Marriage & Family Therapy Faculty Member's Balance of Work and Personal Life

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(ABSTRACT)

This mixed-method study examines the work and personal life balance of Marriage & Family Therapy faculty members across the U.S., 16 of whom were interviewed to gain a deeper understanding of their work and personal life balance issues. Of those, six felt they had good balance, six felt they had poor balance, and four were "middle of the road." More men than women felt they had good balance. Faculty members indicated external and internal indicators such as family and workplace messages, health cues, feelings of contentment, and congruence with personal values help them determine how they feel about their work and personal life balance. Other findings indicate that many factors impact MFT faculty member's sense of their work and personal life balance, including child and relationship status, tenure status, and gender issues. Balance enhancers included job flexibility, setting healthy boundaries, their ability to say no, spirituality, positive work esteem, and participation in non-work activities. Balance reducers included developing bad habits, negative work esteem, problematic but temporary life circumstances, and poor work boundaries. Faculty members also discussed some of their coping strategies and made recommendations for future MFT faculty members such as good self care, not viewing work as a race, being intentional, prioritizing, and strategizing.

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CHAPTER I
Introduction
<u>Statement of the Problem</u>

Studies that examine the links between work and personal life have been a key theme in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) journals over the past 18 years (Bowen & Pittman, 1995). Changes in society in the last century have caused increasing numbers of people to enter the paid workforce and therefore more people than ever before juggle responsibilities at home and in the workplace (Clark, 2000). This phenomenon has fueled much of the recent inquiry into the arena of work and personal life balance. As part of that body of research, there are a number of studies that explore how individuals in the helping professionals balance their work and personal lives. Researchers have studied counselors, psychotherapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, and students of the helping professions and found that they experience daily physical, mental, and emotional strain and tension, as well as some benefits from their work (Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980; Guy, 1987; Underwood, 1991; Wetchler & Piercy, 1986). No research has been published, however, examining the interdependence between the work and personal lives of MFT faculty members. To begin to fill this gap, the current study investigated MFT faculty members' balance of their work and personal lives and how they make meaning of their balance.

The ways in which work and personal life intersect is an important focus of attention in the lives of adults (Bowen & Pittman, 1995). Part of this intersection is a person's sense of balance, commonly defined as satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict (Clark, 2001). Zedeck (1992) defined the problem of work and personal life balance as, "The relationship between employees and families and work organization members, and the way that individuals mold the parameters and scope of their activities and create personal meaning" (p. 750). The research literature suggests significant variation in how people negotiate their work and personal life balance (Greenberger, Goldberg, Hamill, O'Neil, & Payne, 1989; Repetti, 1989; Small & Riley, 1990). Each person responds differently to life circumstances, and those circumstances that are negative to one person may be a positive, stimulating force to another (Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980). How individuals respond to competing life events determines how they are affected emotionally, mentally, and physically.

Some research indicates that stress is responsible for some alarming statistics in many of the helping professions such as social work and teaching, and people in helping professions are prime candidates for job-related stress and its sequelae (Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980). Greenberg and Valletutti wrote, "Many human service professionals work long, tiring hours to provide service to clients. They often refuse to recognize their physical limitations. Insufficient time is given to relaxation, sleep, and eating properly"(p. 76). The stress of mental health work can lead professionals to significant loss of interest, motivation, energy, satisfaction, and effectiveness in connection with work (Friedman, 1985). All of these physical and emotional cues are linked to a person's sense of well-being and, if left unchecked, can lead to feelings of poor work and personal life balance.

Some of these mental health professionals have extremely high turnover rates where people who have spent years preparing for their chosen fields flee to new professions (Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980). In addition, research with psychotherapists

indicates that working as a mental health clinician may hinder interpersonal functioning inside and outside of work (Guy, 1987). The lives of people closest to therapists may be affected if the therapist is too tired or too upset by their caseload to listen to their own family members' concerns (Charney, 1982).

Not all mental health professionals suffer grave consequences due to the inevitable stress that comes with working with human difficulties, however. One study found that therapists viewed working among their peers, their own success, and their children among the top three sources of satisfaction in their lives (Underwood, 1991). In addition, these therapists reported getting satisfaction from their jobs because the nature of their work is important to the well-being and improvement of people in need.

Research suggests that, at least for psychotherapists, there is hope of preserving some sense of balance between their work and personal lives. One study found that the degree of burnout experienced by psychotherapists lessened as they aged and gained professional experience (Hoeksma, Guy, Brown, & Brady, 1993). Those with more experience felt more confident, often had positions in less stressful settings (private practice), and were more involved in consultation with and supervision of other psychotherapists. There is no published research, however, that indicates what MFT faculty members attribute to better outcomes in their quest to balance their work and personal lives.

While it is not known for sure what factors contribute to MFT faculty members' feelings about their work and personal life balance, it is know that all of them juggle a long list of responsibilities in their daily lives. In addition to their clinical roles, MFT faculty members are also professors of higher learning where they are also responsible for teaching, supervising, mentoring, conducting research, and publishing. Because of the additional roles they play, MFT faculty members may have an even greater challenge in linking their work and personal lives. The issue surrounding work and personal life balance is one that has yet to be investigated with MFT faculty members. Nothing has been published about the intersection of their work and personal lives, their level of satisfaction with their work and personal life balance, and what they attribute to the presence or absence of balance between these two major aspects of their lives. This study aimed to fill in the gap of knowledge about MFT faculty members' balance of their work and personal lives.

<u>Significance Of The Study</u>

Most people experience some sort of struggle to balance the many roles they play in their lives. The constant sense of being pushed and pulled in various directions is a challenge that is not always easy to handle. The balance people achieve between their work and personal lives has implications on a variety of aspects of their lives such as their health, family, job, self-esteem, and overall sense of well-being. Individuals are perpetually adjusting and readjusting around the various roles and stressors in their lives (Greenberg & Valletutti, 1980). A common theme in the research literature in this area is that this juggling act is a potential source of stress that may undermine well-being. However, there is also speculation that it may not be an overload or conflict between the many roles people play but the level of commitment they have to one role relative to another (Marks, 1977). Marks wrote that, in the case of balanced role commitments, one could expect to experience a strengthened feeling of identity and an increase in relevant activities, relationships, and ties. Unfortunately, no research has been done to determine

how MFT faculty members feel about the balance they achieve in their work and personal lives or to what they attribute their feelings. Therefore, this study has implications for the larger body of research on work and personal life balance in that it will strive to fill in a gap of knowledge about one specific group of individuals.

In addition to implications for the larger research community, this study will have implications for MFT faculty members themselves. The experiences of others who are similar to oneself can be illustrative and informative when one is examining one's own life circumstances. The information gleaned from participants of this study will provide detailed information to other MFT faculty members about some of their colleagues' level of satisfaction with their work and personal life balance, the indicators they use to measure their satisfaction, the struggles they have, and the coping strategies they use.

This study has clinical implications for the students of MFT faculty members as well. Recent studies of students in MFT programs show that that they report high stress and pressure during their clinical and academic training (Polson & Nida, 1998; Polson & Piercy, 1993). The major stressors found in one study included the number of hours they and their partners or spouses worked to support them during their training (Polson & Nida, 1998). Long hours spent working and the high stress of work reportedly compromised the tasks and roles of these families and individuals, and their home lives suffered because of the program and work demands. Polson and Piercy (1993) found that high program demands, implicit-explicit performance expectations from faculty, and reduced family time were major stressors. The same study reported spousal isolation in the first year of the trainee's program, and spousal anger related to the program demands. These studies give important information regarding the lives of students who may one day decide to become MFT faculty members themselves. They also provide evidence of the need for the MFT faculty members of these students to be healthy mentors. This study will provide additional information about the MFT faculty members who teach these students, illustrating the struggles and triumphs they experience in balancing the interrelatedness of their work and personal life.

Because no research has been published on this topic with MFT faculty members as the unit of measure, I conducted a mixed-method research study that provides the maximum amount of depth and breadth of data. I chose a mixed-method approach because it allows for synergistic interplay between the qualitative and quantitative approaches (Sprenkle & Moon, 1996). The majority of the analysis was qualitative in order to explore the intricacies of individuals' experiences. New research investigations often use qualitative research for this purpose. The data provided illustrative quotes and anecdotes that helps build a foundational knowledge of the work and personal life balance of a small number of MFT faculty members. In addition, the quantitative data bolsters the qualitative data by providing descriptive statistics of a larger group of MFT faculty members who responded to our web-based questionnaire. The quantitative data provides much-needed demographic information on the group of individuals who participated in the qualitative phase of the study.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework I used to guide this study is phenomenology. Phenomenology, a way of thinking inaugurated by Edmund Husserl over a century ago, is concerned with carefully describing ordinary conscious experiences of everyday life, a description of things as one experiences them (Schwandt, 1997). The "things" mentioned

above include perceptions, beliefs, memories, decisions, feelings, judgments, evaluations, and bodily actions. These things mentioned above are applied to aspects of a person's experience, making them meaningful (Holstein & Gubrium, 1994). From there phenomenological researchers use people's narrative descriptions of these situations in which an experience occurs to determine the underlying structures of the experience. "The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions, general or universal meanings are derived, in other words the essences or structures of the experience" (Schwandt, 1997, p. 13). Phenomenology aims to describe peoples' experiences and the meaning they make of them, not to explain the experience. A primary element to finding this meaning of the human experience is recognizing the context in which a situation occurs.

Phenomenology involves four steps (Moustakas, 1994). The first is the problem and question formulation, otherwise known as the phenomenon. This is where the researcher delineates a focus of inquiry and creates a research question that is understandable to others. Next is the data-generating situation, otherwise known as the protocol life text. Researchers collect subjects' narratives using dialogues. Subjects in phenomenological research are often considered co-researchers. Finally, data analysis is conducted, sometimes called explication and interpretation. The researcher, with the input of his or her co-researchers, reads and absorbs the narratives to reveal the structure, meaning configuration, coherence, circumstances of their occurrence, and clusters within the experience. Phenomenology is used to carefully describe things as they appear to consciousness. The way problems, things, and events are described by the phenomenological researcher should take into consideration their manner of appearance to the experiencer's awareness. Phenomenology, therefore, is an appropriate theoretical framework from which to discover and analyze MFT faculty members' experiences of and conscious reflections upon their work and personal life balance.

<div align="center">Research Questions</div>

In order to begin to understand how MFT faculty members experience the interaction between their work and personal lives and to discover how they make meaning of this interaction, I focused on the following research questions:

1. What level of satisfaction do MFT faculty members feel currently about the balance between their work and personal lives?
2. To what do MFT faculty members attribute any changes in their sense of balance over time?
3. What factors impact people's work and personal life balance?
4. How do MFT faculty members make meaning out of the balance they feel?
5. What strategies and coping mechanisms do MFT faculty members use to balance their work and personal lives?
6. What advice about work and personal life balance do MFT faculty members have for future MFT faculty members?

CHAPTER II
Literature Review
<u>Introduction</u>

Work and family are the two spheres most central to individuals (Mortimer, Lorence, & Kumka, 1986). In the past century, there has been a dramatic increase in the numbers of people who have responsibilities both at work and at home (Clark, 2001). This phenomenon has been the subject of much research, and the interdependence of work and personal life has been a dominant theme in major journals over the last 20 years (Bowen & Pittman, 1995). Part of this interdependence is the balance people feel they have between their work and personal lives. Work and personal life balance is a concept used in the research and is defined as, "satisfaction and good functioning at work and at home with a minimum of role conflict" (Clark, 2001).

Hundreds of articles on the topic of work and personal life balance have appeared in journals in the past few decades, many of which in journals related to family studies and family therapy. Some of these studies have focused on people in the mental health community, however only a minority of those used MFTs as subjects of inquiry. A review of this literature showed that balancing work and personal life can be both a challenge as well as a motivator, and plenty of anecdotal suggestions have been made about how mental health professionals can address their work and personal life balance issues for themselves and their families. No research has been published, however, that examines the issues associated with the work and personal life balance of MFT faculty members in the U.S.

Work and personal life balance does not exist in a vacuum, but it is a dynamic phenomenon that is largely dependent on the circumstances that surround it and the vantage point from which it is being experienced. As part of describing the phenomenon of work and personal life balance, then, it is important to examine the factors that help people make meaning of their work and personal life balance. Meaning, according to the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, is the implication of a hidden or special significance that one feels or experiences (2002).

Lattanzi (1984) stated that two variables are important in helping therapists make meaning out of their work. The first is their past life experiences, which can impact how they experience stress as well as their work and personal life balance. The second is communication with and support from a network of supervisors, colleagues, family, and friends. These two variables influence the ways therapists find meaning based on what they have seen, heard, felt, learned, and stored in conscious or subconscious memory. Lattanzi stated that life is a matter of timing and balance, and that the cost of doing therapeutic work can be mitigated by the rewards and meaning it offers.

Meaning is partially created by the work people do as well as the relationships they have (Frankl, 1959). Clinicians, for example, experience a unique by-product of their work in that they open themselves up to deep, personal, individual transformation due to the empathic, often emotional work they do with other human beings (Pearlman, 1995). This unique by-product can impact the therapist's sense of self, world-view, spirituality, tolerance of affect, health, and relationships. The price a therapist pays for doing this type of intense, draining work is often offset by the rewards and the meaning it offers (Lattanzi, 1984). Therapeutic work can cause both solidification and a disruption in therapists' views of the world and the meaning they make of their internal and external

surroundings (Pearlman, 1995). Because of this unique by-product, the meaning therapists make of their balance may shift over time, depending on things such as their caseload, their level of professional experience, and their life-stage. All of these factors serve to impact how a clinician makes meaning of their balance. The following review of published literature covers the work and personal life balance of the general population followed by more specific studies using mental health professionals as subjects of inquiry.

<center>General Research On Work And Personal Life Balance</center>

A significant number of people in the U.S. report that balancing the various roles and responsibilities in their lives can be trying (Haddock, Zimmerman, Ziemba, & Current, 2001). This work-related stress contributes to feelings of inconsequentiality, "a feeling on the part of professionals that no matter how hard they work, the payoffs in terms of accomplishment, recognition, advancement, or appreciation are not there" (Farber, 1983b, p. 6). In addition to these feelings of inconsequentiality, burnout can occur when workers perceive an imbalance between their input and expected outcomes, and is often caused by over-dedication and over-commitment to one role or activity (Friedman, 1985). Burnout has been defined as "…a significant loss of interest, motivation, energy, satisfaction, and effectiveness" in connection with one's life (p. 549). Burnout often affects the most caring and most involved workers such as mental health professionals whose job it is to focus on the problems and pain of the human condition.

There is no lack of published research that supports the notion that balancing work and personal life can be trying. For example, a nationally representative survey of people in the paid workforce evaluated participants' sense of work and personal life balance. One finding showed that parents and non-parents in this sample considered themselves equally burned out and equally successful in their work lives (Galinsky, Bond, & Friedman, 1996). Of the parents, however, employed parents reported significantly more work and personal life conflict, increased levels of stress, and poorer coping skills than employed non-parents. In another study, employed mothers were found to be consistently less satisfied with various aspects of their personal lives than fathers who work, and working mothers report higher incidence of minor health problems, nervousness, and stress than working fathers (Galinsky & Bond, 1996).

On the other hand, there are researchers who argue that men and women feel good when they successfully balance their work and personal life (Milkie & Peltola, 1999). While most employees may report times of feeling burned out and dissatisfied with their balance, most still remain on the job, report feeling relatively happy with their work, and even perform well at work (Jayaratne & Chess, 1983). Some research has shown a modest positive correlation between work commitment and family commitment (Gutek, Searle, & Klepa, 1991; Marks & MacDermid, 1996). That is, work and family commitments tend to go hand-in-hand, not in opposition to one another. In addition, one recent article highlighted the benefits of people juggling multiple roles such as parent, spouse, and employee (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). The authors state that in this current historical period, multiple roles are beneficial for men and women in terms of mental, physical, and relationship health.

The studies reviewed above indicate that many factors impact how people experience their work and personal life balance. While information regarding the general population's experience of work and personal life balance is important, it is also helpful

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to examine the research reported on mental health professionals. This literature provides a more focused foundation on which to build a better understanding of the work and personal life balance of MFT faculty members.

<u>Work And Personal Life Balance Of Helping Professionals</u>

Before the 1970s, mental health professionals, including psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, counselors, and therapists, were all but ignored in the literature regarding work and personal life balance (Farber, 1983a). Their conspicuous omission as research subjects has been attributed to: 1) society's positive judgment of mental health practitioners; 2) therapists' hesitance to question society's unconditional acceptance of them as healers; and 3) professional organizations' reluctance to scrutinize themselves (Sarason, 1977). Mental health professionals have gained some attention over the past few decades in the work and personal life balance literature, especially as it relates to women therapists (Rasmussen & Guy, 1989). This interest is linked to the fact that women have been entering the profession at a high rate for the last few decades, and conflicts are often associated with women's multiple and non-traditional roles.

The majority of the literature is in support of the notion that mental health professionals experience some negative consequences due to the nature of their jobs. Studies show that relationship difficulties (Deutsch, 1985), suicide (Farber, 1983b; Moore, 1982; Steppacher, & Mausner, 1973), depression (Deutsch, 1985; Fine, 1980; Rich & Pitts, 1980), and burnout affect many mental health professionals. Equally problematic, therapists often do not take enough time for themselves and their families and are not in the mood to be sympathetic listeners when they get home from a long day of work focused on other people's problems (Farber, 1983b). In addition, clients whose problems are particularly depressing or draining, such as those who are belligerent, suicidal, severely traumatized, or who have borderline personality traits, can serve to increase levels of stress and burnout among helping professionals (Underwood, 1991).

Not only does research suggest that clinicians experience burnout, but some research studies suggest that mental health professionals are actually more prone to poor balance than other professionals. This may be due in part to the fact that mental health professionals tend to be caring, talented, and motivated people who use their resources to help others in need (Underwood, 1991). While some believe that therapists are naturally concerned with their own mental health as well as that of their clients (Charny, 1982) and others think helping professionals ignore their own needs (Lattanzi, 1984), most concur that therapists' concerns about poor balance are ever-present. Therapists often experience pain and exhaustion as a result of their work, especially when clients' issues are particularly traumatic or unsettling (Figley, 1995). People who work in the mental health field often complain of long hours, isolation, lack of autonomy, client neediness, insufficient resources, non-reciprocated attentiveness, and the often erratic pace of therapeutic progress (Farber, 1983b). All of these difficulties can serve to reduce clinicians' sense of balance between their work and personal life.

