

A CASE STUDY OF STUDENTS IN A DEVELOPMENTAL LITERACY COURSE
WHEN PARTICIPATING IN A MINDFULNESS-BASED INTERVENTION

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation to my grandmothers, Marie Klassen and Catherine Anne Nielson, who demonstrated how to forge ahead for femininity through gentle and kind humility and unforgiving, unrelenting fortitude and strength.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Description
ER of MSLQ	- Effort Regulation of Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire
FFMQ-SF	- Five Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire – Short Form
MBI	- Mindfulness-based Intervention
MBSR	- Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction
PANAS	- Positive and Negative Affect Schedule
RDG 1300	- Reading Development course, a developmental literacy course
SCS-SF	- Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form
SDT	- Self-Determination Theory

ABSTRACT

Success in developmental education contexts requires support not just in cognitive skills, but also in affective areas. One approach showing promise in supporting students in affective areas is mindfulness training. Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) can support affective needs and provide coping strategies in general as well as in some educational settings. While the evidence for mindfulness-based interventions providing coping strategies is, as yet, focused mostly on areas outside of developmental education, it may be that mindfulness training can also benefit students placed and enrolled in developmental literacy coursework in college. The purpose of my study was to understand how students enrolled in a developmental literacy course experienced participation in an MBI in terms of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, and effort. I explored the perceptions of students in a developmental literacy course as they participated in a six-week mindfulness-based stress reduction program. Through the analysis of weekly individual interviews with each participant, researcher observations, weekly journals, and initial- and post-questionnaires of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, and effort, I discovered the following themes through my analysis of the study: (a) common humanity; (b) coping skills enhancement; (c) heightened interest; (d) reflection for growth; (e) time management; (f) adaptation and contextualization; and (g) change or evolution of understanding. I concluded students in developmental education and those who serve them could benefit from students in developmental education engaging in mindfulness-based interventions.

I. INTRODUCTION

Overview of Study

Students enrolled in developmental literacy courses can exhibit a range of affective responses to the course (Arendale, 2010; Dembo & Seli, 2012; Koch, Slate, & Moore, 2012; Mealey, 2003; Mulvey, 2009). Yet, little qualitative research has been done to explore students' perceptions of their feelings and experience of attending developmental classes (Koch, Slate, & Moore, 2012). Although the cognitive abilities of students who need additional literacy support are regularly measured (Boylan, 2009), attempts to assess their affective profiles are scarce (Sideridis, Mouzaki, Simos, & Protopapas, 2006). While studies exist about students in developmental education and their affect, such as stress management, motivation, and epistemological beliefs (Carolan, R., 2015; Jamieson, Peters, Greenwood, & Altose, 2016; Jessen & Elander, 2009; Moore, R., 2008; Robinson, H. M., 2009; VanOra, J., 2012), students' affect about their placement and attendance in developmental education classes is not as widely focused on as other student and classroom characteristics and factors in developmental education, these are topics deserving exploration. Affect is an important student characteristic because evidence exists indicating negative affect can lead to decreased effort regulation in educational settings (Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry, 2002; Schunk, Meece, & Pintrich, 2014). Further, when a student's cognitive abilities are underdeveloped, their affective abilities become more important to their academic success (Sedlacek, 2004). Despite well-intentioned instruction in cognitive learning strategies, inattention to the affective domain can negate otherwise useful instruction.

One approach to supporting affective areas of students' experiences in general is mindfulness (see Arch & Landy, 2015; Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Mindfulness-based

interventions (MBIs) and self-compassion practices have been shown to decrease negative affect and provide coping strategies to deal with negative affect among general populations of adolescents (Bluth et al., 2016; Chambers, Gullone, & Allen, 2009) and adults (Arch & Craske, 2010; Arch & Landy, 2015; Chambers et al., 2009; Lynch, Lazarus, & Cheavens, 2015; Sirois, Kitner, & Hirsch, 2015). Although MBIs have been shown to provide affective coping strategies for participants, the focus of these studies has been primarily on health and general life issues. In my study, therefore, I aimed to explore the use of an MBI to support affective areas of students' experiences when enrolled in developmental literacy coursework in college.

That is, students in developmental literacy courses may benefit from participation in an MBI if it helps to decrease negative affect, increase coping strategies, and increase effort regulation. The purpose of my study is to understand how students enrolled in a developmental literacy course experience participation in an MBI in terms of their levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, and effort. As part of that focus, I gathered data using several measures of students' levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and perceived effort they put forth in the course. As a result of my study, I was able to document the experiences and perceptions of students who were enrolled in a developmental literacy course at a four-year university as they participated in an MBI as described by questionnaires, journals, interviews, and field notes.

In my study, students enrolled in a developmental literacy course took the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire-Short Form (FFMQ-SF; Bohlmeijer et al., 2011a), Self-Compassion Scale-Short Form (SCS-SF; Raes et al., 2011), Positive and Negative Affect

Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), and the Effort Regulation (ER) of the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ; Pintrich, Smith, Garcia, & McKeachie, 1991) to assess their current levels of general mindfulness and self-compassion, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort they put forth in the course. I used the results from these instruments to better understand the levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, and effort, which students in the developmental literacy course reported. The bulk of data for my study comes from the artifacts from a smaller subset of these participants who engaged in an MBI and were interviewed before, during, and after the MBI.

Problem Statement

While researchers have addressed the importance of emotional aspects of education in many areas of education (Brackett, Rivers, Reyes, & Salovey, 2012; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004), students' need for emotional support in developmental education is mentioned less frequently in most developmental education research literature than are cognitive and strategic learning foci (Liff, 2003). However, students in developmental education have the most opportunity to succeed when they are supported on multiple levels. Boroch et al. (2010) wrote the most successful developmental education programs and courses focus on the holistic development of all aspects of a student: social, emotional, affective, psychomotor, and cognitive skills. In addition, instructors can best support students by observing students' emotions and attitudes and help develop student self-concept and facilitate personal growth. Fowler and Boylan (2010) stated that for students with weak academic skills, affective and personal factors were most highly correlated with their success. Students could have a higher

chance of success if they could be provided supports, including a supportive learning environment, which embrace their holistic nature, especially their affective needs.

That is, what are often termed non-cognitive skills in educational settings may be very important parts of supporting students in developmental education domains. Egalite, Mills, and Green (2016) observed researchers and policymakers sometimes focus on cognitive outcomes and fail to take into account non-cognitive skills. Walker (2015) noted instructors can serve students in developmental education courses best by being cognizant of students' "non-cognitive issues and motivations" (p. 29); supportive learning environments include recognizing students' affective needs and offering compassion. By helping to foster students' affective needs, such as increasing intrinsic motivation and decreasing test anxiety through psychoeducational interventions, colleges could improve their students' academic achievement (Khalaila, 2015). Psychoeducational interventions may include fostering mindfulness, compassion, self-compassion, effort and effort regulation, and affect. Thus, I sought to fill a gap in the literature by examining measures of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, and effort in a cohort of students in a developmental literacy course and implementing a mindfulness-based intervention with a subset of that population.

Research Questions

In my study, I investigated the experiences of a subset of students placed in a developmental literacy course at a four-year university as they participated in an MBI through self-report questionnaires, interviews, journals, and field notes. I specifically asked them about their understanding of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect associated

with being in a developmental literacy course, and effort put forth in the course. I sought answers to my research questions:

- 1) How do participants enrolled in a developmental literacy course experience participation in an MBI?
 - 1.A) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of affect in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
 - 1.B) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of effort in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
- 2) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of mindfulness during participation in an MBI?
- 3) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of self-compassion during participation in an MBI?

I analyzed interviews, journals, field notes, and questionnaire packets to inform the research questions. The questionnaire packets consisted of questionnaires, a schedule, a scale, and a subscale to assess participants' scores of mindfulness, self-compassion, positive and negative affect, and effort regulation.

Operational Definitions

In this section, I define the concepts of affect, compassion, self-compassion, effort, and mindfulness and provide a short description of the instruments used to measure each construct. I also define essential components of Self-Determination Theory, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and four mini-theories of Self-Determination Theory.

Affect: Affect can be characterized as positive or negative (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1998). High positive affect (PA) is an attitude defined by heightened vitality, defined focus, and enjoyable engagement. Low PA is the exhibition of melancholy and disinterest. Negative affect (NA) is an aspect of personal anxiety and unenjoyable engagement which could manifest as frustration, disregard, hatred, fear, regret, shame, stress, and tension. Low NA is a state of patience and tranquility (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1998). In my study, I wanted to understand more about students' affect about being in a developmental literacy class.

Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS): A 20-item scale developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) to measure two primary dimensions of mood: Positive Affect and Negative Affect.

Compassion: The recognition of suffering, feeling kindness for those who are suffering, attempting to help those who are suffering, and understanding the flaws and fragile nature of humanity is shared (Neff, 2011).

Self-compassion: Demonstrating kindness and understanding toward oneself during pain and failure, seeing one's suffering as a part of the human experience, and reflecting on pain with mindfulness (Barnard & Curry, 2011; Neff, 2003).

Self-Compassion Scale-Short Form (SCS-SF): A 12-item scale developed by Raes, Pommier, Neff, and Van Gucht (2011) to measure three facets of self-compassion: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Neff (2016) distinguished mindfulness within self-compassion as different from the concept of mindfulness as defined in the FFMQ-SF. Mindfulness in the SCS-SF is a

nonjudgmental, receptive mind state in which one observes thoughts and feelings as they are, without trying to suppress or deny them...mindfulness requires that we not be ‘over-identified’ with thoughts and feelings, so that we are caught up and swept away by negative reactivity. (para. 7)

Mindfulness in the SCS-SF takes a narrower focus limited to negative thoughts and feelings associated with personal suffering compared to positive, negative, and/or neutral experiences. Mindfulness in the FFMQ-SF focuses on the experience of the person compared to the experience itself (Neff, 2016).

Effort: To care about a concept or task and work for said concept or task; effort drives people’s intelligence and allows them to use their intelligence to maximum advantage (Dweck, 2000).

Effort Subscale of the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (ER of MSLQ): A 4-item scale developed by Pintrich et al. (1991) to measure effort regulation, a type of self-regulation, and the degree to which an individual demonstrates responsibility for accomplishing their academic goals even when interferences and obstacles are present.

Mindfulness: Being aware and “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, p. 4). Mindfulness can help to create increased awareness, clarity, and acceptance of present-moment reality (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Baer et al. (2008) and Bohlmeijer et al. (2011b) defined mindfulness as: (1) awareness of internal and external phenomena, including cognition, emotion, and experiences observed by the senses; (2) ability to label internal phenomena using words; (3) ability to act with awareness in the present moment versus acting while one’s

attention is diverted; (4) ability to not judge and evaluate internal phenomena; and (5) ability to not react to internal phenomena and to allow cognitions and emotions to exist as they are instead of becoming entrenched in them.

Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire-Short Form (FFMQ-SF): A 24-item questionnaire developed by Bohlmeijer et al. (2011a) to measure five facets of mindfulness: observing (eight items), describing (eight items), acting with awareness (eight items), non-judging (eight items), and nonreactivity (seven items).

I now define the essential components of Self-Determination Theory, autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Autonomy: “The perceived origin or source of one’s own behavior” and the need to control the course of one’s life (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 8).

Competence: “Feeling effective in one’s ongoing interactions with the social environment and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one’s capacities. The need for competence leads people to seek challenges that are optimal for their capacities and to persistently attempt to maintain and enhance those skills and capacities through activity” (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 7).

Relatedness: “Feeling connected to others, to caring for and being cared for by those others, to having a sense of belongingness both with other individual and with one’s community. Relatedness reflects the homonomous aspect of the integrative tendency to connect with and be integral to and accepted by others” (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 7).

Extrinsic motivation: Behavior guided by external rewards such as grades or accolades.

Intrinsic motivation: “Based in the inherent satisfactions of the behavior” not the “contingencies or reinforcement that are operationally separable from those activities” (Ryan & Deci, 2002, p. 10). Behavior guided by internal rewards.

Summary of Introduction

In the introduction, I described an overview of my study, the purpose of which was to examine the participants’ perceptions related to experiences in and implementation of the MBI, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and the effort they put forth in that class, and mindfulness, and self-compassion. I also introduced the gap in the literature: students’ affect about being in developmental education classes and those students’ participation in a mindfulness-based intervention. I also defined key terms and instruments used in the study. In the next chapters, I will delve deeper into research concerning students in developmental education, mindfulness, compassion, self-compassion, affect, and effort, as well as the research design of the study.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In this section, I will address the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory, followed by a discussion of the educational environment of my study, postsecondary developmental literacy. I will discuss concepts and research of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, effort, and the connections between those concepts. Lastly, I will review the instructional approach of mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), the primary way participants learned mindfulness and self-compassion practices during the intervention. The goal of the review of literature is to provide a basis for an exploration of the affective areas of students in developmental literacy courses and how students in those classes might benefit from mindfulness-based interventions, which may positively impact effort in a developmental literacy course.

Theoretical Framework: Self-Determination Theory

The study is framed with Self-Determination Theory (SDT), a social constructivist macrotheory of human motivation addressing intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, interpersonal relationships, intrapersonal understanding, and basic psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Deci and Ryan (2008) defined SDT as an “empirically based theory of human motivation, development, and wellness” (p. 182). The theory is used to describe people’s innate and inherent propensities to act in an efficient, sustaining, and healthy manner. Research guided by SDT has led to the understanding of three psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When these needs are met, they enhance self-motivation and mental

health; when these needs are not met, individuals can have decreased motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Deci, Ryan, Shultz, and Niemiec (2015) stated when people act autonomously, they are “authentic, congruent, and integrated in their actions” (p. 112), and, in turn, they tend to act prosocially and responsively to others and demonstrate increased effort, persistence, and creativity. When in a state of autonomous motivation, individuals experience determination, purpose, willingness, and endorsement of their actions. Controlled motivation, as distinct from autonomous motivation, can occur when there is external regulation based on reward or punishment and introjected regulation. Introjected regulation, in turn, occurs when “the regulation of action has been partially internalized and is energized by factors such as an approval motive, avoidance of shame, contingent self-esteem, and ego-involvements” (p. 182).

SDT is a broad framework providing a lens for studies in motivation and education. This theory is applicable to teaching students in developmental education because instructors of developmental education classes can benefit from knowing how to best motivate students to attain educational and lifelong success. SDT has been used to frame studies focusing on mindfulness (Allan, Bott, & Suh, 2015; Bernard, Martin, & Kulik, 2014; Chang, Huang, & Lin, 2015; McCarthy, 2011) as a “foundation for autonomous regulation of behavior” (Deci & Ryan, 2017, para. 13). Thus, teaching mindfulness and how to implement mindfulness techniques can help those who practice mindfulness better autonomously regulate. If students in developmental literacy classes are not motivated, MBIs could provide a way to increase the likelihood of acting in efficient, sustaining, and healthy ways in developmental literacy classes. SDT is appropriate as the framework for

my study because I explored students' effort and motivation in my study as they progressed through a mindfulness-based intervention.

An SDT framework provides direct connections to mindfulness. Deci et al. (2015) defined mindfulness as

an 'allowing' form of awareness; one merely observes rather than resists, blocks, manipulates, or latches onto what is occurring. Mindfulness, when so understood is neither selective nor active in the sense of focusing one's attention on specific goals or objects with the intent of making something happen, but instead entails a full acceptance of whatever it is. (p. 112-113)

When people are mindful, open to different experiences, and aware of themselves and their surroundings, they are more likely to be intrinsically motivated; furthermore, researchers have demonstrated mindfulness "supports the development of intrinsic goals or aspirations, such as close relationships, personal growth, and community involvement" (Deci et al., 2015, p. 123). Those who practice mindfulness can better satisfy basic psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Mindfulness can be a practice enabling students to persist and cope with the demands of college life as well as reduce potential distractions while engaged in their studies.

Ryan and Deci (2000) argued through attention to the presence of basic psychological needs being met, "practitioners are better able to diagnose sources of alienation versus engagement, and facilitate both enhanced human achievements and well-being" (p. 76). Thus, it is reasonable to expect that students engaged in practices of compassion toward self and others have an increased chance of learning in supportive conditions and are more likely to be intrinsically motivated. Sustained supportive

environments and conditions foster and maintain intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Furthermore, as students become more mindful and self-compassionate they may, in turn, become more autonomously motivated, increase involvement in their coursework, and foster a state of awareness, which is needed to support mental health.

Intrinsic motivation is the innate propensity to seek out innovation and uniqueness while being open to obstacles and to advance one's aptitude and capacity, to probe, and master new information and the inherent desire to realize comprehension, impromptu enthusiasm, awareness, and discernment crucial to cognitive and affective development, and serves as a primary basis of gratification and stamina (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When instructors provide supportive conditions, students' intrinsic motivation can be best supported (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Ryan and Deci (2000) also stated embracement, emotion recognition, chances for self-empowerment and self-efficacy enhanced intrinsic motivation because these enabled individuals to feel more autonomous.

SDT also addresses extrinsic motivation and differentiates between four different types of extrinsic behavioral regulation: external, introjected, identified, and integrated. The different types fall on a continuum of internalization. In external regulation, an individual satisfies an external demand; this is the least autonomous end of the continuum (Deci & Ryan, 2000). For example, a student attended the MBI in order to obtain class credit. In introjection, an individual engages in an activity to maintain self-esteem or pride or avoid guilt or anxiety. Introjection in the context of my study could look like a student attending the MBI to please an instructor. In identification, an individual begins to integrate an action into his/her life; a student in the study could express that they acknowledge the benefits of the MBI. In integration, an individual has fully integrated an

action into his/her life; this is the most autonomous end of the continuum, an example of which would be if a student sees the benefits of doing MBI and continues to incorporate mindfulness activities in his/her daily life.

Relatedness refers to the creation and maintenance of close personal ties with friends, partners, and community. Relationships are necessary and beneficial for well-being. The best quality relationships occur when people support the autonomy, competence, and relatedness needs of one another. Students who have quality relationships with other students and teachers can meet one of the three psychological needs, that of relatedness.

In my study, I used an SDT lens to provide a framework for understanding relationships among mindfulness and students' feelings of competency and autonomy related to feelings of anger and frustration, especially where motivation and effort are involved. The research questions for my study, as described in Chapter 1, are viewed through this SDT lens.

Students in Developmental Education

The educational setting focused on in my study were developmental literacy courses in college. Boylan and Bonham (2014) defined developmental education as a spectrum of services and coursework guided by adult education and development theory. These services and coursework can support holistic growth, including personal and scholastic pursuits that can lead to college success. Developmental education typically serves undergraduate students who need additional academic support. Developmental education exists to help “undergraduate students prepare, prepared students advance, and advanced students excel” (the National Association of Developmental Education, 2016,

para. 2). Although students can benefit from developmental education support, they may not realize they need that support. Many students placed in developmental education course may not have immediate concerns about doing well in their courses; they instead may believe they are adequately prepared for college. Pretlow and Wathington (2013) surveyed students ($N = 1,318$) who placed into at least one developmental education in the state of Texas, and found that “two-thirds of the students completed the recommended high school diploma and an additional 15% earned a distinguished diploma” (p. 795-796). Most students in the Pretlow and Wathington study believed they were adequately prepared for college as measured by earning a recommended or distinguished diploma. Only 14% of the students surveyed reported they had concerns about attending and participating in college courses; however, researchers conjectured students may still need support in order to be successful in college.

Students in developmental education courses experience a type of paradox. Arendale (2010) stated that students in developmental education often have two differing emotional states at the same time: they are excited that they are in college and they feel they are not as successful as other students and have a lesser academic profile. Dembo and Seli (2004) also observed students who are in developmental education classes are not likely to seek help, may not attend class on a regular basis, and often do not make changes in habits, attitudes, and study strategies throughout their courses. Many students who experience these emotions and habits self-sabotage themselves, fail academically, and may in turn drop out from college (Arendale, 2010; Mealey, 2003). When individuals are approaching their education with anger, anxiety, or disgust, they are not in an optimal learning situation. Strategies that move people to experience drive, excitement and

vitality, or contentment, safety, and connection are related to higher quality learning experiences.

Koch, Slate, and Moore's (2012) qualitative study addressed the affective state of students placed in developmental education. They interviewed students in developmental classes and found themes of affective perceptions, academic perceptions, behaviors, resources, and perceived benefits. Within the category of affective perceptions, students exhibited negative affect as their initial reaction about placement in a developmental class; they felt a negative stigma (Koch, Slate, & Moore, 2012). Students in Koch, Slate, and Moore's study reported negative and positive experiences about their participation in a developmental class over the course of a semester; instructors were key to the determination of negative or positive affective response from students. The authors recommended that developmental programs should meet both the academic and affective needs of students.

Developmental Literacy Courses

The context of my study was developmental education and the participants were a subset of those who were placed in developmental literacy coursework. Developmental literacy courses involve the teaching of developmental reading, developmental writing, or a combination of developmental reading and writing. In my study, the developmental literacy course that the students took is described as: "A content-based integrated reading and writing course for students who require compensatory instruction in reading comprehension and critical reading. Required for students who fail to make passing scores on the Texas Success Initiative reading test" (RDG 1300, 2015, p. 1). Learning outcomes include foci on appropriate use of strategies for navigating texts, understanding

and implementing academic text conventions, analyzing audience and language in texts, evaluating information across multiple texts, and other approaches to successfully managing college-level academic reading (see RDG 1300, 2015). These learning outcomes reflect the official student learning outcomes for developmental reading and writing coursework provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB, 2013).

Students understand reading and writing skills are crucial to their academic success. For example, when Byrd and MacDonald (2005) interviewed students in developmental education classes, the students discussed reading and writing skills most in comparison to other skills needed for college success. Most of the participants stated they were least prepared in reading and related the lack of preparation to poor time management skills and higher expectations for university reading requirements compared to high school and community college requirements. Vacca and Padak (1990) observed students in developmental literacy courses have difficulties specifically related to knowledge of the reading process, do not believe they can read, do not use reading for information and/or entertainment, and have limited use of strategies. Therefore, students in developmental literacy classes can benefit from quality instruction and supportive learning environments.

Though students in developmental literacy classes need to improve literacy skills to better navigate higher education, students may not be emotionally prepared to learn. Students in developmental literacy classes may feel underappreciated, stigmatized, less than others, defeated, angry, self-destructive, and disconnected (Arendale, 2010). They believe they cannot change, do not want to change, or do not know how to change

(Dembo & Seli, 2012; Mealey, 2003). In their prior educational experiences, they may have encountered limited assessment, confusing and intimidating literacy practices, disenfranchisement, a banking model of learning, and teacher-centered classes (Lesley, 2004) which could have affected their expectations of their college literacy courses. They may have also held inaccurate perceptions of self-efficacy (Arendale, 2010; Mealey, 2003) and had low academic motivation (Mealey, 2003).

Cantrell et al. (2013) surveyed college freshmen enrolled in developmental reading and first-year English courses to assess their level of self-efficacy and reading self-confidence. Their findings indicated students enrolled in developmental reading courses had lower self-efficacy in both academic and personal reading tasks, and higher levels of emotional and physiological stress associated with reading tasks. They suggested instructors of developmental reading courses should be sensitive to students' emotional and physiological responses and embed strategies that could help them cope and develop their self-efficacy for reading. They further suggested affective strategies were advantageous for students placed in developmental literacy courses "who struggle with negative physiological or affective influences on reading self-efficacy and should be investigated to determine their effectiveness" (p. 30).

Elements of Student Experience

In this section, I will describe elements of student experience, mindfulness, compassion, self-compassion, effort and effort regulation, and affect. During my study, participants experienced and explored aspects of mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion definitions and practices. Participants were asked to take questionnaires and engage in interviews about their effort and effort regulation in and affect about being in a

developmental literacy course. The qualitative and quantitative data helped me understand how students in developmental literacy classes perceived mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about the developmental literacy course they attended, and the effort they gave in the class. I wanted to understand each of these elements so as to better support students in developmental literacy and benefit those who teach them.

Mindfulness

Kabat-Zinn (1994) defined mindfulness as being aware and “paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally” (p. 4).

Mindfulness is the state of awareness of one’s internal emotions and experiences and external phenomena, and includes the ability to act with that awareness foregrounded.

Aspects of mindfulness include awareness of internal and external phenomena, including cognition, emotion, and experiences observed by the senses. It includes the ability to label internal phenomena using words and act with awareness in the present moment versus acting while one’s attention is diverted. Similarly, mindfulness can include the ability to not react to internal phenomena and to allow cognitions and emotions to exist as they are instead of becoming entrenched in them (Baer et al., 2008; Bohlmeijer et al., 2011b). In general, mindfulness can help to create increased awareness, clarity, and acceptance of present-moment reality (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). I taught mindfulness practices during my study. An approach to fostering mindfulness is discussed in a subsequent section of this literature review.

Self-compassion and Compassion

A component of mindfulness-based interventions is self-compassion. Self-compassion is defined as demonstrating kindness and understanding toward oneself

during pain and failure, seeing one's suffering as a part of the human experience, and reflecting on one's pain with mindfulness (Barnard & Curry, 2011; Neff, 2003).

Interventions that have incorporated self-compassion reflection and techniques have resulted in participants experiencing increases in self-compassion, mindfulness, optimism, connectedness, and self-efficacy and decreases in rumination (Smeets, Neff, Alberts, & Peters, 2014). Evidence also exists indicating self-compassion practices can increase life satisfaction (Germer & Neff, 2013; Smeets et al., 2014).

In addition to self-compassion, an integral aspect of mindfulness work includes teachings of compassion. Neff (2011) defined compassion as recognizing of suffering, feeling kindness for those who are suffering, attempting to help those who are suffering, and understanding the flaws and fragile nature of humanity is shared. Self-compassion requires the recognition of our own personal suffering and has three components: (a) self-kindness: being gentle and understanding to the self instead of harshly critical and judgmental; (b) recognition of common humanity: (feeling connection with others in life instead of feeling isolated and disconnected by our suffering), and mindfulness (holding our experience in balanced awareness instead of ignoring or exaggerating pain) (Neff, 2011).

Affect

Another element I observed during the study was participants' affect about being in a developmental literacy course. In general, affect can be described in the following ways. Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) defined positive affect as the extent to which an individual feels enthusiasm, activity, and alertness. When individuals experience high positive affect, they may feel energetic, focused, or engaged. Individuals experiencing

low positive affect may report distress, depression, or languor. Individuals in a state of negative affect may be distressed and may report “unpleasurable engagement that subsumes a variety of aversive mood states, including anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness, with low negative affect being a state of calmness and serenity” (p. 1063). Similarly, Forgas (2001) defined positive affect as overall feelings of gladness and “positive arousal” (p. 209) and negative affect as “feelings of sadness and anxiety” (p. 209).

Based on studies of positive and negative affect, researchers have determined that when students experience positive affect they are more effective learners and when students experience negative affect they are less effective learners. Isen (1984) and Isen, Daubman, and Nowicki (1987) conveyed that positive affect can lead to more flexible and efficient processing. Gross (2007; 2014) determined that negative emotions can lead to poor decisions, unhelpful behaviors, and interpersonal conflict. These findings imply that students are better capable of authentic learning when in state of positive affect versus negative affect. Linnenbrink and Pintrich (2000) discovered negative affect, not positive affect, hinders working memory; they also stated the literature about affect and emotions is complex and further research needs to occur.

Affect and mindfulness. A number of studies exist related to participants’ engagement in mindfulness activities and the effect on their affect. For example, Arch and Landy (2015) found when participants experience trait mindfulness functions, they are better able to have prolonged contact with voluntary exposure to distasteful experiences, subdued appraisal of hostile situations, reduced “suppression and intensity of negative affect, greater emotional clarity, and more effective down-regulation

of negative emotion” (p. 211). Trait or dispositional mindfulness is the manner in which a person can be in a state of present-moment awareness, which can vary in its quality and frequency (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

Additionally, Sirois et al. (2015) surveyed undergraduate and community adult participants ($N = 3,232$) using the SCS, PANAS, and Wellness Behaviors Inventory. They determined that self-compassion was positively correlated with health-promoting behaviors: healthy eating, physical activity, sleep behavior, and stress management. In addition, self-compassion was associated with adaptive emotions, high levels of positive affect, and low levels of negative affect. Bluth et al. (2016) also found correlations between self-compassion and affect in a sample of adolescents ages 13 through 18. They noted participants with higher levels of self-compassion “self-reported less anxiety, stress, and negative affect, and greater life satisfaction and affect” (p. 1104).

As discussed in this section, mindfulness can reduce, regulate, transform, and lower the experience of negative affect (Arch & Craske, 2010; Arch & Landy, 2015). Mindfulness-based interventions which incorporate self-compassion practices may help transform negative affect experienced by students and help with coping skills. Students in developmental literacy courses who participate in MBIs may become better able to manage negative affect.

Effort and Effort Regulation

Dweck (2000) defined effort as caring about a concept or task that is important and being willing to work for that concept or task; effort drives people’s intelligence and allows them to use their intelligence to maximum advantage. Pintrich and DeGroot (1990) defined effort management or effort regulation as included in self-regulation; it is

the ability to control effort and attention “in the face of distractions and uninteresting tasks” (p. 27). The authors defined effort regulation as self-management, noting that effort regulation involves meeting one’s goals despite barriers or distractions they may face. They noted that “effort management is important to academic success because it not only signifies goal commitment, but also regulates the continued use of learning strategies” (p. 27).

Komarraju and Nadler (2013) found that students who exerted effort regulation and persisted when navigating difficult or boring coursework were more likely to do well academically. Venables and Fairclough (2009) wrote that students in their study, when experiencing success, “experienced positive affect and a less pronounced decline in subjective motivation” (p. 63). Students who experienced failure had negative change in mood and motivation and decreased effort. In summary, students who have coping skills and can exert effort when experiencing negative affect will most likely do better in their coursework.

Effort and affect. As stated previously, students’ affect is related to academic performance. Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, and Perry (2002) indicated that students’ academic emotions related in significant ways to students’ learning and achievement. In their study, positive affect correlated positively with students’ intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and self-reported academic effort. Negative affect correlated negatively with students’ intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and self-reported academic effort. The authors suggested that individual prevention and therapy could change students’ locus of control and appraisal of emotion. Their findings showed that students’ emotions associated with academics are multifaceted and relate to students’ learning, self-regulation, achievements,

and instruction environments. Academic emotions are bound to the manner in which students appraise their competence and control within the classroom, their learning and achievement outcomes, and “to classroom instruction and social environments affecting control, values, and goals” (p. 103). These appraisals imply that therapy and “emotion-oriented design of educational environments” (p. 103) could be used to support students’ academic growth.

In this section, I defined mindfulness, compassion, self-compassion, affect, and effort and effort regulation. I described the relationships between each concept, as well as each element’s connection with student success. Based on mindfulness skills and dispositions models created after a review of research of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) used with teachers and students in educational settings (Roeser, 2014), it is apparent how participation in MBIs could increase motivation of participants. In the next section, I will review mindfulness-based intervention literature.

Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction

Researchers indicated students placed into developmental education coursework could benefit from a greater focus on mindfulness as part of their instructional context (Arendale, 2010; Dembo & Seli, 2012; Lesley, 2004; Mealey, 2003; Vacca & Padak, 1990). In this section, I will review literature pertaining to mindfulness-based stress reduction as a course.

Participants in my study engaged in a mindfulness-based intervention (MBI). One type of MBI is the mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), a standardized eight-week meditation course developed by Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn in an attempt to merge Buddhist meditation practices with current clinical and psychological understandings; it

was first implemented in 1979 at The University of Massachusetts Medical Center (Chiesa & Serretti, 2009). MBSR practices include body scans, guided meditation, yoga, breathing exercises, recognition of feelings and emotions, self-compassion meditation, and development of one's own mindfulness and self-compassion practice. Williams and Kabat-Zinn (2011) defined meditation as the cultivation of awareness, clarity, equanimity, and compassion mindfulness as

clear comprehension and discernment. It is not merely bare attention, although bare attending is an intimate part of it. Nor is it merely conceptual, cognitive, or thought-based. Indeed, in essence, it is awareness itself, an entirely different and one might say, larger capacity than thought, since any and all thought and emotion can be held in awareness. Both are powerful dimensions of the human experience. While we get a great deal of training in our education systems in thinking of all kinds, we have almost no exposure to the cultivation of intimacy with that other innate capacity of ours that we call awareness (p. 15).

The benefits of engaging in MBI's have included significant improvements in psychological health and self-compassion (Bergen-Cico, Possemato, & Cheon, 2013); significant decrease in mood disturbance symptoms and personal distress and increases in self-compassion and perspective taking (Birnie, Speca, & Carlson, 2010); increases in mindful awareness (Birnie et al., 2010; Greeson et al., 2014; Raab, 2014; Song & Lindquist, 2015); reduction of stress symptoms (Birnie et al., 2010; Chiesa, & Serretti, 2009; Gold et al., 2010; Greeson, Juberg, Maytan, James, & Rogers, 2014; Lenze et al., 2014; Raab, 2014; Song & Lindquist, 2015); reduction in depression (Gold et al., 2010; Jazaieri, Goldin, Werner, Ziv, & Gross, 2012; Song & Lindquist, 2015); reduction in

anxiety (Gold et al., 2010; Murphy, 2006; Song & Lindquist, 2015); improvements in mental health (Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt, & Walach, 2004); refinement of coping skills (Bonifas & Napoli, 2014; Grossman et al., 2004; Holzel et al., 2011; Walach et al., 2007); improvements in subjective well-being (Jazaieri et al., 2012; Murphy, 2006; The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, 2013); increases in openness to change and shared experience, increases in self-control and personal growth (Mackenzie et al., 2007); and increases in meaningful action (The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, 2013). In addition, Shapiro, Brown, and Astin (2008) reviewed 40 years of research and determined that meditation practices could help in the growth of cognitive skills of attention and information processing and build coping skills. Additionally, MBI's have been shown to cultivate self-regulation, self-evaluation, social cognition, and motivation (Roeser, 2014).

MBI's combine teaching and practice of mindfulness, awareness, and compassion activities which can result in positive changes for participants involved. Effects of participation in MBI's includes, but are not limited to, stress reduction, increased mental health and coping strategies, and fostering learning skills. Facilitators of MBI's can also adapt MBI's to better serve the needs of the participants (Dutton, Bermudez, Matas, Majid, & Myers, 2011; Patel, Carmody, & Simpson, 2007; Ortiz, 2015; Rayan & Athmad, 2016; Vallejo & Amaro, 2009).

Summary of Review of Literature

Chapter two framed my study through the theoretical framework, Self-Determination Theory, and academic literature. I identified and discussed students in developmental education, the population for the study. I focused on concepts of and

connections between mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, and effort, elements I observed when teaching and meeting with the participants. I reviewed the instructional approach of mindfulness-based interventions, the intervention participants attended. I noted students in developmental education are best supported in a holistic manner, which includes places their affective needs first. Mindfulness-based interventions which incorporate self-compassion practices may be useful in supporting these students, teaching coping strategies which can increase the likelihood of pushing through negative affect and increasing the probability of putting forth effort in courses seen as boring or challenging by students.

III. METHODOLOGY

Overview

In this chapter, I will explain the rationale for the qualitative case study research methods designed to answer my research questions:

- 1) How do participants enrolled in a developmental literacy course experience participation in an MBI?
 - 1.A) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of affect in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
 - 1.B) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of effort in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
- 2) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of mindfulness during participation in an MBI?
- 3) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of self-compassion during participation in an MBI?

I will discuss the MBI, participants, instrumentation, including the artifacts consisting of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, field notes, and journals. I will then explain the type of data analysis I used as well as trustworthiness, ethical considerations, and positionality.

Purpose

The purpose of my qualitative study and the manner that I informed the research questions was to explore students' experiences as they participated in an MBI while enrolled in a developmental literacy course. A subset of participants taking the MBI engaged in weekly interviews with me. I also gathered information from questionnaires

participants took to establish demographic data for the population of students in the developmental literacy classes.

Research Design

Elements of the research design are discussed in this section, including the study rationale, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Rationale for Case Study

I utilized case study methodology, an empirical inquiry investigating a case in detail and in its authentic context when both context and case are not easily discernible (Yin, 2014). I investigated a case of participants enrolled in a developmental literacy course as they engaged in an MBI. My study aligned with Yin (2014) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016), who defined a case study as: (a) process-oriented; (b) involving the systematic examination of a naturally occurring phenomenon; (c) entailing a process of investigation as the unit of analysis and an end product; and (d) describing in-depth a “bounded system” (p. 37). Per Merriam and Tisdell’s (2016) recommendations, I comprehensively analyzed a single phenomenon to support a holistic description to inform my case study. My case study was a collection of single case, within-site studies providing an in-depth understanding and description with a narrow scope, a collection of detailed descriptions and analyses of participants enrolled in a developmental literacy course who participated in a six-week MBI. I investigated participants’ perceptions of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about placement in reading development literacy course who participated in the MBI.

I used information from questionnaires for demographics and artifacts to inform my study. A case study must be intrinsically bound, meaning data collection is finite.

Thirty-two participants in the study participated in an MBI for six weeks, a finite time for data collection. Of those thirty-two participants, 12 individuals were interviewed. Five of the 12 participants interviewed with me four to six times during the MBI. The unit of analysis was all participants in the study who interviewed with me. I also collected quantitative data to provide demographic data.

Merriam (2001) noted a case study encompasses multiple types of data collection and analysis and involves “insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing” (p. 28). Data from multiple sources are triangulated and case studies benefit from previous theories to assist data collection and analysis. I drew from multiple artifacts and data sources to inform my study and I created a detailed literature review to draw upon previous work. I analyzed the data in an inductive, comparative, and recursive manner throughout the study.

A case study was a good fit for my research because I created a detailed and comprehensive understanding of participants in developmental literacy courses as they participated in an MBI. The individuals had a specific way they experienced participating in an MBI as a student enrolled in a developmental literacy course. The use of artifacts, such as questionnaires, journals, interviews, and field notes helped to illuminate participants’ perceptions of the MBI, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort placed in that course.

Procedures

During my study, I first met with all students in developmental literacy courses at the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester. I asked each student to participate in questionnaires to obtain demographic information. Of the 118 students enrolled in

developmental literacy, 96 participants took the questionnaires. Of the 96 who took the questionnaires, I was able to use 86 participants' questionnaires. Several of the participants did not complete the questionnaires fully. I scored the questionnaires to determine their levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation. I used this information for demographic data.

I asked participants who completed the questionnaires to attend the MBI. Of the 96 participants who took the questionnaires, 32 participants attended the MBI. I observed the participants attending the MBI and I asked each participant to keep a journal of their MBI practices throughout the MBI. Of the 32 participants who attended the MBI, 12 participants interviewed with me. Seven individuals interviewed with me one to two times during the MBI. Five individuals interviewed with me four to five times during the MBI.

I recorded and transcribed the interviews of all participants who interviewed with me: those with one to two interviews and those with four to six interviews. After transcription, I hand coded the interviews for themes. Per Yin's (2014) recommendation, I returned to the transcriptions multiple times to "play" with the data, and search for patterns, perceptions, and impressions; the process was recursive. I maintained a chain of evidence by allowing external observers to read through and code transcripts. I also followed Yin's (2014) instructions of placing data in various arrays, creating matrices and data displays using evidence, and writing up information in chronological order. I used Miles and Huberman's (1994) guidance of placing data in tables to further analyze within- and cross-case data and themes. After finding the themes, I returned to the transcriptions to place data within each theme.

Mindfulness-based intervention. The MBI field site was the university's student recreation center. I offered and facilitated an MBI, entitled "Mindful and Self-Compassionate Learning and Living: A Mindfulness-Based Intervention," as a specialty group fitness class through the university's campus recreation department. I used and adapted materials from an online eight-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program called Palouse Mindfulness. Dave Potter, a certified MBSR teacher endorsed by the University of Massachusetts Medical School Center for Mindfulness, maintains the website, which contains the MBSR components needed as described by Kabat-Zinn (1996). Researchers stated MBIs purport to decrease stress, increase well-being, cultivate greater awareness of mind and body, and strengthen emotional, physical, and spiritual health.

I adapted the MBI due to the low attendance of an MBI pilot study; three of approximately 200 students enrolled in a developmental literacy course attended the MBI. The MBI I previously constructed and implemented as a pilot project was eight weeks in length with weekly 60- to 120-minute meetings with students in developmental literacy classes. When I asked students in person and by email why they were not attending the program they stated they could not commit the time required for the MBI. They stated that they were interested in learning techniques of mindfulness and self-compassion but they did not have time in their schedule. Because of that feedback and due to participants' time constraints, for the purposes of my current study, I constructed a shorter version of the MBI, which ran for 45 minutes per session, one session per week, for six weeks.

Precedents of a variety of lengths of mindfulness based interventions exist, and the structure and curriculum of the MBI designed for my study was aligned with other mindfulness-based courses. In a recent meta-analysis of mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) with youth and adults, Zoogman, Goldberg, Hoyt, and Miller (2015) and Visted, Vollestad, Nielsen, and Nielsen (2015) included MBIs ranging in length from two to 24 weeks that reported positive outcomes for participants. I thought adapting the MBI time commitments might lead to higher attendance from first-year university students.

My study involved decreasing the length of the MBI from eight weeks to six weeks. An eight-week MBSR includes weekly meetings ranging from 90 to 120 minutes of instruction, 30 minutes of daily practice, and includes the topics: (a) body scans; (b) seated meditation; (c) yoga; (d) one-minute-breathing space or STOP (stop, take a breath, open to possibilities, proceed); (e) soften, soothe, and allow or RAIN (recognize, allow the experience, investigate with kindness, natural awareness); (f) guided mountain & lake meditations; (g) self-compassion meditation; and (h) developing a practice of your own. In the six-week MBI I facilitated for my study, I included: (a) body scan; (b) yoga; (c) STOP; (d) RAIN; (e) guided mountain meditation; and (f) self-compassion meditation. I will discuss the MBI in more detail below. I incorporated seated meditation into the session on yoga and developing a practice of your own into the session on lovingkindness meditation so that I covered all practices from the eight-week MBI.

I offered the class to university faculty, staff, and students through the university campus recreation program and in the developmental literacy classes; however, only students chose to participate. I listed the description for the MBI as: “Come and learn how to enhance your life through daily practices of mindfulness and self-compassion.

Attend this class to learn about body scans, breathing exercises, and meditation, the research behind these practices, and how to incorporate them in daily life.” Each week, participants completed a module of the MBI to learn a different mindfulness or self-compassion practice, the research behind each practice as presented through readings and videos from the Palouse Mindfulness website, and how to incorporate the practice into their daily lives. I taught and we discussed the MBI for 45 minutes in length each week. I asked participants to keep a journal of these practices, how they practiced them during the week, and their reflections on the practice. I covered the following topics during the six-week MBI:

Week 1 - Body scan

A systematic observation and increased awareness of breath and body.

Week 2 – RAIN

RAIN is an acronym for: Recognize the experience; Allow the experience to occur; Investigate with interest and care; and Nourish with self-compassion.

Week 3 – STOP

STOP is an acronym for: Stop and take stock; Take a breath; Open and observe; and Proceed/new possibilities.

Week 4 – Yoga

A series of physical postures incorporating breath, body, and mind.

Week 5 - Guided meditation

A meditation led by an instructor or audio recording which focuses on stillness and observation.

Week 6 - Self-compassion meditation

A meditation led by an instructor or audio recording which focuses on compassion towards others and self.

I provided each participant with a manual about the MBI practices, online links, readings, and practices. In addition, I provided all class and manual information in an online collaborative learning environment called TRACS offered at the university. I asked participants to implement each practice learned in the class for at least 30 minutes each day during the MBI (e.g., practice Body Scan 30 minutes daily after first session; practice RAIN 30 minutes daily after second session, etc.). I told participants to self-report and journal about their daily practice in the manual provided to them. After each weekly practice, I interviewed a subset of participants individually using semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix H). I encouraged participants to ask questions of me during the interview as to decrease hegemonic relationships that may have existed between the participants and me. However, participants rarely asked questions of me during interviews.

Week 1: Body Scan - Directly before the first MBI session, I set up a sign-in table outside the classroom at the student recreation center. I provided sign-in sheets to all participants. I gave each person a manual and name placard. I also gave them an optional demographics questionnaire to complete (see Appendix F). I showed them where the yoga mats were located and they each retrieved one to sit on during the class and we oriented ourselves toward the projection screen and mirrors in the room. I gave the participants a verbal orientation to the class and manual. I asked them to complete a weekly reading prior to coming to the next class. We watched a video on the meaning of

mindfulness and meditation. We had a group discussion about mindfulness and meditation. I taught them about body scans and led them in a body scan. Participants could choose to do the body scan while seated or lying down. After completing the body scan, I reminded them of the importance of practicing the body scan daily and writing their reflections about the body scan in their journal. I also reminded to read the RAIN text to prepare for the following week.

Week 2: RAIN (Recognize, Accept, Investigate, & Nourish) - Before the second session, the check-in process became more streamlined. During the session, I asked if participants had questions. We then discussed the body scan reading and practice from last week in small groups and then reconvened in a large group. I then showed a video about the RAIN practice. We discussed the RAIN video and reading as a group and then talked about what the practice looked like. I then led the participants in a body scan and RAIN meditation.

Week 3: STOP (Stop, Take a breath, Observe, Proceed with possibilities) - Before the third session, the check-in process was understood and the participants settled in quickly. I asked if there were any questions and then drew their attention to the cover of the journal, which had a quote emphasizing mindfulness is more than just something to be done while sitting or standing. It can be practiced at any time during the day, while eating, walking, running, etc. We watched a video on mindfulness and discussed the video. I then demonstrated being mindful while walking. Participants practiced walking mindfulness. We then discussed the previous week's RAIN reading and practice. I showed a short video about practicing STOP. We then practiced STOP as a group.

Week 4: Yoga – Before the fourth session, participants easily checked in and prepared for class. We then began a yoga practice. Throughout the yoga class, I stressed bringing mindfulness and self-compassion to the practice and each posture.

Week 5: Guided meditation – Before the fifth session, participants once again checked in and prepared for class. I highlighted the reading provided in their manual. I played a video. We then engaged in a few yoga postures and then ended in a guided meditation, the mountain meditation.

Week 6: Self-compassion meditation – Before the sixth session, participants checked in and prepared for the class. I asked participants to define compassion and self-compassion by getting into small groups and creating a living tableau of compassion and self-compassion. Participants organized into groups of their choice and created living statues of their definitions and then explained and described each tableau. We then watched a video about the definitions of compassion and self-compassion. Participants provided verbal feedback. We engaged in a self-compassion meditation. At the end of class, I distributed recreation center t-shirts to the participants who had attended consistently throughout the MBI. Participants were informed they could bring their mindfulness journals to me at the completion of the MBI to help inform the study.

Participants

Participants were drawn from the population of individuals taking developmental literacy courses at a four-year university in the southwest ($N = 118$). Students enrolled in the course from the 12th class day – the last day to drop courses – through the end of the final class day were eligible for the study. Participants in my study had the ability to choose to remain involved in the study and could withdraw at any time. A requirement of

the developmental literacy course was to participate in at least one research study during enrollment in the course; participants received class credit for their participation in a research study. If they did not wish to participate in a research study, they were provided with an alternate activity.

The selection of participants flowed from enrollment in the developmental literacy course, RDG 1300. A visual representation of this flow is provided in Figure 1. For each stage of participation, individuals self-selected and the sample was one of convenience.

1. I informed all students enrolled in RDG 1300 ($N = 118$) about the study and invited them to complete questionnaires about their levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort put forth in that course.
2. I invited all participants who completed the questionnaires ($N = 96$) to enroll in the Mindful and Self-Compassionate Learning and Living: A Mindfulness-Based Intervention course.
3. I asked those who completed the questionnaires and enrolled in the Mindful and Self-Compassionate Learning and Living: A Mindfulness-Based Intervention course ($N = 32$) to participate in weekly interviews.
4. A subset of participants began weekly interviews ($N = 12$). I interviewed seven of the 12 participants once or twice throughout the duration of the MBI.
5. A smaller subset of participants interviewed weekly and attended between four to six interviews throughout the duration of the MBI ($N = 5$).

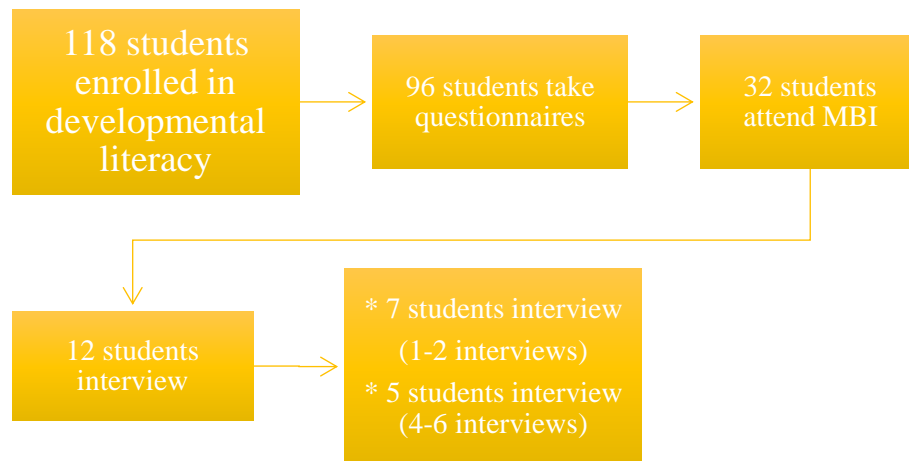


Figure 1. Enrollment in study.

It was possible for students to take the questionnaires only or take the questionnaires and MBI without being part of the interviews and receive credit in their respective sections for participating in a research study.

All participants who elected to be in the study ($N = 96$) completed questionnaires containing the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire-Short Form (FFMQ-SF) (see Appendix B), Self-Compassion Scale-Short Form (SCS-SF) (see Appendix C), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) (see Appendix D), and Effort Regulation of the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (ER of MSLQ) (see Appendix E); each questionnaire and schedule is described in detail in the Instrumentation section.

Participants took the questionnaires during their section of the developmental literacy course with instructor approval. Completion of the questionnaires took between five and 20 minutes. Each developmental literacy class instructor reserved the right to determine if I could offer questionnaires to their participants during class time. Students who did not take the questionnaires completed an alternate activity determined by their respective instructor. Five developmental literacy instructors taught when I conducted my study; all

instructors allowed their students to take the questionnaires. A total of 96 participants took the questionnaires during their respective class times.

I invited all participants who took the questionnaires to take the MBI, *Mindful and Self-Compassionate Learning and Living: A Mindfulness-Based Intervention*. A total of 69 participants expressed interest in participating in the MBI. A total of 32 students attended the MBI consistently over the six-week period. A small subset of the participants enrolled in the developmental literacy course and who participated in the MBI met with me for weekly interviews ($N = 12$). I gave pseudonyms to all participants who interviewed with me to protect their anonymity. Due to scheduling conflicts and time management issues, seven of the 12 participants interviewing with me only met for one to two interviews. Five of the 12 participants met with me separately for four to six interviews over the duration of the MBI. I used the data from the five participants who met four to six times for interviews for the within-case chapter. I used the data from the seven participants who met one to two times for interviews as support for the emergent themes found in the cross-case chapter.

As part of the MBI training, participants should have practiced thirty minutes each day and kept a daily journal of their mindfulness practice. I offered participants incentives of a free MBI pass (\$40 value), free group fitness pass at the university recreation center (\$60 value), and free university recreation center T-shirt (\$15 value). In addition, I gave a \$30 Amazon gift card to those five participants who interviewed throughout the MBI.

Participant recruitment procedure. Students in developmental literacy were required to participate in a university study or engage in an alternative activity. To inform

their decisions about which study to participate in, I made face-to-face announcements about participating in the questionnaires and MBI to participants in their respective sections to determine if they would like to participate in the study. Those who wanted to participate then took the questionnaires (see Appendices B-F) in their respective classes. Those not participating were given an alternate activity to complete in class or left class early to complete an alternate activity depending on their individual instructor's directions.

Participants who participated in the MBI were given a free class pass to the Mindful and Self-Compassionate Learning and Living: A Mindfulness-Based Intervention course, the MBI used in my study. Participants who attended the MBI and interviewed could also elect to receive various incentives for their commitment.

Description of participants. Students in the developmental literacy course, RDG 1300, at this four-year university in the southwestern United States were the population of interest. Students enrolled in RDG 1300 were freshmen between the ages of 18 and 19 and placed into the course based on their placement test results. Specifically, they scored below the cut score of 351 on the reading portion of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) exam. The TSI requires incoming students at public postsecondary institutions in Texas to be assessed in a range of academic areas for levels of college preparedness (THECB, 2012). The accompanying TSI assessment provides diagnostic information and college-readiness cut scores (College Board, 2014).

The population of interest was students enrolled in a developmental literacy course during the Fall 2016 semester ($N = 118$). I recruited participants from this population to take four questionnaires. From the population, 96 participants took the

questionnaires. I recruited for participation in the MBI from this sample. From this sample, 32 participants enrolled in the MBI. I recruited for participation in weekly interviews from this sample. From this sample, seven participants met individually with me for one to two interviews and five participants met individually with me for four to six interviews.

In table one, I present the demographics of all participants in the MBI, the entire sample of those who interviewed with me, and those who had four to six interviews with me. When completing the demographics form, participants self-selected the words to write their ethnicity, thus the categories of African American and Hispanic, and African American and German were created. Many MBI and interview participants self-identified as Hispanic. Of those attending the MBI, four participants self-identified as African American or Black; one participant self-identified as African American and Hispanic; two participants self-identified as Asian; one participant self-identified as African American and German; nineteen participants self-identified as Hispanic; one participant self-identified as Vietnamese; and four participants self-identified as White. Of the 12 who interviewed between one to six times, two participants self-identified as Asian; seven participants self-identified as Hispanic, one participant self-identified as Vietnamese; and two participants self-identified as White. Of those who interviewed four to six times, three participants identified as Hispanic; one participant identified as Vietnamese; and one participant identified as White (see Table 1 - Demographics - Ethnicity).

Table 1

Demographics - Ethnicity

<u>Ethnicity</u>	All MBI Attendees (<i>N</i> = 32)	Interviewees (1-6 interviews) (<i>N</i> = 7)	Interviewees (4-6 interviews) (<i>N</i> = 5)
African American or Black	4	0	0
African American and Hispanic	1	0	0
Asian	2	2	0
African American and German	1	0	0
Hispanic	19	4	3
Vietnamese	1	0	1
White	4	1	1

Note. Ethnicity categories were fill-in-the-blank and created by participants.

Participants also self-identified their gender. Of the 32 MBI attendees, 28 participants self-identified as female, and four participants self-identified as male. Of the 12 who interviewed between one to six times, ten self-identified as female, and two self-identified as male. Of those who interviewed four to six times, all self-identified as female (see Table 2 - Demographics - Gender).

Table 2

Demographics - Gender

<u>Gender</u>	All MBI Attendees (<i>N</i> = 32)	Interviewees (1-6 interviews) (<i>N</i> = 7)	Interviewees (4-6 interviews) (<i>N</i> = 5)
Female	28	5	5
Male	4	2	0

Note. Gender categories were fill-in-the blank and created by participants.

I also asked participants if they had a current meditation, mindfulness, and/or self-compassion practice. Of the 32 MBI attendees, five participants indicated that they had a current practice, and 26 participants indicated they did not have a current practice. Of those who indicated they had a current practice,

answers consisted of running, laying down and watching TV, drawing, jogging, reading and walking. One participant did not supply an answer. Of the 12 who interviewed, 11 participants indicated that they did not have a current practice. One participant did not supply an answer (see Table 3 - Previous or Current Meditation, Mindfulness, and/or Self-Compassion Practice).

Table 3

Previous or Current Meditation, Mindfulness, and/or Self-compassion Practice

<u>Practice</u>	All MBI Attendees ^a (<u>N = 32</u>)	Interviewees (1-6 interviews) ^a (<u>N = 7</u>)	Interviewees (4-6 interviews) ^a (<u>N = 5</u>)
Yes	5	0	0
No	26	7	4

^aOne participant did not answer if she had a current practice.

Participant selection. Participation in the study was open to all students enrolled in a developmental literacy course who were 18 years of age and older. The participants completing the questionnaires and participating in the *Mindful and Self-Compassionate Learning and Living: A Mindfulness-Based Intervention* course self-selected. I identified participants who were interested in participating in an MBI and giving feedback about their experiences and perceptions. The sample for my study was one of convenience. Participants self-selected to participate in each stage of my study. Additionally, time constraints affected who participated in interviews and the number of interviews individuals attended. The participants in the study had varying backgrounds and experiences and created a robust data set.

Participants (Four to six interviews). I interviewed the following participants during the six-week MBI and met between four and six times for interviews. There was

variation between the number of interviews due to scheduling conflicts. I list the participants' questionnaires scores in the table below (see Table 4).

Table 4

Interviewee's Initial Questionnaire Scores (Four to Six Interviews)

Participant	Mindfulness	Self-Compassion	Positive Affect	Negative Affect	Effort Regulation
Alexandra	2.90	3.00	35.00	14.00	4.75
Camila	3.63	3.25	30.00	17.00	7.00
Luz	3.58	2.58	24.00	20.00	7.00
Maria	2.71	2.08	31.00	39.00	6.50
Na ^a	-	-	-	-	-
Mean	3.21	2.73	30.00	22.50	6.31

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* and *Self-Compassion Scale* use a Likert scale from 1-5. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* use a scale from 1-50. The *Effort Regulation Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-7.

^a Na did not have scores due to missing data.

Alexandra. Alexandra self-identified as an 18-year-old White female. I interviewed her on four separate occasions: September 29, and October 6, 20, and 27. She wrote that she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. At the initial intervention, she took the FFMQ-SF, SCS-SF, PANAS, and ER or MSLQ and had the following scores: general mindfulness = 2.90, general self-compassion = 3.00, positive affect about being in a developmental literacy class = 35.00, negative affect about being in a developmental class = 14.00, and effort regulation in a developmental class = 4.75. Her mindfulness score was slightly below average, self-compassion score was slightly below average, positive affect was slightly above average, negative affect was slightly below average (meaning she had less negative affect as compared to the other participants in the study), and effort regulation was slightly below average as compared to the population.

Camila. Camila self-identified as an 18-year-old Hispanic female. I interviewed her on five separate occasions: September 26, and October 3, 10, 17, and 24. She was enrolled in one of my two sections of developmental literacy courses. She wrote that she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. At the initial interview, she had the following scores: general mindfulness = 3.63, general self-compassion = 3.25, positive affect about being in a developmental literacy class = 30.00, negative affect about being in a developmental literacy class = 17.00, and effort regulation in a developmental literacy class = 7.00. Camila was considered to have an average mindfulness score, slightly above average self-compassion score, slightly above average positive affect score, below average negative affect score, above average effort regulation score as compared to the population.

Luz. Luz self-identified as an 18-year-old Hispanic female. I interviewed her on five separate occasions: September 26, and October 3, 10, 17, and 24. She was enrolled in one of my two sections of developmental literacy courses. She wrote that she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. At the beginning of the study, she had the following scores: general mindfulness = 3.58, general self-compassion = 2.58, positive affect about being in a developmental literacy class = 24.00, negative affect about being in a developmental literacy class = 20.00, and effort regulation in a developmental literacy class = 7.00. Luz had an above average mindfulness score, a slightly below average self-compassion score, a slightly below average positive affect score, a slightly above average negative affect score, and an above average effort score as compared to the population.

Maria. Maria self-identified as an 18-year-old Hispanic female. I interviewed her on six separate occasions: September 21 and 28, and October 5, 12, 19, and 26. She was enrolled in one of my two sections of developmental literacy courses. She wrote she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. At the beginning of the study, she had the following scores: general mindfulness = 2.71, general self-compassion = 2.08, positive affect about being in a developmental literacy class = 31.00, negative affect about being in a developmental literacy class = 39.00, and effort regulation in a developmental literacy class = 6.50). Maria had a below average mindfulness score, a below average self-compassion score, a slightly above average positive affect score, a considerably above average negative affect score, and an above average effort score as compared to the population.

Na. Na self-identified as a 19-year-old Vietnamese female. I interviewed her on five separate occasions: September 19 and 28, and October 3, 10, and 17. She was enrolled in one of my two sections of developmental literacy courses. She did not provide an answer for whether she had a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. At the initial interview, she did not complete the questionnaires and I was not able to score her answers.

Participants (One to two interviews). In addition to the five participants who interviewed four to six times during the study, there were also seven participants who interviewed one to two times. I included their contributions and responses in the cross-case analysis as they further enhance the themes and observations that emerged. I was not able to include each participant for the within-case data as I did not have sufficient time with them during interviews due to scheduling conflicts and I was not able to observe

change over time and development in those participants' responses. Their contributions are included in the cross-case data. I provide these participants' initial questionnaire scores for mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation. In comparison to the participants with four to six interviews, the participants with one to two interviews scored lower in mindfulness, negative affect, and effort regulation, higher in self-compassion, and similarly in positive affect.

