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THEORY-DRIVEN APPROACHES TO TARGETING SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP IN EMERGING ADULTS: CONSCIOUSNESS OF SELF

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The purpose of the current paper is to present a theory-driven approach to developing Consciousness of Self, an individual value of the Social Change Model of Leadership, among emerging adults. Specifically, we discuss the development and execution of an intervention involving a large-group retreat with interactive activities and an emphasis on discussion. Grounded in theory, the intervention focused on identifying values, describing strengths, and practicing mindfulness and was evaluated based on the learning objectives. Program evaluation efforts revealed notable participant gains in all targeted objectives six months after the intervention. By providing a theoretical framework, in-depth description of the intervention, and evaluation strategy, the current paper encourages student affairs practitioners to utilize this curriculum to facilitate a Consciousness of Self intervention or create theoretically-grounded curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

The Social Change Model of Leadership (SCM), defined as a model of leadership development to promote positive social change (HERI, 1996), is regarded as the most widely used model among institutions of higher education for student leadership development (Haber & Komives, 2009). The central tenets associated with the SCM involve social responsibility and the development of socially responsible leaders (HERI, 1996; Dugan, 2006). The development of leadership and social responsibility have also been identified as key student learning outcomes of higher education (Adelman et al., 2011; AAC&U & NLC, 2007; CAS, 2015; Dreschsler Sharp et al., 2011; NACE, 2016; NASPA/ACPA, 2004). In response to these student learning outcomes, student affairs practitioners nationwide are increasingly being asked to develop socially responsible leadership among their students (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

Given the growing focus on the SCM and socially responsible leadership among student affairs professionals, the purpose of our paper is to discuss the development, implementation, and assessment of a year-long intervention focused on Consciousness of Self, a value of the SCM (HERI, 1996). Specifically, we outline the theoretical foundations of the current intervention, linking leadership theory to practice. Additionally, an in-depth description of the intervention, including samples of workbook pages and lesson plans, is provided to aid student affairs professionals in implementing a Consciousness of Self intervention in curricular and co-curricular settings. Finally, we discuss the evaluative results of the intervention based on survey data from the participants and provide recommendations and implications for student affairs professionals. Notably, the intervention at the center of our paper is part one of a series of seven interventions that follow the seven values of the SCM (e.g., part two will focus on the 2nd SCM value of Congruence, part three will focus on the 3rd SCM value of Commitment, etc.; HERI, 1996). We focused on one SCM value at a time because it allowed us to take a scaffolded approach to teach the Model. Specifically, we focused on the Individual value of Consciousness of Self to begin because it is the first value in the SCM and is "a necessary condition for realizing all the other values in the Model" (HERI, 1996, p. 31). After discussing the three individual values of the SCM, which build upon each other, then we will turn our attention to the Group Values before finishing the Societal/Community Value of Citizenship.

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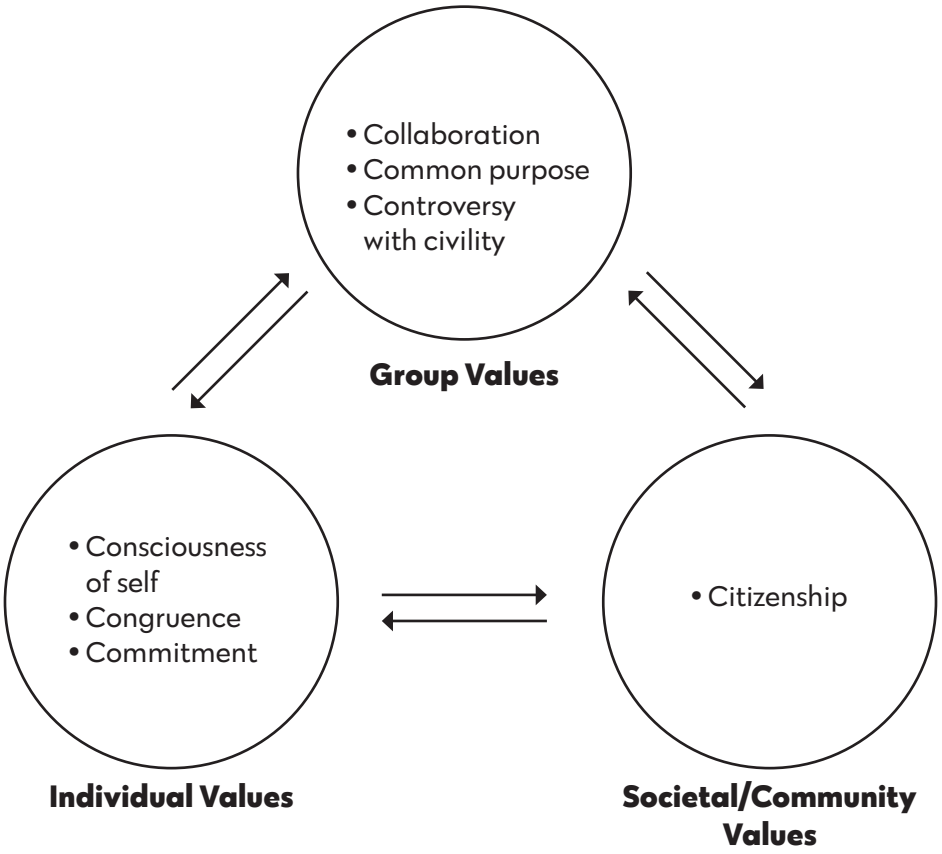
Hastings, L. & Sunderman, H. (2021). Theory-driven approaches to targeting socially responsible leadership in emerging adults: *Consciousness of self. Journal of Campus Activities Practice and Scholarship, 3*(2), 30-38. **https://doi.org/10.52499/2021020**