On the other hand, not all research focuses on the negative impact of clinical work. Wetchler and Piercy (1986), for example, found that respondents from their study of 110 Indiana therapists reported significantly more things about their work that served to enhance marital/family life than things that served to decrease it. In fact the respondents selected over twice as many enhancers as stressors. The most commonly reported enhancers of marital and family life included: the therapist's acceptance of their

own part in marital and family problems; their development of communication skills; a greater appreciation of their own marital and family strengths; and a greater ability to prevent potential family problems. No significant differences were found between males and females in this study, nor between therapists in private practice versus other settings. The authors suggested that family therapists who hold a systemic view of family behavior are more likely to accept their own part in marital and family problems. They also reported that, through their training and experience, family therapists may have developed empathy, an appreciation for their own marital strengths, and skills that are key to a stable family life (i.e., parenting, communication, problem-solving). Wetchler and Piercy acknowledged that the challenge for family therapists appears to be how able they are to balance the enhancers they get from their work while reducing and planning for the impact of work on their personal lives.

Similarly, Charny (1982) reported that the practice of family therapy can bring about both positive and negative experiences for clinicians. Family therapy can actually serve as a means for clinicians to experience an elevation in their well-being in that the very nature of family therapy invites therapists to come out from behind their desks and interact with others in a real, vulnerable way. Family therapy, because it involves issues surrounding human relationships and intimacy, draws therapists into self-disclosure of some of their experiences and struggles of similar topics. Many client experiences remind family therapists of their own families, sometimes making them feel human, genuine, effective, and happy. On the other hand, Charny acknowledged that practicing family therapy can have negative consequences. It can lead to a loosening of professional and personal boundaries as well as carryover into their personal lives of the expectation for continuous responsiveness to and involvement with others. It can also create a lack of awareness of and empathy for the emotional needs of clinicians' own families, and it can create a risk of problems and disappointments in their home lives. Charny points out that therapists often work too hard and too long and leave too little energy for family life. They are often listening so much to others during the day that they do not listen well enough to their own families when they return home. Family therapists tend to set high standards for family functioning based on the idealistic treatment goals they work with all day, putting them at higher risk of disappointment, dissatisfaction, and disillusionment.

In addition to general problems that can emerge for therapists in their home environments, therapists may also experience interpersonal difficulties in their primary relationships. A family therapist will often develop more proficiency with warmth, intimacy, relationships, and life skills than his or her partner, potentially creating a pool of resentment, frustration, and tension at home (Charny, 1982). Some therapists are seduced by their professional role as one who is adored and appreciated by clients who they help so ably. These therapists will undoubtedly feel let down at home by family members who do not see the same heroic qualities in them, as do those with whom they interact in their clinical work. It is important for therapists to create in their personal lives a climate of acceptance for the weaknesses and problems that they and their family members experience. Family therapy is often indicated for clinicians and their families in order to work through common challenges like those mentioned here.

Kaslow and Schulman (1987) also investigated the lives of family therapists and point out some of the multiple roles they juggle and the struggles they have with work

and personal life balance. One of the risks to therapists of poor work and personal life balance is having an overabundance of roles and stressors to deal with. In their article they quoted Freudenberger (1983) who said,

> The everyday world of the therapist encompasses dealing with the demands of one's patients, trainees, students, supervisees, and colleagues, among others. Implicit in the work environment itself are concerns about having enough patients, students, supervisees, and/or securing ample research funds, getting enough publications in refereed journals, being involved in professional and community organizations, and collecting patient fees, royalties and honoraria. The very nature of the 'therapeutic personality' often makes it difficult for the therapist to say 'no' and the constant pressure to overextend one's self is difficult to resist. For some professionals hoping for entrée to prestige and power in their professional field, the ambition to build a fine reputation, coupled with the demands of building a practice and the need for success must be monitored carefully if they are to avoid chronic discontent, burnout, and even breakdown (p. 85).

In addition, these factors may contribute to poor work and personal life balance. The authors went on to make recommendations for therapists who need to create better balance in their work and personal lives (Kaslow & Schulman, 1987). These recommendations included individual and/or family therapy for the therapist; networking with other therapists, and not working in isolation. Also seeking high quality supervision or consultation may be necessary. The authors suggested transferring clients whose issues fall outside the therapist's areas of expertise or whose issues are so close to the therapist's current life experience that it creates pain and stress for the clinician. Upgrading skills with continued reading, workshops, and consultation are recommended. Finally, other suggestions included personal care and replenishment as well as disengaging from the professional role outside of work. Yet another researcher echoed these suggestions and also added that therapists need a network of support both professionally and personally (Lattanzi, 1984). This should include, at the very least, supportive supervisors and colleagues who provide a common language and frame of reference for the clinician.

Based on the research reviewed above, it is clear that a clinician's work can impact their work and personal life balance in many ways. The following sections outline some of the specific factors researchers have found that impact peoples' sense of satisfaction with their work and personal life balance. This includes factors indicating dissatisfaction with balance, those related to satisfactory balance, gender issues, internal and external messages, contextual issues, and coping strategies. Because there is much more research on the general population than on clinicians, both will be discussed in each section.

<div align="center">Poor Work And Personal Life Balance</div>

Poor work and personal life balance is defined for the purposes of this research as a sense people have that one aspect or another of their life consistently consumes more of their time and energy than they would like it to or feel is appropriate. Other phrases used in the literature and in this study as synonyms for poor work and personal life balance include work and personal life imbalance and lack of work and personal life balance. These terms may be used interchangeably throughout this study. Poor balance is being

viewed in the current study as an ongoing phenomenon, not simply one or two days in a year where someone feels that one aspect of their life takes them away from the others; that is actually considered normative.

        Much research has focused on people's experience of poor work and personal life balance. Research indicates that poor balance between work and personal life is relatively common in the general working population. Unfortunately, though not surprisingly, a number of difficulties can result from poor balance among the many roles people play in their lives. Portner (1983) wrote that poor work and personal life balance must be resolved by family members in order for them to feel satisfied with their work and family lives. She found that some of the stressors that impact the satisfaction people feel with their balance are chronic in nature. Some of those include long work hours, taking work and worries home, difficulties making childcare arrangements, and splitting household activities among family members. People in the mental health professions have similar complaints about the stresses of balancing work and personal life. Underwood (1991) found that therapists most often cited "red tape," such as paperwork and meetings, as their primary source of stress in their work life, followed by administrative aspects and lack of time. In addition, therapists who treat their profession as their life rather than as their job convey a sense of poor boundaries, run the risk of poor work and personal life balance, and risk possible burnout. Distance in and deterioration of personal relationships outside of work can occur when clinicians relax their therapeutic boundaries by investing more affect in their clients and work than in their private lives (Boylin & Briggie, 1987).

        In addition to the risks associated with clinical work, many people complain that there is never enough time to accomplish all of the work and family tasks they feel they need to in a given day (Portner, 1983). This is referred to in much of the literature as role overload and can be either short- or long-term in duration. Role overload can also increase moodiness, pressure, and negative attitudes on the job, and decrease competence, tolerance, satisfaction, and creativity (Underwood, 1991). Sometimes the stressor is the sheer lack of time, while at other times it may be the difficulty in schedules that creates conflict. Role overload may occur when the number of roles becomes too great or when the demands of one role are excessive (Barnett & Hyde, 2001). Researchers have found that increased time spent fulfilling a role decreases psychological distress up to a certain point, but increases distress beyond that point (Thoits, 1986; Voydanoff & Donnelly, 1999). For example, researchers found a curvilinear relationship between hours of paid work and psychological distress. They also found a similar relationship between time spent with their spouse and psychological distress. Voydanoff and Donnelly's findings supported their original hypothesis that there are upper limits to the benefits of the number of hours spent in a particular role. Indeed, another researcher discovered not only that there are upper limits to the benefits of hours spent in particular roles, but also that there are upper limits to the number of roles a person plays in their life (Thoits, 1986). Thoits found that five roles is the upper limit in terms of maximum benefit to people's psychological well-being.

        While number of roles and time spent fulfilling the expectations of those roles are important factors in determining well-being, so too are the quality of the roles. A sense of overload in the workplace has been found to be positively associated with symptoms of depression (Klein, Hyde, Essex, & Clark, 1998). In a series of analyses, both cross-

sectional and longitudinal, Barnett and her colleagues have done extensive research on the issue of role quality and distress among dual-earning families (Barnett & Brennan, 1995; Barnett, Brennan, & Marshall, 1994; Barnett, Brennan, Raudenbush, Pleck, & Marshall, 1995; Barnett, Marshall, Raudenbush, & Brennan, 1993). They discovered that negative role quality at work or in one's personal relationships is associated with high psychological distress, regardless of gender. They also found that dissatisfaction with work was detrimental to psychological well-being, and poor marital and parental experiences were linked to diminished psychological wellness for both men and women in their sample. All of these conditions can serve to create poor work and personal life balance for individuals.

Along with the research on the general population, there has also been some research focused on the lack of balance experienced by mental health professionals. One descriptive article provides anecdotal insights into the lives of MFT faculty and is therefore particularly helpful for this current research (Fontes et al., 1998). The authors present information regarding their own personal experiences as MFT faculty and, through their experiences, provide a sense of what factors tell them they lack balance between work and personal life. Those factors include such things as lack of time, lofty and ambiguous demands of tenure and promotion, having to answer to many higher-ups in the bureaucracy of a university setting, and the "publish-or-perish" mentality. Lack of time to accomplish all they have to do is one of the biggest complaints from these four MFT faculty members. They describe themselves as often running against all sorts of clocks, including tenure, biological, semester, publication, and grant deadlines. They may sacrifice sleep, meals, and time off to get all of what they need to cover in a day done, but they often find they still have more to accomplish at the end of the day. The demands of working toward tenure are great and sometimes serve to keep junior faculty in a state of insecurity. Even after tenure is achieved and full-professorship is attained, the authors noted that they often still work on weekends, fall asleep at meetings, miss meals, and take laptops and paperwork on vacation. While anecdotal information like this is important for understanding the intricacies of phenomena like work and personal life balance, the field will benefit from research to confirm and broaden the perspective of these faculty members.

Good Work And Personal Life Balance

It may seem to be common knowledge that a lack of balance between work and personal life is detrimental to a person's physical, psychological, and relationship health, though there is another side to the issue. Not all efforts to balance work and personal life create negative outcomes. It is true that lack of balance is more often associated with the negative, but some researchers also see stimulating or energizing aspects to people's attempts to balance their work and personal lives (Portner, 1983). Portner, for example, believes that feeling a lack of work and personal life balance can be the kind of instigator that helps people clarify their objectives, increase creativity, problem solve, improve cohesiveness, and increase their emotional investment in the areas of their life that are most important to them.

Similarly, the quest to balance work and personal life does not always create irresolvable stress. People sometimes opt for simplifying their lives when competing demands get in the way of their sense of good work and personal life balance. Working parents, for instance, may choose to temporarily stop working to stay home with young

children, or they may psychologically or emotionally retreat from their career for a period of time to expand their involvement with their family (Portner, 1983). This may also include a reduction of time at work and a change in work responsibilities, resuming to previous levels of paid work after children grow more self-reliant or the need for extra time at home has lessened. These actions can serve to improve people's sense of their overall work and personal life balance.

Juggling multiple roles does not always lead to poor work and personal life balance, stress, and dissatisfaction. One longitudinal study by Wethington and Kessler (1989) found that, for a sample of white women, those who joined or rejoined the paid workforce and went from homemaker to part- or full-time work showed lower levels of depression over the three year period studied. Likewise, studies of men's participation at home and work have also indicated that they may benefit from managing multiple roles, a situation often associated with poor work and personal life balance. Barnett, Marshall, and Pleck (1992) found that men's psychological well-being benefited equally from their roles as employee, father, and spouse. Barnett and Hyde (2001) state, "When relationship health is the outcome, again the evidence indicates that multiple roles—and, in particular, employment for women and family involvement for men—are beneficial" (p. 785). These studies help to clarify the notion that factors that sometimes cause a lack of balance in a person's life, such as juggling multiple roles, can sometimes also be beneficial.

Barnett and her colleagues have shown that several processes contribute to the link between multiple roles and beneficial outcomes (Barnett & Hyde, 2001; Barnett, Marshall, & Pleck, 1992; Barnett, Marshall, & Sayer, 1992). These include moderators and mediators such as buffering, which is when the negative effects of stress or failure in one role are cushioned by successes and satisfactions in another role. For men, for example, when relationships with their children and spouse were positive, negative experiences on the job did not have significant effects on distress. For women, challenging, rewarding work offset negative effects of childcare burdens on mental health. Other beneficial outcomes include such things as added income, social support, and increased self-complexity.

Similarly, a qualitative study by Underwood (1991) reported that therapists cited a number of satisfying aspects of their work and personal lives, as well as some stressors. In fact the researcher found that therapists in her study experienced above-average levels of both stress and satisfaction. Respondents reported an average of three areas of satisfaction in their lives. They most frequently reported that they gleaned satisfaction from their peers and coworkers. The next most frequently reported satisfaction was from their internal feelings of personal and work success followed by satisfaction from their children. These three answers accounted for 81% of the sources of satisfaction therapists mentioned. While just over half of therapists in this study reported higher levels of stress than satisfactions in their life, the rest reported more satisfactions. This study, as well as previously reviewed research, shows that some benefits come from the efforts people put into balancing their work and personal lives.

The Role Of Gender In Work And Personal Life Balance

No review of the literature on work and personal life balance would be complete without examining the research that highlights its intersection with gender. The work of the private and public spheres became dichotomized along gender lines like never before

during the Industrial Revolution with men working exclusively outside of the home and women concerning themselves with that which was inside the home (Andrews & Bailyn, 1993). It was during this time that the notion, "Work is work, family is family, and the two spheres do not and should not intersect" (p. 262) became part of the culture's popular thinking. Men continue to be identified with the public arena today even though they are as likely as women to have families. Women continue to take primary responsibility for the private arena, even though the majority of them now work for wage outside the home as well. But research shows that both men and women encounter constraints and conflict in their multiple life roles, though the constraints men face are often different and less severe than those women face.

In theorizing the issue of gender and work and personal life balance, Andrews and Bailyn (1993) described the sociocultural path that led men and women to the issues of balancing work and personal lives. They stated that, even as more women enter the world of paid work, the assumption remains that they, not their husbands, will be the ones to deal with the difficulties in balancing work and personal life. They pointed out that some recent studies show that women indeed are more likely to deal with these realms simultaneously by predilection, necessity, or both. On the other hand, Barnett, Marshall, and Pleck (1992) noted that family roles are key to men's mental health. They found that, among a sample of 300 white, middle class, married men whose wives also work for wage, the quality of their work and family roles contributed equally to their mental health.

Take as an example two men from a study of business school graduates (Andrews & Bailyn, 1993). Both were married with children, both were white business school graduates with established careers, but each responded very differently to the public and private sphere intersection. Both men had different relationships with their work and personal life commitments. One accommodated his private concerns by changing his aspirations and his definitions of success at work. The other chose not to accommodate, but chose instead to deal with the stress and guilt that resulted. The authors pointed out that both men face a common dilemma in the connection between work and family, though their reaction to the dilemma is different.

The larger research study that produced the vignette information above was conducted in 1989 of 41 male business school graduates (Andrews & Bailyn, 1993). All but five were married at the time of the study. Twenty-four of those were in dual career marriages, of whom 15 had children and 9 did not. In addition there were 22 women graduates in the sample. This study gathered both quantitative and qualitative data, and the interviews were with not only the graduates but also their spouses, colleagues, and bosses. During the interviews, the graduates were asked, "How has your relationship affected your progress or performance at work?" and "How has your career affected your relationship?" Responses were combined into a new variable indicating whether they perceived their work and family connection as segmented, synergistic, or mixed. Those who revealed a negative interaction between work and family were considered segmented (what I call in this study "having poor balance"). Those who described positive ways in which their work and family reinforced each other were considered to have a synergistic perceptual framework (what I call "having good balance"). Those who indicated both positive and negative interactions between the two spheres were coded as mixed or ambivalent (what I call "middle of the road"). In general, the researchers found that men

in dual career families versus those in more traditional situations, where the man works for wage and the woman is a homemaker, reported better work and personal life balance.

In comparing the men and women in this study, the authors found that there were dramatic differences in the way the men and women described the intersection of their work, their partner's work, and family relationships (Andrews & Bailyn, 1993). The women tended to see positive interrelations among their own work, their partner's work, and their family relationships in that all three benefited their lives in some way. The men, however, saw no effect of one sphere on the others, or they felt that their careers caused problems for their family lives. This suggests that the women in the sample tended to conceive of a synergy between their work and personal life more than the men. Perhaps they had found ways to bridge the public and private spheres in order to live with less stress. The men, on the other hand, seemed to find the discordance between organizational and cultural expectations and the reality of their lives more difficult to manage than the women.

Based on the qualitative interviews in this study, researchers found that men faced other gender-stereotyped barriers in the workplace in terms of balancing work and personal life (Andrews & Bailyn, 1993). While one manager was accommodating to women who needed flexible work schedules to tend to child issues, he said, "it would feel a little funny" to do so for a father who approached him with a similar request. Interviewees had similar responses when asked to compare men and women in the same positions at their organization on the ease of working a reduced schedule for childcare purposes. Respondents acknowledged that it would be a novel idea for a man to request such a thing, and a man would most likely have more difficulty negotiating a reduced schedule without it impacting his performance review in the future. Indeed, research indicates that a minority of organizations offer both maternity and paternity leave for their employees while more than half offer maternity leave alone. The message for men is that it will be very difficult to negotiate time off for child-related issues, and those who can and do are seen as different, are not respected, and are not as rewarded in their jobs.

Even the men who were both self-employed entrepreneurs and in dual-earner families in the Andrews and Bailyn (1993) study were very stressed both personally and professionally, and experienced high work and personal life imbalance. The females who were in dual-earner families and self-employed entrepreneurs reported being satisfied with their balance. Women seemed to structure their work around their personal life and the arrangement fit their personality. This study provides evidence that it may be difficult for some men to bridge the culturally defined separation between the public and private spheres while some women are better at finding ways to bridge the two. The authors surmise, "…internalized gender norms combine with the gendered cultural assumptions that work and family are separate to create different options as well as different strategies for men and women" (p. 271).

