed by areas of further possible research, and a brief summary.

A model that reflects the collective illustration of these finding has been created and is included to further illustrate the discussion.

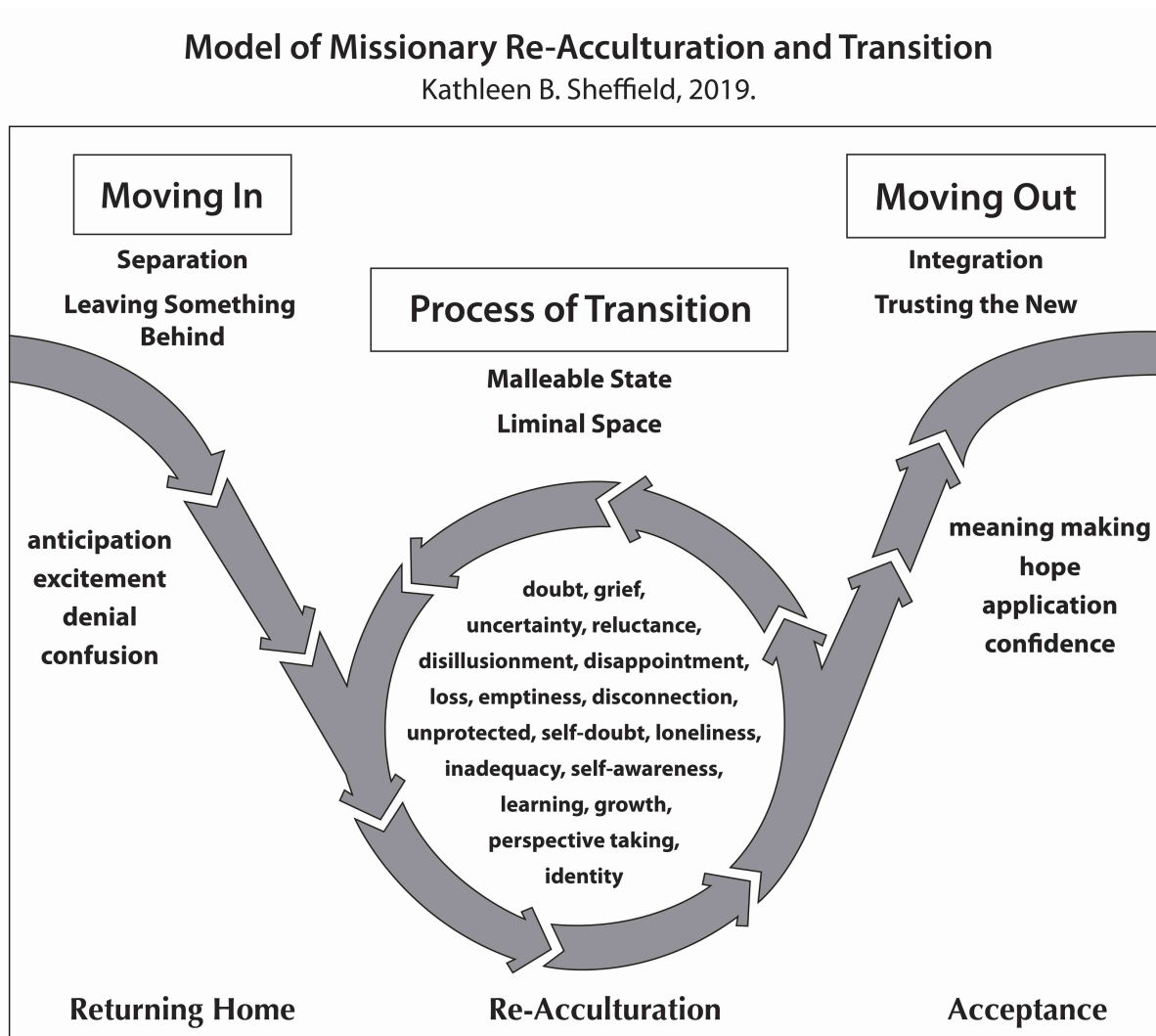


Figure 10. Missionary re-acculturation and transition model. Copyright 2019 K. Sheffield.

Acculturation

While the purpose of this study is focused on re-acculturation, it is important to note that acculturation and re-acculturation have many of the same constructs. Both acculturation and re-acculturation share aspects of maintaining at least a portion of the sojourner's original cultural identity as well as a desire for maintaining connection with individuals from both the host and home cultures (Berry, 2005; Szkudlarek, 2010). Researchers Yu and Wang investigated the acculturation strategies of Chinese students in Germany. They determined that "overseas

students have different degrees of acculturation to the culture where they are living, and these different degrees of acculturation result in different levels of psychological well-being and life satisfaction” (Yu & Wang, 2011, p. 190).

During the 10 face-to-face interviews, all of the missionaries interviewed described feeling different levels of psychological well-being after their return home and did so in a variety of ways. A portion of each missionary’s level of psychological well-being was described as a part of Subtheme 1: Lack of connection.

Through the interview process, the missionary participants expressed a lack of connection with family, friends, their host cultures, their home cultures, and their companions. They expressed feelings of being cut off, unsupported, feeling unknown, or not understood, of being uncared for, disconnected, afraid, abandoned, or independent. These thoughts and portrayals conveyed through emotion and narrative a clear and common perception of vulnerability. Leaving the mission field to return home was a dramatic change in the lives of all ten missionaries. Even if they felt ready to return to secular living, aspects of their adjustment were still at times difficult and confusing. Findings in this study support Yu and Wang’s theory concerning acculturation as it is applied to missionary re-acculturation. Latter-day Saint missionaries returning home after full time missionary service described different levels of psychological well-being and satisfaction with life as they sought to re-enter their home culture.

Lysgaard (1955) proposed an identifiable shift in well-being of sojourners who travel to a new culture. His creation of the U-curve model of emotional adjustment is designed to graph a sojourner’s positive and negative emotional well-being over time during acculturative experiences. Subthemes 1 and 2, along with the overarching theme identified both positive and negative emotions as a part of the emotional well-being of all 10 missionaries interviewed as a part of this research.

Similarly, the findings of this study support Lysgaard's (1955) three stages, but again as it relates to missionary re-acculturation. Lysgaard's optimistic stage mirrors use of the descriptors of anticipation and excitement in the newly created model. Lysgaard's down stage is supported by the use of the descriptors of malleable state and liminal space described by this study. The final recovery stage put forth by Lysgaard is reflected in the newly created model's use of the descriptors of hope, application, and confidence. Both Sheffield's model of missionary re-acculturation and transition created as a representation of this study's findings and Lysgaard's U-curve model reflect the same curve that is also put forth in other models describing acculturation, re-acculturation, and transition.