Table 5

Interviewees' Initial Questionnaire Scores (One to Two Interviews)

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-Compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Barbara ^c	2.63	2.00	26.00	21.00	2.50
Brad ^c	3.79	4.08	31.00	12.00	6.75
Brian ^c	3.21	3.92	25.00	10.00	4.50
Ivy ^c	3.29	2.83	32.00	27.00	7.00
Michelle ^c	2.21	1.67	34.00	11.00	6.50
Molly ^c	2.67	3.25	35.00	14.00	5.50
Sydney ^c	3.71	3.92	28.00	20.00	5.25
Mean	3.07	3.09	30.14	16.43	5.43

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* and *Self-Compassion Scale* use a Likert scale from 1-5. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* use a scale from 1-50. The *Effort Regulation Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-7.

Instrumentation

I asked students in developmental literacy courses to participate in various phases of my study. Of 118 students enrolled in developmental literacy courses during the Fall 2016 semester, 96 participants self-selected and completed the questionnaires about their levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation to provide demographic data. Consequently, after scoring the questionnaires, I discovered some students did not complete the questionnaire and I could only score 86 participants' questionnaires. Participants enrolled in the MBI ($N = 32$) completed the

questionnaires on mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation, and demographics questionnaires, and kept a journal. A smaller subset of participants ($N=12$) engaged in preliminary interviews with me. However, not all participants were able to consistently attend interviews with me and a smaller subset of participants ($N=5$) persisted throughout the intervention and engaged in individual, weekly semi-structured interviews with me. Their artifacts provided the bulk of the data for my study. I describe the questionnaires they took below.

FFMQ-SF. The Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire – Short Form (FFMQ-SF; Bohlmeijer et al., 2011a) was developed from the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer et al., 2008). Both questionnaires have five measurable facets: observing, describing, acting with awareness, nonreactivity to inner experience, and nonjudging of inner experience. The questionnaires use a five-point Likert scale. Examples of prompts include: Item 6. *I pay attention to physical experiences, such as the wind in my hair or sun on my face*; and Item 23. *I find myself doing things without paying attention* (see Appendix B for the complete FFMQ-SF). The FFMQ-SF includes 24 items: observing (eight items); describing (eight items); acting with awareness (eight items); nonreactivity to inner experience (seven items); and nonjudging of inner experience (eight items). The FFMQ-SF was tested with 376 adults with clinically relevant symptoms of depression and anxiety, and 174 patients with fibromyalgia; confirmatory factor analyses determined acceptable model fit for a correlated five factor structure of the FFMQ (Bohlmeijer et al., 2011b).

To develop the short form of the FFMQ, 15 items were removed due to “low item-total correlations and/or standardized factor loadings and high content redundancy”

(Bohlmeijer et al., 2011b, p. 313). “Scores of the FFMQ-SF were highly correlated with the original version of the FFMQ: $r = .89$ ($r_c = .77$) for observing; $r = .98$ ($r_c = .89$) for describing; $r = .92$ ($r_c = .81$) for acting with awareness; $r = .96$ ($r_c = .84$) for nonjudging; and $r = .95$ ($r_c = .74$) for nonreactivity” (Bohlmeijer et al., 2011b, pp. 314-315). Similar to the FFMQ, the unidimensional model of the FFMQ-SF showed poor fit to the data of the adults with symptoms of depression and anxiety and the patients with fibromyalgia. Both the correlated five-factor and second-order hierarchical model showed good fit with the adults with symptoms of depression and anxiety and acceptable to good fit with the fibromyalgia sample (Bohlmeijer et al., 2011b). The effect sizes were typically smaller than those of the full FFMQ; however, all factors in both treatments groups showed significant improvement with effect sizes being moderate to large (Bohlmeijer et al., 2011b).

SCS-SF. The Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form (SCS-SF; Raes et al., 2011) was developed from the Self-Compassion Scale (Neff, 2003). Both scales measure self-kindness, self-judgment, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and overidentification. The scales use a five-point Likert scale. Examples of prompts include: Item 3. *When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation;* and Item 11. *I’m disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies* (see Appendix C for the complete SCS-SF). Raes et al. (2011) tested the SCS-SF with 185 Dutch-speaking adults, 271 Dutch-speaking undergraduates in Belgium, and 415 college students at a public university in Texas. The SCS-SF includes 12 items. The scale has adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .86$ in all samples) and near perfect correlation to the original SCS (Raes et al., 2011). Cronbach’s alphas for each subscale was more

variable, having values between 0.54 and 0.75. The SCS-SF showed an almost perfect correlation ($r = 0.98$) to the SCS long form total score. Correlations between the SCS-SF and long form subscales were also excellent ($r = 0.89$ for Self-Kindness; $r = 0.90$ for Self-Judgment; $r = 0.91$ for Common Humanity; $r = 0.93$ for Isolation; $r = 0.89$ for Mindfulness; and $r = 0.89$ for Over-Identification. Model fit was also tested and indicated acceptable fit ($SBS-\chi^2 = 175.50$ ($df = 48$); $RMSEA = 0.080$; $SRMR = 0.077$; $CFI = 0.97$; and $NNFI = 0.96$) (Raes et al., 2011).

PANAS. The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) measures positive and negative affect in general. The PANAS includes 20 items and uses a fifty-point Likert scale. The schedule's initial prompt asks participants to rate levels of emotions and feelings such as interested, distressed, or hostile about being in a developmental literacy course (see Appendix D for the complete PANAS). Watson, Clark, & Tellegen (1988) tested the PANAS with 101 students and 214 employees at a private university in Texas, 53 community members, and an unreported number of psychiatric patients. The schedule is internally consistent and has excellent convergent and divergent discriminant correlations with lengthier measures of underlying mood factors. The alpha reliabilities are very high, ranging from 0.86 to 0.90 for Positive Affect (PA) and from 0.84 to 0.87 for Negative Affect (NA) (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). For my study, I gave questionnaires that asked about their affect as related specifically to being in a developmental literacy course. The directions of the PANAS were changed to how a participant felt about being in the developmental literacy course, Reading Improvement: *This scale consists of a number of words that may describe different feelings and emotions [related to your placement in Reading*

Improvement]. Read each and then list the number from the scale below next to each word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way at the present moment [about your placement in Reading Improvement].

ER of MSLQ. The Effort Regulation of the Motivated Strategies of Learning Questionnaire (ER of MSLQ; Pintrich et al., 1991; Pintrich & Smith, 1993) measures effort regulation. The questionnaire uses a seven-point Likert scale. Prompts include: Item 1. *I often feel so lazy or bored when I study for this class that I quit before I finish what I planned to do*; and Item 3. *When course work in this class is difficult, I give up or only study the easy parts* (see Appendix E for the complete ER of MSLQ). The ER includes four items. The effort regulation portion of the questionnaire can be used singly. The alpha for effort regulation is adequate ($\alpha = .69$) (Pintrich et al., 1991). The entire questionnaire was tested with over 1,000 undergraduates at a public Midwestern university. Pintrich et al., (1993) tested the MSLQ with 380 Midwestern college students. In Pintrich et al.'s (1993) study, effort regulation was shown to have predictive validity; there was a positive correlation between effort regulation and course grade ($M = 5.25$, $SD = 1.10$, Coefficient Alpha = .69, r with Final Course Grade = 0.32).

I changed the subscale wording slightly for use during the study to specify to participants a specific class was referenced and to avoid confusion. I changed the prompts to: Item 1. *I often feel so lazy or bored when I study for this class [Reading Improvement] that I quit before I finish what I planned to do*; and Item 3. *When course work in this class [Reading Improvement] is difficult, I give up or only study the easy parts*. Pintrich et al. (1993) stated the MSLQ is a “self-report instrument designed to assess college students’ motivational orientations and their use of different learning strategies in a

college course” (p. 2) and was “designed to be used at the course level” (p. 5). In my study, the college course was a developmental literacy course, Reading Improvement.

Demographics questionnaire. I included a questionnaire asking participants about demographics (see Appendix F); the prompts asked if participants had a current meditation, mindfulness, and/or self-compassion practice, the activities they engaged in during the meditation, mindfulness, and/or self-compassion practice, how long they had the practice, and how often and for what length of time they practiced during each session. I also asked participants to voluntarily provide information in a fill-in-the-blank form about their age, gender, ethnicity/race, and major. I used the data from the questionnaire to provide background information about the study participants.

Interviews. I interviewed a smaller subset of participants ($N = 12$) at the beginning, during, and after the MBI (see Appendix H). Each participant met for an initial individual interview regarding general mindfulness, general self-compassion, affect related to being in a developmental literacy course, and effort in a developmental literacy course. They also took the FFMQ-SF, SCS-SF, PANAS, and ER of MSLQ after the MBI to see if there were changes in their levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort put forth in a developmental literacy course. I structured the interviews as semi-structured and I provided the Semi-Structured Interview Questions (see Appendix H). I piloted the questionnaires and interview questions in a previous project (Nielson, 2016) and revised based on feedback from project reviewers and participants.

Journals. I provided general prompts and instructions for journaling to participants. Participants could journal a total of 42 times as the MBI was six weeks in

length and the participant could potentially journal seven days in one week. Journal prompts included:

Record on this form each time you do the Body Scan. In the comment field, put just a few words to remind you of your impressions of that particular body scan: what came up, how it felt, what you noticed in terms of physical sensations, emotions, thoughts, etc. It's important to write the comments immediately after the practice because it will be hard to reconstruct later. (Potter, 2017)

Read the description of Mindful Yoga (this is very important, even for experienced yoga practitioners). As before, don't expect anything in particular from the practice. In fact, give up all expectations about it. Just let your experience be your experience. Record on this form each time you practice. In the comment field, put just a few words to remind you of your impressions of that particular session: what came up, how it felt, etc. (Potter, 2017)

Sage and Sele (2015) reported participants who journaled reported increased preparation, more engagement, and improved reflection in courses; participants appreciated the increase in classroom discussion and engagement in the course; however, they disliked the increased time spent journaling and reported that engagement could be challenging. Baleghizadeh and Mortazavi (2014) noted that students who journaled with feedback conditions reported increased self-efficacy compared with those with no feedback conditions.

Field notes. Throughout the study, I took field notes, written accounts of observations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These accounts include informally or formally writing notes during observations or soon after observations, and audio recording events

during the study. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated field notes should be highly descriptive and reflective. Taylor and Bogdan (1984) advised researchers recording field notes should be aware, look broadly and then increase focus, observe key phrases and comments by participants, and play back remarks mentally during breaks in observations. I observed these recommendations when recording field notes. For example, “when Michelle participated in yoga today, she appeared worried or anxious. She attempted tree pose, but looked around her to observe what other participants in the MBI were doing.”

Data Collection

I delved deeply into the entire experience of the participants engaging in the MBI, gathered multiple artifacts, examined data collected, documented change over time, acknowledged differing opinions, and presented detailed information about the case. A case study approach involves heuristically examining reasons for a situation, looking at why a program did or not work, and evaluating, summarizing, and concluding and thus increasing “its potential applicability” (p. 31). I examined the data collected from my study, reflected on why it did and did not work, analyzed the findings, and presented the findings so as to increase its validity and reliability.

Following Yin’s (2009) suggested forms of data collection, I included conducting participant interviews, directly observing participants in the MBI, gathering participant observations of their MBI reflections, and collecting journals of participants’ practices. I used multiple data collection areas to enhance the quality of my study by providing a thick and rich description. I collected data after the 12th class day, the last day to drop a course. I decided upon this action to reduce the chance of students withdrawing from the study due to dropping the developmental literacy class. At that time, all participants in the

developmental literacy course who volunteered to participate ($N = 96$) completed a packet including the mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation questionnaires. I collected data during class. I used the questionnaires as descriptive statistics to describe the overall population and sample of my study.

During interviews, the participants answered questions about their experiences in the MBI and we discussed the interviewee's mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation questionnaires responses. At the conclusion of the MBI, the subset of participants ($N = 5$) again completed the packet including the mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation questionnaires. I also interviewed them after the MBI. The final interview included a discussion of the comparison of initial and post-MBI observations. All interviews took place in a semi-private room, my university office. I recorded and transcribed verbatim each interview.

Artifacts consisted of field notes made by me throughout my study. I hand-wrote and typed notes about interviews and observations. I took notes and later analyzed and categorized them by the emergent themes. Yin (2014) suggested keeping field notes to enhance data collection and analysis. When I took field notes throughout the duration of the MBI, I was a participant-observer, which enabled me to have greater rapport with the participants (Yin, 2014). Following Yin's (2014) approach, I wrote and collected field notes after each MBI session; descriptive and reflective observations were made with the appropriate data, place, and time of the observation.

Participants also kept journals that included their daily MBI practices (ex. the practices of body scan, RAIN, STOP, yoga, etc.), how they practiced them during the

week, and reflections upon those practices. I asked the participants to provide their journals to me at the final interview or at a later date. All five key informants gave me their journals at the end of the MBI.

Data Analysis

In addition to examining the case studies individually or within-case, I also examined the participants' experiences in a cross-case manner. Miles and Huberman (1994) wrote cross-case studies help to "deepen understanding and explanation" (p. 173). Studying multiple cases allows the researcher to "see processes and outcomes across many cases, to understand how they are qualified by local conditions, and thus to develop more sophisticated descriptions and powerful explanations" (p. 172). To analyze the participants' experiences across case, I created partially ordered meta-matrices and case-ordered meta-matrices for each participant based on the research questions and each interview session. Miles and Huberman (1994) described meta-matrices as "master charts assembling descriptive data from each of several cases in a standard format" (p. 178). Meta-matrices allow for the juxtaposition of single cases. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested the integration of case-oriented and variable-oriented strategies for analyzing cases, which I used in this project.

The quantitative data for my study consisted of initial and post-MBI questionnaire responses from the mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, negative affect, and effort regulation questionnaires; this data provided demographic information. The qualitative data consisted of journals, field notes, and interviews. Throughout the study, I recursively analyzed the artifacts for themes, patterns, and categories. I created detailed descriptions, organized data into themes, and gave an interpretation based on self-

determination theory and my own understanding and positionality. These methods are supported by Merriam's (2001) approaches to coding as assembling the questionnaires, interviews, field notes, and journals into smaller groups of data, comparing information within the study to establish evidence for categorization, and giving a label to the particular code. The goal of data analysis, coding, was to create answers to the research questions. I coded and created categories from those codes for interviews, journals, and field notes; the process of creating codes was iterative and recursive as suggested by Yin (2014). I analyzed each participants' experience and established themes within and across cases.

When analyzing the data from the interviews, journals, and field notes, I initially observed the following codes as I looked through the data: (a) acceptance of being in a developmental literacy course; (b) evolving definitions of mindfulness and self-compassion; (c) benefits from MBI participation; (d) benefits from journaling; (e) reduction in daily practice and journaling as compared to MBI expectation; (f) enjoyment of developmental literacy instructor and classroom; (g) common humanity in developmental literacy community; (h) choice of MBI as best research project offered; (i) choice of MBI for coping strategies in college and beyond; (j) acceptance of imperfection; and (k) creation of personal MBI practices. From these initial codes, I returned to the artifacts to hone the codes and establish accurate themes. I then created matrices as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994) to more carefully analyze the data (see Figures 2 & 3). I used the matrices to more easily observe themes and facilitate the construction of cross-case themes.

Matrix for Alexandra				
Research Question #1: What are the experiences of students in developmental literacy courses when participating in an MBI?				
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>	<i>Interview #4</i>
<i>Purpose of MBI</i>	Practices were relaxing; Learning to sit and reflect	Good to "get away" from school; Can handle myself in stressful situations	Practices took me out of the stressful world; able to be reflective	Learned "much more"; not so jumbled and stressed; able to cope with stressful situations; aware of self
<i>Conflicts</i>	MBI conflicted with other involvements	MBI conflicted with other involvements	Conflicts with other involvements not addressed	Conflicts with other involvements not addressed
<i>Why choose MBI?</i>	Chose MBI because other research options were boring	Other research options not addressed	Other research options not addressed	Other research options not addressed
<i>Daily practice</i>	Wanted to practice more; didn't get to practice enough each week	Wanted to practice more; didn't get to practice enough each week	Wanted to practice more; didn't get to practice enough each week	Wanted to practice more; didn't get to practice enough each week; wants to practice at least once a week in the future
Research Question #1A: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of affect about being in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?				
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>	<i>Interview #4</i>
<i>Affect</i>	A little discouraged at the beginning; didn't have a problem with the class; really liked the teacher	No complaints about class	No complaints about class	No complaints about class
Research Question #1B: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of effort in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?				
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>	<i>Interview #4</i>
<i>Effort</i>	Gives effort in RDG 1300	Gives effort in RDG 1300	Gives effort in RDG 1300	Gives effort in RDG 1300
Research Question #2: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of mindfulness during participation in an MBI?				
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>	<i>Interview #4</i>
<i>Definition of mindfulness</i>	Way you think of situations; way you cope; what's in your head	Way you think about yourself and your surroundings	How we think; being in yourself and removing yourself away from the world	Way you think about others and surroundings
Research Question #3: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of self-compassion during participation in an MBI?				
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>	<i>Interview #4</i>
<i>Definition of compassion</i>	Caring for another person	Caring toward others	Being nice to others; showing love and caring	Love and caring; doing things for others and not expecting returns
<i>Definition of self-compassion</i>	Caring for yourself	Caring for yourself	Loving and accepting yourself	Loving yourself first; putting yourself first in situations

Figure 2. Within-case matrix for Alexandra.

I organized each matrix about each key informant by research questions and interview. I further divided questions one and three into smaller subparts. I divided question three into participants' definitions of compassion and self-compassion. I divided question one into four parts: (a) participants' understanding of the purpose of the MBI; (b) participants' conflicts with the MBI; (c) participants' decision about choosing the MBI; and (d) participants' daily practices. Dividing the questions helped me more clearly identify the themes in my study.

Matrix for Maria			
Research Question #1: What are the experiences of students in developmental literacy courses when participating in an MBI?			
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>
<i>Purpose of MBI</i>	Practices were relaxing; Learning to sit and reflect	Good to "get away" from school; Can handle myself in stressful situations	Practices took me out of the stressful world; able to be reflective
<i>Conflicts</i>	MBI conflicted with other involvements	MBI conflicted with other involvements	Conflicts with other involvements not addressed
<i>Why choose MBI?</i>	Chose MBI because other research options were boring	Other research options not addressed	Other research options not addressed
<i>Daily practice</i>	Wanted to practice more; didn't get to practice enough each week	Wanted to practice more; didn't get to practice enough each week	Wanted to practice more; didn't get to practice enough each week; wants to practice at least once a week in the future
Research Question #1A: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of affect about being in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?			
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>
<i>Affect</i>	A little discouraged at the beginning; didn't have a problem with the class; really liked the teacher	No complaints about class	No complaints about class
Research Question #1B: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of effort in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?			
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>
<i>Effort</i>	Gave effort in RDG 1300	Gave effort in RDG 1300	Gave effort in RDG 1300
Research Question #2: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of mindfulness during participation in an MBI?			
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>
<i>Definition of mindfulness</i>	Way you think of situations; way you cope; what's in your head	Way you think about yourself and your surroundings	How we think; being in yourself and removing yourself away from the world
Research Question #3: How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of self-compassion during participation in an MBI?			
	<i>Interview #1</i>	<i>Interview #2</i>	<i>Interview #3</i>
<i>Definition of compassion</i>	Caring for another person	Caring toward others	Being nice to others; showing love and caring
<i>Definition of self-compassion</i>	Caring for yourself	Caring for yourself	Loving and accepting yourself first in situations

Figure 3. Within-case matrix for Maria.

After revisiting the artifacts and matrices, I analyzed my data and uncovered the emergent themes described in subsequent chapters. To further enhance the qualitative data, I used quantitative data for demographic information. I analyzed participants' responses from the initial and post-questionnaires for those interviewed between four to six times ($N = 5$) change of whole and subscale values, depending upon the specifications of each questionnaire (i.e. mindfulness questionnaire – whole scores; self-compassion questionnaire – whole score; positive affect schedule - subscale scores; and effort regulation – subscale score). When writing the findings, I presented the within-case narratives as chronological structures, a case study strategy described by Yin (2014), and the cross-case accounts as categories or themes answering the research questions, as described by Merriam (2001).

Validity and Reliability

To establish internal validity, external validity, reliability, and confirmability in this case study, I followed recommendations of Yin (2014) and Merriam (2001): I triangulated data obtained from the interviews, questionnaires, journals and observations; created an audit trail showing a clear description of the research and the steps I used throughout the project; documented unexpected results; and established member checks through formal and informal checks of interpretations and conclusions with the participants. Being true to the methods of a case study, I investigated separate participants' experiences, as a case study is a set of units (Merriam, 2001; Yin, 2014).

Ethical Considerations

When engaging in an MBI, participants might have experienced personal issues requiring additional support. I notified participants in the study verbally and in writing

via consent forms and in the *Mindful and Self-Compassionate Learning and Living: A Mindfulness-Based Intervention Manual* there were resources available at the university, including counseling and health center services; I provided phone numbers, physical addresses, and websites for counseling and health center services' business hour services and emergency information.

The participants in the intervention were students in a developmental literacy course who navigated an MBI ($N=12$), which I taught. The participants were enrolled in the RDG 1300 sections that I taught. I was observant of each participants' actions and words, and attempted to represent each person's story to the best of my ability in my dual role of instructor and researcher. I was aware of the power dynamic and required research participation, which might have occurred in the RDG 1300 class and the MBI. I tried to decrease the hegemony by letting participants know they were free to ask me questions during interviews and MBI sessions, though only one participant asked questions of me. I also tried to be aware of the potential power dynamic when collecting and analyzing data.

IRB Approval

My study was approved at the level of exempt by the university's institutional review board on July 21, 2016. Approved questionnaires, scripts, interview questions, and the IRB approval letter are found in Appendices A, F, G, H, and I.

Positionality

Merriam (1998) defined a case study as particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic. In my case study, I examined a specific instance, participants navigating an MBI and I explored my biases and influences before, during, and after the study. Descriptions included showing the complexities and factors that contribute to the phenomenon;

addressing “advantage of hindsight,” yet acknowledging the value of hindsight in the present (p. 30), illuminating “influence of personalities” (p. 30), showing the passage of time, gathering data and information from multiple sources, looking at differences of opinion, and presenting detailed information.

My assumptions entering my study included my belief that mindfulness and self-compassion interventions are highly beneficial to almost any population. I have been a proponent of mindfulness and self-compassion techniques. I acknowledged bias towards mindfulness and self-compassion practices because I have seen them enhance my life and other’s lives by decreasing stress, increasing well-being, and enhancing positive mental health. I have practiced yoga, meditation, mindfulness, and self-compassion on a regular basis and have been a student of these practices since 1997 and a teacher of these practices since 2001.

During my study, I held a dual role as teacher of two developmental literacy courses and facilitator of the MBI. There were participants in the MBI who were also students in the developmental literacy classes I taught. As part of my university doctoral assistantship duties, I have taught developmental literacy classes during the Fall 2013, Spring 2014, and Fall 2016 semesters to undergraduate students placed in both face-to-face and non-course based options. I have taught four face-to-face and one non-course competency-based option reading courses. My experiences while teaching these courses have led me to understand that some students may experience dissatisfaction, frustration, boredom, and other emotions based on their placement in the course. In my experience, a minority of these students express that they need to take a developmental literacy course to strengthen their skills in reading and writing.

Summary of Methodology

In chapter three, I presented and described an overview of the study and the mindfulness-based intervention and the participants, students in a developmental literacy course. I provided information about participants' characteristics, recruitment, and selection. I described the rationale for the case study, as well as the instrumentation, collection, analysis, validity and reliability measures of the study. I provided ethical considerations for supporting the holistic well-being of participants. Lastly, I gave the IRB approval information and my positionality.

IV. WITHIN-CASE RESULTS

In this section, I will present the perceptions and experiences of participants enrolled in developmental literacy courses as they attended an MBI, interviewed with me, and took initial and post-questionnaires. Through the lens of self-determination theory, I inform the research questions that examine the experiences of participants as they engaged in an MBI and how they perceived experiencing aspects of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect, and effort. The research questions addressed the experiences of participants in developmental courses, specifically aspects of mindfulness and self-compassion, affect about placement in a developmental literacy course, and effort in that same course as they participated in an MBI.

Self-determination theory (SDT) has framed many studies involving motivation and effort (Deci & Ryan, 2017). I examined how an MBI might be a motivating factor for participants and how an MBI might help or hinder participants' ability to act in an efficient, sustaining, and healthy manner. Looking through a lens of SDT, I analyzed data to explore if an MBI could support the autonomy, competence, and relatedness of participants in order to create high motivation, creativity, and best performance, and observed if an MBI could provide the tools to enhance motivation and mental health.

I organized data in chronological order describing the way each participant experienced the MBI. I further documented each participant's experiences with a figure displaying a timeline indicating the dates of initial and post-questionnaires, interviews, and MBI sessions. The first five of twelve participants met with me for four to six interviews during and after the MBI. Listed after each participant's story is a summary of responses to the research questions. The remaining seven of twelve participants met with me for one to two interviews during and after the MBI. I did not include data from the

participants with one to two interviews, but included them in the cross-case chapter to allow those data to further inform the observations and themes I analyzed. The following table provides a description of the key informants, participants with four to six interviews, the number of interviews they attended, the number of MBI sessions they attended, and the number of journal entries they wrote.

Table 6

Participants' Interviews, MBI Attendance, and Journal Entries

Participant	Interviews	MBI	
		Attendance	Journal Entries
Alexandra	4	5	7
Camila	4	6	27
Luz	5	6	19
Maria	6	6	25
Na	6	6	31

Note. Maximum # Interviews = 6. Maximum MBI Attendance = 6. Maximum # Journal Entries = 42.

All participants took initial questionnaires determining their scores of current levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, positive and negative affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort regulation in that course. Participants' scores are listed in the table below, as well as the mean, and are discussed in more depth in each section about the participant.

Table 7

Interviewees' Initial Questionnaire Scores

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-Compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Alexandra	2.90	3.00	35.00	14.00	4.75
Camila	3.63	3.25	30.00	17.00	7.00
Luz	3.58	2.58	24.00	20.00	7.00
Maria	2.71	2.08	31.00	39.00	6.50
Na ^a	-	-	-	-	-
Mean	3.21	2.73	30.00	22.50	6.31

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* and *Self-Compassion Scale* use a Likert scale from 1-5. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* use a scale from 1-50. The *Effort Regulation Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-7.

^a Na did not have scores due to missing data.

Alexandra

In this section, I will write about the experiences of Alexandra as she participated in the MBI, her affect about being in a developmental literacy course, her effort in a developmental course, and her understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion.

I met Alexandra in her section of developmental literacy; she was enrolled in a colleague's section of a developmental literacy course. When I visited her class, she took the initial intervention questionnaires measuring her levels of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in the reading improvement course, and effort put forth in the developmental literacy course. Compared to all participants who took the questionnaires, she had an above average mindfulness score, which was less than one standard deviation below the mean, a slightly below average self-compassion score, which was approximately equal to the mean, an above average positive affect score, which was less than one standard deviation above the mean, a below average negative affect score, which was less than one standard deviation below the mean, and a slightly

below average effort score, which was less than one standard deviation below the mean, as displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Alexandra's Initial Questionnaire Scores

Participant	Mindfulness	Self-Compassion	Positive Affect	Negative Affect	Effort Regulation
Alexandra	2.90	3.00	35.00	14.00	4.75
Mean	3.22	3.03	29.87	19.1	5.42

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* and *Self-Compassion Scale* use a Likert scale from 1-5. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* use a scale from 1-50. The *Effort Regulation Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-7.

During the course of the MBI, she participated in four interviews, attended five of six MBI sessions, and journaled seven out of 48 possible days. Alexandra took the initial questionnaires on the morning of the first MBI session. When I met Alexandra again, we were at the first MBI session. Her timeline is shown in the figure below.

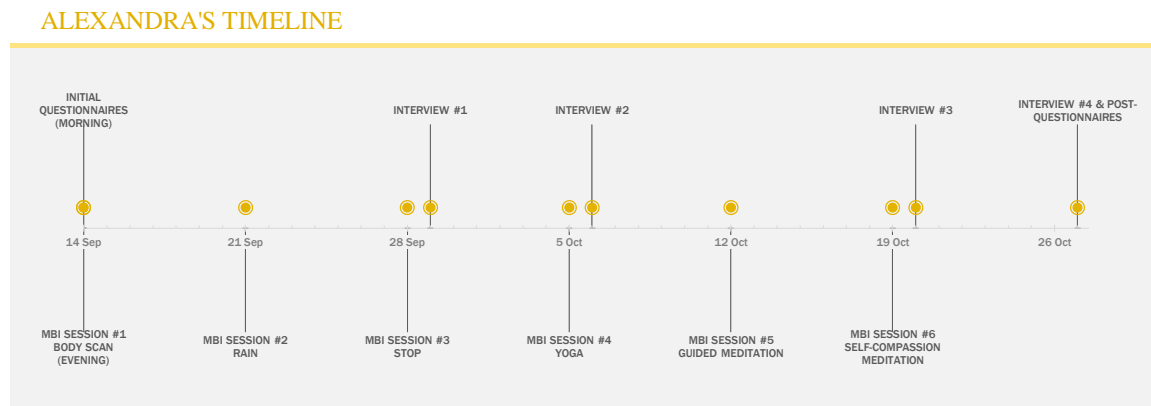


Figure 4. Timeline for dates of all MBI sessions and dates of Alexandra's interviews and initial and post-questionnaires.

Directly before the first of six MBI sessions, Alexandra took a demographics questionnaire in which she self-identified as an 18-year-old White female. She also wrote that she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to the MBI. In her mindfulness journal, prompts were given asking what she hoped to attain by

the end of the MBI, what good friends or close family members would say about her, when she would practice, and where she would practice. She wrote that she hoped at the end of the MBI, she would feel less stressed; she wanted to decrease stress by participating in the MBI. She answered the prompt in her journal about recognizing positive aspects of herself by writing that her closest friends and family would define her as “easy to talk to, funny, and loyal.” She wrote she would practice MBI activities twice a week in the morning in her dorm room. She did note in her journal after the first session that the body scan was “very relaxing” when she practiced it the day after the first session. She journaled two days after MBI session one, but did not journal on any other days of that week.

She was not able to attend the second of six sessions of the MBI due to a sorority function, but attended the third session. At this stage in the study, Alexandra has already experienced a conflict of goals. Though she stated that she really wanted to be in the MBI and receive benefits from the MBI practice she chose to attend a sorority function instead of coming to the MBI session as the sorority function motivated her more than the MBI. I observed she was experiencing challenges with time management due to conflicting meetings and responsibilities.