Jones and Fletcher (1993) also conducted research on the differences between how men and women experienced work and personal life balance, but their results were quite different from those of Andrew and Bailyn (1993). They found that women were more likely than men to perceive their work as not stimulating intellectually, a possible precursor of work and personal life imbalance. In addition, women were able to see positive results from their work less often than the men in the study. Yet another study compared the levels of satisfaction with their work and personal life among couples that

were both in the field of psychology (Bryson, Bryson, Licht, & Licht, 1976). The researchers sampled husband and wife psychologists and found that professional wives reported less career satisfaction than their husbands, other male psychologists, or other female clinicians. Most of the women also reported dissatisfaction from constraints imposed by their marriage. This research raises important questions about the gender differences among married clinicians and suggests that it is important to continue to investigate the challenges mental health professionals face when trying to balance their work and personal lives.

Not surprisingly, gender role ideology has been found to impact how people feel about their balance among various life roles. Barnett and Hyde (2001) found that the extent to which a person holds traditional or nontraditional attitudes about social roles of women and men impacts their relationship between their roles and outcome variables. They reported that men and women who espoused more liberal versus more traditional gender-role beliefs benefited from combining family and work roles. It appears that more flexible beliefs about gender roles lead to more success for both men and women in relation to their balance of work and personal life. Non-traditional roles, when chosen by women, often created significant stress. For example, Rasmussen and Guy (1989) described female psychiatrists as having chosen not one but two non-traditional roles when entering their chosen career field. The first non-traditional role was as a medical doctor and the other was as a psychotherapist. The authors suggested that, while some elements of going against the norm may be thrilling and invigorating to these women, they also faced poor social acceptance, feelings of isolation, and defensiveness against a more traditional role or occupation. As society becomes more accepting of women in professional settings, most women will continue to experience "strong sociocultural pressure to replicate the traditional role of women dependent on, inferior to, and non-competitive with men" (Moore, 1982, p. 438). Rassmussen and Guy (1989) stated that this pressure is likely to increase as women attain higher professional status in traditionally male-dominated careers. Women in these careers may experience isolation, inferiority, and negative feelings about themselves as employees, thereby increasing their likelihood of feeling dissatisfied with their paid work and their work and personal life balance.

Division of household labor on gender lines is one of the factors that may lead to balance conflict in families. Renegotiating gender expectations in families where both parents work is a challenge shared by many people (Haddock et al., 2001). As cited in the previous paragraph, some research indicates that less traditional gender norms appear to benefit men and women in various ways (Gottman, 1999). However, several studies reported that, while men contribute more to child rearing and household responsibilities now than in the past (Barnett & Rivers, 1996), generally their contributions still fall short of those of their wives (Williams, 2000). This leads to women taking on more of the responsibilities at home before, during, and after their full day in the paid workforce, creating a situation where working women with families are more challenged to balance their work and personal lives than their male counterparts.

The study reviewed earlier by Pines (1993) showed some gender differences among 80 male and female social workers in terms of the importance of social support on participants' experience of burnout. Pines found that for men, the more burned out they are the more they will value support from their social environment, thereby improving

their sense of work and personal life. For women, it seems social support is always important to their sense of work and personal life balance, whether they are burned out or not, and women reported more often that they value the importance of social support functions on their balance. On the other hand, in almost all cases people said they wanted or needed more social support than was available to them at any given time, indicating a general need for increased social support for all working people to help them improve their sense of work and personal life balance.

Although plenty of gender issues have been reported in the work and personal life balance literature, there is little agreement and consensus on how the two are linked. More research is needed, therefore, to both quantify and qualify the gender issues faced by people who are balancing work and personal life, especially on a broader population of respondents.

<u>Messages Regarding Work And Personal Life Balance</u>

An important question to ask in understanding work and personal life balance has to do with the messages people carry with them about what it means to balance those two spheres. People identify these messages as originating both from within and from outside themselves. These messages can be from family of origin, society, religion, education, colleagues, work environment, and a whole host of other arenas. Many messages that originate on the outside are internalized, while other messages are so much a part of a person's makeup that they seem to have originated from within. Some messages seem to be overt while others are more covert. Indeed, messages both internal and external often serve as a powerful motivator as well as a catalyst for expectations. Portner (1983) notes,

> The way we perform our work and family roles and the satisfaction we feel about these roles are shaped by various kinds of expectations we or others have about these roles. Some expectations are related to social norms or ideals about what mothers or fathers ought to do. Other expectations are those we have of ourselves. Still others are expectations our employers have of us (p. 166).

<u>Workplace Messages</u>

Some messages people get from their work environments give them information about what is expected and acceptable in terms of work and personal life balance. In this day and age, for example, employers often expect staff to work more than eight hours a day, five days a week (Portner, 1983). This expectation is almost always ladened with additional expectations that promotion and above-average performance evaluations are tied to working more than the base number of hours a week. The time at work reduces the amount of time spent at home, and if the employee is the primary homemaker as well, stress and guilt can increase as tasks at home do not get the attention required.

Another type of internalized, workplace-related message is a sense of how important an employee feels he or she is to their colleagues, bosses, and clients. Many people carry with them a sense of how effective they are as employees. These messages impact how worthwhile, productive, and indispensable a person feels on the job, and whether the person believes he or she is contributing to the greater good of the workplace. A person's sense of autonomy and ability to be involved in decision-making in the workplace is part of his or her belief and positive self-opinion. A person may have a sense of hopelessness, incompetence, unsuccessfulness, depression, and job dissatisfaction when autonomy, participation, and job importance is missing (Underwood,

1991). An employee's feelings of balance, satisfaction with work, and sense of overall well-being can in turn be impacted by these messages.

<u>Family of Origin Messages</u>

Not only are messages from the workplace internalized but so too are the messages people receive from their families of origins. Portner (1983) describes as a significant source of stress the attitudes or expectations family members and others have on people's balance of work and personal life. In a rare insiders glimpse of four prominent MFT faculty members, Fontes, Piercy, Thomas, and Sprenkle (1998) wrote an article about the issues that impact them as family therapy educators. One of those issues, as described by Piercy, is the message he received from his family of origin and the ways in which he sees it impacting his present sense of work and personal life balance. Piercy describes himself as having internalized two opposing messages from growing up in his home. The first was associated with the devotion he saw in his parents marriage, where he believes he internalized a "take time for each other" message about marriage and family. In addition, he observed his parents working very hard and having a tremendous amount of faith in him. He also internalized, from this, a message that he could accomplish anything he set out to do if he only put into it all of his effort. Piercy states, "The challenge of negotiating between these two messages is one of the most consistent struggles in my life." This serves as a poignant example of how much of an impact family of origin messages about work and personal life balance can have on a person's sense of self in the workplace.

Another faculty member in the same article described her dilemmas with work and personal life balance (Fontes, Piercy, Thomas, & Sprenkle, 1998). She recalled internalizing a family message to make good use of life, and a life of service to others was admirable. She also acknowledged that being a family therapy educator carries with it the sense that work is always hanging over her head and she is never truly done. She described the hours spent at her desk at work or home reading as much as she can, and stealing an extra hour or two at the office on a Sunday morning while her children were at Hebrew school. She remarked that her work had not come at the expense of her personal life, though, because she had managed to personify the Superwoman phenomenon, which she said is beginning to lose its appeal. For years she summoned every bit of energy to raise children, teach, advise, commute, and share household chores. This often felt like swimming long distance upstream. She described her experience of severe role strain as she practiced being a full-time wife, mother, and MFT faculty member. She looked at herself later and realized that she was not creating the best model for her students on how to balance work and personal life. She reported feeling thankful that her children let her know when they needed something from her, that she or her husband could be home when the children got off the school bus, and that pictures at work of her children reminded her to go home each day. These were the important elements that she placed in her life that helped her improve her sense of work and personal life balance.

<u>Coping Strategies Used To Manage Work And Personal Life Balance</u>

Much of the research literature concludes with discussions that are bulging with suggestions for people who are trying to balance their work and personal lives. With all of the suggestions that exist in the literature about how to cope with the issues of work and personal life balance, an important over-arching statement is that the right approach

is one that feels right and works for the individual. This section reviews literature that suggests coping strategies both for the general public, clinical populations, and then specifically for mental health professionals to use in their own lives.

In a nationally representative study of 2,958 wage and salaried employees, employed parents reported areas where employers can strategize ways of helping them deal with their work and family life balance (Galinsky et al., 1996). The authors suggested employers focus on improving conditions in: 1) workplace policies and fringe benefits such as flex time, leave, and dependent care benefits; 2) characteristics of the job such as autonomy, job security, and employee control over schedule; and 3) characteristics of the workplace environment such as advancement opportunities, supportive culture, and support from supervisors. This study showed, however, that only one of the above factors, characteristics of the job, predicted conflict between family and work life, explaining 6% of the variance in the outcome. Employed versus unemployed parents experienced lower conflict, less stress, and better use of coping skills when they experienced increased autonomy at work, less hectic and frenetic work, and more of a sense of job security.

A qualitative study aimed at developing a new work and personal life balance theory found that communication and relationship development are keys to improving work and personal life balance (Clark, 2000). Communication with co-workers, and supervisors about family events and situations can increase their awareness, thereby enabling them to be more supportive, informed, and understanding about the happenings in an employee's personal life. The same is true for informing family members of that which is happening at work. Making work and home more integral parts of a person's identity can lead to increased influence both at work and at home, thus allowing for better work and personal life balance.

A number of very recent studies have found that one mediating variable for developing good work and personal life balance is job flexibility (Clark, 2000; Clark, 2001; Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001). In one very large study of 6,451 IBM employees, researchers found that about half of those surveyed described difficulties balancing their work and personal lives (Hill et al., 2001). Perceived flexibility, defined as an employee's ability to choose their work location and schedule, was strongly and positively correlated with work and personal balance for both men and women. Perceived job flexibility enabled employees to experience good work and personal life balance and to work longer hours before they felt their balance was negatively impacted. The benefits of flexibility were found to be even more important to parents than non-parents in the sample. Flexible work enables parents to be more synchronized with the schedules of their children, thereby enabling parents to better balance work and personal life. The authors surmised that just a few of the possible benefits of this flexibility on families could be less marital conflict, better monitoring of children, increased periods of breastfeeding after the birth of an infant, and less depression.

Plenty of suggestions come from and are given to mental health professionals on the topic of balancing their lives and reducing risk of burnout and unbalanced living (Boylin & Briggie, 1987; Case, 1992; Chrestman, 1995; Friedman, 1985; Pearlman, 1995). These suggestions are meant both for the self-of-the-therapist as well as for them to use with their clients who may be dealing with their own issues of work and personal life balance. Suggestions for coping strategies to improve balance come in all shapes and

sizes, whether they are physical, emotional, psychological, social, or spiritual in nature. Some recommend mental health professionals try the use of humor to help alleviate some of the strain of balancing work and personal life (Boylin & Briggie, 1987; Case, 1992). This idea was echoed by Friedman (1985) who pointed out that humor, as well as other strategies, can decrease stress on the therapist within the context of the therapeutic session.

Other suggestions for reducing stress while working with families included permitting the family to keep the problem, maintaining a flexible schedule, sharing feelings in sessions, allowing silence in the room, and purposively defining one's therapeutic role. Some researchers agreed that family therapists can use specific therapeutic interventions in their practice that will have positive implications for their own health outside of the therapy room (Boylin & Briggie, 1987). One suggestion, for example, was to instill in the family a sense that every family member is an integral part of the team by insisting that every person be present for family sessions. Metaphorically, this intervention suggests to the therapist the importance of the involvement of all family members, including themselves, in their own personal lives. It can also serve to mirror the therapist's own need to avoid isolation in their personal life, thereby providing more opportunity for a satisfactory sense of balance. Other interventions that serve to mirror the real-life importance of work and personal life balance included being part of a co-therapy team, supervision, and joining a professional support group to process some of the issues that come up in both the work and personal spheres of life.

A recent study used grounded theory to investigate the adaptive strategies of 47 middle-class, dual earning parents who were successfully balancing work and personal life (Haddock et al, 2001). These couples all resided in three urban areas in the state of Colorado, had at least one child 12-years old or younger living at home, and both worked for wage at least 35 hours a week. All couples were pre-screened to ensure they thought of themselves as: 1) relatively skilled at balancing work and personal life; 2) more successful than failing in their attempts to balance work and personal life; 3) creative in their attempts to balance work and personal life; 4) satisfied with their performance at work and at home; and 5) feeling that they have quality and quantity time with their spouse and children. The average length of marriage for the couples was nearly 13 years. The average age of the women was 38. The average age of the men was 40. The occupations of the couples were diverse with at least one professor in the sample. Women worked an average of 40 hours per week while the men worked an average of 45 hours a week. The majority of respondents were white and a few were Hispanic, African American, Asian American, and Native American. Respondents completed a battery of written questionnaires and a conjoint, semi-structured interview lasting approximately 90 minutes. Researchers used an inductive, cross-case approach to the analysis in the hopes that the data would "speak for itself" (p. 449).

Ten strategies emerged that helped guide couples in making decisions and shaping their behavior regarding their various responsibilities (Haddock et al., 2001). Those strategies included valuing family as their highest priority, striving for partnership in their marital relationship, deriving meaning from work, maintaining work boundaries, focusing and producing at work, prioritizing family fun, taking pride in dual earning, limiting activities that restricted family interactions, making decisions proactively, and valuing time. The couples did not implement all of these strategies all of the time, but

instead they reported that the strategies guided their behaviors and decisions. The researchers added that, while it is clear that the couples in their study have been creative in designing a life that works for them, their success is also dependent on contextual factors and other variables such as a responsive workplace and higher than average family income.

Along the same lines as adaptive strategies for work and personal life balance, another qualitative study, this time of 80 mental health professionals, examined the mediating factors that helped stave off burnout among social workers and found that social support was key (Pines, 1993). Burnout, as mentioned earlier, is an extreme consequence of long-term work and personal life imbalance. Those providing support to these social workers included supervisors, subordinates, colleagues, spouses, children, family, and friends. Social support came in the form of listening, emotional support and challenge, sharing of social reality, and technical support. The most highly rated functions were listening and emotional support. The authors found that the more subjects experienced burnout the more important the social support was for them. Social support, it would then follow, would be an important mediator for work and personal life balance.

According to one study looking at the impact on therapists of work with trauma survivors, another mediating variable that serves to improve work and personal life balance is professional experience. This was associated with decreased avoidance, dissociation, anxiety and trauma symptoms (Chrestman, 1995). Getting additional training (measured by number of Clinical Education Units) and an increase in percentage of time spent in research activities was linked with decreased avoidance and served as an important mediator for therapists' well-being, connectedness, and network building. The researcher also found that therapists who seek out other therapists through conferences and other professional activities are more able to identify with others and regain a sense of community.

Another contribution to the literature on ideas to help therapists improve their sense of balance comes from Pearlman (1995). She states that balancing work, play, and rest helps therapists remain grounded and steady in their identities. One suggestion includes socializing with friends and family to reconnect with the self as something other than a work persona (therapist, employee, teacher, researcher, etc.). Another is engaging in activities that help one feel nurtured, receptive, and safe. Exercising one's creativity by participating in cultural or artistic pursuits is another suggestion. A therapist can reconnect with his or her own body by way of exercise, massage, dance, improved diet, deep breathing, and rest. It is important to rebuild one's world-view by spending time with healthy children and adults, working as an activist on issues of social justice, and travel. Another suggestion is rejuvenating one's spirituality through journaling, meditation, yoga, and engaging with art, nature, or religion. Pearlman also suggests that therapists balance their caseload of clients so as not to have too many emotionally draining, difficult cases. She recommends balancing the workday to include some therapy, supervision, meetings, and breaks. Finally, she endorses balancing clinical and non-clinical work by creating time each day for self-care activities such as taking a non-working lunch, a phone call to a loved one, walking outdoors, and meditation. All of these activities serve to help a therapist feel more balanced and reduces their risk of burnout and dissatisfaction.

Another study examined the effect of leisure activity on therapists' self-report of burnout (Hoeksma, Guy, Brown, & Brady, 1993). Researchers surveyed over 200 psychologists across the U.S. and found that "the degree of satisfaction with leisure time activities was negatively correlated to the degree of burnout experienced by psychotherapists" (p. 54). The leisure activities were psychological, aesthetic, social, and educational in nature. The number of hours a week spent engaging in leisure activities was negatively correlated with degree of burnout. The authors suggest that therapists who are involved in satisfying leisure activities may be guarding against burnout, especially those that are relaxing, that provide relief from daily stressors, and that increase one's sense of personal accomplishment. In addition, therapists can help prevent burnout by limiting the amount of professional work they do every week.

<u>Methodologies Used To Study Work And Personal Life Balance</u>

There are a mix of methods used to study the issues of work and personal life balance. Historically, mostly quantitative studies have examined work and personal life intersections. However there has been a recent increase in both mixed method and qualitative methods when studying work and personal life balance. This may be because understanding how people balance their work and personal lives, how they make meaning of their balance, and the advice they have for others are more easily understood and explored using qualitative inquiry. For example, a gender-related study by Andrews and Bailyn (1993) of the private and public spheres of life used a mixed-method approach to gather data that was rich in detail, imagery, and that retained a certain level of emotional impact. Although the study was small, it contained a lot of information about how people experienced the dilemma of balancing work and personal life. They were able to compare men's and women's experiences in a wide range of issues, and then provided rich quotes to illustrate respondents' ideas using the respondents' own voices.

Another qualitative study that focused on therapists' self-reports of work and personal life balance was a dissertation by Underwood (1991). This study of 30 therapists used a snowball sampling method but, because the interviews were to be face-to-face, only included therapists in one locale. The number of participants in this sample was large for a qualitative inquiry and the range of level of therapeutic job experience was wide (between 2 and 23 years of therapy experience), yet the gender mix of respondents was poor (four men and 26 women). Besides the investigator, two other raters were used to cross-code the qualitative responses, showing a great deal of attention to the issue of methodological rigor.

The only article I found that specifically addressed work and personal life balance among MFT faculty members (as opposed to mental health professionals in general) was an anecdotal description of four faculty members's self-issues (Fontes et al., 1998). This article, while not research-based, provided a descriptive, interesting, thought-provoking account of how four MFT faculty members conceptualized their work and personal life issues. In many ways the results were similar to the open-ended, semi-structured interview responses from more formalized qualitative research studies. The faculty clearly addressed a set of focused issues in a personally revealing way. The method they used to disseminate information in this article, while not rigorous methodologically, served its purpose in shedding light on an issue not researched with this subset of mental health professionals.

<u>The Current Study</u>

Literature currently exists on the work and personal life balance of the general population as well as of mental health professionals. Some studies indicate that work and personal life balance is challenging for clinicians due to the stressful nature of their work, but other studies show there are aspects of being a clinician that serve to improve work and personal life balance. No research, however, has studied the work and personal life balance of MFT faculty members. Only two published studies look at any aspect of the work and personal lives of MFT faculty members, and those were either purely anecdotal or focused only on brief case examples of a few faculty members.