REVIEW OF RELATED SCHOLARSHIP

Consciousness of Self, defined as an awareness of the beliefs and values that motivate actions (HERI, 1996), was originally developed as a value of the Social Change Model of Leadership (SCM; HERI, 1996, Dugan & Komives, 2007). The SCM is a model of leadership development developed to promote positive social change at an institution of higher education or in the community (HERI, 1996). Furthermore, the model seeks to develop self-knowledge and leadership competence, positioning the leader as a change agent and viewing leadership as a collective action. Leadership is posited as furthering equity, social justice, self-knowledge, and service to enhance student development. As previously mentioned, the SCM is regarded as the most widely used model among students for leadership development within the field of higher education (Haber & Komives, 2009).

Figure 1. *Values of the Social Change Model of Leadership*



The SCM highlights seven elements sorted into three categories (see Figure 1; HERI, 1996). First, there are three individual values: (a) Consciousness of Self - an awareness of the beliefs and values that motivate actions; (b) Congruence - thoughts, feelings, and actions align with personal beliefs, demonstrating integrity and consistency; and (c) Commitment - energy motivates an individual to serve and propel group effort. Second, there are three group values: (a) Collaboration - working with others in pursuit of a common goal, empowers the self and builds trust with others; (b) Common Purpose - working in a group with shared values and goals; (c) Controversy with Civility - discussing differences with civility, which implies respecting others, listening, and showing restraint. Third, the SCM has one community value, Citizenship, which is defined as individuals and groups feeling a responsibility to community and society (HERI, 1996; Tyree, 1998). The value of "Change" is also considered a central component of the model (Wagner, 2006); it is the ultimate goal of leadership – making the world better for self and others. Tyree (1998) developed an instrument, the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), designed to assess socially responsible leadership in college students by measuring the eight values associated with SCM.

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Within the SCM, Consciousness of Self is defined as "a means to know oneself, or simply to be self-aware" (HERI, 1996, p. 31). There are two different aspects to Consciousness of Self: (a) an awareness of the more trait-like aspects of one's personality, which includes strengths, values, and interests; and (b) a consciousness of one's current feelings, thoughts, and actions. The SCM clearly states that "being an effective member of a leadership group that works toward social change necessarily begins with self-awareness" (HERI, 1996, p. 31).

In addition to SCM, the current intervention was also significantly influenced by Erikson's stages of psychosocial development (1950, 1963). Stage five of this theory is Identity vs. Role Confusion (see Figure 2). This theory posits that before emerging adults can progress to the sixth of eight stages, Intimacy vs. Isolation, they must first successfully resolve their identity by identifying a clear sense of self and purpose (Patton et al., 2016). After committing to an identity, people can move to the development stage where they build close friendships, as "adults need a strong sense of identity to foster strong relationships" (Patton et al., 2016, p. 290). When emerging adults have a clear sense of self, they can better accept people and ideas they perceive as different or unfamiliar. Given the developmental importance of self-awareness, it is critical that student affairs professionals working with college students intentionally incorporate consciousness of self activities and discussions into curricular and co-curricular experiences. The following section offers one model for utilizing the Consciousness of Self theory to inform practice.