We had our first of four interviews one day after the third of six MBI sessions and further interviews on three separate occasions after that time. She was apologetic about not being able to come for an interview earlier and missing the second of six MBI sessions. In my role as educator and MBI facilitator, I affirmed that sometimes you cannot attend every event of a function and reminded her about the inevitable conflicts in life. I began interview one with the structured interview protocol by asking her what it

was like to be placed in the developmental literacy course. She replied she was “a little discouraged” but that she didn’t have “a problem with it”; her words indicated she processed her negative affect about being in a developmental literacy course. Alexandra said she was “learning new skills,” she thoroughly enjoyed the teacher, and identified with the community of the class. Alexandra was establishing relationships and bonding with the teacher of the developmental literacy class as she said she liked the teacher of the course.

I asked her how she defined mindfulness. She responded that it was “the way you think about situations” and mindfulness in practice looked like “when you are faced with a tough decision, how you cope with it, and how you get to that decisions, and what’s going through your head.” In that way, mindfulness was a coping strategy for her. She did not address present-moment awareness. Her definition of mindfulness was different from the definition being provided in the course. The MBI materials and presentations convey present-moment awareness and observation and noticing thoughts and feelings. She defined compassion as “caring for another person.” She defined self-compassion as “caring for yourself” and “making sure that your needs come first sometimes.” Her definitions for compassion and self-compassion were very much in line with the definitions presented in the MBI. In the class materials and presentations, compassion and self-compassion are defined as caring for others and yourself, being aware of emotions and feelings and treating them with dignity and respect, nourishing oneself with understanding and love.

We progressed to the interview protocol about her motivation for participating in the MBI. She participated in the MBI because the other research project offered in the

developmental literacy class, writing a paper about her digital technology literacy journey and being interviewed about it “sounded very boring,” and because the practices in the MBI might help her “in the long run” as she described herself as “a really high-strung person.” She participated in the MBI as it was better than the other research projects presented for class credit in the developmental literacy class, but also so she could reap long-term benefits of the MBI and decrease stress. She hoped she would learn “new ways to cope with hard situations and being in the moment more than planning,” “just stay in the moment,” and how to “sit and reflect.”

She acknowledged that the frequency and duration of her practice was not happening as much as she would like to and demonstrated a reduced daily practice as compared to the expectation of the MBI. She practiced “one to two times a week for about ten to fifteen minutes.” She admitted she had not journaled but that she would start. Her journal showed no entries for the week after the second MBI session. She was again experiencing time management conflicts. Other responsibilities in her life were competing with her original commitment to the MBI. She thought journaling might allow her to “look back and see the results” and “see the progression of the practice.” She used journaling to assess growth. She also thought journaling might affect the developmental literacy class because she could look back for notes and reflect on the past. I asked if she had additional comments about participating in the MBI and she said no. We concluded the interview.

During the second of four interviews, she acknowledged she had not practiced as much as she would have liked; she continued to have challenges meeting the suggested practice requirements for MBI participation. When she could not do the full MBI

practice, she paused to breathe, reflect, and focus on one thing at a time. She described the practice as “really helpful” and she indicated she liked the outcome. She practiced daily for about five minutes and did not journal. I noticed she established a pattern of infrequent journaling. She was also modifying or contextualizing the MBI to accommodate her life.

During that same interview, she defined mindfulness as “the way you think about yourself and your surroundings.” During the first of four interviews, she defined mindfulness as a coping strategy. The definition from the first to the second interview changed to the manner in which she thinks about the self and her surroundings. Compassion was “caring towards others” and self-compassion was “caring for yourself.” As she experienced the MBI, her definitions were changing.

She observed that she was learning how to “handle myself in stressful situations, breathing techniques, being able to step outside the busy stressful world and making more time for yourself.” She acknowledged that she “really needed that.” The MBI seemed to help her increase her coping strategies. She indicated that she applied her practice to a stressful situation as she waited to hear about a mentor she would receive in her sorority. Her “big sister,” a superior in the sorority, told her she would not get the mentor she wanted and she felt “devastated” and “mad”; “it made the rest of the day so stressful.” But she decided to take a step back, “had a couple of moments to myself and then I was fine.” She later commented that she did get the mentor she wanted. The strategies in the MBI helped her deal with stressful situations. She also noted that the fourth MBI session of yoga was beneficial. She was “very at peace with myself” and “very focused.” Being able to “get away from school” and “open up to everything” was nice. She continued to

develop coping strategies for the rigor of college life. I asked her if she had additional comments and she said she did not. The interview ended at that time.

For the third of four interviews, we were not able to meet until two weeks after the second interview due to scheduling conflicts. We met after the sixth of six MBI sessions. Her journal for the week after the fourth of six MBI sessions was empty and at the bottom she wrote a note, “did not practice STOP this week I’m sorry” and included a sad face emoji. She continued to have time management challenges with competing responsibilities. During the third interview, she commented that the previous week, the week after the fourth MBI session was less stressful than previous weeks and she was able “to put into play/practice the self-meditation.” She practiced three days out of the week for approximately ten minutes again demonstrating a reduced daily MBI practice. She journaled about her experiences. She stated the practice “cleared my mind, took me out of the stressful world of college.” She reflected that she “hadn’t done a lot of journaling” but that when she did, she liked to “look back at the results of it and makes me want to continue. And to see firsthand what I wrote right after I did it.” It was “very reflective.” She was journaling to process feelings, foster internalization, and assess growth. However, her journal only had one entry after the fourth MBI session, yoga, where she wrote that she had watched online yoga videos. She included three journal entries after the fifth MBI session, guided meditation, where she wrote that she really enjoyed the meditation, felt less stressed, and felt prepared for the upcoming week. She demonstrated an increase in using the MBI practices for coping strategies.

During the third interview, she defined mindfulness as “how we think” and it looked like “being in yourself and removing yourself away from the world.” She

continued to use the word think when defining mindfulness, but started to address being in herself and stepping out of the day to day world. Compassion was “being nice to others” and “showing love and caring.” Self-compassion was “loving yourself and accepting yourself.” Her definitions of compassion and self-compassion were similar to previous weeks’ definitions. When she reflected on the MBI, she felt she had learned “to take myself out of busy and stressful moments and knowing how to remove myself from that and take a break; that’s what I wanted to get out of it.” She believed she would continue the practices she learned, especially self-meditation. She experienced developing coping skills.

During the fourth and final interview, one week after the sixth and last MBI session, she volunteered that she “learned much more.” She felt she had a “different background message when I think of things. It’s not so jumbled and stressed and I feel like I take things slower, which is very good. I’m very very grateful.” She continued to have no complaints about the reading improvement class. Alexandra explained that mindfulness meant “the way you think about others and your surroundings.” She continued to use the word *think* in her definition of mindfulness. Compassion meant “love and caring” and it looked like “doing things for others and not expecting anything...giving but not relying on the receiving.” Self-compassion meant “loving yourself first” and it looked like “putting yourself first in situations.” She learned “how to cope with stressful situations, which is why I wanted to do this. I’m very happy.” Journaling was “beneficial because you got to practice but reflect and see...it proved you can go back and look.” She thought she could take the practice “into my later life.”

She felt the self-compassion practices after the sixth MBI session allowed her to open her eyes “to the love around you.” It seemed she was experiencing greater compassion as she practiced self-compassion. “I feel like you are more aware of the meditations and you are more aware of self and you actually thought about the important people in your life and being that back to you and give it to them. And I really liked that.” Her self-awareness, compassion, and self-compassion increased as she practiced. She noted that she would like to continue a personal practice in the future by meditating “at least once a week,” implying she benefited from the MBI. Her journal entries during the week after the sixth MBI session indicated she showed her mother the self-compassion meditation, she felt more appreciative of her life, and felt she was in a better mood. She wished to teach others about the benefits of the MBI practices. Her journal supported her spoken words in that she would like to set aside more time to do meditation and enjoyed the results; they made her feel more relaxed and refreshed. She included a personal note to me: “Thank you for all you have taught me and for being so flexible and understand when I had to miss class! Really enjoyed taking part in your research study. {Heart drawing}, Alexandra.” She seemed appreciative of the experience and participation in the MBI.

After the fourth and final interview, I scored her post-questionnaires and determined the change from at the beginning of her participation in the MBI to after the MBI, as shown in Table 9. She experienced a small increase in mindfulness, self-compassion, and effort regulation scores. She experienced a small decrease in positive affect and negative affect scores. Her mindfulness and self-compassion scores increased; her spoken responses reflected her score increases. Her positive affect score decreased,

implying she felt less positive affect about being in the developmental literacy course. Her effort regulation score increased slightly, meaning she worked harder in the developmental literacy course than at the start of the MBI.

Table 9

<i>Alexandra's Initial to Post-Questionnaire Scores Change</i>					
<u>Name</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Alexandra	+0.06	+0.33	-4.00	-2.00	+0.50

When interpreting Table 9, it is important to remember that the mindfulness and self-compassion scales range one to five, effort regulation ranges one to seven, and positive and negative affect range one to 50.

Summary of Alexandra's Experiences

Alexandra's comprehensive experiences in the MBI are listed above in chronological order as is the summary informing the research questions. The first paragraph addresses research question 1, the experiences of participants when participating in an MBI. She felt she was learning coping strategies for college and life in general. She understood the purpose of the MBI in multiple ways throughout the intervention: to relax, sit and reflect, get away from school and stressful situations, and handle herself in stressful situations. At the end of the intervention she felt less stressed, had more coping skills, and was more aware of herself. During the last two of four interviews, she did not have scheduling conflicts with the MBI and was in attendance for the last two sessions. She acknowledged that her daily practice of the MBI was less than desired and she wanted to practice more in the future. She missed two of six sessions of the MBI to attend sorority events. She also did not practice and journal regularly during

the weeks after each MBI session due to schoolwork and extracurricular activities. Research question 1.A was addressed when Alexandra expressed her affect about being in the developmental literacy course. She stated she did not have negative affect and complaints about the course throughout her interviews. However, she did feel discouraged upon learning that she was placed in the course. Research question 1.B was informed when, throughout the interviews, she said she did well in the class. When I asked her about effort in the interviews, she responded that effort was not an issue for her.

In terms of research question 2, how participants experienced aspects of mindfulness throughout the MBI, she had an evolving definition of mindfulness that included being a coping strategy, the way you think about things, and being able to remove oneself from the world. She provided her experience of self-compassion, informing research question 3, when providing her definitions of compassion and self-compassion throughout the MBI. Her definitions of compassion and self-compassion were consistent throughout the MBI. Compassion was showing love and caring to others and self-compassion was showing love and caring to the self.

Camila

In this section, I describe Camila's journey through as related to the research questions, which explore the experiences she had in the MBI, her affect about being in the developmental literacy course, her effort in that course, and her understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion. During the MBI, Camila interviewed four of six potential times, attended six of six MBI sessions, and journaled 27 of 48 entry days.

I met Camila for the first time in one of two sections of developmental literacy classes that I taught. I perceived her as a very shy and soft-spoken individual as she was not apt to respond quickly and rarely asked questions during the developmental literacy course and MBI. She was involved in the developmental literacy class and inquired frequently how to meet and exceed class expectations. During one developmental literacy class session, she took the pre-MBI questionnaires. Camila's mindfulness score was below the population mean, which was approximately one standard deviation below the mean. Her self-compassion score was slightly above the population mean and less than one standard deviation above the mean. Her positive affect score about being in a developmental literacy course was slightly above average, which was almost equal to the mean. Her negative affect score about being in a developmental literacy course was below average, less than one standard deviation below the mean, and her effort score was above average, which was less than one standard deviation above the mean; Table 10 displays those scores.

Table 10

Camila's Initial Questionnaire Scores

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-Compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Camila	3.63	3.25	30.00	17.00	7.00
Mean	3.22	3.03	29.87	19.1	5.42

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* and *Self-Compassion Scale* use a Likert scale from 1-5. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* use a scale from 1-50. The *Effort Regulation Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-7.

When she came to the first of six MBI sessions, she took a demographics questionnaire and self-identified as an 18-year-old Hispanic female. She wrote she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. During

the first MBI session, she was very observant and involved in the activities. Her timeline is provided in Figure 5.

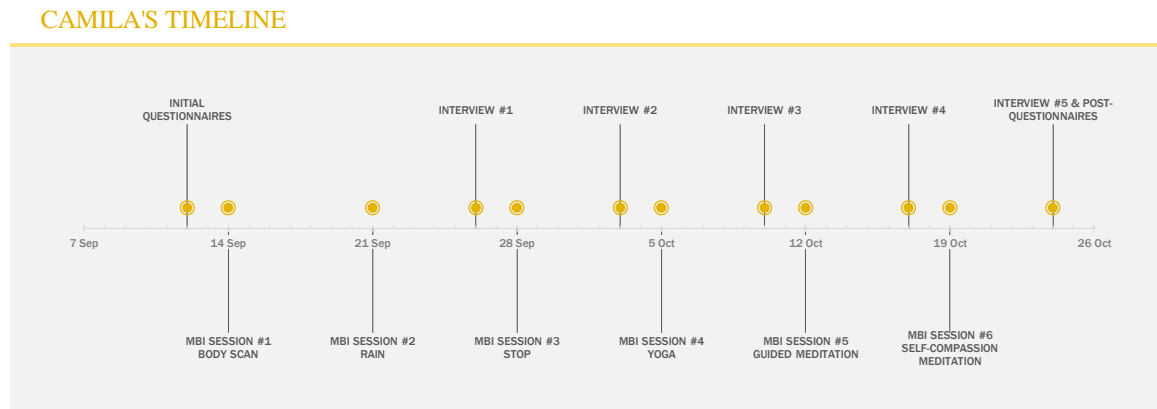


Figure 5. Timeline for dates of all MBI sessions and dates of Camila’s interviews and initial and post-questionnaires.

She wrote in her MBI journal in response to the four prompts about her goals, how others view her, and best MBI practice times and locations. During the week after the first of six MBI sessions, the body scan, she initially wrote that she felt silly but then became more at ease by the end of practice for MBI session one. In her response to the four initial prompts about her goals, how others view her, and best MBI practice times and locations, she wrote that her close family and friends would see her as organized, determined, and a multi-tasker. She hoped to practice in the evenings in her room after she returned from work at a local store.

I met with her for the first of four interviews after the second of six MBI sessions and on five separate occasions for interviews during the MBI. Camila shared she was accustomed to being in classes like developmental literacy as she had been in similar classes in high school. “I had to take extra classes and things after school to help. So, I’ve always known I’m not the best. So, it was kind of expected.” She would go to tutoring sessions with an English teacher during lunch and review TAKS tests [state-mandated

testing in public schools]; she thought the sessions were a bit helpful. “They taught us how to read the question and answer it and read the passage and find what you’re looking for. I learned some helpful things from it.” She revealed she liked the developmental literacy class that she was in and did not have negative affect about the class. Her interview indicated she had positive affect about the class as she was happy to be in the class and it was helpful.

I want to learn things and figure out what I need to better. I’m glad there is a class like this so they don’t just throw you into the main classes and hope that you get it. And be there to give you support.

Camila defined mindfulness as “letting your mind self-express.” She defined compassion as love, “like compassion...like you have more passion. Like shopping. Like you’re passionate about it.” She defined self-compassion as “you love something about yourself.” Camila felt she might learn how to relieve stress in a better way by being in the MBI. She stated when she became stressed, she threw everything on the floor and walked away, watched a movie, and returned to the particular task later. She wanted to participate in the MBI because she had never heard about it and likes to try new things. She hoped to develop coping strategies for stressful situations.

She thought that an MBI might be able to turn negative feelings into positive feelings if someone felt them about developmental literacy. She also believed that mindfulness practices could affect the effort you put into something.

Like the first [MBI] class when we were trying to let go, I was really freaked out.

I didn’t know what to do. I just started laughing to myself. I didn’t know what to

do. The only good thing I think I did was let my hands go. And I couldn't focus on anything else.

She practiced "pretty often...the only time I don't practice is when I work and come home late and have homework and then I just want to sleep." She wrote "a couple of words in my journal after I practice." She thought that journaling could show "the progress that you make. Like at first I felt silly but on the last day I said I felt more confident about the concept." Her journal confirmed at the beginning of the MBI she felt silly about practicing then she got more into it. She felt she could "connect" and felt "relaxed" and "calm." Later in the week, she felt she couldn't focus and that her legs were a "dead weight." She also wrote that she felt "more focused," "more aware," and "calm." She was using her journal to document growth and process feelings. She did not think there was a relationship between journaling and the developmental literacy class.

The second of five interviews occurred after the third MBI session. She revealed she was not able to get into the practice of STOP, which was taught during the third MBI session. She also felt weird during the previous week when we practiced walking meditation. She answered she enjoyed the practice of RAIN better because she could wrap her mind around it more. She also mentioned she couldn't understand the goal or breathing of the first MBI's practice of the body scan. Some of the practices were uncomfortable for her and she did not understand their purpose.

She defined mindfulness as "monitoring your own feelings. And the feelings happening throughout your own body. Not really in your own surroundings. It's really all internal. It's kind of like we really don't pay attention to things outside of us and we pay attention to just us." Her definition of mindfulness was different than the current

literature about mindfulness, which is present-moment awareness. She did not include mindfulness as external awareness. Compassion meant “being really into something.” She defined compassion as *passion*. Self-compassion was “when you really like something about yourself. You can do this instead of this for yourself, like running. You can really relate running rather than walking.” Part of her definition of self-compassion is in line with the current research on compassion, liking yourself. The remainder of her definition then changes to one of relatability or preference. She gave the example of preferring running over walking.

Camila practiced and journaled every other day during the week after the third MBI session. She answered journaling was good because “you really reflect on yourself throughout the whole week. So, with the body scan, on my journal I wrote that I don’t really understand and then towards the end I wrote that I did understand.” Her entries included feeling “more at ease,” “more open,” and “more aware.” She believed she was learning from the MBI to zone out and “kind of just take a second to be just with yourself and kind of exclude everything around you.” She was concerned about her fellow participants in the class. “I feel like some people in the class when they are uncomfortable with it, they start to laugh. Like when I started laughing on my first time. I was just like, uh, this is weird.” Camila was learning new coping strategies, but also experiencing trepidation about practicing those strategies.

During the third interview after the fourth MBI session, she practiced about four times during the week, establishing a pattern of a reduced daily practice. She did not use the videos on TRACS that were provided, but created her own practice. She would hold

each yoga position for about ten seconds and then move on to the next pose. Her daily practices made her

not tense up. I have a lot of problems with my back and hips. Doing some of the exercises would open up and stretch them and I would feel a lot better. One of my tasks for [physical] therapy was to do yoga but I could never find a yoga place near my high school. And this is a couple years later and I finally get to do yoga. It worked.

She benefited physically from the practices. In the past, her physical therapist recommended yoga as part of Camila's physical therapy regimen. She did not get to engage in yoga at the time she was doing physical therapy and she finally had the opportunity to try it during the MBI.

At this point she defined mindfulness as "being aware of yourself instead of your surroundings around you." Compassion was "really being involved with something." Self-compassion was "being connected with yourself." Her definition of mindfulness was partially in line with mindfulness literature: mindfulness is being present of both the self and surroundings. Her definition for compassion was still that of passion. Her definition for self-compassion was beginning to evolve, and she acknowledged self-compassion was being connected with the self or self-awareness.

During the same interview, she mentioned the process of journaling "had to do with pain." As she went through her week, the practice "got easier and it didn't hurt anymore. I felt more flexible so my journaling was more about how much pain I felt. On this day where was my pain and on this day where way my pain." She experienced pain as she did yoga postures, but yoga became easier as she continued practicing. I checked in with her

regarding her level of pain as discomfort is okay, but pain is not desired in meditation and/or yoga practice. I asked her the type of pain she felt and she said “like you’re going too far. Like I needed to stop.” I asked her if she listened to her body and she answered in the affirmative. Her journal entries indicated that she felt pain, “pain in hips”; however, as the week she progressed she wrote that she was “not feeling the pain as much,” had “more balance when I look around,” was “getting better balance,” and “hips don’t hurt like day one.” Her pain level seemed to decrease as she continued to practice.

I then asked her what she felt that she was learning the week after the fourth MBI session. She answered she was learning more ways to be, well, let go or something. “It’s okay to take a minute for yourself and let go of the things you are doing. Like your responsibilities like homework and stuff. It’s okay to take a break and practice some of the practices. Trying to be stress free.” She learned additional coping strategies. She didn’t think that journaling affected the class, but it made her think it “is actually working. Like the process itself has effects.” Journaling helped her understand MBI practices helped her grow.

When I asked her if she had any more observations, feelings, or perceptions, she gave her observations of others as they participated in the class and compared herself to others.

I noticed some people were all the way up like a flamingo and I was struggling just going right here [pointed to lower down her leg below the knee]. More people have already experienced yoga and you can see some people are actually good at it and others just experienced first-hand and stuff and some people kind of struggled. They were struggling to stay up. When you were saying to focus on a

point in the class but I felt like I was more balanced when I look around and not concentrate on me trying to be still.

She compared herself in a previous interview to others and continued to do the same in this interview. Camila was observant of others' actions in the MBI.

In reference to effort, Camila reported she felt as if she gave more in the developmental literacy course because of strategies she learned in the MBI. "It's okay to take a break and practice some of these practices." She described how she could take a break from her work in the developmental literacy course and then come back to that same work after she completed an MBI activity. Her experience in the developmental literacy course benefited from MBI practices.

The fourth of five interviews occurred after the fifth of six MBI sessions. She practiced the guided meditation three times during the week. She practiced for 20 minutes each time she did the mountain meditation. She compared it to the body scan and she said: "I wasn't into the body scan." She acknowledged, "you were saying to be the mountain. I was like, can't do it." She journaled a lot about how she could not identify with the mountain. She thought maybe she could do a meditation on the wind and have a fan going. Doing the practices continued to be hard for her and she was not able to practice the amount of time needed for the MBI.

She defined mindfulness as "only being aware of yourself and not your surroundings." She continued to define mindfulness in the same manner as she had done in previous interviews. Compassion was "being involved in something and putting your mind set into it." Self-compassion was "learning to accept who you are and knowing you love yourself." She felt that the practices "make me more calm. I can do these practices

and take my mind off of something. And I can just be okay for a second.” She believed that practice was best when she did it in the dark. Her journal entries supported her statements: she wrote that she could not “visualize,” evening time was better, and she did “better when I think of the wind.”

The fifth and final interview occurred a week after the sixth and final MBI session; Camila commented the MBI was “kind of interesting.” She thought some practices were “weird” and “different.” Her perspective of the MBI practices persisted throughout the MBI. She felt uncomfortable with the various practices. She felt the MBI “changed my expectations.” She also acknowledged the MBI changed her outlook and understanding. During the same interview, Camila defined mindfulness as “being aware of your surroundings and being aware of what’s going on in your mind and in your body.” Her definition of mindfulness evolved and she defined mindfulness as internal and external awareness. Compassion meant “something you are into. Something that makes you smile and happy.” She continued to define compassion as passion. Self-compassion was the “result of your compassion to others.” I found it hard to understand her definition of self-compassion and pressed her for more details. She repeated what she stated, that self-compassion was the result of her passion to others.

Her practice was sparse as she practiced once in seven days due to being sick. She reflected on the self-compassion meditation and thought about her high school friends. She said once you leave high school you lose all those friends. Those friendships will not “last and so I thought about how they are still with me and how we still talk all the time and how we have each other’s back.” She appeared to miss her friends from high school, but also seemed to mourn relationships that had ended. When I asked for more

information, she did not have more to say. I was confused by her reference to self-compassion and past friendships.

During the same interview, she said she believed she would like to continue the yoga practice in the future and do it four or five times per week and perhaps the self-compassion meditation. She believed that journaling showed her progress. She wrote in her journal that she had “a new meaning for self-compassion.” Her journal entries indicated that she would like to practice yoga in her room. “Yoga and self-compassion works best for me. I will practice yoga in my room watching videos. And I will practice meditation my bed at night.” She wished to continue her practices into the future.

Table 11

<i>Camila's Initial to Post-Questionnaire Scores Change</i>					
<u>Name</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Camila	+1.04	+0.75	+4.00	+1.00	-1.50

After the fifth and last interview, I scored the post-questionnaires and calculated the change between the initial and post-questionnaires (see Table 11). She had a slight increase in mindfulness, self-compassion, positive affect, and negative affect. She had a decrease in effort regulation. Her mindfulness score increased as well as her understanding of mindfulness through the interviews. Her self-compassion score increased, yet she understood self-compassion as one’s passion to others. Her positive affect score about being in the developmental literacy course increased. Her negative affect score about being in the developmental literacy course increased, yet she stated she did not have negative affect about being in the course. Her effort in the developmental

literacy course decreased and yet throughout the MBI, she stated she tried hard in the class.

Summary of Camila's Experiences

The summary of Camila's experiences is in chronological order and summarizes responses to the research questions. The following informs research question 1, addressing Camila's experiences participating in the MBI. Camila's understanding of the MBI changed as she participated in the MBI. At the beginning of the MBI, she viewed it as a way to relieve stress and as a way to change negative feelings to positive feelings, then as a way to zone out, then to letting go and being yourself, and finally to make her calmer and take her mind off distractions. She participated in the MBI to relieve stress and increase coping strategies. The MBI practices made her nervous and distracted at first as she compared herself others. She felt weird about the various practices and didn't understand the purpose of many of the practices. She could feel the nervousness of others in the MBI; however, she enjoyed yoga and its benefits and felt self-conscious about practicing. She felt the entire MBI practice was interesting, weird, and different.

Camila shared her feelings about being in the developmental literacy course, informing research question 1.A. She did not express any negative affect about being in the developmental literacy class, as she was accustomed to being in developmental classes in high school and appreciated the extra help. She continued to be okay with being in the class throughout the interviews. Throughout the interviews, Camila indicated that she did not have negative affect about being in the developmental literacy class.

Research question 1.B addressed Camila's perceptions of her effort about participating in the developmental literacy course. She stated that mindfulness practices

could help her try harder in her classes because she would not feel as stressed by multiple classes and assignments. Throughout the interviews, she emphasized that she did her best in the developmental literacy class; however, she provided limited information about her effort in the developmental literacy class.

The following information addresses research question 2, which pertains to Camila's perceptions of mindfulness throughout the MBI. Her definition of mindfulness changed throughout the interviews. At first it was letting the mind self-express and then monitoring the feelings in your body but not the surroundings. For the next two interviews, she defined mindfulness as monitoring the feelings in your body, but not the surroundings. For the last interview, she described mindfulness as internal and external awareness.

Camila also spoke of her perceptions of compassion and self-compassion, which addresses research question 3. Her definition of compassion stayed consistent throughout the interviews. Her definition of compassion was the definition of passion. It was love, being really into something, and something that makes you happy. Her definition of self-compassion changed slightly throughout the interviews. She first said it was loving something about yourself, then liking something about yourself, then being connected with yourself, then learning to accept who you are and loving yourself, and finally the result of compassion to others.

Luz

In this section, I describe Luz's experiences in the MBI, including her affect about being in the developmental literacy course, effort in that course, and her understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion.

LUZ'S TIMELINE

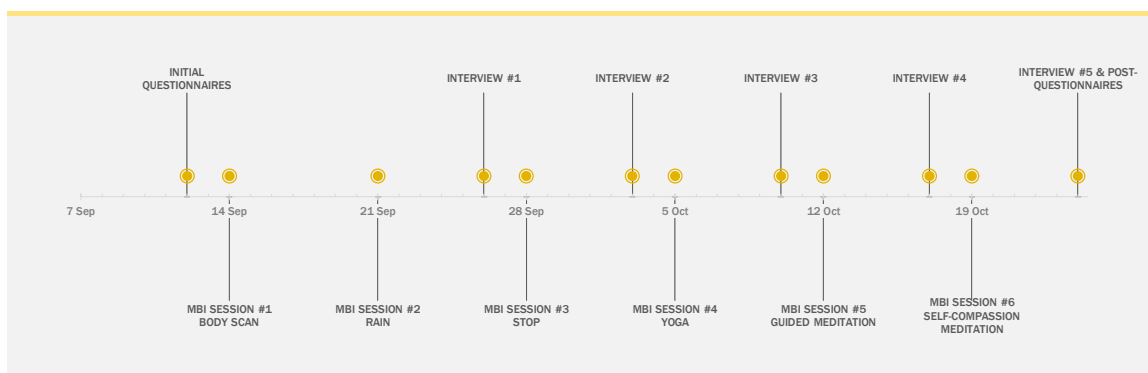


Figure 6. Timeline for dates of all MBI sessions and dates of Luz's interviews and initial and post-questionnaires.

I met Luz in one of my two sections of the developmental literacy course I taught; her timeline is presented in Figure 6. I perceived Luz as interested, perceptive, and involved. She was not apt to speak out in class but would approach me when she felt like situations were inequitable in class. Luz had an above average mindfulness score which was slightly less than one standard deviation below the mean, a slightly below average self-compassion score which was less than one standard deviation below the mean, a slightly below average positive affect score which was less than one standard deviation below the mean, slightly above average negative affect which was approximately equal to the mean, and above average effort which was less than one standard deviation above the mean; her scores are displayed in Table 12.

Table 12

Luz's Initial Questionnaire Scores

Participant	Mindfulness	Self-Compassion	Positive Affect	Negative Affect	Effort Regulation
Luz	3.58	2.58	24.00	20.00	7.00
Mean	3.22	3.03	29.87	19.1	5.42

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* and *Self-Compassion Scale* use a Likert scale from 1-5. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* use a scale from 1-50. The *Effort Regulation Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-7.

When she attended the first of six MBI sessions, she took a demographics questionnaire and self-identified as an 18-year-old Hispanic female. She wrote that she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. In her first journal entry, she wrote that by the end of the course, she hoped to be able to “relax and worry less.” She thought that friends and family would think of her as “nice and very caring person.” She hoped to practice on Friday, Saturdays, and Sundays in the morning in her bedroom.

I interviewed her on five separate occasions. Our first of five interviews took place five days after the second MBI session. I asked Luz what it was like to be placed in developmental literacy. She referred to a literacy placement test she took prior to beginning her freshman year; she explained that she took the test twice and

the first time I took it I felt like I could do better but I really felt like I was not that smart, I guess since I couldn’t pass the test. But I still felt like, hey, I’m going to try this again. So, then I did try it again and I was off by like three points and then I was just, I thought it was too late to take it again. Plus, I needed to worry about the other classes I needed to get to. So, then I said, why not, I’m just going to try this class. Maybe I’ll learn something new that I might need help in. But I don’t know. But yeah.

She initially had negative affect about being placed in the developmental literacy class; she felt substandard. However, when she retook the entrance exam, she was again placed in a developmental class. When she did not pass the entrance exam a second time, she decided she would go ahead and try the developmental literacy class; she thought she would learn new skills.

She felt that the developmental literacy class made her think. She commented that she liked the one-page reflection activities, as they help her think about revision. She said that she was “really enjoying the class. You’re really nice.” She noted that the class made her feel confident and the students were also very nice: the instructor and students in the class helped to make the experience better.