My research will fill a gap in the published literature on work and personal life balance. While there is an abundance of research on work and personal life balance on general populations as well as the sub-population of mental health professionals, nothing has been published on the specialized population of MFT faculty. These individuals are unique in that they are not only therapists in their own right, but they are training the next generation of therapists as well as publishing, teaching, researching, and mentoring. MFT faculty members also juggle a plethora of roles in their personal lives. They are also unique in that they have been trained systemically and are well versed in relationship dynamics, problem solving, and the intersection between systems. As therapists and scholars of family therapy they are constantly exposed to ideas and situations of human difficulty and problems. As teachers they are challenged by the needs of their students, their university community, and their field. As a result, MFT faculty members may find it challenging to find a satisfactory, on-going balance in their lives due to their experience of juggling so many emotionally charged and time consuming roles.

While the general literature on work and personal life balance is foundationally critical for this study, more complete, in-depth information is needed in order to understand MFT faculty members' experiences. Although this study is based on interviews with only 16 MFT faculty members, it goes further than any other published research in that it begins to address the specific elements of MFT faculty members' work and personal life balance.

A mixed-method study design is the most appropriate to use at this stage of inquiry considering so little is known about the work and personal life balance of MFT faculty members in the U.S. In that so many of the research articles reviewed above have used similar mixed-method or exclusively qualitative methodologies, this research follows their lead in attempting to not quantify but qualify this phenomenon. In qualifying the work and personal life balance issues of MFT faculty members, I will use many of their actual words and phrases to provide a descriptive, exploratory glimpse into some of the experiences of this seldom-researched population.

CHAPTER III
Methods
Introduction

This research was conducted over the course of one and a half years, from Fall of 2000 to Spring of 2002. The research emerged out of interest from Dr. Karen Rosen, Dr. Bill Northey at AAMFT, and participants of the 2002 AAMFT research conference. Karen and I began to develop the research design and protocols with suggestions from Bill. After the initial questionnaire was developed and the data collection procedures were refined, I was invited to take over the research as a thesis, at which time Bill was no longer involved. Karen supervised my work from that point on, providing oversight, guidance, coding expertise, and editorial comments throughout. She also co-created the coding scheme for analysis. Throughout this paper, therefore, whenever I mention "we" I am referring to Karen and myself, the research team.

Participants and Recruitment Process

In the fall of 2000, the researcher team obtained permission from AAMFT and COAMFTE to use their list-serves to recruit study participants. These list-serves contained names of professionals interested in research on marriage and family therapy-related topics. Bill Northey explained that the vast majority of the names were of people at organizations of higher learning in the United States. Bill was unable to provide a profile of the people included in the list-serves, though he was confident that many of the MFT faculty members with whom we wanted to speak were represented in the lists.

I sent e-mail messages to all members of the list-serves explaining the study and requesting that interested faculty members go to the website where further instructions would guide them through the questionnaire. In order to target the intended population of respondents, the e-mails and informed consent stated that we were interested in surveying MFT educators in the U.S. I sent three rounds of e-mails to the list-serves over a three-month period. For those who were unable to access our website due to technical difficulties, I sent a copy of the questionnaire and consent form and requested that they fill out the questionnaire, sign the consent form, and return both using an enclosed postage-paid envelope.

After each participant completed and submitted their questionnaire responses, the final question asked if they would be willing to participate in the qualitative interview phase of the study. Those who wanted to participate then typed their name, phone number, and e-mail address in the space provided. That information was then forwarded to Karen via e-mail along with the participant's unique questionnaire identification number. The information was protected on Karen's password-protected computer. She then sent an e-mail to me with the identification numbers of all of the people who volunteered to participate in the interview so as not to disclose their names until after the interview sample were selected. We did this because some respondents might have been well-known in the field and we wanted to reduce the risk of sampling faculty based on their notoriety.

I chose interview participants using a purposive sample. The reason I used a purposive sample was to study a few individuals intensely with the goal of generalizing to a theory, not to a population (Newfield, Sells, Smith, Newfield, et al., 1996). A purposive sample requires that the research establish a list of criteria that the sample must have (Newfield, et al., 1996). All of those I selected were full-time faculty (9- or 12-

month appointments), taught in an MFT program, and had been an MFT faculty member for at least one year. In order to achieve some sample diversity, I first selected an equal number of men and women, then varied the position level (full versus assistant professor), selected a range of ethnicities, chose a variety of state representations, selected both married, divorced, and single participants, then chose people with a variety of levels of satisfaction with their current balance of work and personal life. Once I selected the participants, I sent the selected identification numbers back to Karen. She matched the ID numbers to the people who volunteered and sent me the names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses of each of the selected participants.

I used the criteria mentioned above to purposively select an equal number of men and women from the 29 who volunteered to be interviewed. Of those, all of the women only half of the men agreed to be interviewed. Two of the purposively selected men did not reply to any of the e-mails or phone calls inviting them to be interviewed. One other replied that he was leaving the country and would not be available during the period of data collection. The final person was willing, scheduled, postponed due to a technical difficulty, and was unresponsive to follow-up e-mail requests for rescheduling. A second round of purposive sampling was conducted so that an equal number of men and women would be interviewed. All of the men in the second-round of purposive sampling were willing to be interviewed. Four of the five were selected and the fifth was excused from inclusion so that equal numbers of men and women would be represented in the second phase of data collection.

Procedures

I used a mixed-method approach in my study, including a brief questionnaire followed by in-depth telephone interviews. The two phases of data collection included Phase I (quantitative) and Phase II (qualitative). Phase I included a quantitative questionnaire to gather exploratory and demographic information from the study sample. The second purpose for Phase I was to recruit faculty for the second phase of data collection. Phase II consisted of the in-depth qualitative telephone interviews. These interviews provided the depth and breadth of information needed to more fully understand how MFT faculty members balance different aspects of their lives. Because of the exploratory nature of this research, in-depth qualitative telephone interviews ware deemed the most appropriate qualitative method of data collection. The following sections describe in full the method used for both phases of data collection.

Phase I – Quantitative Data Collection

I collected quantitative data using a web-based questionnaire that consisted of multiple-choice and a few short answer questions. The research team designed a consent form (Appendix A) and questionnaire (Appendix B) for the purpose of this research study. I designed the questionnaire to take no more than 30 minutes to complete, and for the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity, the questionnaire did not contain any questions about the participants' identity (i.e., name, address, e-mail, university). Instead, a consultant designed the web-based program to assign a unique identification number to each participant at the time the respondent submitted his or her data.

Participants who decided to complete the questionnaire clicked on a hyperlink in the e-mail message I sent which took them directly to our web-based questionnaire. The first screen they encountered was the informed consent (Appendix A). They began by reading the informed consent that contained information on the purpose of the study, the

study procedures, risks and benefits of participation, and a statement of confidentiality. The consent form instructed participants that the researchers would not compensate anyone for their participation, participants were free to withdraw at any point with no professional or personal risk, that the research has been approved by Virginia Tech's Internal Review Board, and provided a list of the names and phone numbers of the key researchers. Those who agreed to our terms clicked a link that read, "I have read the above. I agree to participate. Proceed to survey." Those who decided not to participate clicked a button that said, "I do not want to participate" and were exited from the system.

Participants who were interested in filling out the questionnaire but who were unable to access our web-based survey were able to send a request asking for a mailed paper copy of the consent form and questionnaire. These individuals were instructed to send back their questionnaire and signed informed consent in the pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelope provided.

For quick and simple data entry, the researcher team hired a consultant to design the web-based questionnaire. The designer included a feature that enabled the data to be automatically entered into a database for future analysis. For those who sent in a paper version of the questionnaire, I assigned a unique ID number to the interview and entered those by hand into the database. The database was saved as an Access database and was delivered to the researchers via e-mail at the end of this phase of data collection. The consultant disabled the web-based questionnaire after delivery of the database so no late participants could enter data after analysis began.

Phase II – Qualitative Data Collection

The second phase of data collection consisted of one round of in-depth telephone interviews, all conducted by me. In-depth interviews are particularly useful when the researcher wants to investigate people's perceptions of the world and the meaning they make of the events they experience (Sprenkle & Moon, 1996). We designed the interviews to fill in the gaps of knowledge that emerged from the first phase of data collection and to obtain a thorough understanding of the interviewees' experiences of balancing their work and person lives. This included their struggles and triumphs in their quest for balance, the messages they perceived as working on their sense of balance, the way others thought they handled their balance, and suggestions for future MFT faculty members. We designed the open-ended questions to be flexible and fluid. This allowed the interviewer to probe and investigate more completely while listening to the participants' stories and creating a channel for discovery (Boss, Dahl, & Kaplan, 1996). The actual interview questions appear in Appendix C.

In order to stay connected to the experiences of the participants, I carefully listened to the participants' stories, carefully transcribed their interviews verbatim, sent them the transcripts for comments, and sent them the preliminary results for comments and feedback. All of these activities were important to ensure I had recorded an accurate interpretation of the faculty's experiences (Boss et al., 1996).

Once I purposively chose the interview participants (discussed earlier under recruitment), I sent each faculty member an e-mail to assess their ongoing interest in the interview phase of the study and to set up an appointment for the in-depth phone interview. I then sent an e-mail to each participant confirming the date and time, especially noting the difference in time zones so as to prevent miscommunication. I also included in this e-mail the broad research questions, the expected length of the interview

(approximately 30-minutes), and a confirmation of the phone number at which they preferred to be called. At the agreed upon time and day, I called the participant, reviewed the procedures of the interview, clarified any questions they had about the research, and asked for verbal consent to proceed and to audiotape the interview.

At the conclusion of the telephone interview, I thanked the interviewees and asked for their permission to e-mail them the transcript of the interview for them to review and on which to comment. I sent each interviewee a thank you letter and the transcript via e-mail with instructions to reply with any comments or corrections within one week. About half of the respondents replied with comments. Some simply said they read the transcript and it was fine, they sent back typographical corrections, and a couple sent back requests that I not quote particular parts that they thought would easily identify them.

I conducted the first 12 interviews between March, 2001 and June, 2001. I then conducted a preliminary analysis, detailed below. From there I developed a poster presentation of the methods and preliminary findings and presented to MFT colleagues at a national conference. My intent was to generate ideas, elicit reactions, and gather thoughts from an audience of colleagues. This was especially important since I had been so immersed in the data for so long. From there I stepped away from the analysis for a few weeks and returned to collect data from the final four interviewees. At this point I was able to test some of my hypotheses with the remaining respondents and gather more support for the data I collected in the previous 12 interviews.

In qualitative research, the researcher keeps journals and memos to record abstract thoughts and concepts about the data. These often include speculative comments about theory and the relevance of emerging issues to the extant literature (Gilgun, Daly, & Handel, 199; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). It is also important for the researcher to keep track of the impact of their biases during analysis, and journals detailing the researcher's experiences, emotions, insights, and questions resulting from the analysis can be recorded (Boss et al., 1996). The journals I kept included these elements as well as my thoughts about interpretations of the stories I heard, connections among participants' experiences, and my countertransference of what I heard both during the interview, while typing the transcripts, and while analyzing the data.

Qualitative research also calls on the researcher to be the primary data collection instrument (Moon, Dillon, & Sprenkle, 1990). I recognize my influence on the data collection, not just as a person, but also as an individual who is embarking on this career I am studying. In many ways I am simply a few steps behind many of the faculty members with whom I spoke, and my keen awareness of my interest in their experiences was important information for analysis. I am hopeful that my interest in the experiences of the faculty with whom I spoke served to convey a sense of inquisitiveness and openness in order to help build rapport with the interviewees. In a number of instances their stories stirred thoughts or feelings in me that I knew I needed to discuss with my co-researcher in order to get some closure and to think through how those might impact the analysis. In order to better preserve my role as researcher, I recorded journal entries with my observations of my own process in order to remember them during the analysis.

Unit of Analysis

The primary unit of analysis for this current research study was the individual. The questions focused on how MFT faculty member, as individuals, experienced their

work and personal life balance. In an effort to produce a somewhat more systemic slant, I did inquire as to how significant people in their life viewed their balance. This was not simply self-reported data, instead I requested they speak with someone close to them before the interview to ask how others perceive the faculty's work and personal life balance. Regardless, the unit of analysis for this study is the individual.

<u>Data Analysis</u>

I analyzed the quantitative data using SPSS 11.0 for Windows. This analysis was restricted to frequency distributions to provide descriptive statistics on the questionnaire data. The analysis included data from the entire sample of 43 participants as well as another displaying results from just the group of 16 phone interviewees. This largely demographic information from the questionnaires serves as additional information in support of the qualitative analysis.

I focused most of the analysis on the qualitative data in order to develop a broad, rich, descriptive picture of the interplay of the work and personal life balance of the 16 MFT faculty members. The purpose of qualitative analysis is not to tie up all loose ends but to create a sense of better understanding of the experiences of the participants (Boss et al., 1996). Data analysis in qualitative research is a recursive and iterative process where data is collected and analyzed concurrently (Moon, Dillon & Sprenkle, 1990). In addition, the process of analyzing this data included my immersion into the data in order to observe and define what is there and to notice what is missing. It also involved creative synthesis of information so that the results are communicated in a meaningful and accurate way.

Before analyzing the data, I transcribed each interview verbatim using a word processing system. I excluded information that the interviewees asked me to mask, names of specific people, or any other identifying information. I typed each interview as a separate file, spell checked each, and then sent them to each respondent for verification. After I made the necessary corrections or additions to the interview, I then saved the file as a text file in order to download it into the analysis software package.

I analyzed the qualitative interview data using QSR NVivo Version 1.2 qualitative analysis software. This software helped me organize the data so that I could employ the constant comparative method more easily. The constant comparative method is a systematic process by which the content of the data is named or coded, compared to similar occurrences, and organized into categories. I began my coding by reading the first four or five interviews and making notes on a piece of paper regarding the themes and patterns that were emerging. I provided Karen, my co-analyst, a copy of these themes and a hard copy of the first four interviews. Together we were able to break down into broader concepts the ideas and notions that faculty members discussed by identifying themes and patterns found across all interviews. I then returned to the computer where I electronically entered codes in each interview based on Karen and my discussions. We continued to code in this way as more interviews were conducted, transcribed, and analyzed. We met approximately every other week to examine our codes and come to a consensus about under which category a concept should go. We continued this way with the remaining interviews, fine-tuning and re-examining the themes and codes. As a result of that process, we were able to come up with a set of categories that eventually became the basis for the results section, described in great detail in the next chapter.

To bolster the reliability of the analysis, Karen and I coded interviews apart and together, comparing and commenting on each other's thought processes. Karen was instrumental in providing broader, more distant opinions of the data considering she was not as intimately involved with the raw data collection and transcript creation. This undoubtedly reduced some of the rater bias and improved the validity of the results. Karen's and my written journals and memos were typed up and kept as data for the discussion section. This information was helpful in describing our personal reactions to results, our process of coming to certain decisions or conclusions, and providing some insight into our processes during the data collection and analysis.

CHAPTER IV
Results
<u>Introduction</u>

My intent for this research study was to develop an in-depth, descriptive understanding of the experiences of a few MFT faculty members across the country in terms of their work and personal life balance. My hope was to gather data from a relatively diverse set of faculty, so I used an initial data collection technique of a web-based quantitative survey followed by in-depth interviews with a subset of faculty members. In total, 43 MFT faculty members responded to my e-mail request for participation. All but three were able to use the web-based format. All participants were members of two list serves, AAMFT Research and COAMFTE. All were full-time, part-time, or adjunct faculty who were working as MFT educators in the U.S. MFT educators means they are working in MFT graduate programs (master's, certificate programs, or doctoral programs) or they are teaching, mentoring, and supervising in an affiliated department such as counseling psychology or pastoral counseling.

The first part of this chapter will focus on the quantitative results from the 43 faculty members who filled out the web-based questionnaire. The bulk of the results section, however, will focus on the qualitative results of the in-depth phone interviews conducted with eight male and eight female MFT faculty members. The following sections outline some of the results from these qualitative, in-depth phone interviews. After the demographic sections, I describe the most salient themes that emerged from the respondents' comments during the interviews. Through these themes I develop a structured portrait of the issues and factors that play a part in how faculty members make sense and meaning of their balance. These include themes regarding how these faculty members feel about their balance and what indicators they use to make sense of their balance. Other themes involve the things that serve to enhance and reduce faculty members' work and personal life balance and how gender interacts with their issues of balance. Finally, I discuss themes surrounding the coping strategies used by faculty to balance the two realms and a variety of suggestions regarding how future MFT faculty members can balance their work and personal lives.

<u>Quantitative Results of Questionnaire Respondents</u>

While the focus of the results section is qualitative, it is important to highlight some of the quantitative results of the entire sample questionnaire respondents such as the demographics and levels of satisfaction. This data is presented here to provide some context for the qualitative results. I collected demographic data for each faculty member by way of the web-based questionnaire. The actual demographic questions are in Appendix B. First I will detail some of the quantitative results from the entire set of 43 questionnaire respondents followed by demographics and levels of satisfaction for the 16 interview respondents.

Table 1 shows the frequencies of the basic demographic data for all 43 respondents. As the table shows, there was a balance of men and women, a range of ages represented, and almost evenly divided by those with children at home versus those with no children at home. There was also a balance of position levels and years as a faculty member. Ethnicity and whether the respondent had the option of tenure in their position were not as well represented. Under ethnicity, Table 1 shows that the vast majority of respondents were white. The other 14% included one person who self-defined as Asian,

two Latino, and 3 "other." One of the "others" self-defined as European-American, one Jewish-American, and one did not elaborate.

Table 1. Demographics of Questionnaire Respondents

N = 43				
Item	%		Item	%
Gender			Relationship Status	
Female	44%		Single	12%
Male	56%		Partnered	88%
Age			Position Level	
< 39	31%		Full Professor	21%
40-49	31%		Associate Prof	42%
50+	37%		Assistant Prof	30%
			Other	7%
Ethnicity			Tenure Status	
White	86%		Tenure track	84%
Other	14%		No tenure track/	16%
			Other	
Children Home?			Years as Faculty	
Yes	51%		1-4	21%
No	49%		5-9	33%
			10-14	28%
			15+	19%

In addition to demographic-type variables, one of the questions from the web-based questionnaire asked, "On a scale from 1 to 5, what is your **CURRENT** level of satisfaction with the balance you have between your work and family life?" The response categories were: 1) not at all satisfied; 2) not very satisfied; 3) satisfied; 4) very satisfied; and 5) extremely satisfied. The first two response categories were combined to create the new category called "Not Satisfied." Answer categories three, four, and five were combined to create the new category called "Satisfied." Table 2 shows the frequency distribution for this question of all 43 respondents.