A previous study seeking to understand acculturation conducted by Chen (2016) sought to determine whether or not the Lysgaard's (1955) U-curve model could be used to explain the adjustment and acculturation of international postgraduate students studying at a university in the United Kingdom. Chen's findings suggested that the U-curve model did not accurately represent the experiences of the 26 participants in his study. Chen challenged the appropriateness of the U-curve for understanding the acculturative processes because Lygaard's U-curve model did not account for the more diverse, complex, and uncertain situations that Chen's (2016) participants seemed to encounter.

This finding by Chen (2016) is also supported by the findings in this study. Stages of re-acculturation as seen as a part of this research study, mirror the stages proposed by Lysgaard's (1955) U-curve model. The 10 participants interviewed as a part of this study also described positive and negative states of well-being that were more varied and complex than those represented by the U-curve model. This supports Chen's findings. Acculturation and re-acculturation have many of the same constructs yet are also varied and complex. This provided a need for a more inclusive and descriptive model. These varied and complex aspects of

disconnection are represented in the newly created model of missionary re-acculturation and transition as denial, confusion, doubt, grief, uncertainty, reluctance, disillusionment, disappointment, loss, emptiness, disconnection, unprotected, self-doubt, loneliness, and inadequacy.

Participants interviewed for this study varied in the amount of time that had transpired since their return from missionary service. With the most recent missionary having returned home just 4 months before their face-to-face interview and the least recent missionary having returned home 61 years prior to their face-to-face interview. In seeking to understand the lived experiences of missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints upon returning home from serving a full-time voluntary religious mission, the interview protocol (see Appendix D) did not provide a framework for discovery of a timeline, but instead sought to describe the phenomenon. While other studies have considered the importance of a timeline as a viable topic of research concerning acculturation, this topic was not included in this research study concerning LDS missionary re-acculturation.

Re-Acculturation

In the second part of Subtheme 1, connection was uncovered as a common thread described by the participants. This was also seen as an element of emotional well-being. It was considered important to the missionary as well as those offering their support during the missionaries' process of transition to the home culture. Connection was described as being initiated in part by self-reflection as well as a need for connection after experiencing so much lack of connection during the separation phase of re-acculturation. The missionaries interviewed often referred to moments of connection during their re-acculturation as times of healing and strength. This is supported by Brown's (2017) belief about the importance of human connection and Schlossberg's (1981) belief about the importance of support during difficult transitions.

As early as 1945, re-entry adjustment was identified as a separate process from acculturation. Schuetz (1945) considered the phenomenon of readjustment as one of a homecomer who “hopes in vain to re-establish the old intimate we-relations with the home group” (p. 369). Gullahorn & Gullahorn posed a later adaptation of Lysgaard’s work in 1963. Their work included an extension of the U-curve by creating what they called the W-curve hypothesis model (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963). This model extended the U-curve model to include a depiction of the sojourners emotional well-being when returning to their home culture. This replicates the U pattern to create a W. Their premise was that the adjustment process in returning home resembled Lysgaard’s initial model thus repeating the pattern he described as acculturation but applied also to the adjustment made by the sojourners upon their return to their home culture and re-acculturation (Pedersen, 1995). The W-curve model also supports the premise that acculturation and re-acculturation are similar in nature.

When sojourners travel to a new place they acculturate to their new surroundings and the new host culture. There is a period of adjustment when the same sojourner returns home, changed by their recent experiences. Re-acculturation occurs as the sojourner seeks to reconnect with their home culture. Sojourners often experience intense transformation while undergoing the process of transition as a part of their return home after serving a full-time mission. While living and serving away from home, they learn and assume a whole new spectrum of behaviors and responses which they are able to practice daily. They learn these things as a part of their acculturation experiences in the host culture. Along the way behaviors and responses that were a part of their daily living in their home culture are discarded or set aside.

Upon return to their home culture, the missionary sojourners were once again faced with the process of considering which behaviors and responses will best serve the present. This can be a difficult, disorienting, and vulnerable time as they try to re-acculturate to home. Consider the

model below in Figure. 12 as it depicts the replication of the process of acculturation followed by acculturation.

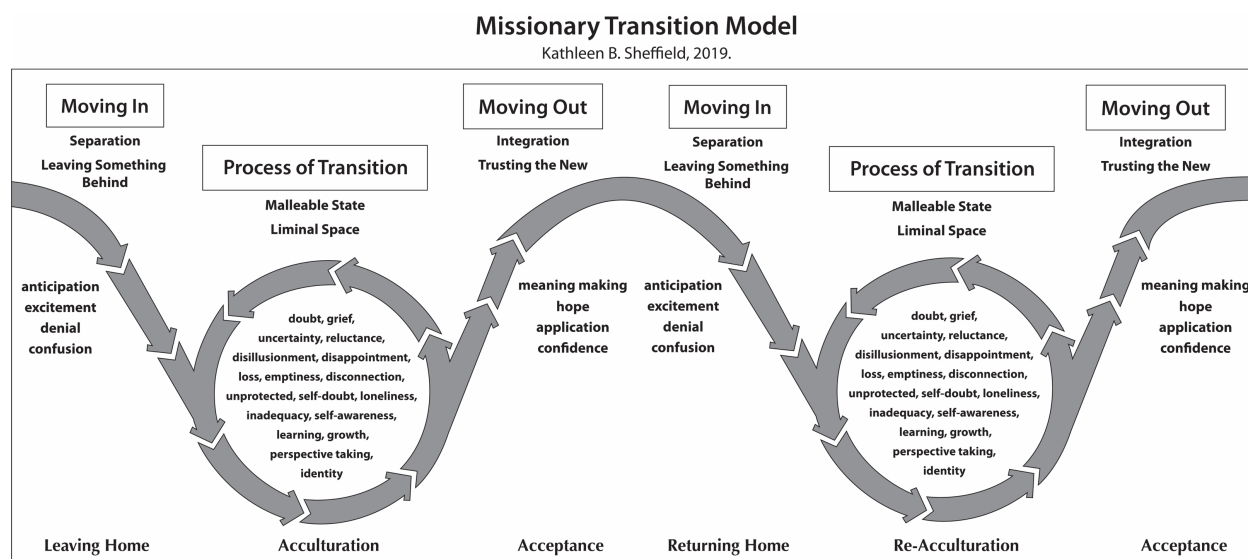


Figure 11. Missionary transition model. Copyright 2019 K. Sheffield.

The findings of this study support Gullahorn & Gullahorn's (1963) W-curve hypothesis model that depicts the acculturation curve followed by the re-acculturation curve in creating a "W".

Schlossberg (1981) describes the coping resources needed by adults experiencing transition as the four S's: situation, self, support, and strategies. Both newly created models reflect the collective illustration of this study's findings and further illustrate aspects of connection and support by identifying self-awareness, learning, growth, identity, perspective taking, meaning making, hope, application, and confidence as being initiators as well as byproducts of connection. The void created by experiencing a lack of connection with family, friends, companions, the host culture, and the home culture provided an increased need for feeling connected and seeking connection and support.