Luz defined mindfulness as “getting confident with myself, my body, and what I feel about myself.” She defined compassion as “like or love and being confident with myself. Not letting other things get to me or letting it go.” She did not know how to define self-compassion. Her definition of mindfulness was about self-confidence and self-acceptance, different than non-judgmental present-moment awareness. Her definition of compassion was similar to her definition of mindfulness, but also includes element of non-judgmental awareness. Though she could define compassion, she could not define self-compassion.

She hoped through the MBI she might learn to not let things get to her, like the placement test, and to have a positive attitude from the MBI. “I can do better and try new things that maybe I wouldn’t have tried before.” She acknowledged again she had negative affect about placement in the developmental literacy class. She also stated she hoped to learn new coping skills from the MBI. She decided to participate in the MBI because she “didn’t want to do the other one [research project option]. And plus, you are fun and nice. I’m going to go; it might be fun.” She chose the MBI because the other research projects offered in the developmental literacy class were not as appealing to her. She also thought that I was a personable individual and attending the MBI would be a good experience. She believed she could use the MBI to have a positive attitude about the

developmental literacy class. She also thought she could use it if she “were to feel sad, stressed, or depressed. I would practice yoga and stuff that we’ve been learning. And I did do it when I had a test this week...and it really helped.” She conveyed multiple times during the interview that she could learn new skills from attending the MBI. She developed coping strategies. She also commented that when she felt stressed about the one-page reflections in developmental literacy, she took a break and go back to it later and then feel better.

She practiced about every other day and journaled after she practiced. She believed journaling could affect her experience in the MBI.

I know at the beginning when I was jotting down my emotions, I wouldn’t feel anything because I was just getting started and getting used to it. I would just jot down and not focus and get distracted by all these things. But later on, eventually, I’m going to start getting used to it.

Luz predicted she would get better at journaling, and that she had seen improvement by journaling. She journaled early in the week she “wasn’t feeling much” and as the week progressed she wrote she “felt very relaxed.” She became more observant about the practices and felt they helped her. She noted in her journal that she kept “wanting to think of other worries I had so I didn’t feel very relaxed.” Her final entry for the week was: “I was feeling stressed over an exam so I did some yoga and it helped me rest my mind.” She acknowledged her practice changed from day to day; one day her practice did not help her relax and another day she did relax. She would get distracted during her practice, “but then I did it this past weekend and I was focusing on myself. I wasn’t getting

distracted by other things I would let myself hear my mind.” Her practice seemed to help her practice present-moment awareness and acknowledge the thoughts in her mind.

During the second week of journaling, Luz wrote in her journal she “felt a little relaxed.” The day following, she wrote that she did the practice twice in one day and first felt relaxed and then felt calm. The next day she wrote that she felt frustrated. The last journal entry indicated that she did not feel as annoyed and frustrated from the practice as the previous day. As a whole, journaling helped her reflect on growth, fostered internalization, and enabled processing of feelings. She did not believe journaling could affect her experience in the developmental literacy class.

When referencing effort in the developmental literacy course, she said when she was feeling stressed and frustrated about an assignment in that class she could take a break and come back to the task later. “I get back to it later and I know I’ll feel better.” She stated that if she stepped back and was mindful, she could engage more fully in the developmental literacy assignment. Her MBI practices could help her give effort in the developmental literacy class.

Our second of five interviews occurred a week after the first interview. She commented she practiced three days during the week in the evenings for about five minutes; she did not practice the entire time the MBI recommended. She tried doing seated meditation but acknowledged that laying down was more comfortable for her. When she practiced seated meditation she became distracted. She acknowledged the manner in which a person sits or lays down affects the practice of meditation. When she sat down, she did not know what to do with her hands. However, when she lay down, she

could rest her hands beside her: “when I’m laying down I know I had my hands next to me like mirrors.” She said it was much easier to meditation when she laid down.

Luz journaled after her practices in a stream of consciousness. She said she didn’t think about what she was writing, but just journaled whatever came to her mind. She did not try to edit or revise her statements about how she was feeling. At other times in her life, she said she would need to think about her writing before doing it, but with journaling she allowed herself to write whatever came to her mind. “I don’t try to make it sound good. I just write down what I’m feeling. Cause right now when I write something down, I usually think about it for a long time and now I just write it down. It’s whatever I’m feeling; I just write it down.” She believed that journaling could affect her mindfulness practice. She could release and let go of her feelings when journaling. She noted she had kept her feelings bottled up inside herself. “I feel like I can write them down and it’s like I’m telling someone but not really.” Her journal was like a confidant. She wrote in her journal twice during that week: the practice was “very helpful” and that she really liked this practice and helped her “slowly get into the relaxation practice.” The MBI strategies and journaling were helpful to her.

She defined mindfulness as “letting go of your feelings and kind of starting new.” Her definition of mindfulness was similar to non-judgmental present-moment awareness, but only focused on internal feelings. She defined compassion as “feeling happy, proud of yourself, calm.” Her definition of compassion was very different from offering empathy or sympathy for others. Compassion was self-confidence and self-pride. She defined self-compassion as “anything I’ve been holding in myself.” I asked her to provide

more information about her definition, but she was not able to provide additional details. Her definition of self-compassion seemed to be about negative emotion she held inside.

Luz felt she was learning from the MBI to release emotions and feelings she kept inside of her. She would typically keep her emotions inside and not tell others about those emotions. Journaling helped her release feelings that were not beneficial to her. She felt journaling was helpful and she would continue that practice. She also believed her practices positively affected her work and effort in the developmental literacy class and other classes. “Last week when I was feeling nervous and I didn’t know if I was going to have a test or not, the practice really helped.” She used mindfulness practices to reduce anxiety.

Our third of five interviews occurred one week after the second interview. Week four’s MBI session of yoga made her feel uncomfortable because she was not accustomed to the yoga postures. She thought others would judge her for how she did yoga. However, she said she stopped thinking about what she believed others said about her. She believed she might fall when attempting balancing postures in yoga. She continued to practice yoga at home, but only for two days for fifteen minutes each session. She acknowledged practicing yoga was difficult. She practiced yoga during the week from memory and did not use the yoga videos provided to the class. She journaled after each session. She wrote she was frustrated because yoga was hard. Even though yoga was hard, she decided to keep trying. “And then it was kind of más or menos [more or less] not so hard.” She was not sure if she would continue her yoga practice because she was not very comfortable with yoga. She journaled twice during the week about her yoga practice: “trying the actual yoga exercises was actually really hard” and “I tried to

keep my balance but at times I could not. Was getting really frustrated.” She struggled with the practice of yoga, but continued to try the postures.

Luz defined mindfulness as “a way in which you can relax from frustration but I got frustrated while I was doing it. Not in the way with studies and school work. It was a different frustration.” She felt mindfulness was a coping strategy, but at the same time the process of learning how to practice mindfulness was frustrating. She defined compassion as “feeling the feelings of others. If someone is going through something, I compare it to me and that’s how I see it.” Alexandra defined compassion as current literature defines compassion: concern and empathy for the sufferings of others. She defined self-compassion as being “just with me, like my feelings. Feeling compassion about, like in yoga, about my body.” Self-compassion looked like “feeling comfortable with my body and proud of myself. Like if I were to be going through something, I could feel my compassion.” She defined self-compassion similarly to current research on self-compassion. She recognized self-compassion as acknowledging suffering in the self (Neff, 2017). She felt she was learning in the MBI how to practice mindfulness and to relax: she was “getting to know the yoga, the movements we do and helping me relax.”

She still felt good about the developmental literacy class because she said she was doing well in the class, tried her hardest, and did the activities. She did believe that the MBI could help her feel better about assignments in the developmental literacy class. She could feel less frustrated because “I feel that at the beginning I would get frustrated because I wouldn’t know how to finish the essays. I guess I’m learning how to relax and say you’re going to finish this eventually so just keep doing it [persistence]. So, I don’t

get as frustrated anymore.” She felt she could cope better with the developmental literacy class due to the techniques she learned in the MBI.

Our fourth of five interviews occurred one week after the third interview. Luz acknowledged her MBI practice for the past week was difficult. She attempted the practices we did in the MBI class, but felt she could do the practices and concentrate better in a group setting. She felt more accountable when others were present. She tried to practice when she was alone, but practicing was harder. She thought the STOP practice was easier to do when alone as it was quick and easy; she felt comfortable with this practice. The guided meditation was easier to do with a group of people. “When I’m alone, I feel I can’t [meditate]. It’s harder for me...I’m trying to close my eyes and trying to remember what we did in class and I just try but I can’t.” I asked if she used the online recordings of the guided meditation and she stated no. She attempted meditation on the floor in a reclined posture; she closed her eyes and envisioned her my voice leading a practice, but she was not successful. She tried to meditate, but felt she could not and she stopped. “There’s no way I could do this [laughs] so I just stopped.” She instead practiced STOP because she thought it was easier than the other practices. “I had the paper [journal with notes] and we could take it and the notes and I read off that and it was easy. And the steps were super clear. It was easier for me.” The STOP practice was her practice of choice; it helped her the most. For her, STOP was different than yoga; she was not accustomed to yoga. She also thought journaling about the guided meditation was frustrating for her. She journaled three times during the week. She noted that instead of doing the guided meditation she did the STOP practice which “was really helpful.” She wrote that place affects her practice. In her last journal entry, she wrote she felt “relaxed,”

“rested,” “calmed,” and “relieved.” She felt calm at the end of the MBI. Her journal entries indicated she felt she could cope better with stressful events. Though she was frustrated by yoga and guided meditation, she did practice STOP and felt calmer and less stressed.

At this point, Luz defined mindfulness as “getting yourself to relax from frustration.” She did say that her practice was “frustrating myself more because I couldn’t do it. I tried the STOP one afterwards and it worked. So, it helped.” She defined compassion and self-compassion as “feeling compassion towards other people and understanding what they go through and myself is feeling compassion when I’m sad or happy or understanding myself.” She defined mindfulness as the benefits of practicing non-judgmental present-moment awareness. She defined compassion and self-compassion both as compassion, feeling empathy for others.

Luz applied the MBI practices to other parts of her life. When she felt frustrated, she practiced yoga and other practices and felt relaxed and more compassionate to others. Practicing MBI techniques helped her release tension and frustration. She reiterated practicing was still hard by herself, but practicing with others was hard due to noise distractions. She could not concentrate due to those distractions. She expressed it was easier to practice in a quiet environment, but without a teacher she was not clear on how to practice. The community of individuals practicing the MBI encourage her to continue: “By myself I’m like, what do I do now and in class everybody’s doing it and so when I was doing the yoga and balance myself, I don’t know, I felt like I was giving up and in class everyone keeps doing it and I feel like I have to keep doing it. I just don’t stop. It

motivates me.” The MBI community helped her practice and challenged her to continue. She felt accountable to others in the MBI.

Our fifth and final interview occurred one week after the fourth interview. Luz took the post-questionnaires at the beginning of the interview and then we talked. She mentioned participating in the MBI was enjoyable. At the beginning of the MBI, she felt nervous and did not know if she would enjoy it. However, she said she enjoyed the MBI and she thought it was interesting. She believed I made the class enjoyable and not boring. Her interest in the MBI increased as she attended. She also reflected on the developmental literacy class: she felt she initially did not need the class, but she saw her growth. She also stated the MBI helped her embrace imperfections and failure: “If I mess up, I learn. I learn many new things. Many things I didn’t know before. So now I’m actually comfortable with it not like before.” She learned new coping strategies from the MBI.

After attending the MBI, Luz defined mindfulness as “A time to relax and not get distracted by negative thoughts and frustrations, things you have going on at the moment and just letting go of all of that.” Her definition is in line with non-judgmental present-moment awareness. She defined compassion as “love, peace, happiness, and calmness.” Her definition for compassion was broad and did not address sympathy or empathy for others, but general feelings of calm and peace. She defined self-compassion as “being comfortable with my own self. Understanding if something goes wrong, just to let go of it and expect the best.” Her definition of self-compassion was representative of current literature on self-compassion.

She observed “Before I started when I felt down, I would bring myself down but with mindfulness classes I felt that I learned how to let go of negative thoughts. Before I wouldn’t, I would just keep it to myself. Now I’m like, I shouldn’t let this let me down.” She thought the MBI strategies were helping her coping skills. She also acknowledged journaling was writing down emotions and observations.

Her MBI practice during the past week was two of the seven days. She believed the self-compassion meditation was very helpful. She felt very emotional during the meditation and even felt like crying. “Just hearing, like the stuff you were saying, I don’t know. I hadn’t felt like that in a while...So, I guess this last one really hit me.” She thought she greatly benefited from this session. She journaled four times during this week’s practice. She wrote she tried the online meditation, but it was strange because she was accustomed to doing it in the MBI session. She also wrote she enjoyed the meditation. On a separate day she wrote she felt frustrated before doing the meditation, but after the meditation she felt much better. The last day of journaling, she wrote she continued to find the meditation helpful.

Luz believed in the future she would practice STOP and the self-compassion meditation. She connected with the self-compassion meditation. She noted that practicing with a group and practicing alone had a different feeling: “when you did it in class, I feel like if I were to do it anywhere else, I wouldn’t feel the same. Just cause the environment, I guess. Where you do it is different.” She journaled that she would like to continue with a practice. She was “thinking of starting to go to the other yoga sessions [University Recreation Center Fitness yoga classes] since this one finished already.” She wrote that

she would hope to practice “every other day and go to the other yoga sessions available. The STOP one works really good for me.”

After her final interview, I scored her post-questionnaires to see if there was change in her scores (see Table 13).

Table 13

<i>Luz's Initial to Post-Questionnaire Scores Change</i>					
<u>Name</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Luz	-0.75	+0.09	+20.00	-4.00	-0.50

She experienced a slight decrease in her scores of mindfulness, negative affect, and effort regulation. A decrease in mindfulness score meant she perceived practicing less mindfulness after the MBI than at the beginning of her participation in the MBI. A decrease in negative affect score meant she felt less negative affect about being in the developmental literacy course. A decrease in effort regulation score meant she perceived giving less effort in the developmental literacy course than at initial intervention. She had a slight increase in her score of self-compassion and a substantial increase in her positive affect score. An increase in self-compassion score can be interpreted as an increase in treating oneself with self-compassion and self-compassion practices. An increase in positive affect score meant her positive affect about being in a developmental literacy course increased.

Summary of Luz's Experiences

The following data informs research question 1 pertaining to Luz's experiences of participating in the MBI. The summaries are based on each research question and are in chronological order. Luz explained the experience of the MBI differently throughout her

interviews. At first, it was learning to not let things get to her and to have a positive attitude. It progressed to learning to let go of feelings, then getting to know yoga and relaxation. At the end, she said it was being able to apply the MBI practices to all parts of her life.

The following information addresses research question 2, her perceptions of mindfulness while participating in the MBI. Her definition of mindfulness changed throughout the interviews. First, mindfulness was being confident about herself, her body, and her feelings. Next, mindfulness was letting go of your feelings and starting new. It was a way to relax from frustration. During the last interview, mindfulness meant time to relax, not be distracted by thoughts, and letting go.

Luz provided insight into her perceptions about self-compassion and informed research question 3. Her definition of compassion changed throughout, similar to her understanding of mindfulness. She first said it was being confident with yourself, then feeling proud of yourself, and then feeling the feelings of others. For the last three interviews, she expressed that compassion was empathy for others. Her definition of self-compassion also changed throughout the MBI. When we first met, she did not know how to define self-compassion, then it was anything she was holding in herself, pride in herself, and understanding and being comfortable with the self.

Research question 1.A delved into Luz's perceptions of affect about being in the development literacy class. While in the class, she first felt she was not smart enough. After she felt this, she took the placement test for the class multiple times and did not score high enough. She decided she would try the class and she discovered there were helpful activities in the class. Throughout the interviews, she felt comfortable and good

about the class. At the end, she revealed that she didn't feel like she needed to be in the class initially, but by the end she realized she learned many new things and she was more comfortable with the class.

Research question 1.B pertains to Luz's perceptions of effort put forth in the class and is discussed here. When she felt stressed about the assignments she would practice mindfulness. In additional weeks, she did not have comments about effort. Later, she repeated that the mindfulness practices helped her to stay engaged in the class. Luz provided no additional information about her effort in the course as she continued to say she tried her hardest in the class throughout the MBI.

Maria

In the following section, I present Maria's experiences as she navigated an MBI. I include her affect about the developmental literacy course, effort in that course, and her understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion. Her timeline is presented in Figure 7.

MARIA'S TIMELINE

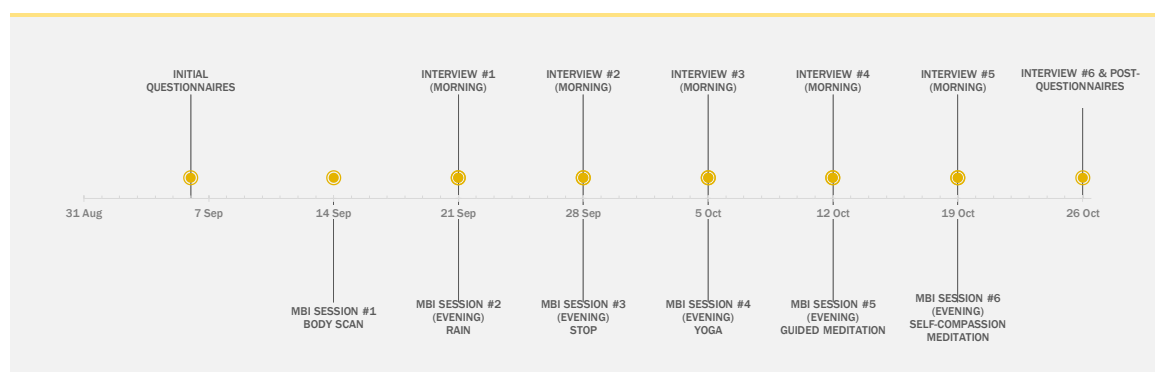


Figure 7. Timeline for dates of all MBI sessions and dates of Maria's interviews and initial and post-questionnaires.

I met Maria in one of the two sections of developmental reading classes that I taught. She was very outspoken and gregarious. She welcomed me and others to class on a daily basis. She took the questionnaires in class at initial intervention. As displayed in

Table 14, Maria had a below average mindfulness score which was slightly more than one standard deviation below the mean, a considerably below average self-compassion score which was between one and two standard deviations below the mean, a slightly above average positive affect score which was approximately equal to the mean, a considerably above average negative affect score which was three standard deviations higher than the mean, and an above average effort score which was less than one standard deviation above the mean. When she attended the first of six MBI sessions, she arrived early and took the demographics questionnaire. She self-identified as an 18-year-old Hispanic female and she did not have a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI.

Table 14

Maria's Initial Questionnaire Scores

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-Compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Maria	2.71	2.08	31.00	39.00	6.50
Mean	3.22	3.03	29.87	19.1	5.42

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* and *Self-Compassion Scale* use a Likert scale from 1-5. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* use a scale from 1-50. The *Effort Regulation Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-7.

I interviewed Maria on six separate occasions. Our first interview occurred one week after the first MBI class. She felt that being placed in the developmental literacy class was expected: “I felt it coming because I’m not a strong test taker.” She felt indifferent about the class and she just needed to take it and get out of it. She added, “Well, I knew that I’d be in there. But I think the class can help me because I’m not a strong reader at all.” She indicated she belonged in the developmental literacy class because she did not have strong literacy skills. When responding to questions about effort in the developmental literacy class, she firmly stated, “I try hard and I don’t half ass it.”

She confirmed she did her best in the class. She defined mindfulness as “the study of the mind. Being aware of your mind.” To Maria, mindfulness was psychology and the awareness of the workings of one’s mind. She defined compassion as “having feelings for others. Having empathy for others”; her definition was in line with the current research on compassion. She defined self-compassion as “having empathy for yourself”; her definition of self-compassion aligned with the current research on the subject.

Maria thought participating in the MBI could help her, “like therapy.” Her practice occurred six of the seven days. When she practiced the body scan, she felt heavy. “Every time she says words or you say words [meditation], I just feel my body getting heavy.” She journaled each day she practiced. She said, “it helps me look back.” She journaled that by the end of the course she wanted to “figure out more about myself and this class.” She observed good friends and close family would think that she listens, stands up for people, learns from others, and is “mentally strong.” She hoped to practice in the evenings in her bedroom. During the body scan week, she journaled six times. Her entries include her body felt heavy and weird on two occasions. She wrote that she fell asleep while doing the body scan and she felt weird. By mid-week, she started feeling okay with this. Moving to the end of the week, she didn’t fall asleep as easily and it felt less weird. In her last entry she wrote that it didn’t feel as bad and weird anymore, but that she did doze off again.

Our second of six interviews occurred a week after the first interview. Maria said that she typically fell asleep while doing the practices. Sometimes she “just chilled” and did not feel anything from the practices. We explored possibilities of her participating in active meditation so she would not fall asleep while practicing. She suggested she could

try mindful eating, a practice included in eight-week MBSRs that was not addressed during my study's six-week MBI. She added she felt good about the developmental literacy class. "I like the class. It helps me because I'm not a strong reader." I pressed further for more information, but she said she did not take issue with the class. In my observation, she appeared not to have a problem with the class and was able to apply concentrated effort in the developmental literacy course.

She defined mindfulness as "to be aware of stuff"; I understood this definition as awareness in general. She defined compassion as "having emotion...like if someone gets hurt, you're there"; her definition was in line with current research on self-compassion. She defined self-compassion as "realizing your emotions. Like if you feel sad, happy, or angry, just be aware."; her definition was partially in line with current research on self-compassion in that first, individuals acknowledge their emotions, and the next step in self-compassion is to accept the present emotions.

Her daily MBI practice was four out of seven possible days during the week. She listened to the entire length of the meditation. She journaled each time she practiced. She wrote four times in her journal. She felt "bored," "indifferent," and "just chill." The last entry she wrote that she "took a three-hour nap." She was indifferent to journaling. She did not think it had any bearing on the mindfulness class.

Our third of six interviews occurred one week after the second interview. Maria practiced four of the seven days for the length of the online recording. "I usually listen to it and then sit there for a minute or two. Because I'm thinking and I can't get my mind clear." She journaled after each practice. When she practiced, her mind wandered and she could not focus. She had been very aware when practicing eating meditation. "Usually I

just shove stuff in my mouth and just go but now I kind of stop and make myself process the day while I'm eating. Just calm down cause I'm always at a rush." She was able to practice present-moment awareness while eating and be less rushed. She talked about another form of active meditation, walking meditation. Walking meditation caused her to lose track of time: "Because all of sudden I'll be there and it's been 15 minutes and I'm like what?" She was present during walking meditation and the time passed quickly. I observed she had modified or contextualized an MBI practice so she was able to practice meditation.

She defined mindfulness as "being aware of your body." Her definition was reflective of self-awareness. She defined compassion as "caring about others," similar to the academic definition of compassion. She defined self-compassion as "care of yourself, taking care of yourself." This definition is in line with the actions of self-compassion, that of self-care. Maria believed she has been able to slow down. She noted that her therapist believed the practices are good for her. She was waiting for the benefits as she continues to fall asleep while practicing. Journaling has helped her understand she has a lot on her mind and she is aware. She journaled four times during the week. Her entries include: "thoughts," "can't stop thinking," "sleep," and "what am I supposed to do."

Our fourth of six interviews occurred a week after the third interview. Her practice gave her something to "get out of bed for." She practiced five of the seven days for about fifteen minutes. She did yoga from memory and did not use the online recordings. When she practiced, she started "thinking of things." She was distracted, but acknowledged her mind wandering. Her journal entries made her realize she is "stressed and had lots of thoughts. I can't stop thinking." I commented to her that she didn't have to stop thinking.

During that same week, she journaled four times. Her entries included: “trying to focus,” “keeping busy,” “worried,” and “to[o] much on mind.” She observed her mind wandered when she practiced and she was frustrated by these occurrences. She defined mindfulness as “being aware of your thoughts and actions,” a definition in line with present-moment awareness. She defined compassion as “feeling sorry for others,” a definition also in line with compassion literature. She defined self-compassion as “you’re sorry for yourself. Like when you’re upset.” Feeling sorry for yourself looked like noticing that you’re in pain.” Her definition included sympathy for self, similar to the definition of self-compassion.

Maria journaled when she practiced. Journaling helped her get thoughts out of her mind: “I wrote it down and I see it and then I go and do something else and it’s like out of my mind.” She could not meditate and that she sleeps when she practiced. Active meditation worked better for her than passive meditation. “I always try to rush things. Like eating my food and just go and go and go. And when I slow it helps me to slow down.” Seated and laying down meditation did not work for her. She knew she needed to modify to practice mindfulness.

She felt the developmental literacy class continued to help her. She added she tried hard and did well in the class. When I prompted her for more information, she replied again that she tried her hardest and did not have a problem being in a developmental literacy course. She noted that she continued to not possess negative affect about being in the course.

Our fifth of six interviews occurred one week after the fourth interview. She practiced yoga, guided meditation, and running meditation during the previous week. She

practiced four of the seven days. She journaled when she practiced: “It’s pretty much like I jot down one or two things about what’s going on and then like in my head. Just put’s stress on and I’m weird about an ADHD test I’m gonna have to take.” She journaled five times during the week. Her entries included: “stressed,” “can’t stop thinking,” “to[o] much,” “thoughts,” and “thinking.” She had many stressors: “Family problems. Depression. ADHD. Cutting. Suicide. Panic attacks. A whole heap load of problems.” She stated previously she was under the care of a counselor and I told her to speak with the counselor about her stressors. To curb these, she chose running.

Running is the only way it goes away. Cause the pain of running, you know like when your shoulders burn and your body burns, after a while running, I crave that pain. Because I don’t want to feel sad for myself so I run. I’d rather feel pain. I run until I literally cannot run anymore. Or it hurts to run. I feel everything and it’s like I can’t. I feel better but at the same time I don’t and it’s like I can’t really get a hold of it so when I feel pain it’s physical, it’s there, it’s hurting me, I’m hurting myself. It’s...and then it takes my mind off of it because then I won’t be sad anymore. I don’t like when people see me sad. Cause then it makes me think that people can use that against me. That they can use my weakness against me. So that’s why I always seem happy in class. I tell people, everyone good morning so that at least I could have made one person happy.

Maria observed by being in the MBI, she met more people and that was a “good thing. I like meeting people. I don’t like to be alone.” When I asked her about not being alone, she replied “I mean I can but I don’t like big groups of people but I don’t like to be alone because then I get harmful thoughts. And so...and then I end of hurting myself

sometimes. So, I don't like to be alone. People distract me from it." She felt more comfortable in the class because there were people with whom to identify.

Maria became frustrated when she had to define mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion again; she did not believe she needed to define the terms again because she knew what they meant and her definitions did not change from the previous weeks' definitions she had provided. She defined mindfulness as being aware of your thoughts and actions. Compassion was feeling sorry for others. Self-compassion was feeling sorry for yourself. She also became aggravated when asked about her affect about developmental literacy course and the effort she put forth in the class. She did not have a problem with the class and she put forth effort. When I asked for more information, she repeated she did not have a problem doing her best in the class.

Our sixth and final interview occurred one week after the fifth interview. Maria took the post-MBI questionnaires and then we interviewed. She thought being in the MBI was "cool." She was indifferent about the developmental literacy class: "I'm indifferent. I just want to get it over with. I mean I try hard and everything, but...I just get agitated with people." There were other students in the developmental literacy class that she felt did not treat her and other people well: "We can't say anything. They'll always roast us and stuff. And when we say something to them, they have to make a smart remark or something else. Just judge us on what we're saying."

She defined mindfulness as "being aware of what's going on in your mind." She understood mindfulness as self-awareness or an observation of cognitive events. She defined compassion as "being aware of other people's feelings," a dictionary definition of compassion. She stated was self-compassion as "being aware of your feelings"; this

definition is partially complete as self-compassion also involves acting on the awareness of one's feelings.

She learned that she could not “meditate to save my life.” I asked about her practices of passive and active meditation. “I have to be moving. This is probably while I get so frustrated in class. I hate being in one spot. People will tell me I have to be sitting down. And then they’ll tell me not to fidget and then I’ll fidget and it will give me anxiety.” She journaled six times during the week. Her entries included: “anxiety,” “worried, school, family,” “extremely upset,” “can’t stop,” “sleepy,” and “thinking about work/schoolwork.”

She practiced the self-compassion meditation five or six days out of the seven days. She ran as her practice. She believed that yoga also worked for her. She did not journal on the last page which included looking to the future, continuing practices after the class ended, and noting which practice worked best for her.

After the last interview, I scored her post-questionnaires and examined them for change compared to the initial questionnaires (see Table 15).

Table 15

<i>Maria's Initial to Post-Questionnaire Scores Change</i>					
<u>Name</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>	<u>Self-compassion</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Maria	-0.54	-0.66	+9.00	+3.00	-0.25

She had a slight decrease in mindfulness, self-compassion, and effort regulation. A decrease in mindfulness and self-compassion scores can be interpreted as a decrease in the practice of mindfulness and self-compassion. A decrease in effort regulation score meant she decreased effort in the developmental literacy class. She had a slight increase

in both positive and negative affect. An increase in positive affect score meant she felt greater positive affect about being in the developmental literacy course. An increase in negative affect score meant she felt more negative affect about being in the developmental literacy course.

Summary of Maria's Experiences

The summary of Maria's experiences addressed the research questions, specifically in chronological order. Research question 1 addresses the experiences of participants as they participate in an MBI. When Maria began the MBI, she thought the MBI could be helpful, like a therapy session. She felt that the practices made her "heavy" and that she got sleepy when practicing. She realized as the sessions went by she needed to do active meditation like eating, walking, and/or running. She created her own practices which allowed her to meditate more productively.

Research questions 1.A and 1.B examine the perceptions of affect about being in the course and effort put forth in the same course while participating in an MBI. Throughout the MBI, she liked or was indifferent to the developmental literacy class. She knew she needed to be in the class as she was not a strong reader, and for that reason was deliberately effortful in the class throughout the semester. After the first interview, she wondered why I kept asking about her affect and effort because she said she didn't have a problem with the course and worked hard in the class.

Research questions 2 and 3 delve into the perceptions of mindfulness and self-compassion while participating in an MBI. Her definition of mindfulness changed over the course of the intervention. At first it was the study of the mind and being aware of the mind. Then it was being aware of "stuff." She later defined it as being aware of your

thoughts and what is going on in your mind. Her definitions of compassion and self-compassion changed slightly over the course of the MBI. Compassion was initially having feelings for others, then having empathy for others, then being aware of other's feelings. Self-compassion was having empathy for yourself, then realizing and being ware of your emotions, then taking care of yourself, then feeling sorry for yourself, and finally being aware of your feelings.

Na

In the following section, I report and examine Na's experiences as she participated in the MBI, including her affect about the developmental literacy course, effort in the course, and understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion. Her timeline is displayed in Figure 8.