Table 2. Questionnaire Respondents' Current Level of Satisfaction with Work and Personal Life Balance

Question Wording	N	%
Current Level of Satisfaction with Work and Personal Life Balance		
Not Satisfied	12	28%
Satisfied	31	72%
TOTAL	43	100%

I cross-tabulated respondents' reported level of satisfaction with a number of demographic-type variables from the quantitative data. Figure 1 below shows the

distribution of gender by respondents' level of satisfaction with their work and personal life balance. The graph shows that the majority of men and women in the sample reported feeling satisfied with their balance, though more men than women reported feeling satisfied.
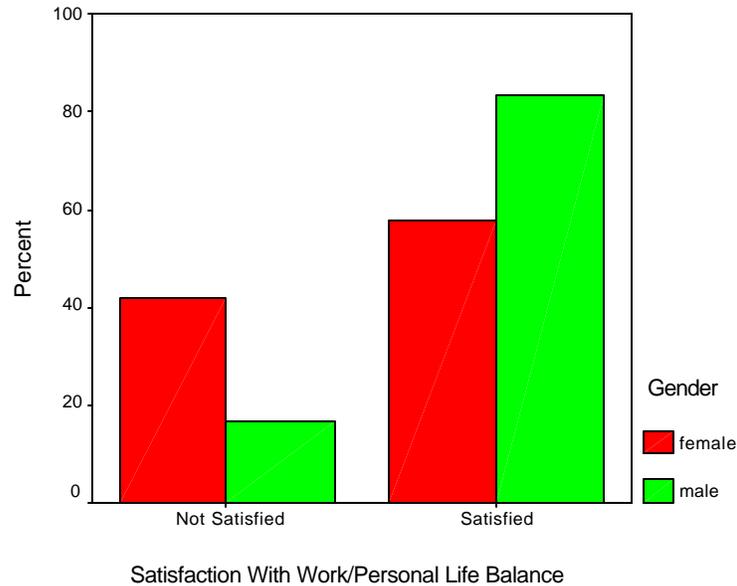
Figure 1. Gender by Satisfaction

Figure 2 shows the results when I cross-tabulated age with the respondents' level of satisfaction with their work and personal lives. This graph shows that all of those who are 50-years old and older reported feeling satisfied with their balance. Both younger categories of respondents reported satisfaction and dissatisfaction more equally, though it is clear that the older the respondents the more satisfied they are with their balance.
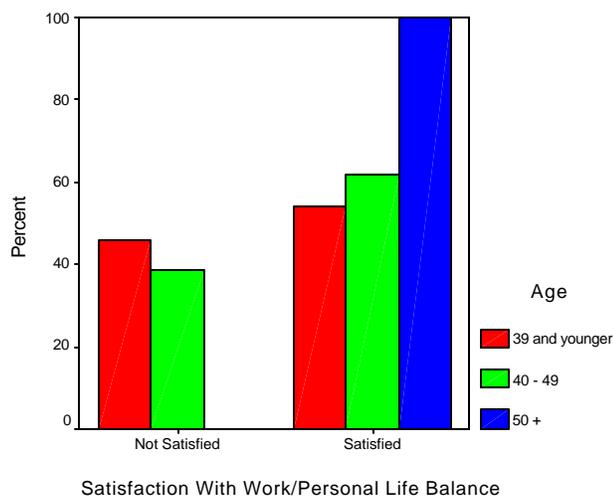
Figure 2. Age by Satisfaction

Figure 3 shows the variable of relationship status by respondents' level of satisfaction with their work and personal life. It is clear from the graph that all of those who responded to the questionnaire who were not partnered felt dissatisfied with their balance. The large majority of those who were partnered were satisfied, with less than 20% feeling dissatisfied.
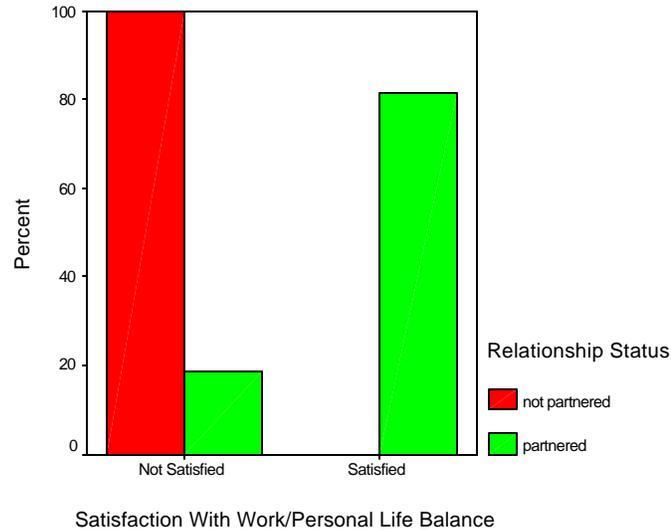
Figure 3. Relationship Status by Satisfaction

Figure 4 shows respondents' level of satisfaction by whether they are in a tenure-track position within their university or not. This does not mean that the respondents have tenure, but that they are in a position where tenure is possible. The graph shows that those who are in tenure track positions are the only ones who report both dissatisfaction and satisfaction with their work and personal life balance. All of those not in tenure track positions reported feeling satisfied with their balance. "Other" indicates someone who is not in a tenure track position because they are contracted for only a certain number of years in their position.
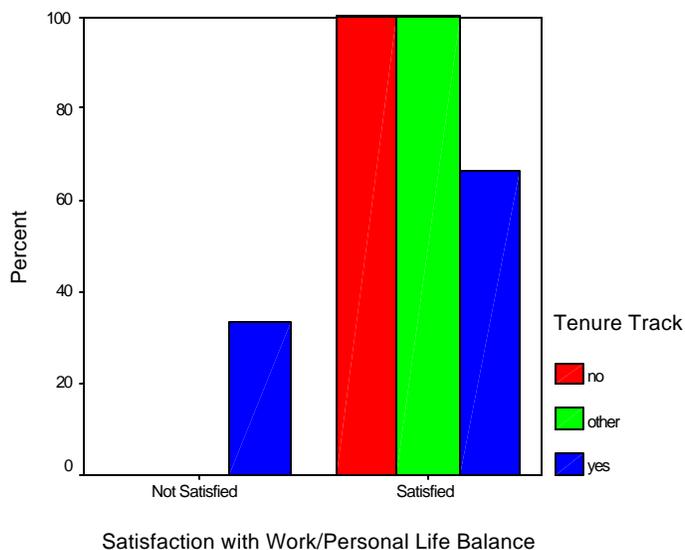
Figure 4. Tenure Track by Satisfaction

The quantitative data highlighted above shows that gender, age, relationship status, and tenure-track status may be important variables when looking at the work and personal life balance of the faculty with whom we surveyed and interviewed. The results indicate that for the 43 people who responded to our questionnaire, more men reported satisfaction as well as older faculty members, those who were partnered, and those who were not in a tenure-track position. These results provide an important backdrop for the qualitative interview results described in detail next.

Quantitative Results of Interview Respondents

A total of 29 of the 43 questionnaire respondents agreed to be interviewed after they completed the web-based questionnaire, and all of those who were interviewed agreed to be audiotaped. The majority of the respondents who agreed to be interviewed were white, male, married, and had children living at home. I purposively selected 16 of the 29 interview volunteers, and I attempted to select as demographically diverse a mix as possible. The following are the demographic results for those 16 respondents.

Table 3 shows the frequency distributions of the demographic variables for the 16 interview respondents. The data in Table 2 was collected as part of the anonymous, web-based questionnaire in Phase I.

Table 3. Demographics of Interview Respondents

N = 16					
Variable	%		Variable	%
Gender			Relationship Status	
Female	50%		Single	25%
Male	50%		Partnered	75%
Age			Position Level	
< 39	19%		Full Professor	19%
40-49	44%		Associate Prof	44%
50+	31%		Assistant Prof	31%
(Missing)	(6%)		Other	6%
Ethnicity			Tenure Status	
White	81%		Tenure track	88%
Other	19%		No tenure track	12%
Children Home?			Years as Faculty	
Yes	63%		1-4	25%
No	37%		5-9	31%
			10-14	31%
			15+	13%

In addition to the demographics listed in Table 2, I also purposively selected people from a range of states. Included in the interview sample were people from the following states: Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida (2), Georgia, Indiana (2), Kansas, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Texas (2), Utah (2), and Virginia. Fourteen MFT programs were represented in the interview sample. While seven of the interviewees were from a state on the East Coast of the U.S., I selected respondents from a range of U.S. regions based on those available from the 29 interview volunteers.

The following table (Table 4) shows the frequency distribution of the purposively sampled interview respondents by their reported current level of satisfaction with their work and personal life. I attempted to select a more equal distribution of levels of satisfaction from those who volunteered for Phase 2 of the study so that the responses to the interview questions would be more evenly mixed.

Table 4. Interview Respondents' Current Level of Satisfaction with Work and Personal Life Balance

Question Wording	N	%
Current Level of Satisfaction with Work and Personal Life Balance		
Not Satisfied	7	44%
Satisfied	9	56%
TOTAL	16	100%

As seen in the table, the 16 purposively sampled interview respondents were roughly split in terms of what they said was their level of satisfaction at the time they filled out the

web-based questionnaire. Slightly more were satisfied than dissatisfied, which is consistent with the results of the larger sample of 43 from which these 16 were selected.

<u>Qualitative Results</u>

The next sections of the results chapter describes in detail the qualitative data from the interviews I conducted with MFT faculty regarding their work and personal life balance. This includes their feelings about and indicators of balance, balance indicators, the context in which they experience their balance, gender issues, coping strategies, and suggestions for future MFT faculty members.

<u>MFT Faculty Members' Feelings About Work and Personal Life Balance</u>

The first questions I asked MFT faculty members during the in-depth telephone interviews were how they feel about their current level of balance and what indicators told them they feel that way. Specifically, I asked, "Think for a moment about the balance you feel you have between your work and personal life at the present time. How do you feel about the balance you have between your work and personal life? Tell me what specifically makes you say that. What are the indicators you use to determine how balanced your life is?" The responses to these questions ranged from feeling very good to not feeling good at all about their work and personal life balance. Of the 16 respondents, six felt negatively about their current balance, six felt positively, and four were what I call, "middle of the road." Middle of the road means they were relatively neutral about how they felt about their balance, citing both some positives and some negatives, but feeling unable to say definitively either way. The following are some of the results that emerged with respect to level of balance currently experienced by MFT faculty members broken down into those who felt good about their balance, those who felt poorly, and those who felt "middle of the road."

<u>MFT Faculty Members with Good Work and Personal Life Balance</u>

Six of the participants, all but one of who was male, stated that they currently feel positively about their work and personal life balance. It is important to note that, even though each of these six faculty members felt overall their balance was good, each commented on some aspect of their life that was challenging to balance, a little off balance, or had been problematic in the past. The difference is that they currently saw their balance as good, and for most of them this was not something that happened suddenly or very recently. So in general, these six faculty members fell into the category of respondents who felt their work and personal life balance was good. This was strongly indicated by statements such as, "I think it's well balanced" (13M), "I'm pretty happy with it" (15M), and "I feel like it's working well." (F12) One faculty member elaborated about his positive feelings of balance by saying,

> Well I think it's balanced very well. Besides my teaching and
> administrative load at the university, I have a private practice that I do
> maybe 10 hours a week. And that keeps me fresh and utilizing the things
> that I'm talking about…. And I think there's a real recursive loop that goes
> between my practice and my teaching. So that in itself provides a nice
> professional balance. Also I have a couple projects going on at the
> university that are related both to the teaching and my practice… I've
> gone from being a student in the program to being a trainer. I'm associate
> trainer plus I organize that training series. And that's a lot of fun. And I do
> that with my wife. So she's also involved in the training and being a

trainer. So we do that together. I also study karate and I'm a 3rd degree black belt… So that's kind of on the physical end… And you know there's a spiritual component to that work that I bring into my practice and my teaching, just in my relationships. And I go to movies, we take trips, go to conferences, I'm also a musician. I always have a guitar out, laying out around the house in various rooms and whenever I have a free moment I pick one up and play. I also have people that I get together with and play. (8m)

The one female faculty member who confidently stated that her balance was quite good at the present time also added that there are infrequent times when, "…it's tipping over too much in one direction or the other, but most of the time I feel like it's working well." (12F) Yet another indicator that she is more balanced than not is that she noted that when she does feel her balance tipping, it is not necessarily toward the same side each time. She stated that it could go either way and that it just depended on which arena was in crisis at the time, thereby making her feel more stretched in one direction than usual.

In examining the characteristics of these faculty who felt positively about their balance, I noted that, besides all but one being male, most offered the information at some time or other during the interview that spirituality or religion were a significant part of their lives. All were married, most had a spouse who worked at home caring for the household and children, and two of the six were in non-tenure track positions whereby they were not required to conduct research, write grant proposals, and "publish-or perish." All others had already achieved tenure in their current positions.

MFT Faculty Members with Poor Work and Personal Life Balance

Six faculty members said their work and personal life balance was not good. These faculty members often had aspects of their lives that were satisfying, but in general they felt poorly about their balance, were struggling with stress, displeasure, and unhappiness with their balance, and did not view their poor balance as something that had happened very recently. As I previously mentioned, all of these were female, and all six of them felt that their balance was negatively tipped toward the work side of the scale. Two of the six (6F and 10F) echoed the same sentiment by asking me the question in return, "What balance?" or "What personal life?" These two felt so out of balance that they appeared to be making a joke at their own expense by responding to my question with a tongue-in-cheek question. Interestingly, both of these women were not currently in a romantic relationship. Both recursively attributed their lack of balance to their lack of social life and vice versa. Another woman added, "I feel that it is just way out of balance. I feel like I work most of the time and I have very little personal time." (3f) While only two of the women stated overtly that this was "a huge issue" for them in their current life, all six women made clear indications that not only was their balance poor, but that it was also a major problem for them that caused them a lot of dissatisfaction.

Some women were so dissatisfied with their work and personal life balance that they told me they were in the midst of making a major change in their life to try to reestablish a healthier sense of balance. One woman was so clear about trying to reestablish a healthier balance that she reiterated her point three times in the same statement. When describing how she felt about the balance she had in her current life, she stated, "Well I'm kind of in a transition from when I filled out the questionnaire,

which is kind of interesting. I'm trying to work harder on it. I think it's out of whack and I'm trying to work harder on it. I might have said that on the questionnaire but I'm trying harder." (11F) This showed her emphasis on trying harder to make a shift in her work and personal life balance, but I also sensed how difficult it was for her and the urgency with which she was trying to make a shift. Another woman's attempts to rebalance are not as clearly stated with words, but her description clearly indicates a constant, daily effort to bring things into a more balanced state. When asked about her feeling of her balance, she stated emphatically,

> Oh that is a huge issue for me. And I would say it changes like day to day and week to week, how satisfied I am with it. Right now it's two levels. It's kind of complicated. If you look at the time I spent on personal things and travel and family and stuff like that, and having a good time and going out and stuff, it would look pretty good. But in reality I feel so much pressure from work right now that I feel work is crowding out my personal life. So it's not so much an issue of time or that kind of thing. It's more an issue of emotional investment. My work is causing way too much stress right now. And it's having a negative influence on how much I can relax…It's like holding back the Red Sea to try to feel like I can go and relax knowing all the stuff I'm leaving undone….So I'm feeling pretty dissatisfied right now. (4F)

It is important to note that, while only one of the men with whom I spoke discussed any ways in which their current life was out of balance, a number of them did discuss times in the past in which they felt dissatisfied with their work and personal life balance. One man, for instance, described a time in his life early in his career when he recalled, "…one week I spent about 120 hours at work. And just basically was there about 20 hours a day….And so it was obviously out of balance. I wasn't home." (16m) But even in this case, he acknowledged that this was a temporary, unusual situation that led him to this feeling of lack of balance. He described these times as, "really pushing hard," whereas the women who felt out of balance in their current lives did not indicate it was a particularly temporary situation that would clear up within the week. This example shows the less chronic, more routine, more manageable form of poor work and personal life balance that all faculty say they have experienced at one time or other in their lives. The women who described their current life as poorly balanced, however, have a much more insidious and problematic balance problem with which to cope. For example, one of the women who acknowledged that she has not always been this out of balance helped clarify her particular situation by saying, "I see the balance as being in the past three months, probably, oh at least 90% of my life is work and 10% is what's left." (10F) I think there are circumstances that make that more true now than at some times in the past." Clearly, while not as bad as someone who has struggled with lack of balance for years, this person's situation is more problematic than the man who finds himself "really pushing hard" for one week at a time every now and again.

MFT Faculty Members with "Middle of the Road" Work and Personal Life Balance

There were a few faculty members whose sense of balance could not easily be fit into either "feels positive" or "feels negative." Only four out of 16 faculty members interviewed were included in the category "middle of the road" in terms of their work and

personal life balance. This meant they either described themselves as mostly one way but had some elements of the other, they were not sure how they felt, or they identified just as many positive feelings as negative ones. A few of these "middle of the road" faculty members were unable to give a definitive answer but instead chose to elaborate without being able to use one qualifier or another. One faculty member stated,

> That actually was my most difficult question that you asked because this is very hard to put into words. There are times when I feel that I wished that I had more time for non-academic things, be it social, be it art, be it some kind of recreational activity. There is, I would say, none. However, when I think of personal life it's impossible to think about all that without also thinking in terms of my companion, my spouse….And the fact of the matter is we have a perfect balance. Any personal dissatisfaction I feel is sort of based on the discontent between the occupational investment in my life and the non-occupational. But in terms of my family, my relationships, and so on, the balance is actually exquisite…our jobs are really well suited to our relationship. (14M)

Another faculty member was somewhat undecided about his balance in that he seemed to take into account both the positive aspects and negative aspects, weighed them both, and determined that he could not say definitively where he stood on his feelings of balance. He began with, "I feel like I balance it pretty well" but followed that statement immediately with, "I think it's a struggle." (16M) He went on to describe things that tell him he is both doing a good job balancing and struggling with his balance, and summed it up with, "Never well enough in either [arena]."(16M) This type of on-the-fence response seems to indicate participants' satisfaction level with their balance tends to shift at times, whether those times are days, weeks, months, or years apart. Interestingly, this same faculty member described himself as having an internal alarm that seems to go off when his balance starts to shift in the negative direction. He said, "I think that there's a kind of an alarm that goes off when I'm kind of short-changing either my marriage or parenting or at work….A feeling of guilt. A feeling that I'm not doing what I need to be doing. A sense that I'm not performing at a level that I need to." (16M) When asked how often this alarm goes off, he stated, "I think that it happens pretty regularly. I mean I've learned to balance things so it doesn't go off as much as it used to. But I think that it's a more frequent issue." (16M)

The one woman who was in the "middle of the road" category was placed there because she stated that her balance in general has been particularly problematic, but she has made some changes recently that have made her balance "a lot better." (9f) This is very different from those women who said their balance has been bad and they have been trying to make changes but still feel very much out of balance. She was the one person who felt her balance had actually changed recently, partly because I interviewed her in the summer when responsibilities as a faculty member were lessened.