Culture shock and reverse culture shock. Loneliness, anxiety, confusion, grief, frustration, withdrawal, and purposelessness were uncovered as more prominent emotions during the coding process and emerged as emotions expressed and described by those interviewed. Add

to that disillusionment, uncertainty, reluctance, disappointment, loss, emptiness, self-doubt, and inadequacy and the low point on the U-curve is even more well-defined as a part of the newly created models of missionary re-acculturation and transition. It was at this point that the researcher began to see the yo-yo pattern described by Maclachlan (2016), where the feelings of anxiety may lessen for a time but then unexpectedly resurface. The image of a circular pattern emerged. A pattern like a wheel that could be repeated as symptoms would emerge, retreat, and then again re-emerge.

In the 1960s, Canadian anthropologist Kalervo Oberg coined the term *culture shock* (as cited in Lakey, 2003). The American Psychological Association defines culture shock as “loneliness, anxiety, and confusion experienced by an individual or group that has been suddenly thrust into an alien culture or otherwise encounters radical cultural change” (as cited in VandenBos, 2015, p. 275).

Oberg adapted Lysgaard’s (1955) U-curve model to become the culture shock U-curve model. It follows the same U-curve shape but transitions from euphoria, to anxiety, to rejection, and then to adjustment. According to Schmidt (2018), some of the symptoms of culture shock include: (a) feelings of sadness and loneliness; (b) feelings of anger, depression, and vulnerability; (c) feelings shyness or insecurity; (d) feelings of homesickness, and (e) feelings being lost or confused. All aspects as described by Schmidt (2018) are supported by the findings of this study.

During the survey portion of this study, respondents were allowed to convey their own descriptors as a part of the “others” category of the survey (see Appendix A). A total 924 descriptors were self-identified and reported by survey respondents.

and hope. Professionals who work abroad and have experienced culture shock describe a yo-yo pattern. This yo-yo pattern is where the feelings of anxiety may lessen in time but then unexpectedly resurface (Maclachlan, 2016).

Reverse culture shock involves the process of re-assimilating into one's own culture after living in a differing culture for a period of time. It follows much the same pattern as that of culture shock. It too is marked by grief, frustration, withdrawal, confusion, and purposelessness (Kneill, 2006). Research concerning cultural re-entry suggests that "reverse cultural shock" or "re-acculturation" is a more challenging experience than culture shock (Austin, 1983; Isa, 2000; Lakey, 2003).

Evident in these descriptions of culture shock and reverse culture shock is the same pattern of similar symptoms and difficulties. The only difference is whether they are used to describe aspects of extreme acculturative stress or extreme re-acculturative stress. The findings of this study describe both a lack of connection with the host culture and the home culture after returning home which emerge in the narrative as a kind of reverse culture shock along with the emotional context of feeling disconnected.

Adopting some of the customs and practices of the host culture is one of the observable behaviors assigned to acculturation. As mentioned earlier, and described in Figure 12, acculturation precedes re-acculturation. Sometimes missionaries can become so enmeshed in their newfound culture that leaving the people, customs, and language behind provides a severing of what was and now is. The severing between host culture and home culture is also evident from the opposite perspective. The enmeshment that can happen during missionary service can also create a feeling of lacking connection with the missionary's home culture after their return.

Missionary Re-Acculturation and Transition

The 14 aspects of transition as put forth by Tremolada (2015) adapted from Bridges (2009) and applied to re-entry adjustment or re-acculturation as a part of the on-line survey were described as occurring by 2,756 of the 2,761 survey respondents. When answering the question, “After returning home from your mission, to what degree did your adjustment to home and daily living include any of the following?”, survey respondents were asked to select one of five options on a Likert scale to describe their frequency in experiencing each of the 14 transitional elements (see Appendix A). Options included: never, sometimes, half of the time, most of the time, or all of the time. Of the 2,761 respondents, only 5 respondents selected no frequency or “never” on all of the 14 aspects of transition. These findings offer substantial proof that re-acculturative or transitional elements are experienced by missionaries as a part of their return to their home culture after serving full-time voluntary religious missions.

Each of the 2,761 survey respondent’s answers of frequency were assigned a numerical value. A modified ordinal weighting was applied to each selection as follows: 0 for never, 2 for sometimes, 3 for half of the time, 4 for most of the time, and 5 for all of the time. These numerical values were totaled for each survey respondent and divided by 14 to obtain an average value of frequency for each respondent. In addition, a median frequency was also identified by determining the middle value of each of the respondent’s choices for the 14 descriptors. The “other” categories were not included in these parts of the analysis. Using the average and median values, the respondent was assigned to a frequency category. All 2,761 survey respondents were classified as demonstrating a disposition in one of five categories. The five categories were as follows: higher frequency, moderate frequency, lower frequency, ping pong, and outlier (see Chapter 3, Participants for further description). In the cases where the average and the median values were significantly different, the information was reviewed, and

the category assignment was adjusted. This most commonly occurred when assigning the ping pong category. A table has been created to reflect the numbers of survey respondents and their frequency of experiencing the transitional elements.

Table 5.1

Participants and their Frequency of Experiencing Transitional Elements

| | Frequency of Experiencing Transitional Elements | # of Potential Interviews |
|---|--|----------------------------------|
| 1 | Higher frequency | 385 |
| 2 | Moderate frequency | 1024 |
| 3 | Lower frequency | 770 |
| 4 | Both less frequent or not at all and more frequent or always (Ping Pong) | 582 |
| 5 | Total number of participants that completed the survey | 2,761 |

Assigning these categories was important in considering a variety of experiences to eliminate bias towards describing only one type of frequency while gaining understanding about missionary re-acculturation and transition as a whole.

Liminal space. Arnold Van Gennep coined the term *liminality* in 1908. He described liminality as the ambiguous phase where the initiate is outside of society but preparing to enter society (Van Gennep, 1908). In the case of this study, the missionary would take the role of the initiate. At the point of arriving home, the missionary or initiate is outside of their home culture, preparing to re-enter. Van Gennep (1908) used the term *liminal period* to describe the second phase in the three-part structure of the rites of passage or ritual. The three-part structure as explained by Van Gennep (1908) involves: (1) separation, (2) liminal period, and (3) re-assimilation.

All 10 of the missionaries interviewed described aspects of ritual in submitting their papers, receiving their call to serve, delivering a farewell address, being set apart as a missionary, and attending a missionary training center. In every case, a series of events were described that appeared to prepare the missionary for the rite of passage of serving a mission.

Yet upon returning home, the missionaries interviewed had little structure other than being released and being asked to take their nametag off. Some of the missionaries interviewed expressed a need for a lack of structure upon their return.

Victor Turner first introduced his theory of liminality in 1967. He described liminality as the midpoint of transition, the place midway between the starting place and the ending place. He considered liminality as a temporary rather than a permanent state. He postulated that liminality ends when the person that is undergoing the transition process is reincorporated into the social structure around them.