NA'S TIMELINE

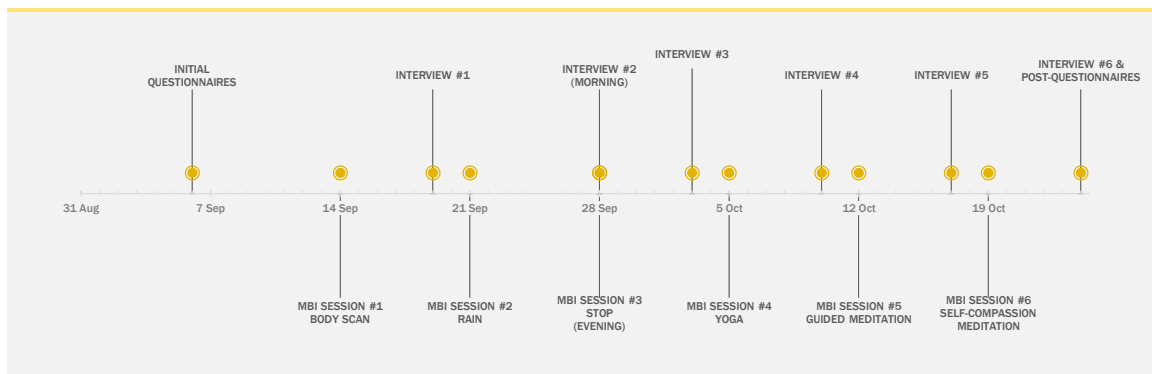


Figure 8. Timeline for dates of all MBI sessions and dates of Na's interviews and initial and post-questionnaires.

I met Na in one of the two sections of developmental literacy classes I taught. She was very quiet in class and always interested in how to succeed in class. She took the initial questionnaires in the developmental literacy class; however, there was missing data and I was not able to score her questionnaires. When she came to the MBI, she took the demographics questionnaire and self-identified as a 19-year-old Vietnamese female. She

did not provide an answer for whether she had a meditation, mindfulness, or self-compassion practice prior to this MBI. I interviewed her on six separate occasions. Our first interview occurred five days after the first MBI class. She mentioned that being in the developmental literacy class was comfortable for her. She liked the class better than other classes.

She defined mindfulness as knowing herself better and doing “lots of things better. I can relax when I’m in there [in the MBI class].” She felt practicing mindfulness was self-empowerment and bettering herself as a person. She defined compassion as “courage to do something. It helps me improve myself.” Her definition was not in line with the literature of compassion, instead she defined it as being courageous. She did not see a difference between compassion and self-compassion.

Na felt she might improve herself, concentrate and study better, and sleep better at night by participating in the MBI. She also wanted the class to help her not be shy in front of other people. She thought that the MBI could also make her more confident in reading, make more friends, and “just help myself better.” Her initial journal entries indicated that she hoped that by the end of the MBI she could concentrate when she studied, sleep well at night, and have courage to talk in front of people. She wrote that good friends and family members would say she could easily make new friends, make people happy, and is good at cooking. She hoped to practice daily in her dorm. When journaling about the body scan, she wrote on seven separate occasions. She wrote in her first two entries that she fell asleep during the practice. Her subsequent entries included sleeping well at night, feeling relaxed, and falling asleep.

Our second of six interviews occurred one week after the first interview. She defined mindfulness as “how the self relaxes and is able to be comfortable...liking yourself and not being judgmental.” She defined compassion as “to have confidence and just being confident.” She did not see a difference between compassion and self-compassion. She felt she was learning how to be more relaxed and better cope with busy days. She was not able to practice this week because she was too busy, and there were also no journal entries for this week. The previous week she practiced every day. When she compared the week she practiced to the week she did not practice, she said, “When I did the body scan, at night, I feel better and when I didn’t do it this week I stayed in bed until midnight and just lay there. It’s so tired for me in the morning. I feel that when I practice I’m going to fall asleep.” I asked her what would help her practice more regularly and she would set an alarm on her phone to practice.

Our third of six interviews occurred one week after the second interview. Na observed that last week’s practices made her feel great. “Whenever I did the exercise, I can sleep easier and I feel relaxed.” She practiced five of the seven days. She observed that she felt relaxed and could sleep better when she practiced. She journaled after she practiced, for a total of six times during the week; the entries included being relaxed, exhausted, and sleeping well. She wrote she felt relaxed four out of the six days she journaled.

Na defined mindfulness as knowing about her thoughts and bodily sensations. When she is aware of them, she can relax and feel lighter. Her definition of mindfulness was awareness, a partial definition of mindfulness. She defined compassion and self-compassion as “confidence.” Her definitions of compassion and self-compassion were

very different from the definitions I presented in my study: empathy for others and empathy for self.

Our fourth of six interviews occurred one week after the third interview. She practiced yoga and journaled. She watched the online video to do the yoga exercises. She did it three of the seven days. She acknowledged it was hard to do the yoga the first time but then it got easier. She felt healthier and slept better. Journaling helped her sleep better and feel better the next day. Her entries included feeling enjoyable, relaxed, exhausted, and sleeping better at night. She wrote that she felt relaxed two out of the seven days she journaled. During the same interview, she defined mindfulness as “being relaxed.” Compassion and self-compassion meant “confidence.”

Yoga allowed her to “stay healthy, exercise, and just relax a day we did from a whole day tired. And we can relax when we do the yoga.” The reading class “helps me a lot, concentrate, and reading, and help me do thing more with the homework.” The mindfulness class gave her something to do besides just going back to her room and watching the internet. “day we did from a whole day tired. And we can relax when we do the yoga.”

Our fifth of six interviews occurred one week after the fourth interview. She was able to practice two of the seven days. She “sat on the floor and closed my eyes and then just sat there to relax my body.” She did not use the online resources. The practices helped her fall asleep. She also journaled with the practices. She journaled six times during the week. Her entries included feeling comfortable, relaxed, healthier, exhausted, and comfortable. She wrote comfortable on two separate occasions, relaxed on two separate occasions, and healthier on two separate occasions. At this point, Na defined

mindfulness as “how I can pay attention to my feelings and my thoughts without judging them.” She defined compassion as “The feeling I want to help someone...about anything.” She defined self-compassion as “when someone has a difficult emotion and helping them to deal with that.” She also addressed the developmental literacy class and said it helped her to “concentrate in reading.” The MBI helped her “concentrate more in class and I can relax.” She also believed she was healthier. When the MBI ends, she would like to practice every day. She liked all the practices.

Our sixth and final interview occurred one week after the fifth interview. She took the questionnaires and then we interviewed. The questionnaires reminded her that she can feel more relaxed by practicing mindfulness. “The mindfulness class is good. I can know myself better. And I feel relaxed after I did the practice. Before I did it, I just felt so tired and stuff like that. But when I practice, I feel relaxed and I can sleep well at night. And sometimes I can more concentrate on my work. Like when I’m reading and writing something. Yeah. And I feel healthier.” She felt that being in the developmental literacy class and a college writing class gave her lots of homework. During the interview, she also defined mindfulness as when someone feels bad, you support them. She forgot what compassion meant. She defined self-compassion as supporting someone when they felt bad. She journaled after her practices. She practiced STOP and yoga and felt good after the practice. “I can concentrate and I feel healthy.” She fell asleep during the self-compassion meditation. She journaled on five separate occasions. She wrote she slept well, felt healthy in the morning, felt really relaxed, and felt exhausted. She wrote she slept well at night twice and felt really relaxed three times. She liked yoga best during the MBI and will try to continue it in the future. She journaled that she would like to continue

the practices and “will try to practice every day or as much as I can.” She also wrote that she will practice yoga, STOP, and RAIN “as much as I can like at least 20 minutes every day.” She concluded, “yoga works best for me because whenever after I did it, I feel healthier and relax. With the day I did the practice, I can sleep well at night than the day I did not do it.”

After the interviews, I scored her post-MBI questionnaires. I was not able to make a comparison to her initial questionnaires because she did not complete them.

Summary of Na’s Experiences

The summary of Na’s experiences sheds lights on the research questions and was presented chronologically within each research question. Research question 1 concerns Na’s experiences when participating in the MBI. At the beginning of the MBI, Na thought the purpose of the MBI was to help her improve herself and be more confident. She then added being able to relax and cope with busy days. As the MBI continued, she also added that she could sleep better, concentrate more easily, and felt healthier.

Research questions 1.A and 1.B explored the perceptions of affect about the reading class and effort put forth in the class while participating in the MBI. She was comfortable in the developmental literacy class, liked it, and it helped her to concentrate. She did well in the class and that the class provided a substantial amount of homework.

Research question 2 pertaining to perceptions of mindfulness during the MBI is addressed here. Her definition of mindfulness changed from knowing herself to knowing how the body relaxes, knowing her own thoughts and body sensations, being relaxed, paying attention to feelings and thoughts without judgment. At the end of the

intervention, she defined mindfulness as compassion: supporting someone when she feels bad.

Research question 3 explored the perceptions of self-compassion while participating in the MBI. Her definition of compassion through the interventions was having confidence. During the fifth interview, she defined it as the feeling to help someone. During the sixth interview, she did not know the definition. Her definition of self-compassion was confidence throughout the interviews. During the last two sessions, she said self-compassion was the same as compassion: supporting someone when they feel bad.

Summary of Within-case Results

This chapter provided chronological details of the experiences of participants in a developmental literacy course, specifically aspects of mindfulness of self-compassion, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort put forth in that course while participating in an MBI. The findings indicated the participants' perceptions about their experiences navigating an MBI while enrolled in a developmental literacy class varied. Most participants had already dealt with negative affect associated with placement in a developmental literacy course or did not experience negative affect about the course and felt it would help them. Effort was either not an issue or was not addressed by participants as evidenced by the verbal responses of the interviewees. Most participants participated in the MBI because they wanted coping strategies for college and beyond college. Some participants immediately understood mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion as taught in the MBI. Some participants had different understandings of the definitions of mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion. All participants in the MBI

who interviewed altered the daily practice schedule and were not able to practice every day for 30 minutes, as MBI programs suggest. These topics will be addressed further in the next chapter addressing cross-case analysis.

V. CROSS-CASE RESULTS

In the previous chapter, I reported the within-case findings of the interviewees. During the analysis of the data a variety of themes emerged from the observations, transcriptions, and coding of the interviews. In this chapter, the emergent themes will be discussed, organized by research question and viewed through the theoretical framework, self-determination theory (SDT). The research questions for my study included providing data about the experiences of participants in a developmental literacy course when participating in an MBI, including their perceptions of affect and effort, and how participants perceived experiencing aspects of mindfulness and self-compassion:

- 1) How do participants enrolled in a developmental literacy course experience participation in an MBI?
 - 1.A) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of affect in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
 - 1.B) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of effort in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
- 2) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of mindfulness during participation in an MBI?
- 3) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of self-compassion during participation in an MBI?

I discovered the following emergent themes after analysis, which informed research question 1, the experiences of participants in a developmental literacy course when participating in an MBI: (a) common humanity; (b) coping skills enhancement; (c) heightened interest; (d) reflection for growth; (e) time management; (f) adaptation and contextualization; and (g) change or evolution of understanding. The observations I made

that emerged and informed research question 1.A, how participants perceive experience aspects of affect in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI, were: (a) negative affect was processed prior to attending the developmental literacy course; and (b) negative affect was not experienced. Observations that informed research question 1.B, how participants perceive experiencing aspects of effort in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI, were (a) effort was made in the developmental literacy course; and (b) effort was not an issue. Outcomes informing research questions 2 and 3, how participants perceived experiencing aspects of mindfulness and self-compassion during participation in an MBI, include participants' changing and evolving definitions of mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion throughout the intervention.

I noted many of the emergent themes were in line with the theoretical framework of self-determination theory. Intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, individual differences, and relationships or community were integral to the experiences of participants. Many participants indicated they felt more comfortable in the developmental literacy course when finding out there were others in the class with whom they identified. Some participants also noted that feeling comfortable with the instructor was important, which related to both intrinsic motivation and relationships. Some of these participants experienced motivation based on social context and interpersonal controls. I identified extrinsic motivators when participants reported their reasons for participating to be in the MBI, which included receiving class credit and increasing coping strategies for college and beyond. Individual differences were evident when participants found increasing interest and value in the MBI. Relationships or community identification were also clear

when participants reported they felt personal ties to the community and instructor of their developmental literacy section.

Research Question 1: Participants' Experiences of the MBI

The themes that emerged as they relate to the first research question during the course of the MBI are presented below. Each theme is described and explained in depth, and participants' statements are provided to support the themes.

Common Humanity

The theme of common humanity aligns with self-determination theory, the theoretical framework of the study. Participants identified with, related to, and found community in the developmental literacy class due to positive interactions and relationships with the instructor and fellow students in the developmental literacy course. The common humanity theme illustrates the importance of a supportive environment. Relatedness is a psychological need of self-determination theory. When this need is met, individuals can have increases in motivation and mental health (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Participants also found common humanity in the study, an element of self-compassion. Common humanity allows individuals to feel less isolated and potentially increase self-compassion (Neff, 2011).

Several participants identified with the instructor of their developmental literacy course. They liked the teacher of the course due to her supportive nature and relatability. For example, Alexandra said she identified with the teacher and felt connected, and Luz stated the instructor helped her adapt to the class because she was "really nice." Others found common humanity with students in their course and felt less isolated. Many participants understood they were not the only student required to take a developmental

literacy course. The friendly nature of other students in the course helped the participants to feel comfortable in the course. Luz remarked “the students are also super nice”; Luz indicated she felt comfortable in the class and it helped her cope with being in a developmental literacy class.

Participants in my study commented that they did not feel negative affect any longer because they realized they were not alone in their assignment to a developmental literacy course. Sydney said she did not have negative feelings about the class because she realized she was not “the only one” in the class; she felt less isolated and acknowledged common humanity. Ivy commented that the structure of the class and making friends helped make the class easier. She had a negative reaction to the course when she was assigned and thought the class was hard; however, the supports the teacher put in place in the class made her feel more comfortable. She identified with the students in class and they made the experience better. Ivy answered that the class was “better now because at first it was kind of hard. I was frustrated and it was kind of hard at first but now with the discussion on TRACS and the stuff on and in class the people that I sit with were more friends than we were at first. So, it makes it way easier.” She did say that when she first started the developmental literacy class, she had negative feelings, specifically shame. Once she was in the class, she established friendships and it made all the difference to her. She said initially she felt like a “lower class of people. I kind of didn’t feel smart enough to be in a regular class. It wasn’t passing. I felt different. Like to be in there but then once I got in there I made friends and it made everything better. It’s really easy too.”

Barbara also confirmed that the instructor and students helped make the developmental literacy course a better experience. Barbara said she really liked the developmental literacy course. “I like the environment and [the instructor] is really cool and we all got along there. And I haven’t really felt stress for that class at all.” Participants in the MBI stated that they no longer felt negative affect about the developmental literacy course because the instructor and students provided a supportive environment and met the need of relatedness, helping to increase motivation and support positive mental health. I probed for more information with each participant to determine if they still possessed residual negative affect about being in a developmental literacy course; all participants continued to affirm they did not feel bad about being in the course.

The examples from the verbatim transcripts offered above indicated participants in the study identified with the community of learners and were more accepting of being in the developmental literacy course. The participants experienced common humanity, recognizing that adversity and imperfection are components of shared humankind all people experience (Neff, 2011), in their courses.

Coping Skills Enhancement

I discovered the participants in my study participated in the MBI for learning coping strategies in college and beyond college. When I interviewed the participants, I asked about why they decided to attend the MBI. Most participants stated they hoped that the MBI would give them coping skills for college and beyond. They shared that college was very stressful and they wanted to know how to deal with their problems better and be less stressed. They wanted to learn new information. They hoped to have better mental

health, increased peace and self-confidence. They also indicated they wanted to improve their minds and bodies. Some participants indicated that their current coping strategies were not serving them well.

Stress relief. Many participants stated they experienced or wanted to experience stress relief as a result of participating in the MBI. For example, Camila said that she hoped the MBI would teach her about “when you get stressed out how to relieve it in a better way. Cause when I get stressed out I just throw everything on the floor and walk away.” Ivy and Alexandra, referenced how the MBI could decrease stress. Ivy thought that the MBI would fulfill her more in life. She thought that attending the MBI would give her strategies to help her with schoolwork. She thought she could experience more peace in her life. She also thought it would be beneficial to learn coping:

I felt that if I took this class [the MBI], I would be less stressed in my first semester and I wouldn’t be stressed with another essay. So, I felt like the classes were going to be more calming than the one that I had. Why write another essay when I can go and relieve stress? It was way better.

She also said she could learn to decrease anxiety when life was full very stressful.

Participating in the MBI would help her practice techniques she could use to be focused and induce serenity. “I would know how to calm it down. If things started getting really out of hand, then there’s way to put your body and your mind of being relaxed and staying calm.” Michelle knew college might be stressful and it seemed wise to give herself some tools in her toolbox for coping with that stress. She stated that she was interested in the MBI not

just for the class credit. It just seemed like a good idea to do because there was meditation and compassion and self-compassion and being at peace and having that calming surrounding and experience. It just seemed like a good idea and a cool experience. Just something new I wanted to try. I'm in college and I might get stressed out; this might come in handy.

Likewise, Michelle emphasized the benefits of the MBI to decrease stress and cope with multiple homework assignments. She knew that when she slowed down, acknowledged all her stressors and accomplishments, and reminded herself to calm down, she felt better.

I want to get to that point where I'm comfortable with all of myself...a bigger sense of self-compassion. I want to be able to carry that with me. I feel that self-compassion creates a sense of confidence in yourself. Once you have accepted all of yourself and loved all of yourself then you are not insecure as you were before. [and] help with the stress...I was feeling so stressed out I was just...I laid in bed and I was like calm down, just going through, you need to chill out and I don't want to say I was meditating, I was chilling.

Like many of the participants, Michelle hoped to increase self-compassion and decrease during the MBI and use these skills in her personal and collegiate life; this theme of learning new ways of coping with stressors in life was threaded throughout several participant experiences.

Learning new information. Some participants expressed the desire to learning something new through their experiences in the MBI, including coping strategies and general benefits in other areas of their lives. For example, while Camila wanted to learn new coping strategies in life, Alexandra reflected about herself and thought she was a

very excitable and restless person who could benefit from the MBI practices in general. In Alexandra's case, she knew that the MBI would take time, but that it could yield positive results in her life. She also indicated that she enjoyed learning new information. As she participated in the MBI, Alexandra found out she really enjoyed being in it because of the positive results happening in her life. She conveyed that she was a stressed individual and the MBI might help her. She liked the class because she could visualize the long-term benefits.

I've always been a really high-strung person and I thought this would be really interesting. Yes, it is time consuming and it's adding another thing on to my schedule but I thought that in the long run it would really pay off. And I was really interested in learning new things. And I really like the class.

Alexandra commented she saw the benefit of the MBI and hoped it would benefit her even though it would add more to her schedule.

In addition, when Maria compared the MBI to "help, like therapy" she expressed a different, yet also vitally important, type of new information she might learn from the MBI, about how to increase positive mental health. Similarly, another participant, Luz, noted that she felt down when placed in the developmental literacy class and by taking the MBI, she would not be inclined to get depressed or let negative emotions control her. She said she thought the MBI could help her put a positive spin on life, try harder, and place herself in new situations. "I wouldn't let those things get to me. Just have a positive attitude over it. I can do better and try new things that maybe I wouldn't have tried before." She believed that the MBI could help specifically with negative affect in the developmental literacy class and future challenges in life.

While Michelle's experiences reflected those of other participants in terms of the MBI being useful overall – she noted a sense of tranquility – she also added that she felt that self-compassion she was learning could also increase her self-confidence. She explained that when people enact self-compassion and self-love, they are less insecure. She hoped to practice self-compassion and self-love so she could become more secure with herself. Overall, this theme articulated the desire that participants like Michelle had to add additional information to her knowledge base.

Overall health. Some participants believed the MBI could enhance their health and well-being. For example, Brad said he wanted to participate in the MBI because he was interested in yoga. He stated he was active in CrossFit and one day at a CrossFit session, a yoga instructor led the class. He thought the class would not be a challenge, but after the yoga class, he changed his mind. The yoga class had challenged his body and his mind. He became interested in attending more yoga classes because of the perceived benefits; he wanted to experience these benefits more. He thought that by attending the MBI, he could learn how to cope with stress and be more attentive. He wanted to learn more “stress-relieving techniques. And yeah. How to be more thoughtful.” Na expressed similar experiences, that the MBI could help her health and stress levels. She thought attending the MBI could improve her entire life, helping her improve focus, be a better student, and improve sleep. She believed the MBI could help her “improve myself. I can concentrate and study. And I will sleep better at night.” Na hoped the MBI practices would benefit her education and health.

Participants reported participating in the MBI because the program could help them cope with the stressors of college and life in general. They said their participation in

the MBI could provide general stress relief, decrease stress associated with school assignments, learn new information, deal with depression and negative feelings and improve mental health, challenge the body and mind, and increase general well-being.

Heightened Interest

The participants navigated the MBI, they began to take more interest in and find increased value in the MBI. They reported their interest increased because they grew in knowledge, changed outlook, decreased stress, exercised and relaxed, released feelings, and increased general well-being. For example, Alexandra commented that the MBI was compelling and her knowledge base grew. The MBI was “very interesting. I feel like I know much more, learned much more.” She thought that her outlook had changed and she looked at situations in her life differently. Her outlook was less stressed. I feel like I have a different background message when I think of things. She felt that she encountered her day at a slower pace instead of at a frantic pace. For these changes, she was thankful. “It’s not so jumbled and stressed and I feel like I take things slower which is very good. I’m very very grateful.” She reported that her stress levels decreased, she could concentrate better, and found benefit in the MBI.

Likewise, Luz added that her interest in the MBI grew as she learned how the MBI could help her let go of feelings she had bottled up inside. The MBI helped her process and release feelings that were not helpful to her, that she could

let go of feelings because I usually keep them in and I don’t tell no one. I can put them down and it helps me calm down. Especially with the journaling entries. I feel like I’m going to keep doing that. It’s really helping me.

Luz reflected how the practices benefited her and how she was interested in continuing to do MBI practices in the future.

In Na's case, her interest in MBI practices grew after she saw how the MBI could help her replace some unhelpful habits with one she understood as more beneficial; before the MBI she would return to her dorm after classes and search the Internet or watch TV. Since she attended the MBI, she would return to her dorm and practice yoga, exercise, and/or unwind. The MBI was "good for me because before I just go to class and come back to my room so this is kind of boring and then I just go to the internet and watch something and now I go to do yoga and do exercise and relax." Na became more interested in the MBI after she saw the benefit of the MBI practices in that she would not just watch the internet or other distractions; she would purposefully do yoga or other MBI practice and relax. The participants indicated increased interest in the MBI as they navigated the program. They felt they learned new information and skills, changed their outlook on life, increased effort, and wanted to continue the practices after the six-week MBI concluded.

Reflection for Growth

Participants commented on how journaling helped them to reflect on and register growth, internalize MBI practices, and process feelings in general. For example, Camila experienced journaling as a way to document progress. She thought at first it was not a beneficial practice, but later in the MBI, she felt assured that journaling was constructive. Journaling helped to see "the progress that you make. Like at first I felt silly but on the last day I said I felt more confident about the concept." She noticed that she did not

understand the concept of the MBI practice called the body scan, but that with practice and journaling, she was able to see her growth in that particular practice.

Participants also used journaling to help them reflect; as Alexandra stated, it was useful “being able to reflect from something and write it down.” Likewise, Maria and Barbara also thought that journaling enabled reflection and could help process growth. Maria commented journaling “helps me look back.” Barbara said journaling helped her to look back to the beginning of the MBI practice and fully reap the benefits of the practices. She thought back to earlier in her life when she kept a writing journal. She reflected that journaling allows you to see the improvements you have made in life. Journaling “gives you a chance to look back and see how you started and how much you have improved. Whether it’s in a class or in your personal life. I used to keep a diary and that makes you realize how much you’ve improved.”

Brian and Luz journaled for similar reasons. Brian commented that journaling was the experience of writing “down what I feel after I finish with it.” Luz said she could process and release her feelings when she journaled. She thought that she kept her feelings inside her, but when she journaled it allowed her to let go. “Yeah, at the end, it lets me let go of my feelings. Because I’ve been keeping them inside to myself. I feel like I can write them down and it’s like I’m telling someone but not really.” Journaling allowed them to process their feelings.

Michelle realized journaling was a reflective and monitoring process. She could observe her process as she participated in the MBI practices. As she journaled longer, it was easier to see changes happening. She could compare different days to each other in her MBI journal. She could see how an MBI practice was different just a week later. She

assessed which MBI technique she was using, how she was feeling, and what the practice looked like on each unique day. Journaling helped her

see how I do it, the longer I do it, just to see how it changes and how I felt like this on this day compared to this day and what happens when I do the same technique, but a week later. Just to see those changes or those similarities and to see those, what day I was feeling this way and what day I was feeling that way compared to how I was feeling this day when I did it. Was I more stressed? Did it help me more? Just to compare and see what techniques will do compared to how I'm feeling that day.

Journaling allowed her to keep track of her progress with MBI practices and her feelings. These sentiments were echoed by Brad and Molly. Brad noted that journaling might affect his experience in the MBI by tracking progress and creating a record. Journaling helped him keep track and remember what he did from day to day. Molly said writing in the journal could help her document development and transformation. She saw how she “progressed and how things were different.”

Ivy mentioned that as she journaled there was no pressure and she could simply write whatever came to her as compared to an actual college course. Journaling helped her to address what was on her mind at the moment. “When you journal, you are allowed to free hand. You’re not being told, write this and write that. As it is in the actual class [developmental literacy course].” Journaling was an open experience where you could write whatever was on your mind. Participants used journaling to process feelings, document change, and reflect on what they were learning. They commented that journaling was a positive experience that enhanced the MBI.

Time Management

I observed the majority of participants in the intervention had not observed the suggested daily MBI practice of 30 minutes accompanied by journaling in their MBI journal and workbook. Participants' daily practice and journaling was highly variable. For example, Camila observed during one week of the intervention she practiced every other day during one week. During another week, she recalled doing the MBI practices often, about four times. She said it was hard to do the MBI practices when she went home to visit her family. She said that when she attended the MBI class she would do the entire practice. When she was not in the MBI class, she was likely to not complete an MBI practice:

I did it often. I'm trying to think. I went home so I did it about four times. I wouldn't do the whole thing. Like the class we would go through and do it five times. I would only do it a couple times and then I would be like I'm done.

During another week, she said she practices three of seven days. She went to visit her family and was not able to practice. "I only did it about three times. And then I went home so I didn't really do it." At another interview, she stated she only practiced one time during the week due to sickness; she had been sleeping to gain her strength back. "I did it once because I've been sick the whole time. I've just been sleeping."

Likewise, Luz revealed that she practiced every other day for one week. Another week she stated she practices three days out of seven and for five minutes only. On a subsequent week, she said that during the MBI class she felt awkward with the yoga positions. She thought others around her were judging her and would tell her she was doing the postures incorrectly. However, as she continued through the week of yoga

practice, she ignored these thoughts and practiced yoga. She practiced for 15 out of a total of 30 minutes. She felt unsure and challenged in her yoga practice:

When we did it Wednesday in class it felt like kind of uncomfortable because I wasn't used to the positions. I was like, there are people around me and they might say something. But eventually I just stopped thinking about it and then so I only did it for on Friday and Saturday and I did it for fifteen minutes only and I did what we did in class and when I would stand up I would steady myself but sometimes I felt like I was going to fall. I wasn't used to doing that and it was just hard but I did it for like fifteen minutes but it was hard cause I wasn't used to it. It wasn't like the ones before where we were doing the meditations. This was actually yoga yoga. It's kind of difficult.

Luz perceived yoga as a practice different than she was accustomed to. She felt others might judge her as she practiced yoga. However, as she practiced, she forgot about what others might think of her. She did practice yoga during the week, but it was not as long as the suggested practice of 30 minutes per day. She confirmed she felt uneasy in her practice at times, but she would continue with yoga practices. She acknowledged she was not familiar with yoga practices. She compared the yoga to practices in the MBI before the yoga session and stated yoga was different from the other MBI practices. She did not use the videos to assist her but did the yoga practice from memory.

Brad observed he missed a day or two of practice during a typical week. When he practiced, he did it for 20 to 30 minutes each time. He stated he practiced when he was done with work to calm himself and release stress. He tried to "relax and get the stress out. It's like, not worry about it anymore. I got it done. I don't have to worry about it."

The frequency and duration of the MBI practice depended on which practice he was doing. When he practiced the body scan, he practiced longer. When he practiced RAIN, it was shorter. The STOP practice was even shorter. Brad noted

it depends which one [MBI practice] it is. With the body scan, it tends to be 10 to 20 minutes. With the RAIN one, that usually takes ten minutes. I try to go for longer to see if I can find anything else and think about it and let it go. The one we just did, the STOP one. That one is really quick. I try to keep it, I try to go long, but I'm like, what else can I do? That one is 30 seconds to a minute at most.

Seven of the 12 participants stated they did not practice the full 30 minutes each day throughout the intervention. Some even had reduced practice each day and practiced between five and less than 30 minutes. Participants did not follow the suggested daily practice for MBIs due to conflicts with family, available time, sickness, and sleep. They had difficulty navigating their commitments and finding the time necessary to complete the MBI daily practice requirements of practicing and journaling. While they were present in the weekly MBI teaching session, it was harder to practice and journal when practicing alone. Yet, as the following section describes, they created practices that flowed from the MBI curriculum in order to individualize their experiences.

Adaptation and Contextualization

Some of the participants in the intervention created their own practices differing from the practices of the body scan, RAIN, STOP, yoga, guided meditation, and self-compassion meditation. Maria had difficulty practicing while lying down and she tried walking, running, and eating meditations. She revealed a great deal of frustration when practicing MBI strategies, such as the body scan, RAIN, STOP, and meditations, as she

would fall asleep. She did not like that she fell asleep and felt that her time was wasted when she fell asleep. She felt better when doing active meditations. Her favorite of these practices was running meditation. She enjoyed these practices and did not fall asleep like she did when she practiced seated or lying down meditation.

Brian attempted walking meditation. One evening during the MBI, he returned to his home and he said he felt tired and stressed. He decided to go outside and started a walking meditation. When he was engaged in walking meditation, he felt more relaxed and lengthened his walk:

I started walking and thinking for some reason and that loosened me up a little bit.

So, I kept walking for longer and I kept thinking I can't believe this is actually working right now. I never stop to try it and actually think about it.