Only one faculty member currently felt he spent more time on his personal life than in the professional arena, and also said he had a sense that his balance was "a little bit" off. He went on to say, "I'm spending a little more time on my personal life than I would probably want to. I wish I were spending a little more time on work." (7m) On the other hand, he was not willing to say his balance was completely negative, mostly because he saw his current level of balance being largely influenced by the special care

needs of a family member. This is one of the reasons he is best described as middle-of-the-road compared to some others in terms of his balance, well-indicated by his response to a question inquiring about what he would change about his current level of balance: "Ah, well I wouldn't. I mean the balance isn't the way I'd like it, but that's because I'm going through a life transition that takes a little more time. So you know that's kind of the way that goes. I wouldn't change it because I think it will change itself." (7m)

       While the task of labeling their balance was easy for some and slightly more challenging for others, they all were able to identify overt and covert indicators that helped them evaluate their current (as well as past) level of work and personal life balance. In the next section, I will explore in more detail these balance indicators that the 16 MFT faculty members described as helping them determine how the felt about their work and personal life balance.

<div align="center">Indicators of Work and Personal Life Balance</div>

       In addition to how they feel about their balance, MFT faculty provided a glimpse into what indicators help them determine how they felt about their work and personal life balance. Indicators are defined for this study as the data that people use to provide information about their feelings, thoughts, and experiences of their work and personal life balance. Another phrase used in this study to describe balance indictors is balance cues, and the two phrases will be used synonymously. I grouped faculty members' balance indictors into ones that were external and internal, as well as those which were overt and covert. Respondents describe these overt and covert indicators within the context of the internal and external indicators they described.

External Indicators of Work and Personal Life Balance

       External indicators are the signs and signals faculty members notice in the people around them and in their environment that help them determine how they are balancing their work and personal life at any given time. These were the indicators of work and personal life balance that MFT faculty members mentioned most often. The respondents described external indicators that I clustered into cues from family/friends and those that are work-related.

       External indicators from home. For those who live with someone (partner and/or children), family-related cues were often some of the first on their list. These included things such as how family members responded to them on a daily basis, either with complaints about how little time they spent at home or with compliments about how much they enjoy the time the person makes to be at home. They also could include things their family members have said to them, hints they make, and observations about how family members are being impacted by the faculty members' work and personal life balance. When asked what indicators told one faculty member that he was out of balance, he responded, "The looks on my kids' faces. Comments like, 'Are you going to be gone again?'" (M5) Another faculty member stated, "Family members say things like, 'You work too much.' So they pretty much tell me directly I'm unbalanced in my personal and work life." (3f)

       One faculty member mentioned an indicator she uses to determine how she feels about her work and personal life balance. She said her most prominent external indicator is, "…first and foremost that my child is doing well. That I'm not seeing any signs that she needs a great deal more of my time and attention. She'd always like more time. And my husband is happy and feels like he's getting enough of my time." (F12) Another

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faculty member said of his external, family-oriented indicators, "Well some of them are clearly overt. They're my wife saying, 'I love that you're home all the time. And that, 'I can count on you coming home between 5:00 and 5:30 or 5:30 and 6:00'." (2m) Yet another faculty member stated he knew his balance was good because of the lack of complaints he got from his children and spouse. He also added that he is regularly able to commit to attending family activities such as soccer games and church functions, an indicator to him that his balance was in check. (13M)

On the other hand, some external cues bring to light the realization of the absence of friends/family in one's life. For example, one faculty member said, "One indicator is the fact that I'm 31, almost 32, and still single. I think that's sort of a major indicator. So I think the fact that I'm still single is one indicator. And not in a long term relationship." (6F) In addition, a few faculty members cited past or current intimate relationship difficulties, such as breakups or divorce, as indicators of poor balance. These comments point to the quality, stability, and longevity of the faculty members' interpersonal, familial relationships as one indicator of work and personal life balance.

Work-related external indicators. While external cues from the family members and friends who are in relationship with these MFT faculty were common, other external cues were work-related. The majority of those who said their balance was poor said one external work-related indicator was simply that they are at the office too long each day, too much per week, or they take work home with them too often. On the other hand, one faculty member felt that his balance was off in that he was not spending enough time at the office due to extenuating circumstances in his personal life. He mentioned, "Well I'm not going into work as much as I wish I was. There are just things that…reports and things that are taking longer to get done than I'd like." (7m)

Many faculty members suggested it was not just the physical working time that served as a balance indicator, but also the overt messages they got from their bosses, colleagues, or students. Some commented that their colleagues tell them they work too hard and need to go home or rest. Others said they noticed how few people work as long or as often as they do, an indicator of how poorly balanced they felt. One faculty member said she knew she was out of balance, "When I was spending more time in the evening working than I needed to be. Sometimes I would be the last person here. And because I was just feeling that was all I was focused on." (11F)

Besides indicators of poor balance from the workplace, other faculty members observed indicators of good balance from the office setting. Some faculty observed colleagues taking work home more often them themselves and used that as an indicator to themselves about how well they were balancing their work with their personal lives. For example, one faculty member talked frankly about comparing himself to his colleagues as one indicator of his positive feelings about his own work and personal life balance. In terms of his colleagues, he said, "Some of them spend weekends and evenings here. To me that seems kind of out of balance. They talk about how important their families are and yet they're here all the time….So I think there are other indicators that I don't see myself acting as other colleagues who say family is important but then spend a lot of their time at work."(2m) Others say their colleagues notice what good boundaries they have, and their colleagues tell them that they wish they had such good boundaries. Clearly this is a point of pride for some. One respondent said, in regards to what indicators tell her that she is balancing OK, "…that I'm doing OK at work in that I'm publishing and I'm

well regarded by my peers. And I have a sense that I'm not letting down the team. We've all been together as a faculty for most of the past 11 years so we have a strong sense of team camaraderie….I would feel bad if I wasn't teaching as well or something. Because I'd feel like I was letting down my colleagues." (12F) She added that in terms of the indicators she gets from her students,

> I do have some indicators that I'm giving them enough time. I get good teaching evaluations. With the master's students in particular I care that they get jobs. I follow did they get jobs, did they get the jobs they wanted? And again with the master's students in particular I look for them to keep in touch with me after graduation. And if that stopped happening I would be concerned. (12F)

General external indicators. Other external cues faculty use to determine their level of balance had to do with how many other activities they made time for in their lives, other than the time spent at work or doing chores at home. One person noted that one way he knew his balance was good was, "I go to movies, we take trips, go to conferences, and I'm also a musician. I always have a guitar out, laying out around the house in various rooms, and whenever I have a free moment I pick one up and play. I also have people that I get together with and play." (8m) On the other hand, one woman noticed her balance was not good because of things she normally enjoyed doing, but in the last six months work had replaced those things. She said, "And also doing things like not going to choir, church choir, because I'm going to stay home and work." (4F) These cues served as important indicators of faculty members' lack of work and personal life balance.

External indicators that evolve into internal indicators. External indicators sometimes serve as a poignant reminder and quickly become transformed into an internal indicator. This might include reading something or hearing something that strikes a person as an indicator of their work and personal life balance. For example, one faculty member said that one of his indicators was,

> Being here at the office and doing something and having wake up calls. Reading something. Hearing something on the radio. Just a wake up call. And saying, 'Wow, wait a second, this isn't right. I could spend all my time here and I still wouldn't be happy.' Missing an activity maybe. If I do that then I always feel that's a good reminder to me. When there are conflicts, just for me, I feel like you can make the right choices or the wrong choices.   The wrong choice feels wrong. I don't know how else to say it.

This example is particularly illustrative in that it combines external cues from sources outside work and family. It almost seems as though this faculty member's sensitivity to balance indicators was so heightened that the mere suggestion of need for balance (from radio or text) was enough to begin his inner dialogue about his priorities.

Internal Indicators of Work and Personal Life Balance

Besides external indicators, internal indicators help MFT faculty determine their level of satisfaction with their work and personal life balance. Internal indicators are the signs and signals faculty members notice within and about themselves that help them determine how they are balancing their work and personal life at any given time. These include things such as their health, a sense of contentment with their balance, and the

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congruence between their personal values and their experience with their work and personal life balance. About half of the respondents volunteered information on these internal cues, while others never mentioned any internal indicators unless I prompted them to think about those. Once prompted, all of them were able to think of some indicator within themselves that helped them determine the level of satisfaction they had with their balance.

Health cues. Some of the internal cues many faculty members cited as helping them determine their level of work and personal life balance were related to their health. For example, after giving three examples of external indicators of her balance and being prompted by me for more, one faculty member said, "Ah, well I suppose we should include me! (Laughs.) That always tends to fall to the bottom of the list. But that I'm doing OK. That I'm not getting sick or not…I went through a time period where I really wasn't getting enough sleep. And I realized I had to reorganize some things. But that I'm holding together and not feeling overly stressed." (12F) These internal cues were mentioned by more than one faculty member, namely levels of fatigue, quality of sleep, or levels of feeling stressed. Another faculty member stated, "Yeah, well I'm not an insomniac anymore. I rarely find myself looking forward to a day and hating the idea." (15M) Another stated, "I think one indicator is just a general sense of feeling burned out." (6F) Still another added, "…I know I'm in trouble when I wake up in the middle of the night and I'm thinking about work instead of my kids and my husband and me, or whatever….And that's not good." (4f)

Besides stress, fatigue, and sleep difficulties, other internal, health-related indicators of their balance that faculty discussed included change in weight, change in frequency of exercise, or shift in their level of energy. Some also notice the time they have for themselves and their ability to relax. One MFT faculty member combined many of these items when she said,

> [I] cannot get to the gym, not eating as well, working late into the night,
> getting up early in the morning to get into work, feeling like I can't lay on
> the couch for 10 minutes without wondering if I should be doing
> something work-related. So things like that where I'm starting to carve
> out my personal time and thinking about filling it with work….I don't
> have good friendship relationships. (J9)

Another echoed some of these same sentiments by saying, "I work everyday, I've gained a lot of weight in the past couple years from physical inactivity. I feel tired almost all the time." (3F)

Contentment. A few faculty members described a sense of contentment with their lives that served as in internal indicator for their work and personal life balance. Interestingly, these indicators provided by some faculty members were indicators of good balance compared to health indicators described above which were indicators of poor balance. For example, one man said,

> Well even though things are pretty tightly scheduled I find that when I'm
> doing an activity I'm pretty much focused on being there and I can really
> kind of be present for the activities I do. And to me that's neat because I
> can just kind of enjoy the moment. And you know in situations where
> there's contention I think I'm pretty good at kind of staying grounded. So

I feel like I don't pick up an awful lot of stress. Now I think a lot of that
has to do with kind of working on myself. (8m)

The same faculty member also added, "Well you know you wake up in the morning and you go to bed at night and you have to fill the time up with something. And I really enjoy everything that I do, so nothing really seems like it's hard work." Others cited a general and somewhat ambiguous feeling or sense they had that something was right with their balance. For example, when asked if he noticed any internal indicators of his good balance, one faculty member said, "Well I feel real comfortable with…I feel good, I feel comfortable, good about, content with my life and how it's going." (13m) Still another added the simple statement, "I don't tend to get too stressed." (2m)

Another faculty member described feeling content when she noticed she was not bored in her life, and this served as an indicator that her balance was satisfactory. Another faculty member said, "I guess the [indicator] for me is whether or not I feel satisfied or dissatisfied by some sense of emotional completeness by what I'm doing. And very frankly most of the time I do." These examples show how some faculty members use an internal sense of contentment as a measure of their feelings about their work and personal life balance.

One faculty member described himself as one who is generally satisfied with his work, a personal characteristic that led to overall contentment in his past and present work situations. This characteristic also served as an internal indicator of his positive balance. He described a conversation he had with another researcher about how satisfied he is in his work as an academician. She replied that she had rarely seen someone so enthusiastic and satisfied with their work. He noted that it led him to talk it over with his wife and together they surmised that, "I talk about being able to be pretty happy wherever I went to work, which has included UPS as a graduate student! I worked from 10 until two in the morning. And I worked in a lumberyard as an undergraduate while we were married. So I don't know if that's a personal characteristic that I just tend to be kind of happy wherever I'm at, or if there is some other reason."(16M) This sense of contentment with work is also an indicator he uses of his level of satisfaction with his work and personal life balance.

Congruence with personal values. Another theme that emerged for some faculty members was how congruent they felt their balance was with their personal values. This sense that their values and experiences were aligned was an important work and personal life indicator for some faculty members. One faculty member explained his sense of congruence as, "It's important for me to do well at work. It's also extremely important that I do well at home. I wouldn't get close to jeopardizing my home life by being too much at work….I just value both of them so strongly that I'm willing to work hard to find a balance." (16m) A female faculty member added more support for this notion when she said, "I feel like my commitment to my family comes first. I try to keep myself very strict and limited to one late night a week. And that's because I feel responsible for being there." She described this as one way she monitors her level of balance and it serves as an indicator of her success in balancing her work and personal life when she recognizes herself putting her family first and limiting her work in the ways she has personally defined it.

Another element of congruence as an internal indicator of balance was that the messages faculty send to their clients, students, colleagues, and families are in line with

what they do themselves in terms of prioritizing and acting in accordance with their personal values. One faculty member explained his way of measuring his personal values with his experience as an indicator of balance when he said,

> …I would feel hypocritical to preach to my clients a life of the importance of relationships and then spend most of my time with my primary relationship being work. I think for me work becomes a vehicle to help sustain and support a way of living that helps foster relationships. I know that by working we get the money to support family vacations and mealtimes together. These things are pretty important to me. And so if my job demanded that I work all the time, travel all the time, and be away from my family, it would take a tremendous toll on me.

Putting Work and Personal Life Balance Into Context

Putting work and personal life balance into context is an often complex series of data points coming together in a sometimes organized, sometimes disorganized way. The context in which people see their work and personal life balance seems to be a crucial aspect of how people make meaning out of the balance they experience at any given time. Many variables interact in determining the meaning one makes of their work and personal life balance. The next section explores some of the more salient issues MFT faculty described as being part of the context in which they viewed their balance.

I asked respondents to describe the context in which they examine their balance by discussing extenuating circumstances that have impacted their balance, changes they have noticed in their balance, and the messages they got in the past and present regarding work and personal life balance. These factors seemed to play a significant role in helping MFT faculty members determine their sense of work and personal life balance. This section will examine what MFT faculty members said were some of the pertinent issues in terms of making sense of their work and personal life balance.

Child and Relationship Status

A few of the faculty members commented that the presence or absence of children or a significant other in their lives helped them make sense of their level of work and personal life balance. In terms of the absence of these people in their life, 37% of the MFT faculty with whom I spoke did not have children in the home (or never had children) and 25% were not currently in a relationship. During the course of one interview, one male respondent frequently mentioned that he had no children, so I felt compelled to ask how he felt this impacted his sense of balance. He was confident in his response that if he had children he thought his balance would be very different from how it is now. He was clear that it did not mean his balance would be better or worse, but that the joys and challenges of parenting would create a different balance. He did add, however, that he felt he had more flexibility in his life since he did not have children. He was clear not to make it a value judgment about having children when he said, "If I had children then my life would've gone in a different direction. I wouldn't have known this life and I wouldn't have missed it because I wouldn't have experienced it to miss it." (8M)

Some faculty members pointed to the presence of children in their life as part of the context in which they viewed their work and personal life balance. One faculty member said he began examining his work and personal life balance more critically after he and his wife decided to have children together. This change in child status altered his

way of seeing the issue of balance between work and home in that his child and family took precedence over work responsibilities. He stated that the issue of how to balance his work and personal life is much clearer to him now that he has children, and that this clarity began from the time he and his wife made the commitment to be parents. He explained how his balance is impacted by saying,

> I started a job a few years ago. It was soon after my first child was born. And I had been there a couple weeks….there was a situation that I could have more quickly dealt with if I had worked late. And I basically said to [my boss], 'Look, I'm not willing to do that. I'm going to be home with my family. If you want me to not work here that's fine.' But I made a very strong commitment to that and have…it's been a pretty solid line for me….It's just something I'm committed to and am willing to do what I need to do to make sure that I have that time with my family. (13m)

Other faculty members also noted that the inclusion of children in their lives impacted how they make sense of their balance. Most of the women with whom I spoke described ways in which their balance was impacted by having children. One noted that her balance was better when she had children because the responsibility she felt to them kept her from over working. Her words said it simply when she commented, "…the young children kept me balanced." She noticed as her children got older and became more independent she became more invested in her career. She also noticed that she began to stop taking "automatic breaks" to leave work and get home to care for her children's needs the way she did when they were very young and much more dependent on her for their daily functioning. Another faculty member, this time male, also felt that his children's launch from the home had impacted how he experiences his work and personal life balance. He stated, "…my vocational life and my personal life compliment each other exactly. But that's because children are out of the home so they are no longer there to be involved with." In both of these cases, the presence followed by the absence of children was part of the context in which these faculty members saw their changing work and personal life balance over time.

Family of Origin Messages

Another way some faculty made sense out of the balance they experienced in their work and personal life was through the experiences and messages they got from growing up in their particular families. Some of these messages were overt while others were covert. There was wide diversity as to whether or not people felt their current balance was similar to how their parents balanced work and personal life or whether they had made a conscious effort to balance their work and personal lives differently from their parents. Some faculty members remarked that they continue to receive balance-related messages from their families of origin that impact how they make sense of their balance. These included overt messages such as one faculty member's mother expressing concern for how stressed and overworked she appears. Another faculty member noted that his mother routinely tells him how proud of him she is that he devotes such time and effort into being the best father he can be to his children. He added that both of his parents acknowledge his good balance and notice that his is much better than the balance his father had when he was younger. Other messages were less overt than this and included memories faculty members had of what they observed or heard in their families of origins that they think impact how the make sense of their work and personal life balance.

Regardless of what the specific message, every faculty member had something to say about how they made sense of their balance based on the messages they got from their family of origin.