The theory of liminality perfectly describes the process of Latter-day Saint missionary reacculturation. It also honors this researcher's belief that "coming home" is also a rite of passage. Liminality or liminal space is represented in the model of missionary transition by the large circle in the center. This is the midpoint of transition for the returning missionary. This is the liminal space where learning, growth, and identity take shape.

The down phase, time of rejection, or conflict as described by other theorists is what this researcher has called the malleable state or liminal space. The word malleable state is used in this case to describe the state of readiness, a pliability of existence, or an openness to become something new. This is also described by the idea of liminal space or liminality. Both liminal and liminality have their origins in the Latin word *limen* which means threshold (Horvath, Thomassen, & Wydra, 2018). This is in reference to the threshold of a doorway. When someone stands in the liminal space or in the threshold of a doorway, with the door open, they are neither in the room they have just left, nor are they in the room to which they are going. The idea of liminal space provides a powerful image for missionaries retuning home after serving a mission. They are no longer in the host culture they have just left but have not yet been integrated into their home culture. In a very real sense, they are standing in the threshold or liminal space.

Transformational learning. It is instinctive for all humans to make meaning of their daily lives. In 1978, Jack Mezirow introduced a theory of adult learning. This theory of transformative learning assisted in explaining how adults change in the way they interpret their world. According to Mezirow (1991), “Learning is understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience in order to guide future action” (p. 162). There is a difference between learning as adding something new to something that has already been learned and learning as change, wherein the meaning and understanding of something already learned is changed.

While studying women’s reentry to community college programs in the 1970s, Mezirow (1991) described a 10-phase transformation process. This process, according to Mezirow (1991), involves the following:

- a disorienting dilemma;
- a self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame;
- a critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions;
- recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change;
- exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions;
- planning a course of action;
- acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan;
- provision trying of new roles;
- building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and
- a reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s perspective.

These 10 phases of transformative learning were clearly reflected in Subtheme 2:

Learning, growth and identity as uncovered in the descriptions provided by all 10 missionaries

about their experiences upon returning home. This is noted as a part of the process of transition in the missionary re-acculturation and transition model. Regardless of whether they served abroad, in a neighboring state, or learned a new language, each of the 10 missionaries who were interviewed expressed and acknowledged feelings of learning, growth, and identity upon their return home. These feelings of learning, growth, and identity were described as missionaries were able to comment on their pre-mission state compared to their post-mission state. Each missionary described what they had learned, how they had grown, and how it had changed them.

Their courage in navigating the disorienting dilemma of returning home after living away for 18-24 months, along with their self-examination and critical assessment led to an increase in self-awareness. Their recognition of discontent and disorientation while in the liminal state along with their exploration of new roles, relationships and actions required a shift in identity. This was followed by meaning making of past and present experiences, increased hope in the future, and an application of what they had learned along the way with amplified confidence. This demonstrated their readiness for integration, acceptance, and trusting the new.

It was confirming to note that each of the ten missionaries interviewed in this study described learning and growth, which contributed to a shift in their identity as supporting all of Mezirow's (1991) 10 phases of transformative learning. It is clear that this process of adult learning is taking place during LDS missionary re-acculturation. In the end, learning is not just acquiring new knowledge but making application and integrating new meaning and understanding.

Mezirow's (1991) 10 phases of transformative learning also has application to the main overarching theme of perspective taking/meaning making/application and integration identified in LDS missionary re-acculturation. Consider 5.1 and the comparison that is made between the final theme of this study and Mezirow's work.

Table 5.2

Mezirow and Missionary Re-acculturation Overarching Theme Comparison

| Mezirow's Phases | Missionary Re-Acculturation |
|---|--|
| A disorienting dilemma | Missionary return to home culture after sojourn of 18-24 months. |
| A self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame | Perspective taking, |
| A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions | Perspective taking Meaning making |
| Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change | Meaning making |
| Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions | Application |
| Planning a course of action | Application |
| Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plan | Application |
| Provision trying of new roles | Application |
| Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships | Application |
| A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's perspective | Integration |

Transition. Bridges (2004) three-phase process involves: (a) Ending, Losing, Letting Go; (b) The Neutral Zone, and (c) The New Beginning. For Latter-day Saint missionaries involved in the re-acculturation process, ending, losing, and letting go has to do with their mission coming to an end, leaving something behind, like their service as a missionary, and losing their connection with home and their host culture where they served. The neutral zone is where Bridges (2004) believes transition takes place. In the model created from this study's findings, it is referred to as the process of transition phase.

Change as described by William Bridges (2009) has to do with the nature of our external situation whereas transition involves the psychological internal process. Bridges (2009) also emphasized how a transition is different from change:

It isn't the changes that do you in; it is the transitions. They aren't the same thing.

Change is situational: the move to a new site, the retirement of the founder, the reorganization of the roles on the team, the revisions to the pension plan. Transition on

the other hand, is psychological; it is a three-phase process that people go through as they internalize and come to terms with the details of the new situation that the change brings about. (p. 3)

Gary Tremolada (2015) adapted and expanded Bridges' transition model to create the conceptual model used as the theoretical framework of this study. Tremolada's version of the model alters stage or Phase 2 from The Neutral Zone to the Transition Zone. This researcher has adopted the title Process of Transition for this phase. Once again Lysgaard's (1955) U-curve is evident in the model as conveyed by Bridges (2009) and adapted by Tremolada. Both concepts conveyed in Bridges simpler model and Tremolada's more complex model are supported by the findings of this study. All but five of the 2,761 survey respondents noted experiencing, to some degree, each of the 14 aspects of transition (see Appendix A) as put forth by Tremolada. Re-acculturation is real. It is happening. For LDS missionaries, it is a vital part of their return to secular living.

Mary Anderson, Jane Goodman, and Nancy Schlossberg (2012) present an integrative model of the transition process. It also includes three stages or phases. The three stages are (1) moving in, (2) moving through: Betwixt or between, and (3) moving out. This integrative model is not presented on a U-curve like the other models mentioned, but instead it is shown as a process where an individual entering the transition process travels from the first stage, moving in, to the second stage, moving through, and then to the third stage, moving out. Once the cycle is completed, an individual might begin the cycle again. This idea of repeating aspects of the process of transition is supported by the overarching theme uncovered in this research study and described in the developed model as well as a description of the findings in Chapter 4.

The overarching theme. Perspective taking/meaning making/application and integration were described by all 10 participants interviewed in this study. This theme reflects the same sort

of process described by (Anderson et al., 2012). More elements are included and described as a part of the process of transition in the second stage of the newly created model. Below is a comparison of each of the models presented in this research study and supported by the findings of this study.