Each of these practices was not deliberately taught during the MBI. These individuals decided mindfulness practices while eating, running, walking, and listening to music were best for them and they felt they benefited from these personal mindfulness practices. These participants reflected on the MBI practices presented, decided those practices were not serving them well, and created new practices that would serve them well. They understood they benefited from practicing mindfulness, but the current MBI practices were not the best option for them. In order to reap the benefits of a mindfulness practice, they implemented creative solutions.

A contrasting finding occurred with Na who stated that listening to instrumental music while meditating helped her focus. She felt she did not fall asleep and could keep her attention more when listening to instrumental music and doing the MBI practices. She

had a passive practice as compared to the active practices of Brian and Maria. However, each of these participants created practices that differed from the teachings of the MBI.

Research Question 1.A: Perceptions of Affect

I observed various reactions about affect about being in a developmental literacy class. Approximately half of the participants reported they either had processed their negative affect about being in the developmental literacy class and approximately half of the participants reported they did not have any negative affect when told they would be in a developmental literacy class.

Only one student, Brian, stated he did not need to be in the developmental literacy class and was upset by his placement in that particular course. When he was placed in the class he felt strange because he scored two points below the cutoff score on the placement test that determined he needed the class. He was shocked he had to take the course that was focused on literacy skills. “[I]t was kind of weird because I was only off by two points on the TSI. I was like, am I really taking this? And then when I got there it was reading AND writing. So that was kind of weird for me too because it was just the reading one that I didn’t do so well on.” He did not understand the goal of the class: “Maybe I’m not seeing clearly, but I don’t know why I’m in there.” He felt he didn’t need the developmental literacy course because he was already taking English and both classes covered the same topics. He stressed that the developmental literacy class did not count for credit toward his degree. He thought if he wasn’t taking the English class, taking the developmental literacy class would probably be fine. However, taking both classes was redundant.

I do the same thing in there. It's basically like I'm taking two English classes.

And one doesn't even count as a credit? [incredulous tone] So, it's kind of like, why am I here? If I wasn't taking English I'd probably be, ok, this is another way to help me out, but I'm taking English, so....

Brian expressed outrage about his placement in the developmental literacy class and harbored negative affect about his placement and attendance in the class. At the outset of the study, I expected most students to be like Brian, but he was the only student out of 12 interviewed who still felt negative affect about being in the class.

Processed negative affect about placement. Unlike Brian, other participants interviewed had already processed their negative reactions to the class by the time we began the project. Maria stated that being placed in the developmental literacy class made her feel apathetic at first. She wanted to take the class and be done with it. Before she took the TSI, she thought she would need to take a developmental literacy class; she identified as a weak reader. She was "indifferent. I'm just gonna take it and get out of it...well, I knew that I'd be in there. But I think the class can help me because I'm not a strong reader at all." She decided to make the most of the situation she was in. Alexandra said she was discouraged when she was placed in the developmental literacy class, but became open to learning new literacy skills, saying "now I don't have a problem with it. I'm learning new skills." Sydney said she should try to make the best of being in the developmental literacy class and not "blow it off." Ivy expressed that at first the developmental literacy class was challenging and she was frustrated by her placement, but the class content and the people in the class made the experience easier.

Barbara commented that placement in the developmental literacy class was aggravating to her, it “kind of sucked.” She thought she was a good reader, but she also knew she did not prepare adequately for the TSI. “I didn’t feel like I was bad at reading and at the same time I didn’t take it seriously to get prepared for the test.” She felt that she needed to be in the developmental literacy class because she was not well prepared for the TSI. “So, I guess I kind of deserve to be in there.” She stated she really liked the class; she enjoyed the environment, students, and instructor. She believed the environment was supportive and allowed her to thrive. “I actually really like it. I like the environment and [the instructor] is really cool and we all got along there.” Due to the nurturing environment, she did not experience stress in the developmental literacy class. “And I haven’t really felt stress for that class at all.”

Michelle confirmed that placement in the class made her feel shocked, astonished, and disappointed. She chose to major in English and believed she had proficient literacy skills. “So, I was like, wow, I thought I was good at this stuff.” She was ashamed to speak with her parents about her placement in the developmental literacy course. “[W]hen my parents found out I was kind of embarrassed to tell them, hey, I have to take a developmental course.” Her parents assured her that the TSI was just one test taken on one day in her life. “And they were like, it happens, you know. It was one test. It was one day.” They said that sometimes events like these happen in life. She proceeded to say that she was not able to take the TSI again and she believed that by taking the developmental literacy class she could improve herself and her literacy skills. “This could improve me so that instead of struggling in an actual, like in a non-developmental class, I could be struggling in that class instead of improving in this class. I think of it as a learning

experience.” She reframed being in the class and thought that instead of struggling she could thrive.

Brad said he felt displeased about placement in the developmental literacy class. He felt he was a good reader, but confessed he did not prepare for the TSI. “I blew off the TSI really.” He said he was not processing these feelings any longer and he thought the class was satisfactory and perhaps too simple. He said the class was “alright. It’s easy. It’s too easy.”

Acceptance of placement. Other students indicated that they did not possess negative affect about the class. Luz stated she really liked and enjoyed the developmental literacy class. Camila expressed that she was accustomed to being in developmental classes. She took developmental classes in high school and stayed after school for tutoring. She believed her literacy skills were not as good as others. She was “kind of used to it because even in high school I had to take extra classes and things after school to help. So, I’ve always known I’m not the best. So, it was kind of just expected.” Na felt that when she was in the developmental literacy class, she felt more comfortable than in other classes she was taking at the university: “I feel comfortable when I’m in this class.” Molly said being placed in the class was helpful. She valued the class because she believed she needed additional assistance in the subject matter. She was delighted she did not have to pay for the course and that it was advantageous for her college career. “I actually appreciated it because I do need help with it so I’m glad I’m in it and I don’t have to pay for it... Yes. It’s helping me. I like it.” She noted many of the students in her section complained about being in the developmental literacy class.

Questionnaire data about affect. To enrich the qualitative data, I have provided the change in negative affect questionnaire scores for those who took the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) at the beginning of the study and after the MBI in Table 16. Alexandra's and Luz's negative affect scores decreased slightly and Camila's and Maria's negative affect scores increased slightly. Both the increase in scores and decrease in scores were minimal as the Likert scale is from zero to 50. Na had no scores due to missing data when the intervention began. The previous participants reported during interviews they had no negative affect regarding the developmental literacy course and yet Camila's and Maria's negative affect scores increased. An increase in negative affect score meant a participant's negative affect about being in the developmental literacy class increased. A decrease in negative affect score meant a participant's negative affect about being in the developmental literacy class decreased. Alexandra and Luz decreased negative affect about being in the developmental literacy course after the MBI, where Camila and Maria increased negative affect about being in the developmental literacy course at the same point.

Table 16

<i>Participants' Initial to Post-Change in Negative Affect Questionnaire Scores</i>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Negative Affect</u>
Alexandra	-2.00
Camila	+1.00
Luz	-4.00
Maria	+3.00
Na ^a	-

Note. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* uses a Likert scale from 1-50.

^a Na did not have scores due to missing data.

Table 17, located below, contains data regarding the participants' positive affect scores.

Table 17

Participants' Initial to Post-Change in Positive Affect Questionnaire Scores

<u>Name</u>	<u>Positive Affect</u>
Alexandra	-4.00
Camila	+4.00
Luz	+20.00
Maria	+9.00
Na ^a	-

Note. The *Positive and Negative Affect Scale* uses a Likert scale from 1-50.

^a Na did not have scores due to missing data.

Camila, Luz, and Maria had increases in their positive affect scores. Of those three individuals, Camila and Maria had small increases in their positive affect scores. Of those three, Luz had a large increase in her positive affect score. Alexandra had a small decrease in her positive affect score. Camila, Luz, and Maria, who had increases in their positive affect scores, decreased in their effort regulation scores. Alexandra, who had a decrease in her positive affect score, increased in effort regulation score.

One would imagine that if an individual had an increase in her positive affect score, the individual would have a decrease in her negative affect score. However, Camila and Maria had an increase in both their positive affect scores and negative affect scores. The change in their positive affect scores indicated their positive affect about being in the developmental literacy class increased; they felt better about being in the class. The change in their negative affect scores suggested their negative affect about being in the developmental literacy class also increased. However, their verbal responses

about affect related to the developmental literacy class was that they did not have negative affect about the class. Alexandra had decreases in her positive affect score and her negative affect score. The changes in her scores suggested her positive affect and negative affect about being in the developmental literacy class decreased; she felt less positive affect and less negative affect about the course. However, her interviews indicated she did not feel negative affect about the class. Luz had a dramatic increase in her positive affect score and a small decrease in her negative affect about being in the developmental literacy course. However, her interviews indicated she did not have negative affect about being in the class.

Research Question 1.B: Perceptions of Effort

Participants in the MBI reported they worked hard in the developmental literacy course or that giving effort was not a problem in the course. The participants stated throughout the practice that effort was not an issue. Some participants even wondered why I kept asking about the effort they gave in the developmental literacy course as they consistently responded that the effort they gave was appropriate.

The following data in Table 18 provide more information regarding participants' effort regulation during the MBI. Three participants had decreases in their effort regulation scores ranging from $-.25$ to -1.50 . One participant had an increase in her effort regulation score by $.50$. The three participants who increased in their positive affect scores also decreased in their effort regulation scores. The participant who had a decrease in her positive affect score also increased in her effort regulation score. All participants stated they put forth effort throughout the developmental literacy course. Alexandra's effort regulation scores were in line with this qualitative data. Three participant's effort

regulation scores decreased as compared to their verbal comments about continued effort throughout the developmental literacy course. Perhaps the majority of participants' effort regulation scores decreased because participants did not have to put forth as much effort in the developmental literacy course at the end of the MBI as compared to the beginning of the MBI. Participants might have thought they needed work harder in the developmental literacy course to do well, but as the semester passed they became more accustomed to class routines and more familiar with the course subject matter. The effort regulation scores could also be viewed in relation to the time in the semester. The MBI ended in late October or mid-semester when participants might have experienced a decrease in effort in general due to college and life responsibilities and demands.

Table 18

<i>Participants' Initial to Post-Change in Effort Regulation Questionnaire Scores</i>	
<u>Name</u>	<u>Effort Regulation</u>
Alexandra	+0.50
Camila	-1.50
Luz	-0.50
Maria	-0.25
Na ^a	-

Note. The Effort Regulation Questionnaire uses a Likert scale from 1-50.

^a Na did not have scores due to missing data.

Participants in the MBI did not indicate having difficulty participating in and fulfilling requirements of the developmental literacy course. They said they worked hard and giving effort was not challenging. Three key informants' scores indicated they decreased in effort regulation in the developmental literacy course, contrary to the qualitative data.

Research Question 2: Perceptions of Mindfulness

In this section, I will describe participants' understanding and perceptions of mindfulness. Many of the participants in the intervention had evolving definitions of mindfulness as they navigated the MBI; others kept their initial understanding of mindfulness throughout the MBI. All participants provided an understanding of mindfulness at their first interview. Five individuals met for four to six interviews, and those participants provided definitions during and after the MBI. The following data are organized by all participants followed by those who met for four to six interviews. Initial definitions of mindfulness consisted of perception, self-improvement, self-awareness, awareness of the mind and emotions, and being at peace. Definitions of mindfulness during the MBI included objective and present-moment awareness, self-awareness, and releasing emotions. Definitions of mindfulness after the MBI included perception, objective awareness, and self-awareness.

Alexandra's definition of mindfulness at the beginning of the MBI centered on how a person perceives the world and person deals with difficult situations. She considered mindfulness a coping strategy where a person had a perception of themselves and the world and could successfully navigate obstacles. Camila initially explained mindfulness as self-expression of the mind, which she explained as allowing the mind to simply "be." Her words were "letting your mind self-express." When I asked her to explain further, she was not able to define the term further. She did believe that when practicing mindfulness, a person's effort could increase. Two participants defined mindfulness as being in a state of peace. Molly defined mindfulness as being at peace and

being peaceful. Michelle also thought mindfulness was peace, specifically being at peace with one's self.

Self-Awareness: Initial Perceptions

The following participants' understandings of mindfulness pertain to self-awareness and confidence. To illustrate, Na initially defined mindfulness as knowing herself better and improving herself. She said the weekly MBI session allowed her to relax. Additionally, Luz initially said mindfulness was confidence and self-awareness. She said mindfulness was "getting confident with myself, my body, and what I feel about myself." Another example occurred when Ivy said mindfulness was understanding how you think and who you are: "when you have a good concept of what you think and who you are and how you visualize life in your own way." She expressed that when an individual becomes more knowledgeable, that person can achieve more: "And the more you develop, the more you see things and how you interpret. I think, well I know, that when you have more mind, you can be better at it. And you get fit more, it's more understandable to you. Than if there's something you didn't know." Barbara defined mindfulness as the acknowledgement of stress or stressful situations and the ability to decide how to react to stress or stressful situations. Mindfulness was the ability "to acknowledge a stress or situation that is going on but still be able to have control over it, yourself, and your emotions." Brian indicated that he thought mindfulness was oneness with the self: "being one with yourself mentally." Each of these definitions describe awareness and understanding of the self.

Present-moment Awareness: Initial Perceptions

Other participants described mindfulness as present-moment awareness. Brad saw mindfulness as contemplating others and one's self, and being with those thoughts: "thinking about others and yourself and just being there." Sydney's definition was similar in that mindfulness was to be at peace and have a free mind. She later defined as mindfulness as "being free from everything else and focusing on you."

Perceptions during the MBI. During the intervention, Alexandra added that mindfulness included removing yourself from the world or being objective. This is a change from her initial definition of perception or outlook. Additionally, as Camila participated in the MBI, mindfulness became self-awareness and the monitoring of one's feelings but not one's surroundings. Maria also defined mindfulness as being attentive and present-moment awareness, specifically in her mind.

Luz's definition of mindfulness pertained to letting go of thoughts and emotions. She said mindfulness was letting go and starting fresh. She later defined mindfulness as not getting distracted by negative affect and those items out of your control; she thought mindfulness could reduce anxiety. Mindfulness was the ability to release negative affect and present moment stressors. Mindfulness allowed a person to release "negative thoughts and frustrations, things you have going on at the moment and just letting go of all of that." It was a way to relax and become less stressed. At first, mindfulness was confidence and self-awareness and later it was self-awareness and the ability to release negative affect.

Perceptions After the MBI

Participants gave a variety of definitions of mindfulness after they completed the MBI. During Camila's final interview, mindfulness was awareness of the world, mind, and body: "being aware of your surroundings and being aware of what's going on in your mind and in your body." She experienced mindfulness as an objective awareness as she engaged in the MBI which began as only self-expression and changed to self-awareness and awareness of one's surroundings. Alexandra and Maria also alluded to perceptions of the world and one's self, as she said mindfulness was "the way you think about others and your surroundings. It's the way we think about things." This definition is one about perception or outlook and how a person frames an experience and the self. She kept the same definition of mindfulness throughout the intervention. Maria defined mindfulness as self-awareness, specifically the awareness of the body. Mindfulness was "being aware of what's going on in your mind." As she continued in the MBI, she added metacognition to her definition of mindfulness. Mindfulness to her was awareness, first of the mind, then of the mind and body, and finally adding the processes of the mind.

Similar to how Maria noted the self-awareness aspect of mindfulness, at the end of the MBI, Michelle also defined mindfulness as self-awareness, particularly in terms of metacognition and self-understanding. She said mindfulness was "being aware of how you are feeling and your body is telling you...becoming one, your actions and your emotions...being aware of how I'm feeling and why I'm feeling that way." She also commented that the mindfulness practices applied to multiple parts of her life: emotional, spiritual, religious, and physical. Na described self-awareness in a slightly different way, saying that mindfulness was "how I can pay attention to my feelings and my thoughts

without judging them.” She experienced mindfulness as becoming more acquainted with herself and being relaxed. As she participated in the MBI, she defined mindfulness as an objective awareness.

The participants’ definitions included perception, self-improvement, self-awareness, and being at peace at the initial interviews. Some of the participants also met with me for interviews during and after the MBI. Participants gave definitions later in the intervention as perception, self-awareness, and objective awareness.

Mindfulness Questionnaire

Additional data about changes in mindfulness questionnaire scores provides further insight. As Table 19 shows, Alexandra and Camila experienced increases in their respective mindfulness scores. Luz and Maria experienced decreases in mindfulness scores. Alexandra had a slight increase in her mindfulness scores and Camila had a large increase in her mindfulness scores, greater than one point on a five-point Likert scale. Of those participants whose scores decreased, Luz’s scores decreased by .75 and Maria decreased by .54. It is interesting to note that Alexandra and Luz had consistent definitions of mindfulness based on the current literature and had slight increases in mindfulness scores. Camila and Maria had evolving definitions of mindfulness throughout the MBI. Their definitions were different from the current literature at the beginning of the intervention. By the end of the intervention, their definitions were more in line with the current literature and yet their mindfulness scores decreased by the time they completed the MBI. Perhaps their changing definitions of mindfulness led to a reinterpretation of prompts in the mindfulness questionnaire. Their scores may have been

lower at the end due to redefining the word *mindfulness*. Na had missing data at the beginning of the MBI and therefore no change could be documented.

Table 19

Participants' Initial to Post-Change in Mindfulness Questionnaire Scores

<u>Name</u>	<u>Mindfulness</u>
Alexandra	+0.06
Camila	+1.04
Luz	-0.75
Maria	-0.54
Na ^a	-

Note. The *Five-Factor Mindfulness Questionnaire* uses a Likert scale from 1-5.

^a Na did not have scores due to missing data.

I learned the majority of individuals understood mindfulness as the literature defines it. Those who had a basic understanding of the definition seemed to create an evolving and maturing definition of mindfulness. The only participant with a definition different from the current literature on mindfulness defined it as self-expression.

Research Question 3: Perceptions of Compassion and Self-compassion

In this section, participants' perceptions of compassion and self-compassion are discussed. I present participants' perceptions at the initial interview, and during and after the interview. Most participants understood the definitions of compassion and self-compassion throughout the intervention. Other participants defined compassion and self-compassion as passion and interest in a subject or were unsure how to define the terms.

Compassion Definitions

The participants perceived compassion in various ways. Participants' understanding of compassion at the time of their first interviews will be addressed,

followed by their understandings during and after the MBI. All participants defined compassion, but fewer participants met with me during and after the MBI. One individual expressed not knowing how to define compassion. The remaining individuals defined compassion as passion, self-improvement, confidence, love, and empathy for others.

Initial perceptions. Some perceptions differed from commonly understood definitions. For example, Camila's definition of compassion was initially passion. She gave an example of having passion for or loving shopping. Ivy thought compassion meant love and passion, giving your full effort and "always trying to give extra because you are dedicated to it [a person or cause]." Sydney thought compassion was to have a strong desire for something you really want or enjoy. Na initially defined compassion as having courage and the ability to improve the self. Compassion was the ability to "have courage to do something. It help[s] me improve myself." Luz initially defined compassion as fondness, tenderness, and love, and self-confidence. Brad said compassion simply meant being "caring and loving."

Other perceptions reflect commonly understood definitions of compassion as empathy or sympathy for others. Barbara commented that if you have compassion for someone, you will attempt to understand and empathize with the person. Brian perceived compassion as an intense emotional connection with someone or a cause that prompts a person to respond and act for the benefit of said person or cause. Michelle described compassion as empathy and sympathy, "heart-felt emotion" and it looked like when people show support for others. Maria initially defined compassion as having empathy for others. She said it was "having feelings for others." Alexandra defined compassion as caring for others and demonstrating it through actions.

During the MBI. The majority of participants interviewed during the course of the MBI defined compassion as empathy for others. Na continued to define compassion as confidence. She later defined compassion as being inclined to help another person for any reason, “the feeling I want to help someone...about anything.” Maria later included actions in her definition. Not only was compassion feeling for others, but following through with actions. Alexandra later defined compassion as altruism with a focus on not receiving anything in return, “giving, but not relying on the receiving.” Her definitions of compassion were in line with the current literature about compassion. Luz later defined compassion as empathy.

Camila continued to define compassion as passion stating that compassion was “being really into something.” She later defined compassion as a commitment to a cause. It was “really being involved in something.” She added that compassion was commitment and putting your best effort into that commitment.

After the MBI. After completing the MBI, definitions of self-compassion differed more than during the intervention when most participants defined compassion as empathy for others. At that time, definitions of compassion consisted of passion, love, confidence, and empathy for others. During Camila’s final interview, she said compassion is a passion that you enjoy. Her definition stayed consistent throughout the MBI and was very different from common understandings about compassion. For example, Luz said compassion was “love, peace, happiness, and calmness.” She understood compassion as accord, unity, well-being, and tranquility. Her definition stayed consistent throughout the MBI. Her definition was most in line with current literature about compassion during the middle of the intervention when she said

compassion was empathy. Na provided a definition of compassion that focused on confidence. She initially defined compassion as courage and self-confidence and briefly defined it as empathy for others. Later she said she did not know what it meant.

In contrast to other participants, Michelle thought compassion meant loving others around you, embracing imperfections, and being okay with yourself even when others might find you different. She said compassion was “loving your imperfections and the weird intuitions that you have. Loving those even though others are like, you’re so weird, Michelle. [Laughs].” Maria later defined compassion as being self-aware about feelings and other’s feelings. Her definition stayed consistent through the intervention.

Definitions of self-compassion throughout the MBI consisted of passion, commitment, self-confidence, love, and empathy for others. During the intervention, most participants defined compassion as empathy for others. After the intervention ended, some participants returned to a definition of passion, love, or confidence. Only two participants continued to define compassion as empathy for others. I learned some individuals confused compassion for passion. Others just understood it as general love and was not tied to feeling for others and acting on those feelings. It was also an interesting phenomenon that some participants correctly defined compassion during the intervention and then incorrectly defined it post-intervention.

Self-compassion Definitions

Definitions of self-compassion either evolved or remained consistent for the participants throughout the course of the MBI for those who met with me for four to six interviews. For those who met with me for one to two interviews, I was not able to ascertain consistency or change throughout the course of the intervention. All definitions

are presented in the following order: before, during, and after the MBI. Most participants at their first interview defined self-compassion as self-love or empathy for self. One participant defined compassion as compassion. Two participants did not know the meaning of the word.

Initial perceptions. Na defined self-compassion as compassion, showing empathy for others. Maria defined self-compassion as displaying empathy for the self, understanding your emotions, then sympathy for self, and later as self-awareness, specifically self-awareness related to feelings and emotions. Alexandra thought self-compassion was self-care and putting oneself first. Camila initially defined self-compassion as loving characteristics about yourself. Barbara's definition of self-compassion was self-acceptance, "being able to understand yourself and accept and take it easy." Brad said it meant self-love: "caring and loving for yourself." Brian perceived self-compassion as your perception of yourself, "how you feel about yourself," To be truly self-compassionate would mean being kind to the self or having belief in the self: "you're not bringing yourself down by thinking that this is not for me or I can try this, I might be good at it. That's what I see: you bring yourself up." Ivy felt self-compassion was self-love and self-acceptance: "when you love yourself and you take yourself as the way you are. You treat your body and you love it. You keep it healthy and you care about yourself so much that you just want to show love to yourself."

Michelle defined self-compassion as self-love and self-acceptance. She thought it meant to accept everything about oneself, including the flaws. "I guess just like loving yourself and all the flaws that you, accepting all of your flaws and stuff. And then loving them too. Because no one really likes their flaws. That's why they're called flaws." At

the end of the MBI, she defined self-compassion as being receptive to the body, mind, soul, and intuition.

[I]istening to my body whenever I need to, being aware and taking care of your body and the way your body is reacting to certain things. Rather than ignoring it and trying to do whatever. It's important to take care of yourself and your body, your emotions, and the way you are thinking. And if you continue to feel uneasy about something, and then you don't, I feel like your body will get back at you for that.

Sydney stated self-compassion was to do something you want for you and not for others. She gave an example of what self-compassion would look like: "instead of following along with others, you're doing something for yourself." She went on to say that she knew a guy who used to be "really rude and very blunt about what he said and when he went to college and he said he was going to change. And he was compassionate about changing his personality. I guess that's self-compassionate. And compassionate...I'm trying to think. Being compassionate for drawing art. A person could be compassionate about their work."

At Luz's first interview, she did not know what self-compassion meant. Molly did not know what self-compassion was and said her English was not good as it was her second language; she could not define self-compassion.

During and after the MBI. Many of the participants' perceptions of self-compassion remained the same during and after the MBI. Throughout the interviews, Maria became frustrated at having to define self-compassion each week. She said she had already defined the term and that her definition remained the same. Maria's

understanding of self-compassion was consistent with current literature about self-compassion throughout the MBI.

During and after the intervention, Alexandra defined self-compassion as self-love and putting yourself first. She thought a person would be inclined to have compassion and empathy for others, but self-care was of first importance. She stated self-compassion was “loving yourself first. Putting yourself first in situations. You’re still thinking about others but you have to stick to yourself first.” Alexandra thought that self-compassion meant to fill oneself first before helping others. Her definitions were in line with current literature about self-compassion throughout the MBI.

During the intervention, Camila defined self-compassion as the outcome of compassion towards others. She first defined self-compassion as self-compassion, but later defined self-compassion as compassion. At the beginning of the MBI, self-compassion was synonymous with the current literature about self-compassion but later in the intervention her definition of self-compassion was that of compassion. Na defined self-compassion the same as compassion, feeling empathy for others, at the beginning and end of the intervention. Her definition was similar to the current literature’s definition of compassion.

One participant began to define self-compassion as mindfulness during and after the MBI. Luz defined self-compassion later as being okay with herself and understanding her limitations. She thought that if something went wrong in life, she should let go of it and be comfortable with the results, “just to let go of it and expect the best.” Her definition of self-compassion was more like the current literature’s definitions of mindfulness.

Self-compassion questionnaire. To enrich the qualitative data, data about change in self-compassion scores is provided in Table 20. Alexandra, Camila, and Luz had increases in self-compassion scores; the change in scores ranged between .09 and .75. Maria had a decrease in self-compassion score, a change of .66. Na had missing data at the beginning of the study and change was not able to be determined. Alexandra's self-compassion score increased slightly and throughout the MBI she defined self-compassion as self-care. Camila's self-compassion score increased and she initially defined self-compassion as caring for the self and then as caring for others. Luz's self-compassion score increased slightly and she initially did not know the definition of self-compassion and then defined it as letting go. Maria's self-compassion score decreased and she maintained a true definition of self-compassion throughout the MBI. The participants' understandings of self-compassion did not appear to correlate with their self-compassion scores. It is a possibility that the participants understood self-compassion differently when they began as compared to when they completed the MBI. Participants' questionnaire answers were defined by their current understanding of self-compassion, both at the beginning and after the MBI. Perhaps the participants' understanding of self-compassion affected the way they perceived self-compassion and answered questions about self-compassion.

Table 20

Participants' Initial to Post-Change in Self-Compassion Questionnaire Scores

<u>Name</u>	<u>Self-compassion</u>
Alexandra	+0.33
Camila	+0.75
Luz	+0.09
Maria	-0.66
Na ^a	-

Note. The *Self-Compassion Scale* uses a Likert scale from 1-5.

^a Na did not have scores due to missing data.

I learned through the cross-case analysis of self-compassion definitions that those who understood self-compassion at the beginning continued to understand it throughout the intervention. Those who did not define it correctly gave the definitions of mindfulness or compassion. Most participants during the first interview understood self-compassion as self-love, self-acceptance, or empathy for others.

Summary of Cross-Case Results

In this chapter, I informed the following research questions regarding the experiences of participants in a developmental literacy course when participating in a Mindfulness-Based Intervention (MBI) and how they perceive aspects of mindfulness and self-compassion, affect about placement in a developmental literacy course, and effort in that course during participation in an MBI. The findings indicated that the participants' perceptions about their experiences navigating an MBI while enrolled in a developmental literacy class varied. Multiple themes emerged within each research question. The participants' experiences included finding community and identification with others in the developmental literacy class, selecting the MBI to deal with the stresses of college life, discovering increased interest in the MBI when participating, using

journaling to assess growth, decreasing the daily MBI practices, and creating a personal practice different than those strategies presented and suggested during the MBI.

Participants also defined and experienced mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion differently throughout the MBI. In addition, it was surprising to note that participants said they did not have or had already processed negative affect about the developmental literacy class prior to starting the MBI. They also said they were motivated to work hard in the class and that effort was not an issue for them.

VI. DISCUSSION

My research adds to the qualitative research about the perceptions and feelings of students attending developmental education coursework. While much research in developmental education focuses on developing cognitive skills, it is also vitally important to understand students' affective experiences as they navigate developmental literacy coursework. As my research makes clear, one approach showing promise in supporting students in affective areas is mindfulness training.

To explore this issue, I examined the experiences of students enrolled in a developmental literacy course as they navigated a mindfulness-based intervention (MBI), specifically focused on how they understood and experienced mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in a literacy development course, and the effort they gave in that same course. In this section, I interpret and describe the significance of findings in light of what was already known about the research in this area and to explain any new understanding or insights about the problem after taking the findings into consideration so as to better understand developmental students' experiences as they navigated an MBI.

I chose to use a case study for this project because a case study focuses on “a single thing, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries” (Merriam, 2001, p. 27). In my study, participants in developmental literacy courses navigated a six-week MBI. Case study methodology was appropriate for this project because it was a study occurring in an authentic environment, had multiple types of data collection, and included thick descriptions of the participants' experiences during the intervention. I examined and analyzed the experiences of participants as they participated in the MBI, their understanding of mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion, their affect about being in a developmental course, and the effort they put forth in the developmental course. I

recorded participants' experiences and perceptions through interviews, observations, field notes, journals, and questionnaires; I used this data to describe the participants' stories.

My research provided pertinent information because mindfulness-based interventions have the potential to support students in developmental education classes in regulating their affective responses to their developmental coursework. The findings of my study aligned with Khalaila's (2015) research, which observed when fostering students' affective needs, such as increasing intrinsic motivation through interventions like mindfulness and self-compassion, colleges can support the academic achievement of their students. Students in developmental education and those who serve them could benefit from students in developmental education engaging in mindfulness-based interventions; those benefits could include the development of better coping skills and strategies to manage affective aspects of their college experience. These benefits are likely not limited to students in developmental education coursework; for students not in developmental education, mindfulness and self-compassion practices could also help provide coping strategies for the stresses of college. Students who seek out decreasing stress in college and beyond could benefit from being in a mindfulness-based intervention.

Research Questions

In my study, I aimed to understand the perceptions of participants in developmental literacy courses as they participated in an MBI; the data gathered from the study can be used to better support students in developmental literacy courses as they pursue their education. The goal of the study was to gather, explain, and analyze how participants in a developmental education context experienced participation in an MBI.