Some faculty members noticed that the ways in which one or both of their parents balanced their work and personal lives encouraged them to try to balance their lives differently. One faculty member, who was currently middle-of-the-road about his balance, said that he had an epiphany during his career whereby he realized that the way in which his father had balanced his life was not normal but in fact unhealthy. He stated that one of his achievements in figuring out how to balance his spheres of work and home has been the realization that his father was not balancing life well, and that he had bought into his father's poorly balanced lifestyle for much of his young life. In terms of having the tendency to emulate his parents, he added, "I do know that it's easy to get confused about why you're doing what you're doing. It's easy enough to lose perspective." (7m) This faculty member recognized some of the same tendencies he had to follow in his father's footsteps, and he was conscious of his desire to try to find a way to a healthier balance. His struggle was both a function of the current indicators that tell him his balance is not good combined with the observations he made of his father's poor balance. The memory of his father's poor balance served as somewhat of a motivator for him to try to balance his work and personal life differently.

It was not uncommon for the faculty with whom I spoke to describe family of origin messages that they think help explain why they struggle with their work and personal life balance. A couple of women remarked that what they observed in their family of origin has had some negative impact on their ability to feel balanced in their current work and personal life. They observed their parents overworking and attempting to be all things to all people, thereby relaying the message that in order to be good and successful you have to work hard at everything. One woman observed her mother functioning so well in so many arenas that she internalized the message that she could do anything she set her mind to. This is one reason she thinks she becomes interested and invested in so many different tasks, takes on too many things, and finds herself feeling out of balance.

In other cases, faculty members observed their parents doing such a good job of separating work from personal life that they have a hard time as adults trying to incorporate the two spheres in a way that is balance enhancing. They described their fathers, for example, working very hard at work and not bringing work home at all, either emotionally or physically. They described their parents as people who rarely if ever mixed work and personal life. The way that has become translated for these faculty members, then, is that work is such an encompassing thing that they have difficulty marrying their work life with their personal life. They feel stuck in an all-or-nothing pattern where work has taken up the bulk of their focus and they are left feeling very unbalanced. Because they feel they have never learned how to incorporate personal time into their day they notice that their balance is way off. For these faculty members, they get the sense that others have an easier time wrapping up work and shifting gears to enjoy parts of their personal life. Instead, they say they feel so focused and driven when they are at work that they struggle to break their work-trance to infuse some personal life activities.

One woman compared her current life situation with that of her family of origin. Her family owned a business where all family members, including the teen aged children, worked in the shop along with their parents. She described the message she got from her family of origin as one where work and personal life are the same thing, intricately woven together. She remarked that even when her parents left the shop to come home for dinner, the discussion at the table and throughout the evening was often about the family business. Interestingly, she has continued her family of origin's method of combining work and personal life in that her life partner works in close conjunction with her. They share many of their work experiences, providing many opportunities for work to intertwine into their personal lives. She does not describe this as something she hopes to one day change. She sees this intersection as an inextricable part of who she is, something that has positive aspects on her life, and acknowledges that it is linked to the example that was set for her in her family of origin.

Only a few faculty members discussed ways in which their balance enhancing activities were linked to their parents doing a good job balancing work and personal life. Some felt encouraged by the ways in which their parents attained balance. One faculty member felt that one message she got from watching her mother's career journey was that she does not have to accomplish all of her life and work goals early in her life in order to be successful in her career. Her mother, she thinks, was a good role model for her in helping her stay grounded about how much work to put in on any given day. She watched her mother's evolution, as she put it, from a non-career-oriented, unhappy person into a happy and accomplished writer much later in life. Her mother serves as a reminder to her that work is not a race and that much of what she wants to accomplish can come in time when the situation is optimal. So when she is feeling poorly about her balance and notices she is putting pressure on herself to work more, she reminds herself that she can pace herself throughout her career much as she saw her mother do with satisfactory results. The same woman who described her family of origin's business as being entwined with their personal lives also added that she has internalized some positive messages from that experience. She said that she learned from her parents that having her family as a part of her work life is comforting and feels supportive, and she developed a keen business and financial sense that has served her well in her career. She also acknowledges that it taught her how to share both spheres of her life with her partner, thereby bridging a gap that some people may have between work and personal life. This, she felt, helped her feel satisfied with some parts of her balance, even if for the most part she felt that her work took up too much of her personal time.

While it is crucial to take into account how MFT faculty members make sense of their balance, what circumstances lead them to feel a certain way about their balance, and what messages they believe impact their balance, it is also important to examine what specific factors served to both positively and negatively impact their sense of balance. The following sections will explore many of the things MFT faculty members identified as being balance enhancing or balance reducing.

<div align="center">Balance Enhancers</div>

Balance enhancers are those things MFT faculty members said serve to improve their sense of their work and personal life balance. These comments varied widely, but some of the most commonly reported and those that participants said had the greatest impact in improving their balance were flexibility at work, setting health boundaries,

their spiritual foundation, and positive feelings about their worth and productivity on the job.

Flexibility

        One of the most commonly mentioned enhancers of people's sense of work and personal life balance was the flexibility they experience in their career as an MFT faculty member. Many faculty members not only mentioned this but highlighted it as one of the best parts of being an MFT faculty member. Flexibility came in the form of flexible work hours and days, having a choice about in what location to work (home, office, on the road) on a given day, choosing a research focus, and specializing in a specific aspect of their career. Some faculty members felt that they have a lot of choice about what they do in their jobs and what they do not do, and this choice enables them to control the amount of work they accept. For example, one faculty member said,

> …when you do your work, how you do your work, if you do it on weekends, if you come in on Sundays, it's completely up to you….the flexibility of being a professor is a huge advantage….my favorite part, besides teaching, of being a professor is the fact that the flexibility is enormous….The flexibility is one of the biggest strengths. And it's a real plus in terms of finding balance. (16m)

Many of these faculty members said they used this job feature as a balance enhancing tool. There were both new faculty members and later-career faculty who felt they could pick and choose what they do in their work, so it seems as though time in position is not a factor for use of flexibility as a balance enhancing tool. At least one junior faculty member used his job flexibility to set his work hours to fit his and his family's needs. He acknowledged that when he has a class to teach or weekly supervision he cannot dictate his hours to the fullest extent. But except for those circumstances he felt he has the flexibility to set his work hours to his liking, thereby improving his sense of balance.

        Another aspect of flexibility included faculty members' notions that they can drop what they are doing at work a lot of times in favor of some other activity, and often a more balance-enhancing activity. This served to not only enhance their balance but also improve job satisfaction. One faculty member, for instance, said,

> I have a very flexible schedule in a lot of ways, and I can pretty much make my own schedule. Which I really like….if someone calls me up and says, 'I'd like to get together with you for lunch,' somehow I manage. I can manage to do that. If I want to take off for a weekend, generally I can work my schedule so I can do that. So a lot of it has to do with feeling like I have a sense of control. (8m)

        Others noted that if their children have special functions or their family obligations take priority, they feel free to take the time off without question. This acceptance for work flexibility seems to be universal within the academic communities of the faculty with whom I spoke. They made it clear that the flexibility is supported by colleagues and administration alike, and that as long as a faculty member is productive and is contributing to the scholarship of the field, flexibility is meant to be used as a perk. Clearly many faculty members appreciate this benefit and utilize it as a way to enhance their work and personal life balance.

Setting Healthy Boundaries

Besides the importance of job flexibility, another commonly mentioned balance enhancer was the faculty member's ability to set healthy boundaries in their work and personal lives. This took the form of saying "no," taking purposeful time away from all work activities to do health-enhancing activities with self, friends, and family, and speaking up for themselves at the office.

Saying no. Saying no as a means of setting boundaries was something that many of the faculty members with whom I spoke had done at some point as a way to set healthy boundaries and enhance their balance. Some faculty stated they were pretty good at saying no, but nearly all of those were men. Most faculty members cited times when they have said no at work or in their personal life to a request made of their time, energy, or expertise as a way to set a healthy boundary.

One faculty member who is also an administrator discussed needing to say no in order to focus on the parts of her work that will allow her to reach her professional goals. She feels pulled by many of the requests that are made around her, as well as some of the aspects of her job that are particularly enticing to her but are not things that will help her advance her career. Saying no for her has been a trial, but she reports some success in it and some sense that it is balance enhancing. Not only has it been difficult for her to learn to say no more, but she described it as somewhat of a learning process to get to the point where she was comfortable saying no. She said, "I didn't know that it was OK for me just to say no….as a new faculty member it's hard for me to always figure out politically when do I have to say yes and politically when could I say no. And I think I'm starting to learn the lay of the land a little bit better in terms of that." (3f) She states that saying no has become a necessity as well as a key to reaching her goals and to having a more balanced work and personal life.

Non-work activities. One boundary setting activity that some faculty said they do to enhance their work and personal life balance involved consciously leaving work behind in favor of activities with loved ones or even alone. The key here was this was a conscious effort to not work but to build on an existing (or struggling) personal life. These activities were sometimes solitary, such as reading a non-academic book, gardening, or sleeping. Other times it was something more social such as dinner with friends, picnics with family, kids' soccer games, or making a date with a significant other. Some faculty members admitted these activities sometimes take some effort and purposefulness on their part, but all mentioned these as the kinds of balance enhancing activities they wanted, needed, and try to do. About half of the faculty with whom I spoke did these types of activities routinely. About the other half reported they struggle with doing these things or they have struggled in the recent past but are now putting in extra effort to try to accomplish their goal of setting healthy boundaries through the development of their social life. Two faculty members even mentioned that this purposefulness of separating from work in favor of non-work activities makes them more productive, focused, and happier during the time they are working. Whether it is the anticipation of the time off without work or the motivation to get everything done before leaving the office, setting this form of a healthy boundary was an important part of balance enhancement for a couple of faculty members.

Some faculty members reported that being a parent of young children serves as a way to enhance their work and personal life in general and on a daily basis. They noted

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that those who have children seemed better suited to balancing their work and personal lives having learned or used strategies that helped them put the two spheres in better harmony with each other. While these comments were more the exception than the rule, it is important to note that from the point of view of some respondents, being a parent was actually balance enhancing. They noted that the presence of children allowed many parents to prioritize more easily, leave the office earlier, and not devote their entire existence to their work. One woman stated, "The women faculty who have children are consistently much better off. The ones who don't tend to do what I'm doing, which is just work 18-20 hours a day. And no balance." (4f) So while it may seem unconventional, some of the faculty members thought the presence of children was balance enhancing.

        <u>Speaking up for self.</u> Sometimes setting healthy boundaries not only involves the individual, but it can also involve the cooperation of other people. Some faculty members stated that they sometimes find it necessary to speak up for themselves in order to set a boundary that will help enhance their work and personal life balance. For example, one faculty member who taught until 9pm made a request of her colleagues that helped her set and keep a healthy boundary. Their staff meeting was regularly scheduled at 9am that same morning, causing her to not only be at the office for over 12-hours a day but also to be away from home and her personal life for that time plus the time of her commute. She admitted speaking up for herself took some courage, but she added that not only has it improved her balance, but she thinks her brave actions have also encouraged her colleagues to set healthy boundaries for themselves at times.

        A couple of men added that they often speak up for themselves in an effort to set healthy boundaries. One man noted that he has learned to say no more in staff meeting when people ask for volunteers and he knows he is at capacity for what he is willing to do. He feels that taking on more work when he is already struggling to leave work at a decent hour is not healthy and not in line with his value system of leaving enough time each day for his personal life.

<u>Spirituality/Religion</u>

        While I asked no questions specifically about spirituality or religion as it pertains to work and personal life balance, just under half of the MFT faculty talked about their spiritual life being something of a balance enhancer. The ways in which their spirituality enhanced their lives varied by person, but for most of the faculty members who discussed spirituality it was a grounding, stabilizing, and clarifying force in their lives that helped them prioritize and keep focused on those things that they deemed most important in life. In nearly all cases this prioritizing led them to conclude that God, family, and self were ultimately more important than their work. This realization seemed so reinforced in some faculty that it served as a daily reminder of how to set limits on work in favor of their personal life. One man made his point clear when he said, "For me the spiritual is primary. And I believe I have a spiritual obligation to my family to be a father and a husband….I feel a great responsibility." (13m) For some men their spiritual and religious beliefs guided their actions in daily life, including their decisions about how much time and energy to devote to their work, and helped them feel a sense of congruence between their belief system and their work and personal life balance. This served to enhance their sense of balance and these men generally reported relatively high levels of work and personal life balance. A few men acknowledged that maintaining this balance was often

challenging, but they felt a sense of assurance that their focus should be on God, family, and self before work, and that helped them to rebalance when they needed to.

In nearly all cases the men who spoke about spirituality as a guiding, boundary enhancing force were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS). One other man was of a Christian faith and worked as a pastoral counselor and an MFT faculty at a religion-based school. Only one woman volunteered information about religion, but only peripherally when she noted that one of the indicators that tells her she is out of balance is that she does not sing in her church choir any more. No other women volunteered information about their religion or spirituality, and no women faculty members described spirituality or religion as having any bearing on how they make sense of their work and personal life balance.

Some of the men who described their spiritual or religious beliefs as being a guiding force for their balance also added that it helps them to also have support from their spiritual communities, families, and sometimes from their work environment regarding their priorities. This sense of support, they said, helped reinforce their beliefs and made them feel even more congruent with their surroundings. In some cases, the male faculty members were at a religiously-oriented university. Those men often attributed some of their ease in balancing work and personal life to the fact that their colleagues, administrators, and students feel the same way they do about the priorities of God, family, and self. One of these men said, in regards to feeling that family is his priority, "I think that in my work setting here where I am now…that kind of stance has been honored. And I think it has to do with the people that I work with are in line with how I think spiritually." He remarked that there is little conflict in his work environment in terms of how strong boundaries need to be around work so as not to encroach on that which they deem most important. This served to improve his sense of good balance.

Positive Work Esteem

Some MFT faculty members described feelings of accomplishment, pride, and well-being in their careers. This feeling represents a theme that I have termed, "positive work esteem." This feeling of positive work esteem served to enhance the satisfaction most people described in their work and personal life balance. Faculty described this sense of positive work esteem in a variety of ways. Some described it as feeling good about the work they do, feeling that they do their jobs well, and loving their jobs. Others noticed that they get positive feedback from colleagues and administration and they notice a progressive upward climb in their career success. Others felt positive work esteem came from their sense that their work is a positive contribution to society and to the well-being of others. As an indicator of positive work esteem, one participant commented with pride, "Well actually I'm quite satisfied with most of it. I really am. I love my job. I think I'm good at it. I get praise for that, I get evaluated well for that from all sides…students, other faculty, administration, colleagues, and so forth….And I'm satisfied with most aspects of my job." (F1) While this participant was one of those who was "middle of the road" on her feelings of work and personal life balance, the feelings of positive work esteem she described was part of what she said made her feel better about her balance. Another faculty member also described his feelings about his work in a way that made it clear that he had positive work esteem. He said, "More often than not I say to my students, 'I love this life.' I may not be driving a Ferrari and I may not be getting triple digit figures in the thousands, but over time my income will go up, and it

affords me the opportunity to do private practice on the side and stay clinically active and do consultations and community work. I'm pretty happy!" (2M) This faculty member felt satisfied with his work and his contributions to the field, and this sense of positive work esteem was one of the factors that enhanced his work and personal life balance. Others had a similar sense that the appreciation they felt from those around them and their view of themselves as important and contributing members of their field were very important balance enhancers and proved to increase their sense of satisfaction with their balance.

<div align="center">Balance Reducers</div>

Balance reducers are things MFT faculty members said serve to decrease their sense of balance between their work and personal lives. They include things such as developing bad habits that cause them to feel out of balance, situational circumstances, negative work esteem, and poor boundaries. The following section highlights some of the factors that reduce MFT faculty members' sense of work and personal life balance.

Bad Habits

A number of faculty described things they did habitually that reduced their sense of work and personal life balance. In all cases these were not isolated occurrences but patterns that could be tracked over time. In some cases these actions may have started out innocently enough but, over time, have become problematic in that they were identified by the faculty as reducing their balance. One faculty member called this forming "bad habits," therefore this next section will highlight those bad habits faculty said they had that made them feel that their work and personal life balance was not good. All of the faculty members who described actions that fall into this category of "bad habits" were women, interestingly enough.

A slightly different bad habit developed by one female MFT faculty member to deal with an overabundance of work was procrastination. She identified as problematic her tendency to take mental breaks throughout her workday that actually served as an avoidance of work. She made it clear that she was not purposely taking a mental rest during the workday but instead was procrastinating and putting off the inevitable. To her, she had become quite inefficient during the day, and said,

> There's time that I spend at work that's pretty avoidant [laughs]. That's the best word I can think of. You know, [I] take a little while and say, 'Let's see what e-mail has come in during that few minutes of down time.' You know, play a game of solitaire while I'm waiting for [my e-mail] to download. And I could be more efficient in those minutes. And those minutes might add up to something a little more relaxing for myself later on. (1f)

She saw this avoidance as a bad habit that served to reduce her sense of work and personal life balance. She made it clear that this was not simply time for a needed mental break, because she felt she took those purposefully, but that these were times of true inefficiency that served to reduce her overall sense of balance. To emphasize the point, she even gave examples of these avoidant behaviors by saying, "So that when I have things like…an article that I'm working on and I'm avoiding. I'm playing with the cats or doing the dishes or downloading more e-mail or surfing for something irrelevant on the Internet [laughs], then that feels to me like avoiding work. It doesn't feel to me like relaxing, it feels to me like avoiding work." (1F)

Situational Circumstances

Some faculty mentioned that their balance was currently poor because of extenuating circumstances in their lives. Faculty members usually stated this up front as if this contextual piece was a major factor in determining their current level of satisfaction with their work and personal life. In almost all circumstances the faculty member was describing a situation that was making them to feel out of balance and was significant enough an issue that it warranted early comment.