Table 5.3

Model Comparison Expanded

| Model Name | Author | Year Published | Stage or Phase 1 | Stage or Phase 2 | Stage or Phase 3 |
|--|------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| U-curve Model | Lysgaard | 1955 | Optimistic Stage | Down Stage | The Recovery Stage |
| Culture Shock U-Curve | Oberg | 1960 | Euphoria Anxiety | Rejection | Adjustment |
| W-Curve Model for Cultural Adjustment | Gullahorn & Gullahorn | 1963 | Honeymoon | Conflict Culture Shock | Recovery Adjustment |
| | | | Honeymoon | Conflict Culture Shock | Recovery Adjustment |
| Three Phase Rite of Passage | Van Gennep | 1908 | Separation | Liminal Period | Re-assimilation |
| Three Stage Process of Transition | Bridges | 2009 | Ending Losing Letting Go | The Neutral Zone | The New Beginning |
| Model of Managing Transitions | Tremolada | 2015 | Ending | Transition Zone | New Beginning |
| Integrative Model of the Transition Process | Anderson Goodman Schlossberg | 2012 | Moving in | Moving through: Betwixt or between | Moving out |
| Missionary Re-Acculturation and Transition Model | Sheffield | 2019 | Returning Home | Re-Acculturation | Acceptance |

A common thread remains evident as a part of the research surrounding acculturation, re-acculturation, and transition. The process involves a letting go or a leaving behind of something. It is a condition where optimism is replaced with a feeling of the unknown or of being between, or in a state of liminality, and not yet having arrived. These phases are followed by the phase of acceptance, integration, and adjustment or a new beginning.

Spiritual aspects. An additional unique element of transition and re-acculturation is also evident among missionaries returning from service. But this element has less to do with secular aspects and changes in living and more to do with spiritual aspects and the missionaries' relationship and perceived relationship with God (Parker, 2006). While missionaries have much in common with other sojourners that live, work and study abroad, there is another aspect which was uncovered during this research that can intensify all other aspects of re-acculturation. This aspect was not uncovered in any other model or study on the subject.

It was again described by all of the 10 missionaries that were interviewed. They described a feeling of being disconnected or cut off from God. While different words were used to describe this feeling of the loss of an extra measure of the Lord's spirit given to LDS missionaries namely, mantle, armor, and protection, each missionary was doing their best to describe this feeling of their lack of connection with God. This is one of the unique aspects of re-acculturation that seems to play an important role in missionary re-acculturation. Words and phrases such as void, bereavement, loss of a sense of calling, loss of a sense of purpose, and feeling different were all ways those interviewed attempted to convey this part of their experience.

There was also a common theme in their depictions that included the portrayal of this loss, taking place over a period of time. It was described as not happening all at once but sort of fading as time went on. As missionaries entered the liminal space and experience doubt, grief, uncertainty, disappointment, loss, emptiness, disconnection, a feeling of being unprotected self-doubt, loneliness, and inadequacy, most often these feelings were associated with leaving behind their host culture and no longer being a missionary, but it was understood by their expressions that much of what they were experiencing had to do with their loss of connection with God. As they worked through the process of transition and became more self-aware of their learning,

growth, and shift in identity, they found new ways to seek and feel God's power in their daily lives.

It is evident that part of the missionaries' struggle during re-acculturation and transition had to do with the change in their feelings and perceptions concerning their closeness to God. Returning to a secular lifestyle after becoming accustomed to the religiosity and spiritual nature of a mission can be a difficult part of the re-entry process for a missionary (Madsen, 1977; Taylor, 2016).

Limitations

Because the participants of this study were only selected from the return missionary population of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the findings and assessments may not be generalizable to a larger population. Limiting the participants of this study to returned missionaries from only one church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints might appear to make the findings of this study less generalizable. But, because of the clear demarcations provided by this missionary population, namely, the point at which acculturation begins and then again, the point at which re-acculturation begins, many of the findings of this study might also be generalizable to other populations experiencing life's transitions. Understanding at what point acculturation and re-acculturation begins to take place was vital in gaining an understanding of the processes of both acculturation and re-acculturation.

Originally, the researcher thought it might be a limitation of this study to not have served as a Latter-day Saint missionary. Throughout the course of the interview process, the researcher came to understand that this was not a limitation but an asset because the researcher had no experience of her own to compare to the missionary experiences. She was able to sit beside each missionary in an authentic way and listen to their narrative about their own experiences.

The researcher is an active member of the ascribed congregation and has observed countless students and family members struggle through the process of re-acculturation. This may have provided some bias but, at the same time, also provided a deeper understanding of some of the issues.

While LDS missionaries return throughout the calendar year, this study included not only missionaries who had recently returned (6 months or less) from missionary service but also missionaries who experienced re-entry decades ago. Male and female LDS missionaries, 21-81 years of age, who had previously completed full-time missionary service while single were used as participants in this study. One participant was a returned LDS missionary who served a full-time mission with his wife at the age of 63. The difference in the period of time that has elapsed since missionary re-entry along with the missionaries' ages at the time of service as well as their ability to reflect and look back on those experiences might have been a factor in the way the missionaries described their experiences.

While the participants considered for this study had all completed full-time missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, no missionaries were interviewed that had come home early and not returned to serving a full-time voluntary mission. This population was not included as a part of this study.

The interview protocol (see Appendix D) did not provide a framework for discovery of a timeline, but instead sought to describe the phenomenon. While other studies have considered the importance of a timeline as a viable topic of research concerning acculturation, this topic was not included in this research study concerning Latter-day Saint missionary re-acculturation.

The data obtained was limited to those missionaries selected for the study. This researcher recognized that this study involved a small pool of participants, the volume of data

collected was less important to the researcher than the individual participant's narrative and sense-making of the common experience.

Recommendations for Future Study

This study provided a unique coming together of theories and ideas that are a part of several different areas research. Acculturation and re-acculturation have been topics of research in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and psychology. Choosing Latter-day Saint missionaries as the population of interest for this study allowed the researcher to incorporate aspects of religion. This study is foundational in nature; therefore, the findings provide a “jumping off place” for further research. The Latter-day Saint missionary population was the perfect population to begin the journey of understanding the lived experiences of missionaries in transition. Below are 10 recommendations for future study.

Respectful relationships and inter-group understanding. As previously noted, Plato argued that intercultural adaptation or acculturation could cause social disorders and proposed minimizing acculturation by recommending that people should not travel abroad until after the age of 40 (Fisher & Lerner, 2005). Contrast this idea with the recent statement the American Educational Research Association made on the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting:

For decades, members of our association have carefully studied the root causes of racism, antisemitism, homophobia, and xenophobia, and we have evidence of how schools and other educational institutions can be sites of healing and transformation. For instance, we know that early socialization with people of different racial, ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds, under the right conditions, has a more powerful positive influence on lifelong perspectives than does later exposure. We also know that direct and continuing interaction with people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives

can, when thoughtfully implemented, enhance respectful relationships and inter-group understanding. (Levine & Wells, 2018, Para 3-4)

Missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints experience a level of the socialization referred to above which includes direct and continuous interaction with people of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and differing perspectives while participating in full-time missionary service. An additional recommended area of study might include the study of enhanced respectful relationships and inter-group understanding, as it may be associated with missionaries that serve abroad.