Figure 2. *Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development*

VIII Maturity								Ego Integrity v. Despair
VII Adulthood							Generativity v. Stagnation	
VI Young Adulthood						Intimacy v. Isolation		
V Puberty and Adolescence					Identity v. Role Confusion			
IV Latency				Industry v. Inferiority				
III Locomotor-Genital			Initiative v. Guilt					
II Muscular-Anal		Autonomy v. Shame, Doubt						
I Oral Sensory	Basic Trust v. Mistrust							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**

DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

The purpose of the current paper is to discuss the development, implementation, and assessment of an intervention targeted at fostering Consciousness of Self, a value of the Social Change Model of Leadership (SCM; Higher Education Research Institute [HERI], 1996). The Consciousness of Self intervention is part one of a series of seven interventions that will follow the seven values of the SCM. The intervention took place within a 360-student (180 mentors; 180 mentees) leadership mentoring program at a four-year, public, Midwestern university. The college students in the leadership mentoring program are selected based on the demonstration of leadership strengths through a structured interview and are paired in one-to-one mentoring relationships with K – 12 student leaders in the local community for three years. Mentees are selected throughout the public and parochial school systems

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to represent a cross-section of youth in the community. College student mentors also represent a cross-section of students at the University, including all colleges. Notably, college student mentors undergo significant training, including taking an interpersonal skill for leadership course their first semester in the program and meeting weekly with other mentors throughout their three years in the program. Of the 150 mentoring pairs with middle school and high school mentees, approximately 90 mentoring pairs participated in the intervention.

We originally intended that there would be two primary components of the intervention. First, students would participate in a large-group, two-hour retreat comprised of three active learning activities during the fall semester. Second, students would participate in a one-hour discussion of research and mass media materials related to Consciousness of Self with a small group during the spring semester. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions during the spring semester, the one-hour discussions were not held. There were four retreat objectives, which stated that, by the end of the retreat, participants would be able to do the following:

1. Justify their selection of values
2. Describe their leadership strengths
3. Apply their leadership strengths to a specific situation
4. Practice mindfulness of their thoughts, feelings, and actions.

While not all leadership competencies may be able to be advanced through short-term leadership interventions, previous research has demonstrated a significant increase in SCM competencies immediately after and three months after a short-term training (Rosch & Caza, 2012), therefore affirming the relevance of the retreat objectives.

We began the retreat by asking participants to discuss in small groups the following central question: "What does the term 'Consciousness of Self' mean, and why is it important?" Following the small group discussions, we asked students to share their initial ideas with the group. Specifically, we encouraged them to share excellent thoughts with other members of their small groups. After beginning to consider the topic, the retreat facilitator provided a 10-minute opening lecture on definitions and research associated with Consciousness of Self and SCM and learning outcomes.

The first two activities of the retreat focused on the first part of Consciousness of Self, self-awareness (HERI, 1996). After an introduction lecture (see Figure 2), the initial activity was about values. Participants began by identifying key moments in their lives (see Figure 3), which they shared within their mentoring pairs. After reflecting on where they have been, participants were then invited to determine their top values. First, participants circled all of the values that resonated with them (see Figure 4). Then, they selected the top ten values that were the most meaningful. Each of these values was written on a separate sticky note. After displaying the sticky notes, participants were given 30 seconds to pick the three post-its that were the least important to them and throw them away (see Figure 5). We repeated this process until participants were left with the three values that were the most important to them. Participants reflected on their results individually and in their mentoring pairs.