The information was used to inform the research questions in order to better understand how an MBI can support affective areas and students' experiences in developmental education coursework. The research questions were as follows:

- 1) How do participants enrolled in a developmental literacy course experience participation in an MBI?
 - 1.A) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of affect in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
 - 1.B) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of effort in a developmental literacy course while participating in an MBI?
- 2) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of mindfulness during participation in an MBI?
- 3) How do participants perceive experiencing aspects of self-compassion during participation in an MBI?

I analyzed the responses and experiences of participants in a developmental literacy course as they participated in an MBI. I gathered data from interviews, journals, observations, and questionnaires to understand their experiences and perceptions of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort put forth in the course. Each research question was viewed through the theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and will be reviewed below.

Theoretical Framework: Self-Determination Theory

Data informing the research questions were viewed through a lens of Self-Determination Theory (SDT). This theory was used to describe people's innate and inherent propensities to act in an efficient, sustaining, and healthy manner. Research

guided by SDT has led to the understanding of three psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and relatedness. When these needs are met, they enhance self-motivation and mental health; when these needs are not met, individuals can have decreased motivation and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The theoretical framework chosen for my study aligned well because I examined participants' experiences as they participated in an MBI. Participants were students in developmental literacy classes. I observed participants' experiences, which included their observations of their motivation, relationships, development, and wellness; SDT encompasses each of those areas. This theory prompts researchers to ask the following questions: did individuals act authentically, congruently, integrated in their actions, and prosocially; were individuals autonomously motivated and did they experience determination, purpose, willingness, and endorsement of their actions; did individuals experience external or internal regulation; did individuals act in efficient, sustaining, and healthy ways; and was effort and motivation affected. The theory helped me to form the research questions for this project, which examined participants' experiences as they navigated an MBI and participated in a developmental literacy course.

I observed how participants sought personal development and focused on aspirations and life goals through involvement in the MBI. This information can be used to better understand and support students in developmental literacy classes and encourage their college completion. Those objectives related to intrinsic goals that can lead to greater health, well-being, and performance, and greater life satisfaction. Some participants initially participated in the MBI to complete the course requirement, an example of extrinsic motivation. Others participated in the MBI to help reduce their stress

and increase well-being, an example of intrinsic motivation. Participants also demonstrated intrinsic motivation as they persisted and found increased value in the MBI. Throughout the intervention, participants were given autonomy in deciding when and where to practice throughout the week, and determining which practices worked best for them. Additionally, participants stated that the instructor and classmates in the developmental literacy class helped them persist in that class, an example of being self-determined through relatedness.

I sought to understand more about participants' motivation, interpersonal relationships, intrapersonal understanding, and basic psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence. Participants addressed their motivation, interpersonal relationships, intrapersonal understanding, and basic psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence. This information informed the research questions and was viewed through the lens of SDT. The participants told me of their motivation to participate in the MBI, their motivation to persist throughout the MBI, relationships with others in the developmental literacy course, and their understanding of themselves during the MBI. I reflected on the participants' competence, autonomy, and relatedness as they participated in the MBI.

Participants' responses and experiences will be answered in the following section, organized by each research question. Each subheading below pertains to the research questions of the study which include participants' experiences, and their perceptions of aspects of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and effort put forth in that course while in an MBI.

Research Question 1: Participants' Experiences

The emergent themes from the participant's experiences included common humanity, coping skills enhancement, heightened interest, reflection for growth, time management, and adaptation and contextualization. Each will be explored below in relationship to the current literature and theoretical framework.

The findings of my study supported Koch, Slate, and Moore's (2012) research affirming instructors were key to the determination of negative or positive affective response. Many of the participants in my study reported they identified with the instructor and experienced common humanity with instructors and students in the developmental literacy course. An emergent theme aligning with self-determination theory, the theoretical framework of the study, involved participants enjoying the developmental literacy class due to the instructor or the community of the developmental literacy course. That is, participants related to the instructor and students in the class; relatedness is a psychological need of self-determination theory. When this need is met, individuals can have increases in motivation and mental health. Participants also found common humanity in the study, an element of self-compassion. Common humanity, feeling connection with others in life instead of feeling isolated and disconnected (Neff, 2011), allowed individuals to feel less isolated and potentially increase self-compassion.

Many researchers have shown MBIs can provide coping strategies to participants (Arch & Craske, 2010; Arch & Landy, 2015; Bluth et al., 2016; Chambers et al., 2009; Lynch et al., 2015; Sirois et al., 2015) and refinement of coping skills (Bonifas & Napoli, 2014; Grossman et al., 2004; Holzel et al., 2011; Mackenzie et al., 2007; Shapiro et al., 2008; Walach et al., 2007). The majority of participants chose to take the MBI to increase

coping skills and as they engaged in the MBI they reported benefits such as decreased stress and increased focus, thus fostering heightened interest in the MBI. The intervention combined the teaching and practice of mindfulness, awareness, and compassion activities, which resulted in positive changes for the participants involved.

Participants in other research studies reported improvements in subjective well-being (Jazaieri et al., 2012; Murphy, 2006; The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, 2013). Participants in my study also stated they felt happier, healthier, and more successful as they implemented MBI practices. Bergen-Cico et al., (2013) and Grossman et al. (2004) reported participants experienced improvements in mental health and Gold et al. (2010), Murphy (2006), and Song and Lindquist (2015) observed anxiety reduction in participants. My findings affirmed their research as multiple participants spoke of the MBI practices helping increase positive mental health and reducing feelings of depression and anxiety.

As the participants progressed through the MBI, they began to take more interest in and find increased value in the MBI. The participants in my study, like those in Mackenzie et al.'s (2007) study, demonstrated an openness to change and increase in personal growth. Participants reflected on how their current habits had changed and been replaced with others that helped them to decrease stress and cope better with college and life in general. Similarly, Roeser (2014) found participants cultivated self-evaluation. Similarly, individuals in my study said they were able to process their feelings more accurately and commented that they would like to continue MBI practices in the future.

Participants commented journaling could help them assess growth, foster internalization, and process feelings. The findings from my study supports the research of

Sage and Sele (2015) and Baleghizadeh and Mortazavi (2014) in that participants were more engaged and reflective, and increased their self-efficacy while journaling. Sage and Sele (2015) also reported increased time spent journaling and engagement in journaling was challenging as the participants in the study were not able to journal every day as they were asked. I also observed the majority of participants in my study had not observed the suggested daily journaling to accompany their daily MBI practice of 30 minutes each day.

Some of the participants in the intervention created their own practices from the MBI; these participants indicated the practices of body scan, STOP, RAIN, guided meditation, and self-compassion meditation while sitting or lying down were not productive for them as they would become distracted or tired. These individuals created new practices, which included meditating while walking, running, or listening to instrumental music. Forms of meditation with movement already exist in MBIs: yoga, walking meditation, Tai Chi, Qigong, and meditation while eating. Each participant also made decisions about which practices worked best for them and which practices they were most likely to continue. I encountered adaptation of MBIs by MBI facilitators in the literature (Dutton, Bermudez, Matas, Majid, & Myers, 2011; Patel, Carmody, & Simpson, 2007; Ortiz, 2015; Rayan & Athmad, 2016; Vallejo & Amaro, 2009), but had not found participation adaptation of the MBI to sustain their mindfulness practices. My observations fill a gap in the literature about participant adaptation and contextualization of MBI practices. Additionally, since participants are modifying MBI practices, facilitators of MBI could provide additional support on how to best modify an MBI to stay true to the practice of mindfulness and self-compassion.

My study supported this research and adds to the literature of students participating in MBIs and more specifically, students in developmental classes participating in an MBI. Researchers have indicated students placed in developmental education coursework could benefit from a greater focus on mindfulness as part of their instructional context (Arendale, 2010; Dembo & Seli, 2012; Lesley, 2004; Mealey, 2003; Vacca & Padak, 1990); analysis of data from my study indicated participants benefited from mindfulness and self-compassion practices taught in the MBI.

Research Question 1.A: Perceptions of Affect

During the interviews, participants shared how they felt about being placed in and attending a developmental literacy class. Reflecting Arendale's (2010) study, which found students placed in developmental education classes can feel anger, shame, and guilt about placement and attendance in those classes, many participants stated they initially felt angry, frustrated, guilty, and ashamed about their placement in the developmental literacy class. However, all participants except one stated they processed negative affect about placement in the developmental literacy class or never felt negative affect about placement in the developmental literacy class at the beginning of the study. Participants who indicated they never had negative affect about the class stated they needed to improve their literacy skills and the class would help them.

Most participants indicated experiencing common humanity in their respective developmental literacy course helped them to process their negative affect prior to attending the MBI. Referencing Arendale's (2010) research where he found students placed in developmental education classes can feel negative affect about their placement and attendance in those classes, I expected the participants in the study to be in the

process of coping with negative affect associated with placement and attendance in a developmental literacy course. Only one participant was upset by being in the developmental literacy class, as he felt the class was redundant and unnecessary. Interestingly, though, his positive and negative affect questionnaire at the initial interview noted below average negative affect scores. While he reported verbally his frustration about placement and attendance in the developmental literacy course, his negative affect score indicated less negative affect than would have been expected. This information implies instructors and researchers should consider more than one data source when understanding affective areas of students' experience.

Four participants in the study took the positive and negative affect schedule (PANAS) initial and post-questionnaires. Two of the four participants had increases in their negative affect scores and two of the four participants had decreases in their negative affect scores. Three of the four participants had increases in their positive affect scores and one had a decrease in her positive affect score. The participant whose negative affect score decreased also had a decrease in positive affect score. Two participants whose negative affect scores increased also had decreases in positive affect. Only one participant whose negative affect score decreased had an increase in positive affect. These findings are interesting because the four participants who took the PANAS at the beginning of the study and then again after the MBI indicated that they had processed negative affect prior to enrollment in the MBI. Participants' understanding of their positive and negative affect may have changed and been reflected during the MBI. However, the participants reported during interviews that they either did not possess negative affect or had already processed negative affect before beginning the MBI. The

qualitative data do not align with the quantitative data. In my study, the qualitative data provided a richer description of participants' perceptions and experiences compared to the initial and post-questionnaires. Dissonance existed between the qualitative and quantitative data as the findings did not always align. Some participants verbally reported an increase in practice and understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion practices, yet their scores on the mindfulness and self-compassion questionnaires decreased. I found similar findings with verbal reports and questionnaires regarding affect about being placed in developmental literacy courses and effort in those courses.

Research Question 1.B: Perceptions of Effort

Throughout the MBI, participants were asked to self-report about their level of effort in the developmental literacy class. The participants reported they did not have an issue with the course and gave effort. Some participants even questioned during the interviews why I continued to ask about their level of effort because they said they tried hard in the class. The majority of participants who participated in the study reported they did not feel negatively about being in a developmental literacy course and therefore they had no problem participating fully throughout the developmental literacy course. This finding supported the research of Komarraju & Nadler (2013) and Venables & Fairclough (2009) who found that students who have coping skills and can exert effort typically do better in courses than those who experience negative affect.

While qualitative data supported participants' sustained effort in the developmental literacy courses, quantitative data indicated three participants' effort regulation scores increased and one participant's effort regulation scores decreased. This is interesting because all participants interviewed reported not having a problem with

effort. The quantitative and qualitative data do not align in this area, similar to the findings regarding mindfulness and self-compassion. The majority of participants reported multiple times throughout the MBI they did not have a problem applying themselves in the developmental literacy course. However, if effort regulation scores were the only data in the study, it would appear that one participant decreased in effort. Effort regulation scores might have decreased due to the time of the semester when the participants took them: participants took the questionnaires during mid-semester, a stressful time of the school year. However, they verbally reported that they did not have difficulty making a concerted attempt to achieve in the developmental literacy course.

Research Question 2: Perceptions of Mindfulness

Throughout the MBI, I asked participants to define and explain their perceptions of mindfulness. The participants defined mindfulness in a variety of ways. Some participants kept their definitions the same throughout the intervention. Others changed their definitions as they participated in the intervention.

Mindfulness is a state of present-moment and nonjudgmental awareness and attention (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). A person in this state is aware of emotions and surroundings and can act with that knowledge and awareness. Mindfulness includes acknowledging internal and external events and states. When mindful, a person can assess events and states objectively and act with awareness. Likewise, being mindful can enable individuals to not react to events out of their control and to allow emotions and feelings to simply be instead of overidentifying with them (Baer et al., 2008; Bohlmeijer et al., 2011b). Practicing mindfulness can help individuals to be more aware and accept present-moment reality (Kabat-Zinn, 1994).

Most participants' definitions were in line with the literature about mindfulness. Participants understood mindfulness as perception, outlook, self-awareness, present-moment awareness, objective awareness, awareness of surroundings, acknowledgement of emotions, contemplation, oneness with self, metacognition, and letting go. Participants also described the benefits of mindfulness, including relaxation, being at peace, and stress relief. Of those who took initial and post-questionnaires about mindfulness, two participants decreased in mindfulness scores and two individuals increased in mindfulness scores at the end of the intervention. It is interesting to note that though some participants' mindfulness scores decreased, most participants' interviews and journals indicated a deeper understanding of the definition and practice of mindfulness. My findings about the participants' understanding of mindfulness add to the literature as there are few qualitative studies about participants conceptualizing mindfulness (Hitchcock, Martin, Fischer, Marando-Black, & Herbert, 2016).

Research Question 3: Perceptions of Compassion and Self-compassion

Throughout the MBI, participants were asked to define and explain their perceptions of self-compassion. Their definitions were wide-ranging and diverse. Some participants retained the same definition of self-compassion throughout the study and others changed their definitions throughout the study.

Neff (2011) defined compassion as recognizing suffering, feeling kindness for those who are suffering, attempting to help those who are suffering, and understanding that the flaws and fragile nature of humanity are shared. Self-compassion requires the recognition of our own personal suffering and has three components: self-kindness (being gentle and understanding to the self instead of harshly critical and judgmental),

recognition of common humanity (feeling connection with others in life instead of feeling isolated and disconnected by our suffering), and mindfulness (holding our experience in balanced awareness instead of ignoring or exaggerating pain) (Neff, 2011, p. 41). Self-compassion is defined as demonstrating kindness and understanding toward oneself during pain and failure, seeing one's suffering as a part of the human experience, and reflecting on one's pain with mindfulness (Barnard & Curry, 2011; Neff, 2003). Most participant's definitions were similar to those found in the literature. Participants defined self-compassion as empathy for the self, self-awareness, self-care, love of self, acceptance of imperfections, and self-acceptance.

My findings fill a gap in the literature, as I could not locate studies about participant conceptualization of self-compassion. Additionally, I found, as in the areas of mindfulness, affect, and effort, quantitative and qualitative data did not align. Two individuals in the study saw self-compassion as compassion. Three individuals who took initial and post-questionnaires experienced an increase in self-compassion scores after the MBI; one individual experienced a decrease in self-compassion score after the MBI.

Limitations

During my research study, I was the instructor of the MBI and I was the instructor of two sections of the developmental literacy class. I assume my involvement as instructor and researcher affected the participants and their experiences of the MBI. My involvement as instructor helped me to more further understand the context and develop rapport and trust with the participants. However, as an instructor of a developmental literacy course, a power dynamic existed between the participants and me. Their participation, behavior, and interview sessions could have been affected by this

relationship; we had dual roles and responsibilities in the developmental literacy course and my study. The power dynamic could have also been exacerbated because the participants in the MBI did not have many options about the projects they could choose while in their developmental literacy course. They had a limited choice of options and were not given full autonomy, though they were provided with alternate activities.

The vast majority of the participants stated they dealt with negative affect or did not have negative affect about being placed in and attending the developmental literacy class at the beginning of the study. Therefore, I did not get to observe if MBIs could affect participants' negative affect. Perhaps the students felt pressure from the power dynamic due to my dual role as developmental literacy course instructor and MBI facilitator.

The number of interviews with participants also varied due to students' and my scheduling conflicts. I met with some individuals one to two times and met with others from four to six times. I reported data from all participants who interviewed with me and included how many interviews I had with each person. I was better able to analyze the experiences of those had four to six interviews.

Ideally, I wanted to have two to three participants who possessed high negative affect about being in a developmental literacy course, two to three participants who possessed high positive affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and two to three participants who possessed neither high negative affect nor high positive affect about being in a developmental literacy course. I anticipated collecting this information after they took the initial PANAS, which determines positive and negative affect. However, I was not able to determine the participants' positive and negative affect until

after the intervention began because the participants' initial interviews occurred after the first MBI session.

Of the five participants who completed all interview sessions, one had an above average positive affect score and a below average negative affect score, one had a slightly above average positive affect and a below average negative affect score, one had a slightly below average positive affect and a slightly above average negative affect, one had an average positive affect score and a greatly above average negative affect score, and one had no scores due to missing data. The participant with no scores did not complete the questionnaires prior to the intervention. I selected level of affect as a deciding factor for the case study because one of my areas of interest included understanding issues of affect and effort in the course and how participants perceived aspects of mindfulness, self-compassion, affect about being in the class, and effort put forth in the class.

Participants also altered the MBI to help them practice mindfulness and self-compassion throughout my study. Though facilitators modified practices in other studies, I did not find a precedent for participants modifying or altering the MBI. The modifications made by participants could have altered the qualitative and quantitative results as compared to other studies where participants did not alter the MBI or alterations were not reported in the study.

Implications

Future studies involving MBIs might involve creating multi-site designs to observe how students at community colleges and universities experience an MBI. Researchers could potentially make better generalization about students participating in

MBIs. The study could be enlarged to include participants in gateway classes, other developmental classes, or demanding classes to see the effect of MBI practices. Another potential study could involve teaching educators and administrators about practices of mindfulness, self-compassion, and/or yoga and how they can be used for self-care. The educators could be taught how to pass on basic practices to their students.

Similar studies could also include using accountability partners within the study. MBI participants could pair with others in the class or the instructor and meet at a specified time to practice and journal. This might increase the chance of participants practicing daily for 30 minutes and completing daily journal entries. With these changes, participants might be more likely to practice for the amount of time indicated by MBI guidelines.

When engaging in data collection through interviews, I would suggest additional probing during interviews and prompt participants to supply more detail to questions. For example, researchers could use metaphors and metaphor analysis to gather more information and analyze data to determine how participants perceive engaging in an MBI. To further enhance data collection, I think it would be beneficial to have an additional interview after scoring the post-questionnaires. After a participant took the post-questionnaires, a researcher could score the questionnaires and assess any changes that occurred. The researcher could then review the scores with the participants and ask them about their understanding of why their scores may have increased, decreased, or remained the same. Researchers could also revisit the questionnaires used and assess their viability and applicability to the study.

Given the dissonance between qualitative and quantitative data in my study, I also think researchers can add to the qualitative and mixed methods studies about MBIs. In my research, I found fewer qualitative and mixed methods studies about MBIs as compared to quantitative studies. Additionally, researchers could explore participants' conceptualization of mindfulness and self-compassion as I found one article on participants' conceptualization of mindfulness and no articles on participants' conceptualization of self-compassion. Another area that could be enhanced by qualitative research would be participant modifications to MBIs. Based on my findings, participants modified MBI practices so they could continue practicing mindfulness and self-compassion. Researchers should ask participants if and how they are modifying the MBI and how these modifications affect participants and research results. Furthermore, when participants modify MBI practices, MBI facilitators should be prepared how to best support participants.

Implications related to developmental education including instructors and staff maintaining awareness of students in all developmental education classes. If students experience negative affect after testing and placement, perhaps support staff should be provided to them at that time. Many students take college entrance exams during the summer when little support is provided by institutions to students. A supportive solution might be to provide peer mentors, who previously completed developmental education classes, as a resource to students who have been recently placed into developmental education classes. Students in developmental education who have relationships with peer mentors may experience common humanity and increase interest and motivation to do their best in developmental coursework.

Students in developmental education classes could be supported by providing mindfulness-based strategies within their classes. The strategies could be practiced in and out of class. Students could benefit from the increased coping strategies. If these practices are implemented in developmental education classes, accountability partners, either virtual or face-to-face, might also be an option to enhance and support student's practices throughout the week when they are not attending a developmental education class. In short, providing coping strategies such as MBIs to students in developmental education classes could help them understand and manage affective areas of their educational experience, necessary to their long-term success.

Summary of Discussion

Student growth in higher education can be best fostered when educators provide cognitive and affective support. For students in developmental education, affective factors become even more important to their educational success (Sedlacek, 2004). Mindfulness-based interventions have shown success in supporting the affective needs of students in developmental education and aiding them in academic pursuits. My study included the experiences of five key informants and supporting evidence from seven additional participants as they navigated an MBI and addressed their understanding of mindfulness and self-compassion, their affect about being in a developmental literacy course, and the effort they gave in that course. Their stories provided an example of students attending a developmental literacy class experiencing an MBI. Researchers can help create a more robust picture of what mindfulness and self-compassion mean to students and the possible benefits to students by engaging in additional research with a variety of students, especially in the area of qualitative research.

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APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES INTRODUCTION

Questionnaires

Name _____

RDG 1300 Section # _____

RDG 1300 Class Day and Time _____

RDG 1300 Instructor Name _____

The survey items on the following pages are about your levels of mindfulness (being aware of something), self-compassion (extending concern to your own state of being and/or suffering), affect (emotions and feelings) about placement in Reading Improvement (RDG 1300), and effort put forth in Reading Improvement (RDG 1300). You are to read each statement and rate yourself according to how well the statement describes you, not in terms of how you think you should be or how others want you to be. The usefulness of my research depends upon you carefully and honestly responding to each survey item. Please take your time and answer each item as best as you can.

If you prefer not to answer a survey item, or want to stop participating for any reason, please close the survey and inform Ms. Nielson that you would like to stop participating (erika.nielson@txstate.edu). If you stop participating, you will still be able to earn credit by completing an alternative assignment and will earn credit for the portion of the survey you completed.

APPENDIX B: FIVE-FACTOR MINDFULNESS QUESTIONNAIRE – SHORT FORM

Questionnaire #1

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

Never or very
rarely true

Very often or
always true

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------|---|---|---|---|
| _____ | | | | |
| _____ | | | | |
| _____ | | | | |
| _____ | | | | |
| _____ | | | | |
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| _____ | | | | |
| _____ | | | | |
| _____ | | | | |
| _____ | | | | |
1. I'm good at finding words to describe my feelings.
 2. I can easily put my beliefs, opinions, and expectations into words.
 3. I watch my feelings without getting carried away by them.
 4. I tell myself I shouldn't be feeling the way I'm feeling.
 5. It's hard for me to find the words to describe what I'm thinking.
 6. I pay attention to physical experiences, such as the wind in my hair or sun on my face.
 7. I make judgments about whether my thoughts are good or bad.
 8. I find it difficult to stay focused on what's happening in the present moment.
 9. When I have distressing thoughts or images, I don't let myself be carried away by them.
 10. Generally, I pay attention to sounds, such as clocks ticking, birds chirping, or cars passing.
 11. When I feel something in my body, it's hard for me to find the right words to describe it.
 12. It seems I am "running on automatic" without much awareness of what I'm doing.
 13. When I have distressing thoughts or images, I feel calm soon after.
 14. I tell myself that I shouldn't be thinking the way I'm thinking.
 15. I notice the smells and aromas of things.
 16. Even when I'm feeling terribly upset, I can find a way to put it into words.
 17. I rush through activities without being really attentive to them.

- _____ 18. Usually when I have distressing thoughts or images I can just notice them without reacting.
- _____ 19. I think some of my emotions are bad or inappropriate and I shouldn't feel them.
- _____ 20. I notice visual elements in art or nature, such as colors, shapes, textures, or patterns of light and shadow.
- _____ 21. When I have distressing thoughts or images, I just notice them and let them go.
- _____ 22. I do jobs or tasks automatically without being aware of what I'm doing.
- _____ 23. I find myself doing things without paying attention.
- _____ 24. I disapprove of myself when I have illogical ideas.

APPENDIX C: SELF-COMPASSION SCALE – SHORT FORM

Questionnaire #2

How I typically act towards myself in difficult times.

Please read each statement carefully before answering. To the left of each, indicate how often you behave in the stated manner, using the following scale:

Almost never always				
1	2	3	4	
	5			

_____ 1. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.

_____ 2. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.

_____ 3. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.

_____ 4. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.

_____ 5. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.

_____ 6. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.

_____ 7. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.

_____ 8. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.

_____ 9. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.

_____ 10. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.

_____ 11. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.

_____ 12. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.

APPENDIX D: POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE AFFECT SCHEDULE

Questionnaire #3

This scale consists of a number of words that may describe different feelings and emotions related to your placement in Reading Improvement. Read each and then list the number from the scale below next to each word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way at the present moment about your placement in Reading Improvement.

1	2	3	4
5			
Very Slightly or Not at All	A Little	Moderately	Quite a Bit
Extremely			
_____ 1. Interested			
_____ 2. Distressed			
_____ 3. Excited			
_____ 4. Upset			
_____ 5. Strong			
_____ 6. Guilty			
_____ 7. Scared			
_____ 8. Hostile			
_____ 9. Enthusiastic			
_____ 10. Proud			
_____ 11. Irritable			
_____ 12. Alert			
_____ 13. Ashamed			
_____ 14. Inspired			
_____ 15. Nervous			
_____ 16. Determined			
_____ 17. Attentive			
_____ 18. Jittery			
_____ 19. Active			
_____ 20. Afraid			

APPENDIX E: EFFORT REGULATION OF MOTIVATED STRATEGIES OF
LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire #4

1	2	3	4	5	6
7					
Not at all					Very
true					
true of me					of me
_____ 1. I often feel so lazy or bored when I study for this class (Reading Improvement) that I quit before I finish what I planned to do.					
_____ 2. I work hard to do well in this class (Reading Improvement) even if I don't like what we are doing.					
_____ 3. When course work in Reading Improvement is difficult, I give up or only study the easy parts.					
_____ 4. Even when course materials in Reading Improvement are dull and uninteresting, I manage to keep working until I finish.					

APPENDIX F: DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

Demographics Questionnaire

1) Do you have a current meditation, mindfulness, and/or self-compassion practice?

a. If yes, what do you do during these sessions? (Ex. I run outside, I read daily devotionals, I sit in a park, etc.)

b. If yes, how long have you been practicing?

c. If yes, how often do you practice? (Ex. I practice three times a week for 15 minutes each session).

2) Age _____

3) Gender _____

4) Ethnic background _____

5) Major (ex. General Studies, Chemistry, etc.) _____

APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW SCRIPT

Interview Script

Thank you for agreeing to speak with me today.

The purpose of these interviews is to understand how you have navigated and are currently navigating the mindfulness-based intervention in which you participate. Your feedback can help to understand how mindfulness-based interventions can benefit students placed in developmental literacy courses.

Many students who are placed in developmental literacy courses experience negative affect (emotions and feelings) about the placement and do not put forth great effort in the course. It is my hope that by participating in a mindfulness-based intervention, you will be given tools to cope with any negative affect and thus increase effort in the developmental literacy course. Your feedback can help me understand if mindfulness-based interventions can provide these tools.

I'd like to remind you that to protect the privacy of interview members, all transcripts will be coded with pseudonyms.

Each interview will last about thirty minutes and is audio-recorded so that information is accurate.

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

APPENDIX H: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Initial MBI Intervention Phase:

- 1) What was it like to be placed in the Reading Improvement course?
- 2) How do you feel about the Reading Improvement course?
- 3) What does mindfulness mean to you?
- 4) What does compassion mean to you?
- 5) What does self-compassion mean to you?
- 6) What do you feel you may learn from participating in an MBI?
- 7) Based on your current understanding of MBI, do you think participating in an MBI might affect your feelings or emotions towards placement in the Reading Improvement course? If so, how?
- 8) Based on your current understanding of MBI, do you think participating in an MBI might affect your effort in the Reading Improvement course? If so, how?
- 9) Is there anything you would like to add?

During-MBI Intervention Phase:

- 1) What is it like to participate in an MBI?
- 2) How do you feel about the Reading Improvement course?
- 3) What does mindfulness mean to you?
- 4) What does compassion mean to you?
- 5) What does self-compassion mean to you?
- 6) What do you feel you are learning from participating in an MBI?

- 7) Based on your current understanding of MBI, do you think participating in an MBI might affect your feelings or emotions towards placement in the Reading Improvement course? If so, how?
- 8) Based on your current understanding of MBI, do you think participating in an MBI might affect your effort in the Reading Improvement course? If so, how?
- 9) How do you feel journaling might affect your experience in the MBI and the Reading Improvement course?
- 10) Is there anything you would like to add?

Post-MBI Intervention Phase:

- 1) What was it like to participate in an MBI?
- 2) How do you feel about the Reading Improvement course?
- 3) What does mindfulness mean to you?
- 4) What does compassion mean to you?
- 5) What does self-compassion mean to you?
- 6) What do you feel you have learned from participating in an MBI?
- 7) Based on your current understanding of MBI, do you think participating in an MBI affected your feelings or emotions towards placement in the Reading Improvement course? If so, how?
- 8) Based on your current understanding of MBI, do you think participating in an MBI affected your effort in the Reading Improvement course? If so, how?
- 9) Before participating in the MBI you stated [insert answer to initial MBI Intervention Phase #1]. How do you feel about the Reading Improvement course after completing an MBI?

- 10) How do you feel journaling might have affected participating in an MBI and the Reading Improvement course?
- 11) Is there anything you would like to add?

APPENDIX I: IRB APPROVAL LETTER



In future correspondence please refer to 2016O4482

July 25, 2016

Erika Nielson Vargas
c/o Dr. Eric Paulson
Professor
Department of Graduate College
Texas State University
601 University Drive.
San Marcos, TX 78666

Dear Ms. Nielson Vargas :

Your IRB application 2016O4482 titled "Students in Developmental Literacy Navigating a Mindfulness-Based Intervention " was reviewed by the Texas State University IRB and approved 07/21/16. It has been determined that risks to subjects are: (1) minimized and reasonable; and that (2) research procedures are consistent with a sound research design and do not expose the subjects to unnecessary risk. Reviewers determined that: (1) benefits to subjects are considered along with the importance of the topic and that outcomes are reasonable; (2) selection of subjects is equitable; and (3) the purposes of the research and the research setting is amenable to subjects' welfare and producing desired outcomes; that indications of coercion or prejudice are absent, and that participation is clearly voluntary.

1. In addition, the IRB found that you need to orient participants as follows: (1) signed informed consent is required; (2) Provision is made for collecting, using and storing data in a manner that protects the safety and privacy of the subjects and the confidentiality of the data; (3) Appropriate safeguards are included to protect the rights and welfare of the subjects.

This project is therefore approved at the Exempt Review Level

2. Please note that the institution is not responsible for any actions regarding this protocol before approval. If you expand the project at a later date to use other instruments please re-apply. Copies of your request for human subjects review, your application, and this approval, are maintained in the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance. Please report any changes to this approved protocol to this office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Monica Gonzales".

Monica Gonzales
IRB Regulatory Manager
Office of Research and Integrity
Texas State University

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