Pre and concurrent re-acculturation training. Presently, missionaries receive training in acculturation to assist in their adjustment to the host culture in which they will be serving. Little if any research exists concerning the process of readjustment and re-acculturation for missionaries who undergo transition upon returning to their home culture (Huffman, 1986; Pirolo, 2000). The UNC Greensboro International Programs Center advises students who are planning to participate in study abroad programs by preparing them to recognize the symptoms of culture shock during their experiences abroad. They list several personal characteristics that can help study abroad students cope with and diminish the effects of experiencing culture shock when they return from their programs abroad: (a) tolerance for ambiguity, (b) open mindedness, (c) ability to fail, (d) adaptability, (e) empathy, (f) being communicative, and (g) self-reliance.

An additional area of study might consider, pre and concurrent re-acculturation training that would include: tolerance for ambiguity, open mindedness, ability to fail, adaptability, empathy, being communicative, and self-reliance experience lower levels of re-acculturative stress as it relates to full time missionary service.

Correlation of the length of sojourn. Theoretically, the longer a sojourner is gone the more acculturated they may become to the new culture (Knell, 2006). Those that experience a

“high level of acculturation and integration in a new culture often experience more difficulties in re-entry” (Cox, 2006, p. 31). This area should be studied in relation to missionary re-acculturation. There might be a correlation between missionaries that experience high levels of acculturation as well as a difficult re-entry. While the participants considered for this study had all completed full-time missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, no missionaries were interviewed that had come home early and not returned to serving a full-time voluntary mission. This population is another avenue that could be explored concerning re-acculturation by exploring to what degree missionaries who have returned home early from serving a full-time voluntary mission experience re-acculturative aspects.

Re-acculturation timeline. While other studies have considered the importance of a timeline as a viable topic of research concerning acculturation, this topic was not included in this research study on LDS missionary re-acculturation. Further possible research could include a longitudinal study of the aspects put forth in the newly developed model as well as a question protocol that seeks discovery of the amount of time that missionaries experienced the elements of re-acculturation.

Acculturation related to satisfaction of re-entry. Rohrlich and Martin (1991) investigated the impact of the sojourner’s experience in the host country and its relation to the sojourner’s satisfaction with re-entry. Participants in their study were asked to describe experiences and adjustment while living abroad as well as experiences and adjustment after returning home. There were 248 students who completed study abroad programs that completed the questionnaire. The findings of this study supported the premise that sojourners with previous transition experience reported a greater ease in adjustment both in adjusting to the host culture as well as their home culture. The study also revealed that students who were generally satisfied with their study abroad experiences had a lower satisfaction with re-entry experiences.

Additional research in this area would either confirm or refute the findings of this study as they relate to missionary re-acculturation.

Missionary re-acculturation and the transition model. Aspects of the model created to express the findings of this study could be used to provide survey data points for further study of missionary re-acculturation. In addition, the model could be adapted to study missionary acculturation.

Re-acculturation as a rite of passage. All 10 of the missionaries interviewed described aspects of ritual in submitting their papers, receiving their call to serve, delivering a farewell address, being set apart as a missionary, and attending a missionary training center. In every case, a series of events were described that appeared to prepare the missionary for the rite of passage of serving a mission. Yet, upon returning home, the missionaries interviewed had little structure other than being released and being asked to take their nametag off. Some of the missionaries interviewed expressed a need for a lack of structure upon their return. This research believes that re-acculturation follows the three-part structure set forth by Van Gennep (1908) as a rite of passage or ritual. Further study about missionary re-acculturation could include research relating to aspects of re-acculturation that mirror this three-part process.

Missionaries returning to school. A study conducted by Kevin Gaw (2000) examined 66 students who completed their high school education outside the United States and were U.S. citizens. These students graduated from international and U.S. schools abroad and had since returned home to the United States and were enrolled as undergraduate students at a West Coast university. The purpose of the study was to assess the relationship between reverse culture shock and personal problems/concerns in college after returning from their study abroad programs. A further area of study would be to assess the relationship between reverse culture shock and personal problems/concerns in college after returning from missionary service.

Familial similarities. Because of the nature of LDS families and that, within families, there might be multiple generations that have completed full-time voluntary missionary service, additional research concerning familial similarities within and among family members and their common narratives would provide additional context for understanding missionary re-acculturation within the extended family.

Application to other life transitions. Heraclitus, a Greek philosopher from Ephesus, who lived from circa 600 BC to circa 540 BC said: “No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it is not the same river and he is not the same man” (Heraclitus, n.d.). This philosophy is evident in the study of acculturation and re-acculturation. It is also portrayed in an understanding of other life transitions. This researcher postulates that the elements put forth as described in the models created as a result of the findings of this study might have additional application. Further research should be conducted to determine if the findings of this study could be applied to other life transitions.

Summary

The goal of this study was to gain insight into and an increased understanding of Latter-day Saint missionary re-acculturation. Through an in-depth study of the ascribed phenomenon, various aspects of re-acculturation as experienced and expressed by missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints were uncovered and described. An increased understanding of re-acculturation as described in this study has the potential to assist future return missionaries during their re-acculturation period. It has also provided increased data on re-acculturation and re-entry that applies directly to the missionary experience thus filling a part of the gap that is evident in the literature concerning these events. There may also be an indication of re-acculturation in other populations returning to their home culture.

Acculturation and re-acculturation have many of the same constructs yet are varied and complex. During the 10 face-to-face interviews, all of the missionaries interviewed described feeling different levels of psychological well-being satisfaction with life after their return home in a variety of ways.

Leaving the mission field to return home was a dramatic change in the lives of all 10 missionaries that were interviewed. Even if they felt ready to return to secular living, aspects of their adjustment were still at times difficult and confusing. This study has helped to identify and describe aspects of Latter-day Saint missionary re-acculturation including under the surface issues that often accompany a missionary's return to their home culture and un-talked about issues that can color a missionary's return to secular living. The subthemes and overarching theme functioned symbiotically as they described the essence of the ascribed phenomenon. The description was processual in nature and was best represented by the development of two models which reflected the collective thoughts, feelings, and experiences of the 10 missionaries that were interviewed. The models created from the findings of this study further illustrate and describe missionary re-acculturation and might also provide understanding for many of life's other transitions.

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Appendix A

Online Survey

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey about Latter-day Saint missionaries and their experiences of returning home after completing full-time missionary service. This is part of a larger research project being conducted by Kathleen B. Sheffield a Doctoral student at Southern New Hampshire University. It should take approximately 6 minutes to complete.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

BENEFITS

You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about understanding the transition process that LDS missionaries undergo after returning home from serving a mission.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Qualtrics does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you are interested in participating in an additional interview [in person, or online]. If you choose to provide contact information such as your phone number or email address, your survey responses may no longer be anonymous to the researcher. However, no names or identifying information would be included in any publications or presentations based on these data, and your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that

- ☐ You have read the above information
- ☐ You voluntarily agree to participate
- ☐ You are 18 years of age or older

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree

Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Home state and country at the departure of your mission.