Figure 3. *Introduction Lecture*

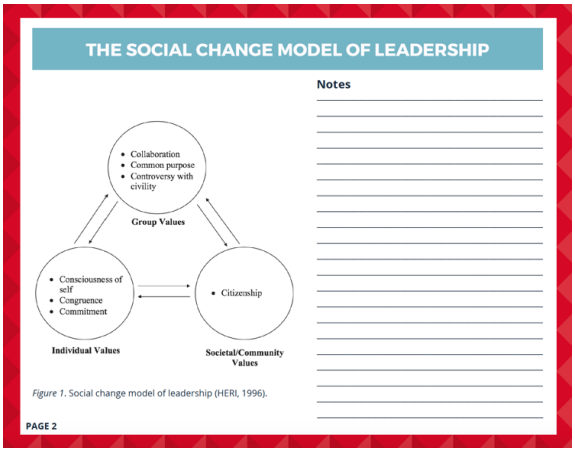

Figure 4. *Values Activity*

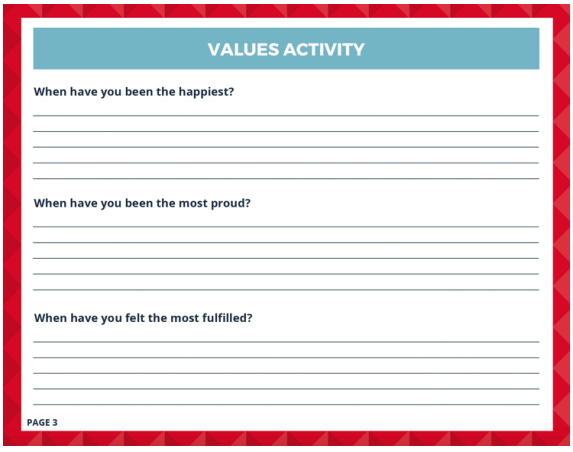

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Figure 5. *List of Values*

VALUES ACTIVITY

Accountability	Creativity	Fitness	Love	Shrewdness
Accuracy	Curiosity	Fluency	Loyalty	Simplicity
Achievement	Decisiveness	Focus	Making a difference	Soundness
Adventurousness	Democraticness	Freedom	Mastery	Speed
Altruism	Dependability	Fun	Merit	Spontaneity
Ambition	Determination	Generosity	Obedience	Stability
Assertiveness	Devoutness	Goodness	Openness	Strategic
Balance	Diligence	Grace	Order	Strength
Being the best	Discipline	Growth	Originality	Structure
Belonging	Discretion	Happiness	Piety	Success
Boldness	Diversity	Hard Work	Positivity	Support
Calmness	Dynamism	Health	Practicality	Teamwork
Carefulness	Economy	Helping Society	Preparedness	Temperance
Challenge	Effectiveness	Holiness	Professionalism	Thankfulness
Cheerfulness	Efficiency	Honesty	Prudence	Thoroughness
Clear-mindedness	Elegance	Honor	Quality-orientation	Thoughtfulness
Commitment	Empathy	Humility	Reliability	Timeliness
Community	Enjoyment	Independence	Resourcefulness	Tolerance
Compassion	Enthusiasm	Ingenuity	Restraint	Traditionalism
Competitiveness	Equality	Inner Harmony	Results-oriented	Trustworthiness
Consistency	Excellence	Inquisitiveness	Rigor	Truth-seeking
Contentment	Excitement	Insightfulness	Security	Understanding
Continuous Improvement	Expertise	Intelligence	Self-actualization	Uniqueness
Contribution	Exploration	Intellectual Status	Self-control	Unity
Control	Expressiveness	Intuition	Selflessness	Usefulness
Cooperation	Fairness	Joy	Self-reliance	Vision
Correctness	Faith	Justice	Sensitivity	Vitality
Courtesy	Family-orientedness	Leadership	Serenity	
	Fidelity	Legacy	Service	

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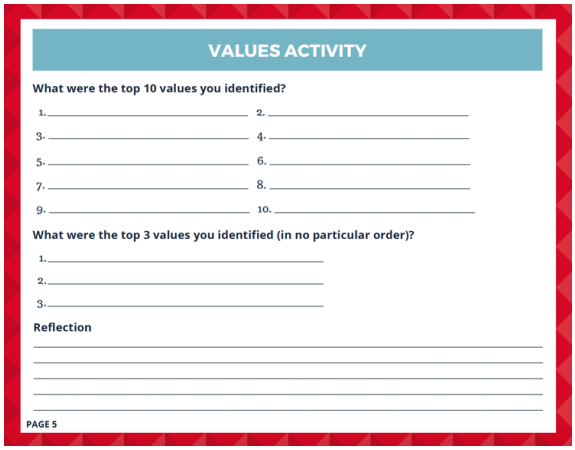
Figure 6. *Values Identification*



VALUES ACTIVITY

What were the top 10 values you identified?

1. _____ 2. _____
3. _____ 4. _____
5. _____ 6. _____
7. _____ 8. _____
9. _____ 10. _____

What were the top 3 values you identified (in no particular order)?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Reflection

PAGE 5

In the next activity, we asked participants to identify and use their leadership strengths. First, participants identified their top five leadership strengths (see Figure 5). Next, participants practiced utilizing their strengths within small groups. The goal of this activity was to build the tallest freestanding tower using only paper and masking tape. After planning and then constructing the tower, participants debriefed the experience and discussed how their strengths influenced their actions and success at various stages of the process.

The third and final activity focused on practicing mindfulness, the second component of Consciousness of Self. The goal of this activity was for participants to practice noticing what was in front of them through moments of awareness in action (HERI, 1996; Senge et al., 1994). Based on an activity in HERI (1996), participants were asked to pretend that they had never seen a raisin before and pay attention to a variety of aspects of the raisin, such as how it looks, feels, and smells. After completing the exercise, participants considered five questions about their current feelings and surrounding (see Figure 7). We concluded the retreat by discussing how Consciousness of Self influences people's capacity for social change.

DISCUSSION OF OUTCOMES

Figure 7. *Leadership Strengths*

LEADERSHIP STRENGTHS ACTIVITY

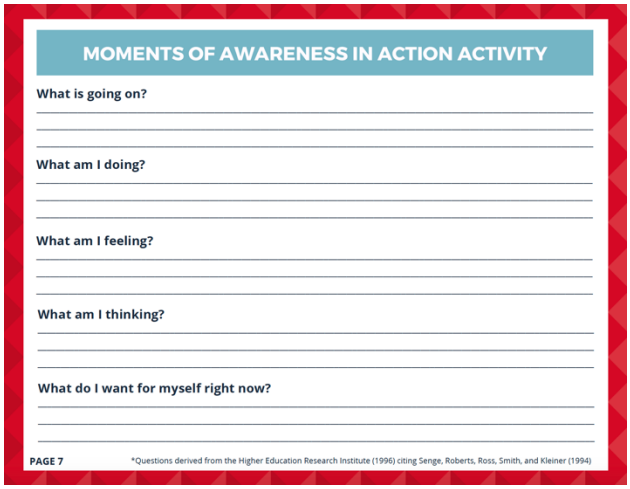
What are your top 5 leadership strengths?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Reflection/Notes

PAGE 6

Figure 8. *Mindfulness Actvity*



MOMENTS OF AWARENESS IN ACTION ACTIVITY

What is going on?

What am I doing?

What am I feeling?

What am I thinking?

What do I want for myself right now?

PAGE 7 *Questions derived from the Higher Education Research Institute (1996) citing Senge, Roberts, Ross, Smith, and Kleiner (1994)

The intervention was evaluated with a survey centered on the retreat objectives. Utilizing the response anchors suggested by Seemiller (2013; 1 = Did not increase, 4 = Greatly increased), participants were asked to evaluate their growth on the following five statements: (a) My ability to justify my values; (b) My understanding of my leadership strengths; (c) My ability to apply my leadership strengths; (d) My ability to practice mindfulness of their thoughts, feelings, and actions; and (e) My confidence in my ability to apply my values and strengths to positively change a situation. An ag-

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gregate total of all items was calculated. We determined that an aggregate total ≥ 3.0 would indicate that the objectives had been developed, as 3.0 would be the average score ("moderately increased") on the five items (Seemiller, 2016).

Participants were asked to complete the evaluative survey at the end of the spring semester (i.e., six months after the intervention). By having a notable amount of time between the intervention and the survey, we avoided Honeymoon Effect (Rosch & Schwartz, 2009). The Honeymoon, or recency, Effect occurs when participants overstate the developmental effects of an experience immediately following its conclusion. Rosch and Schwartz (2009) recommended that the Honeymoon Effect can be minimized by collecting evaluative data after participants have had sufficient time to incorporate the curriculum into their lives. Therefore, participants were surveyed six months following the intervention. Ultimately, 68 participants completed the survey out of a population of approximately 90 student mentors. Table 1 shows the survey results.

The results of the survey indicated that the majority of participants self-reported that all of the questions and, therefore, objectives "moderately increased" (i.e., a score of 3) or "greatly increased" (i.e., a score of 4). Notably, 76% of participants evaluated each of the five questions as a 3.0 or higher. Additionally, all questions had an average score equal to or greater than 3.0. Specifically, the lowest average evaluation was a 3.0 for "My ability to apply my leadership strengths." Although this question received the lowest average score, it still met the 3.0 threshold, indicating an increase in perceived participant growth (Seemiller, 2016). The highest average evaluation was a 3.18 for "My understanding of my leadership strengths," revealing that participants perceived a larger growth in their understanding of their leadership strengths than the application of their leadership strengths. The aggregated average across the five questions was 3.10. This exceeded the predetermined threshold (i.e., aggregate average ≥ 3.0), indicating that participants perceived a moderate increase in the targeted objectives (Seemiller, 2016).