Home state and country upon returning home from your mission.

Religious affiliation of immediate family members when missionary service began

- ☐ Latter-day Saint
- ☐ Other

Religious affiliation of immediate family members when missionary was completed.

- ☐ Latter-day Saint
- ☐ Other

Age at start of mission

Years when served mission

Duration of missionary service in months

Location of missionary service

Native language

Mission language

Missionaries undergo many changes and transitions during their time of service. One such change involves that of returning to their home culture. Missionary re-acculturation can include a period of adjustment that is often accompanied by new roles and relationships. Chances are that as a returned missionary you experienced or are experiencing some or many of the following aspects of re-acculturation.

As you approached the end of your time as a full-time missionary, to what degree did you experience any of the following as your date of return approached and your release from full-time missionary service occurred?

| | Never | Occasionally | About half the time | Most of the time | Always |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Uncertainty | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Excitement | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Anticipation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Confusion | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Denial | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Reservation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Frustration | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Skepticism | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

After returning home from your mission, to what degree did your adjustment to home and daily living include any of the following?

| | Never | Sometimes | About half the time | Most of the time | Always |
|-------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Creativity | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Anxiety | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Innovation | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Resistance | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Confusion | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Skepticism | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Exploration | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Ambivalence | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

| | Never | Sometimes | About half the time | Most of the time | Always |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Uncertainty | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Relief | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Accomplishment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Learning | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Contentment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Non-productivity | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other <input type="text"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

When you reflect on your time as a missionary, how often do you . . .

| | Never | Sometimes | Once a year | Once a month | Every day |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| make application in daily living to experiences and things that you learned as a missionary? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| experience feelings of worry or confusion? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| experience feelings of accomplishment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| experience feelings of indifference? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| experience feelings of indifference? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Would you be willing to participate further in this study and to be interviewed about your experiences and their relation to missionary re-acculturation?

- ☐ Yes

- ☐ Maybe
- ☐ No

Those wishing to participate in the interview process should please leave their contact information here.

Including Name, Phone number, and e-mail.

Appendix B

Survey Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a web-based online survey about Latter-day Saint missionaries and their experiences of returning home after completing full-time missionary service. This is part of a larger research project being conducted by Kathleen B. Sheffield a Doctoral student at Southern New Hampshire University. It should take approximately 6 minutes to complete.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

BENEFITS

You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about understanding the transition process that LDS missionaries undergo after returning home from serving a mission.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Qualtrics does not collect identifying information such as your name, email address, or IP address. Therefore, your responses will remain anonymous. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study.

At the end of the survey, you will be asked if you are interested in participating in an additional interview [in person, or online]. If you choose to provide contact information such as your phone number or email address, your survey responses may no longer be anonymous to the researcher. However, no names or identifying information would be included in any publications or presentations based on these data, and your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records. Clicking on the “Agree” button indicates that

- ☐ You have read the above information
- ☐ You voluntarily agree to participate
- ☐ You are 18 years of age or older

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree

Appendix C

Interview Informed Consent

You are invited to be interviewed as a part of a research project being conducted by Kathleen B. Sheffield a Doctoral student at Southern New Hampshire University. The project focuses on understanding Latter-day Saint missionary re-acculturation after returning home from serving a voluntary full-time religious mission. You are free to speak with anyone about this research and can take time to reflect on whether or not you would like to participate. If during the process you have any questions or concerns about terms and concepts. I will be more than willing to explain them as we go along, and you are free to ask questions at any time.

Missionaries undergo many changes and transitions during their time of service. One such change involves that of returning to their home culture. Missionary re-acculturation can include a period of adjustment that is often accompanied by new roles and relationships. Chances are that as a returned missionary you experienced or are experiencing some or many of the following aspects of re-acculturation. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.

This research will involve your participation in a 60-90 minute, one on one interview. You have been selected from a pool of Latter-day Saint missionaries that have completed the online survey and acknowledged your willingness to participate in this research further. Your responses to questions on the survey were also considered as a part of the selection process. Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. It is your choice to participate or not.

During the interview I will sit down with you in a private and comfortable venue at the church, my office or another venue of your choice. If it is better for you the interview can take place in your home or a friend's home. No one else but the two of us will be present during this discussion. The entire interview will be tape-recorded, but no one will be identified by name on the tape. The tape will be kept in my possession and protected by password on a secure server. The information recorded is confidential, and no one else will have access to the tapes except in the case of transcription services where again the identity of the interviewee will be protected by a pseudonym. The tapes will be destroyed after 1 year from the completion of the study.

As a part of the interview you will be asked questions about your thoughts, perceptions and experiences upon returning home from your Latter-day Saint mission. The questions are geared to glean understanding about your personal experiences during this time period and in no way are a reflection on your service as a missionary or your membership in the Church. If you do not want to answer any question during the interview you may say so and we will move to the next question. No one else but the interviewer and the interviewee will be present. You will also be given a copy of the interview upon request. A summary of the results of this study will also be e-mailed to you.

Because of the voluntary nature of this research you are free to withdraw at any time. You may also ask to modify or remove portions of the interview including discussion and remarks. If you

have any questions you can ask them now or later. This proposal has been reviewed and approved by the SNHU IRB, which is a committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm. If you wish to find about more about the IRB, contact irb@snhu.edu or 603-645-9695.

I have read the foregoing information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it, and any questions I have been asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Print Name of Participant _____

Signature of Participant _____

Date _____
Day/month/year

Statement by the researcher/person taking consent

To the best of my ability, I have made sure that the participant understands the benefits and risks of the study.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this ICF has been provided to the participant.

Print Name of Researcher/person taking the consent _____

Signature of Researcher /person taking the consent _____

Date _____
Day/month/year

Appendix D

Interview Protocol

| <i>Areas</i> | <i>Purpose</i> | <i>Questions Relating to Recently Returned Missionaries</i> | <i>Questions Relating to Not Recently Returned Missionaries</i> |
|---|--|---|---|
| Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe their experiences and feelings about preparing for and receiving their call to voluntary missionary service. | To help participants reflect on their preparation and call to voluntary missionary service. Questions within this section are only preliminary in nature and are formulated to allow participants to reminisce and describe their experiences leading up to re-acculturation. | <p>Can you think back to when you received your call to serve a mission?</p> <p>Can you describe the feelings that you had when you opened your call?</p> <p>Were you required to learn a new language?</p> <p>What were your feelings surrounding learning a new language?</p> | <p>Can you think back to when you received your call to serve a mission?</p> <p>Can you describe the feelings that you had when you opened your call?</p> <p>Were you required to learn a new language?</p> <p>What were your feelings surrounding learning a new language?</p> |
| Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe their first impressions of arriving in the new location where missionary service will take place. | To help participants reflect on and describe their initial feelings, impressions, and reactions after arriving in the new location where missionary service will take place. Questions within this section are only preliminary in nature and are formulated to allow participants to reminisce and describe their experiences leading up to re-acculturation. | <p>Do you remember arriving in your new location?</p> <p>Can you describe your first impressions?</p> <p>What might be three words that would summarize or describe the feelings you had upon arrival?</p> <p>Can you tell me more about why you chose these three words?</p> | <p>Do you remember arriving in your new location?</p> <p>Can you describe your first impressions?</p> <p>What might be three words that would summarize or describe the feelings you had upon arrival?</p> <p>Can you tell me more about why you chose these three words?</p> |