Table 1. *Results of Evaluation Survey*

Question	Objective Targeted	Average	% ≥ 3.0 Rating
My ability to justify my values.	One (Values)	3.16	86.8
My understanding of my leadership strengths.	Two (Understand Strengths)	3.18	82.4
My ability to apply my leadership strengths.	Three (Apply Strengths)	3.00	79.4
My ability to practice mindfulness of my thoughts, feelings, and actions	Four (Mindfulness)	3.09	76.5
My confidence in my ability to apply my values and strengths to positively change a situation	One (Values) & Three (Apply Strengths)	3.07	82.4

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRACTITIONER

The purpose of the current paper was to outline a theory-based intervention focused on Consciousness of Self. The intervention was a two-hour retreat with interactive and discussion-oriented activities. The results of evaluation data indicate that participants did perceive an increase in the objectives targeted by the intervention, which stated that, by the end of the retreat, participants would be able to (1) justify their selection of values, (2) describe their leadership strengths, (3) apply their leadership strengths to a specific situation, and (4) practice mindfulness of their thoughts, feelings, and actions.

The intervention and evaluation strategy outlined in the current paper has numerous implications and recommendations for student affairs professionals. First, student affairs professionals may utilize the theory-based, and evaluatively-examined activities shared in this paper in curricular and co-curricular settings to target Consciousness of Self. Providing an in-depth discussion of the retreat and pictures of the workbook meets a need in the literature for more "descriptions of assignments and activities comprising the day-to-day teaching of leadership" (Smith & Roebuck, 2010, p. 136). While the activities in the current intervention were implemented at one two-hour retreat,

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other student affairs professionals may decide, for example, to separate the activities into four 30-minute activities used as development icebreakers during student meetings.

Second, this intervention demonstrates the importance of using theory to shape practice, specifically evaluation. Avolio et al. (2009) noted that leadership development interventions have a positive impact on a variety of outcomes (i.e., affective, behavioral, cognitive, and organizational performance), although the impact of these interventions differs, in part, based on the theoretical foundations. Grounded in the Social Change Model of Leadership (SCM; HERI, 1996) and Erikson's psychosocial development theory (1950, 1963), the intervention sought to foster Consciousness of Self among emerging adults through a two-hour-long retreat. Therefore, in alignment with the commentary by Avolio et al. (2009), our intervention evaluation aligned with our theoretical foundations. We recommend that student affairs professionals consider utilizing a similar structure to create interventions and evaluations that answer the call of "document[ing] and demonstrat[ing] impact" (Reinelt & Russon, 2003, p. 129).

Third, furthering the utilization of theory to shape practice, student affairs professionals are encouraged to employ the backward design process of designing the curriculum used in the current intervention (Wiggins & McTighe, 1998). Our intervention was created by writing intervention objectives based on the SCM and then developing activities that targeted the objectives. By starting with the end in mind, the focus was tailoring the curriculum to student learning rather than tailoring student learning to the established curriculum. This process was also instrumental in guiding the assessment strategy (Wiggins & McTighe, 1989), ensuring that the evaluative survey aligned with the intervention objectives.

Given that the current intervention was conducted among a relatively homogenous sample of college student leaders who mentor at one university in one leadership mentoring program, the generalizability of our evaluation results is limited (Cook & Campbell, 1979; Shadish et al., 2001). To address this concern, we recommend that practitioners who implement the current intervention conduct a thorough evaluation among their participants and modify the programming to meet the unique needs of their population.

Additionally, scholars and practitioners are encouraged to build upon the current intervention by researching participant change over time using the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS; Tyree, 1998). The SRLS measures the seven values of the SCM. While the evaluation strategy of the current paper focused on assessing participants' perception of growth related to the learning objectives, it is recommended that future scholars utilize the SRLS to examine participants' growth over time. We also suggest that researchers explore the process of student development during the current intervention using a qualitative, phenomenological design to more thoroughly understand the "lived experience" of participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Qualitative researchers may also wish to explore the interaction being mentors and mentees on perceived growth in the mentor. Further, it is recommended that Consciousness of Self interventions be implemented in conjunction with additional curriculum on the other six SCM values. In line with this recommendation, we will complete a similar intervention this year on Congruence, the second value of SCM. The following year the program will focus on Commitment, the third value of SCM. This pattern will continue until all seven values have been discussed.

These applications and recommendations, along with others previously discussed, will continue to enhance SCM utilization on college campuses through student affairs professionals. As the SCM is the most widely used model for leadership development on college campuses (Haber & Komives, 2009), it is critical that student affairs professionals implement SCM interventions and curriculum with a strong theoretical grounding and a process of evaluation to document impact (Reinelt & Russon, 2003).

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