| Areas | Purpose | Questions Relating to Recently Returned Missionaries | Questions Relating to Not Recently Returned Missionaries |
|---|--|--|--|
| Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe joyful experiences that they had while participating in voluntary missionary service. | To help participants reflect on and describe a joyful experience that occurred while participating in voluntary missionary service. Questions within this section are only preliminary in nature and are formulated to allow participants to reminisce and describe their joyful experiences leading up to re-acculturation. | Think back to a time on your mission where you remember experiencing joy. Can you describe this time for me? What are some of the reasons you think it was joyful? | Think back to a time on your mission where you remember experiencing joy. Can you describe this time for me? What are some of the reasons you think it was joyful? |
| Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe difficult experiences that they had while participating in voluntary missionary service. | To help participants reflect on and describe a difficult experience that occurred while participating in voluntary missionary service. Questions within this section are only preliminary in nature and are formulated to allow participants to reminisce and describe their difficult experiences leading up to re-acculturation. | Think back to a time on your mission where you remember experiencing difficulty. Can you describe this time for me? What are some of the reasons you think it was difficult? | Think back to a time on your mission where you remember experiencing difficulty. Can you describe this time for me? What are some of the reasons you think it was difficult? |

| Areas | Purpose | Questions Relating to Recently Returned Missionaries | Questions Relating to Not Recently Returned Missionaries |
|--|---|---|---|
| Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe their experiences as they approach their return to a more secular lifestyle as they prepare to return home from voluntary missionary service. | To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of approaching their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are formulated to assist participants in describing their experiences as they approach re-acculturation. | <p>You know your release date is coming.</p> <p>You know how many days you have left on your mission.</p> <p>Can you describe for me the feelings and emotions that you remember having as you approached the close of your mission and your return home?</p> | <p>You know your release date is coming.</p> <p>You know how many days you have left on your mission.</p> <p>Can you describe for me the feelings and emotions that you remember having as you approached the close of your mission and your return home?</p> |
| Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe their experiences to a more secular lifestyle after returning home from missionary service. | To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are focused primarily on the purpose of the study which is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission. | Having recently returned from missionary service, how would you describe your experiences in transitioning to a more secular lifestyle after returning home from your missionary service? | Reflecting back on your return from missionary service, how would you describe your experiences in transitioning to a more secular lifestyle after returning home from your missionary service? |

| Areas | Purpose | Questions Relating to Recently Returned Missionaries | Questions Relating to Not Recently Returned Missionaries |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe the role that perception of self played during missionary transition and re-entry.</p> | <p>To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are focused primarily on the purpose of the study which is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.</p> | <p>Having recently returned from missionary service, in what ways if any do you feel like you have changed?</p> <p>How would you describe these changes?</p> <p>Do you feel like you are a different person than before you served a mission?</p> <p>If so, how would you describe this difference?</p> <p>Do you see these changes as positive or negative?</p> <p>If so, why?</p> <p>How would you describe the role that your perception about who you were and your perception about who you have become played during your missionary transition and re-entry?</p> | <p>Reflecting back on your return from missionary service in what ways if any do you feel like you have changed?</p> <p>How would you describe these changes?</p> <p>Do you feel like you are a different person than before you served a mission?</p> <p>If so, how would you describe this difference?</p> <p>Do you see these changes as positive or negative?</p> <p>If so, why?</p> <p>How would you describe the role that your perception about who you were and your perception about who you have become played during your missionary transition and re-entry?</p> |

| Areas | Purpose | Questions Relating to Recently Returned Missionaries | Questions Relating to Not Recently Returned Missionaries |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe the role that family, friends, ecclesiastical leaders and others played during missionary transition and re-entry.</p> | <p>To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are focused primarily on the purpose of the study which is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.</p> | <p>Having recently returned from missionary service, how would you describe the role that family, friends, ecclesiastical leaders and others played during your missionary transition and re-entry?</p> | <p>Reflecting back on your return from missionary service, how would you describe the role that family, friends, ecclesiastical leaders and others played during your missionary transition and re-entry?</p> |
| <p>Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe the role that changes in home life during the sojourner's absence plays in missionary transition and re-entry.</p> | <p>To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are focused primarily on the purpose of the study which is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.</p> | <p>Having recently returned from missionary service, how would you describe the role that changes in home life during your absence might have played your transition and re-entry?</p> | <p>Reflecting back on your return from missionary service, how would you describe the role that changes in home life during your absence might have played your transition and re-entry?</p> |

| Areas | Purpose | Questions Relating to Recently Returned Missionaries | Questions Relating to Not Recently Returned Missionaries |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe the role that unresolved experiences that occurred during missionary service might have had on missionary transition and re-entry.</p> | <p>To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are focused primarily on the purpose of the study which is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.</p> | <p>Having recently returned from missionary service, how would you describe the role that unresolved experiences that occurred during our missionary service might have had an effect on your transition and re-entry?</p> | <p>Reflecting back on your return from missionary service, how would you describe the role that unresolved experiences that occurred during our missionary service might have had an effect on your transition and re-entry?</p> |
| <p>Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe the role that the host culture during his/her missionary service played in their readjustment to their home culture.</p> | <p>To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are focused primarily on the purpose of the study which is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.</p> | <p>Having recently returned from missionary service, how would you describe the role that the host culture during your missionary service played during your readjustment to your home culture?</p> | <p>Reflecting back on your return from missionary service, how would you describe the role that the host culture during your missionary service played during your readjustment to your home culture?</p> |

| Areas | Purpose | Questions Relating to Recently Returned Missionaries | Questions Relating to Not Recently Returned Missionaries |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Volunteer Latter-day Saint missionaries describe the role that strategies and help played if any in assisting the missionary during transition in coping with challenges if any during re-entry.</p> | <p>To help participants reflect on and describe their feelings, impressions, and reactions as a part of their re-acculturation experience. Questions within this section are focused primarily on the purpose of the study which is to explore the lived experiences of Latter-day Saint missionaries and their re-acculturation as they return home after completing a voluntary religious mission.</p> | <p>Having recently returned from missionary service, how would you describe the role that strategies and help played in assisting you during transition and in helping you to cope with challenges during your re-entry?</p> | <p>Reflecting back on your return from missionary service, how would you describe the role that strategies and help played in assisting you during transition and in helping you to cope with challenges during your re-entry?</p> |