The most commonly cited work-related circumstance that faculty cited as making them feel that their work and personal life balance was poor was going through the process of attaining tenure. One male faculty member summed it up well by using the metaphor of different "seasons" of one's career, and the first few years were inherently less balanced and more difficult for most faculty. In describing his philosophy of what most young faculty members deal with in the beginning of their career in academia, he said, "…there's a price you have to pay early on. And balancing that is difficult. But I just think that people when they enter a career they just have to be prepared that those first few years you've got to work really, really hard. And long hours." (16M) In recalling his own tenure-track experience and how he makes sense of his shifting balance, he added,

> …those early years, especially before you have tenure, I mean you really
> have to work hard. You know you have lots of new class preps, you have
> to get your research program established, you have to be publishing. To
> get up to speed and to earn tenure is a lot of work. And I think people
> have to realize that's a 60 hour a week commitment to be successful. And
> then later on you can kind of maybe, you know not ease off, but find a
> better pace that's going to last you decade after decade after decade so you
> don't get burned out. (16M)

Others mentioned the issue of tenure as a significant factor in making sense of their current balance. It was only women who mentioned tenure as being an extenuating circumstance that was currently impacting their balance, but half of the women with whom I spoke mentioned it. This may be an indicator of the demographics of the interview sample whereby the majority of the more junior faculty were women. In terms of her experience of tenure as it relates to balance, one female faculty member said,

> I think some of it is being non-tenured….I've heard a lot of people,
> especially recently, talk about, 'Once you're tenured it's very different,
> it's much different.' And I hope that maybe it will be [laughs]….And I
> think part of it is a rite of passage everyone has to go through. 'Someday
> you'll be tenured and it will be better.'…but I think that pressure of tenure
> is always looming. Even though I've had people say, 'You don't need to
> worry about it.' I'm like, 'I know but until I have it in hand I feel like I
> need to.' (6f)

Another faculty member echoed the notion of pressure to get tenure by saying, "…there's a lot of expectations that you need to have so many things done in a year…I feel supported here, but there are still high expectations." (9f) The same tenure-track faculty member, when asked if she felt her department valued her efforts to balance her work and personal life, said,

…at the end of the year they're still going to count your publications and your grants submitted and look at your student evaluations. I mean there isn't a section in our portfolio for love letters written or amount of dates you went on with your spouse or number of children you had. Or, you know, number of vacations or photos from your vacation….I mean even though they say they want you to be balanced, in the end that's not what's going to get you promoted [laughs]. (9f)

Another faculty member described her pursuit of tenure as somewhat of a motivating factor for her, albeit one that caused some dissatisfaction with her work and personal life balance. She said, "Well certainly the whole tenure and promotion thing drives me as much as I allow it to. And to a certain extent you have to allow it. I mean you know it's not like something you can just ignore [laughs]." (10f)

The fourth woman to mention tenure as a stressor and an indicator of poor balance noted that part of her problem was that she also has a large administrative component to her job at the university. This respondent was a relatively new faculty member who had not yet achieved tenure and described how the administrative responsibilities got in the way of her attempts to achieve tenure in her department. As she described it, her administrative duties prevented her from devoting the necessary time and focus to research and publishing, activities that she said she had to work on in order to get tenure. She said, "You know I worry about the tenure process. And when I sit down with the tenure manual and I put it next to my [administrative] job description [laughs] they're really different things." (3f) She went on to say that even when she attempts to get clarity from her colleagues about how to manage the many facets of her administrative job and the tenure process, she says, "I get really different answers from people." (3f) This combination of administrative responsibilities and the expectations of a new faculty trying to achieve tenure proved to be a problem for this faculty member's balance, and these elements were part of how she made sense of her poor work and personal life balance.

Besides the issue of tenure, other work-related issues emerged that made faculty members feel that their balance was poor. One faculty member, for example, described how timing during the academic year was crucial for his sense of work and personal life balance. He said, "Well right now in the summer it's pretty good. (Laughs.) I'm not teaching any classes this summer." (5M) He went on to explain, "…in the spring was tough. Whenever we have evening situations it's very difficult for me with three young children….And so we were interviewing [of potential students and one faculty member in the spring semester]." (5M) He said the interviewing he was doing as part of his departmental duties during the spring semester required him to be away from home more nights than he usually allows himself, and he felt out of balance. He was not only able to see how different his current situation was from only a few months earlier, but the difference was enough to significantly change how he perceived his balance. He also recognized that this feeling of good balance was somewhat temporary, and that as the following academic year got underway he would feel pulled by his work at times in ways similar to that in the spring.

Others mentioned extenuating circumstances either at home or at the workplace that made them feel out of balance. Some of the specific at-home problems that faculty said serve to reduce their balance were things such as experiencing relationship problems,

going through a divorce, and moving. Some of the circumstances in the workplace that served to make faculty members feel they had poor work and personal life balance included: working on grants; managing an accreditation process within their program; being in a new job or at a new university; adding administrative duties to one's already busy job; work-related travel; and temporarily problematic relationships at work. For example, one faculty member said that he notices his balance shifting to the negative, "…during times of stress here where relationships are not going well at work or whatever where I tend to bring it home more." (13M) In order to resolve this shift in balance, he described being able to reestablish his balance by talking it through with his wife, getting it off his chest, "…and then we can move on."

In a clear example of how work and personal life balance can be negatively and dramatically shifted by life circumstances, one faculty member outlined a recent time in his life when his balance was particularly problematic, even though now he felt satisfied with his balance. He described a time about two years ago when,

> There were several factors. I had a colleague resign…another colleague went on sabbatical…I had a book deadline…my wife had an emergency appendectomy…my wife was cleared medically to get a pancreas transplant…then in March she broke her right leg in eight places. So I was simultaneously doing two people's work, taking care of an invalid wife, and doing the last couple of chapters of a book. That did not feel like good balance. (15m)

Clearly this faculty member's life circumstances served to severely reduce his sense of work and personal life balance. His story and the ones mentioned above serve as poignant examples of how poor balance is sometimes not so much a matter of lack of balancing skills but of the day-to-day circumstances that impact people's work and personal life balance.

Negative Work Esteem

One of the other themes that emerged from MFT faculty members as they described the factors that served to reduce their feelings of satisfaction with their work and personal life balance is that of negative work esteem. Negative work esteem is a general feeling faculty members have that they are not valued members of their workplace. This sense of not being valued can either come from specific messages they get from their workplace or from internal messages they have of themselves as a worker. Negative work esteem was characterized by the some of the MFT faculty members as negative feelings about their work performance, how they are viewed professionally by the colleagues and the larger field, and how hard they have to work to attain the levels to which they aspire. Negative work esteem was one of the factors that faculty members said caused them to feel out of balance in that they never feel they are measuring up to their own or others' standards in the workplace.

In describing her own struggle with an aspect of negative work esteem, one female MFT faculty member stated, "…I think maybe that perfectionism comes out there as well. You know I'm not feeling like I'm doing as much, and yet the feedback that I get is, you know, 'You're doing it all!' kind of thing. So I wish I could balance it all, but feeling like I'm not, so…." (6F) She continued to talk about her negative work esteem that caused her to take on more work than others because she feels a constant internal pressure to be better, more accomplished, more productive, and more driven in her work.

This sense of not doing enough, even though the feedback is overwhelmingly positive, came up a number of times among faculty. Whether it be high self-expectations, low self-esteem, or unrealistic expectations, it's clear that many faculty question their own worth and contributions in their work. These factors were things that some faculty members said cause them to consistently overwork themselves, and still feel that they have not done enough, leading them to feel exhausted and prone to burnout.

Another female faculty member discussed a similar problem with her work esteem. While she acknowledged that she is thought of as successful in the field of MFT, she still notices her own feelings of inadequacy. She said,

> …I have issues about confidence….the stress comes more from the lack of confidence than a feeling of sort of having to prove myself….it's like no matter how much feedback I get I'm still going to think, 'Well I still don't know what I need to know.' I still feel like the new kid on the block…. I could have 100 people at my house right now saying, 'Oh what you're writing is just fabulous." And I would say, 'Oh my gosh, what do they know?'

She attributed most of these feelings of inadequacy and lack of confidence to family of origin issues, and recognized the feelings as very personal, not ones she thinks she gets from people in her profession. Even though she was aware of the negative impact these internal messages had on her, her negative work esteem made her work harder than she needed to, feel stressed about her abilities, and feel dissatisfied with her work and personal life balance.

Only one male faculty member described an aspect of his work that came under the theme of negative work esteem. While his negative work esteem seemed to be related more to the way his university (and universities around the country) is operating, some aspects of it were similar to the negative work esteem described by other faculty members. His negative work esteem stemmed from what he described as a recent trend in university administration becoming more authoritarian, money-oriented, and fear-driven due to the present state of our U.S. economy and national cutbacks in education. He stated that he found this new emphasis to be destructive to his sense of satisfaction with work and his ability to perceive himself as adequate in the eyes of his administration. He stated that he felt,

> There's a lack of appreciation plus the sense that you're really not what you really need to be. It's really nasty. We all say to ourselves, 'Well we're mature human beings. We should have outgrown that need for approval a long time ago.' But probably that's an immature part of me and an immature part of other people. It's also the feeling that [the Administrators] keep moving [their approval] slightly out of your reach. It's the one thing that has been most destructive of emotional equanimity and feelings of well being. And it does intrude into our personal life. It's probably the one thing that makes me least efficient here because when those messages come down it takes you awhile to deal with the negative emotion. (14m)

So while negative work esteem can take on may forms, it is clear from the examples above that it serves to reduce faculty members' sense of balance and causes them stress and dissatisfaction.

Poor Work Boundaries

Just as the development of healthy boundaries was a balance enhancer frequently mentioned by the MFT faculty members in this study, so too were poor, loose, or inconsistent boundaries at work one form of balance reduction. It is important to note that these poor boundaries were not general but specific to work. They were cases where the metaphorical walls that contain their work life were not strong enough to prevent work from leaking (or flooding) into their personal lives. Never did poor boundaries mean their personal life was encroaching on work. Some forms of poor work boundaries included things like taking work home every night, taking work on vacation, working every weekend, and accepting an overabundance of tasks, roles, or responsibilities at work.

A couple of women discussed how they often let their work encroach upon their personal lives, and that for them this was an indicator of poor work boundaries. One faculty member said,

I feel like a lot of times my professional life is my personal life. I think about leaving work, often times I don't just leave work. I'm taking work with me, and that's pretty much a daily thing. But I don't often feel like I have that break. So I think another adjective that I might use would be that my work life overlaps with my personal life in a lot of ways. (6f)

Yet another echoed this sentiment by saying, "…I'm starting to carve out my personal time and thinking about filling it with work." (9f) These women clearly felt that their struggles with work boundaries were partly responsible for their feelings of poor work and personal life balance. Their time and energy were taken up mostly by their work and left little for their personal life. This clearly was not a source of pride and satisfaction for them, but felt intrusive and problematic for their balance.

It became clearer to me why so many respondents described their poor work boundaries when some faculty members mentioned that they thought a career as a faculty member was "boundarylessness." They acknowledged that the very nature of their work in a university setting meant there was always more to accomplish. One faculty member said,

A typical university job, whatever you're doing you can always be doing something more. It's not structured in a way that there's a beginning and an end. That there are walls around what your job description is and what it ought to encompass. There are always articles to write, grants to write, more projects to do, and the university frankly wants all of that, and more.

Many faculty members acknowledged this sense that there are no boundaries on their work is part of what makes it easy for them to have poor work boundaries and thereby feeling that they have poor work and personal life balance. On the other hand, some faculty members are able to resist poor work boundaries, and most of them attributed that to having personal life-related priorities and a value system that said being at home with family is more important than work.

Interestingly, only a couple of men reported they had poor work boundaries, though the women reported this very frequently as one of their most problematic balance

reducers. Most of the women were at a loss as to why they had such poor work boundaries, but all were able to give examples of the negative impact poor work boundaries had on their work and personal life balance. Some women thought it might be the "Superwomen" concept whereby they have been conditioned to believe they need to be all things to all people. Some women thought it might be something they learned from watching their mothers do too much. Still others thought it was part of the negative work esteem issue discussed earlier whereby some women feel they have to over-perform in order to measure up to their male counterparts.

There were two cases where a male faculty member said he had poor work boundaries. One of the men stated he has struggled with this problem of poor boundaries his whole life and felt it was very difficult for him to say no to people at work. The other faculty member attributed his poor boundaries to the fact that his children are no longer in the home, his wife works very long hours, and he is highly invested in and enjoys his career. Therefore he stated that he had less incentive to set stronger work boundaries since there was generally no one at home to serve as a lure away from the office. This makes sense compared to most of the other people who reported poor work boundaries. Most of them either have no children, no children at home, no life partner, or a spouse who works as much or more than they do. These faculty members recognized that their poor boundaries are influenced by the lack of a motivating force in their personal life, while the tasks and responsibilities at the office served as a motivating force to stay on and keep working longer than they thought was healthy.

Gender Issues

While gender was not initially one of the issues about which I had intended to ask faculty members, the first couple of interviewees mentioned it in describing how they made sense of their work and personal life balance. I began to ask about gender to see if it was a significant factor for interviewees, and indeed it seemed to be one of the salient themes that emerged. Nearly all faculty members mentioned some way in which they thought their gender impacted their work and personal life balance, though one person said he thought gender was not a part of his balance meaning-making as much as his family-of-origin issues. The following section describes some of the gender issues that MFT faculty discussed as being a part of their work and personal life balance.

I asked all but the first two MFT faculty members, "How do you think your gender impacts your work and personal life balance?" The most prominent gender issue described by the interviewees was the belief that, in general, the men had an easier time balancing their work and personal life because the division of labor at home for couples in heterosexual relationships continues to be split down gender lines. This was also referred to as "The Second Shift" (Hochschild, 1989) by more than one faculty member, a scenario that many see operating in their own lives. The phrase The Second Shift refers to a popular book published in the 1980s that publicly acknowledged a phenomenon where men and women may put in about the same effort and intensity at work, but women take on more of the responsibilities for home and child care than do men. The faculty members who mentioned The Second Shift said that they believed that men do not generally feel as worn out, stressed, and overextended as do their female counterparts. Most faculty members acknowledged this imbalance of domestic work as one factor of why they experienced their work and personal life balance the way they did, whether it be

good or not good. One participant said about being male, "I think it makes it easier. I think it's 100 times more difficult for a woman because of expectations… Being a guy, it's easier to leave home in the morning that it is for a woman." (16m) Another man added,

> Well you know my wife takes care of a lot of things that, you know, that I
> don't have to. And I think women as they work, their husbands don't
> necessarily pick up the stuff. [My wife] helps pick up. She works but she
> doesn't work full time. And so there's a balance there that she can take
> care of things for me that makes it easier for me to have balance. (13m)

Another male faculty member provided more thoughts on this issue when he said,

> I think women are in an interesting jam in that…by socialization, by
> default, [my wife] still gets the lion share of crap [at home]. So even
> though both of us are managing home and vocation, I still think she's got
> the more backbreaking job than I do; even with children gone. (14m)

A few female faculty members confirmed this notion through their own experiences and described carrying more of the load at home, while nearly all of the men acknowledged that their spouse was a major contributor to their positive sense of balance.

As an additional example, one male faculty member, whose wife works full time for wage outside of the home, noted how much easier it is to balance his life because of being male. In his case, his wife is a pastor, and he recognized how little her congregation expects of him as the husband of a female pastor than if a male pastor was in place. When I inquired further I learned that the congregation of a male pastor expects to get "two-for-the-price-of-one" in that the pastor's wife is expected encouraged to participate in the running of the church. That might be through teaching, entertaining, administration, or volunteering. He illustrated this point well when he said,

> Somebody would be giving [a male pastor] hell about it if [his wife]
> wouldn't teach Sunday school or play the piano or whatever the job was.
> But nobody gave anybody hell about it when [my wife] was a pastor for
> eight years and I kind of picked and chose what I wanted to do. (15m)

So this faculty member pointed out a case of gender discrimination working in his own experience in that as the husband of a female Pastor he does not face the same expectations as the wife of a male Pastor would. He recognized that this made his life much more sane and that he and his sense of balance was benefiting from being male in this case.

One of the rare cases where a woman did not feel this division of labor issue playing out was for a female faculty member who was also in a lesbian relationship. She noted that, while she does not feel the second shift phenomenon playing out in her own personal life, she does observe most if not all of her heterosexual female friends dealing with it in their lives. She said,

> I don't face that kind of a personal relationship where work is divided
> along gender lines. So I feel an enormous amount of equality in my
> relationship and in the balance between home life and work. I look at my
> female counterparts…and I know I don't face anything like the kind of
> gender problems they face. (3f)

Some of the faculty who were also parents of young children described often feeling guilty about the time they spend away from their children. In almost every case

this was not because they felt they were spending too much time away from home in favor of work, but that any time away from their children and family caused some feelings of guilt. One woman made a poignant statement that working mothers often feel like a failure no matter what they do. This came across as the old adage, "You're damned if you do and damned if you don't." She agreed wholeheartedly with one of her friends who said, "Once you're a working mother you're always a failure." She added that it is not just the time away from the children that provokes guilt in her, but that the time she spends with family instead of work is also noted at the office. Her idea was well captured when she said, "No matter how late in the morning you leave the child with a sitter the child is angry at you for leaving. And no matter how early you get to the morning meeting, one of your male colleagues that doesn't have any children probably got there first. So you're always losing." (12f)

On the other side of this coin is the feedback men get about their roles at home and work. One male faculty member admitted that he gets extremely positive feedback from people when he does what he thinks is normal parenting by spending time with his children and putting them first. He added that no women get extra attention and kudos for doing the same thing, clearly a double standard. He noted that society expects him to be less emotionally available and involved than women are, so he gets positive attention from his parenting, which he feels is wrong. He noted that this is an example, albeit nontraditional, of male privilege. This also showed up in areas such as parental leave when babies are born, leave for sick children, and reduced schedules for working parents. These situations are typically utilized by females, and many women are penalized in the short or long term for their decisions to put family and children first. Men, as the respondents noted, rarely have to make that decision, especially when there is a spouse to take care of domestic chores and child care for the family.

One male faculty member noted that there may be a gender issue impacting faculty members' freedom to say no to work-related tasks and responsibilities. He felt that for men in a male-dominated work environment it may be more accepted for a man to say no than a woman. Some remarked that this could be due to an existing "old boy's network" still at play in university systems or that an academic career is still relatively new for women in our culture, making it harder for them to feel safe and confident to speak up for themselves without negative repercussions. Regardless, a few men acknowledged this gender difference and said it seems to be more accepted than for their female colleagues. For example, one male faculty member casually mentioned one of the ways in which he set boundaries at work. He said, "…there were probably some times when I said no to some things. When I said that I couldn't do anymore, that I couldn't take another appointment. That I had to leave early. That I pushed things off till later. I would do that again. I'd do more of that actually." His confidence and ease of saying no comes through in this quote. This safety and confidence in saying no in the workplace served to enhance the work and personal life balance for the men who used this tactic, while a number of men thought their female colleagues felt they could not use this option due to the underlying message that it is not acceptable coming from women. Indeed, a number of women acknowledged that they have trouble saying no at work, however only one of them reported noticing a gender difference related to her trouble saying no. This female faculty member said that she began as one of the few female faculty members in MFT across the country and still feels like "the new kid on the block" because of being

female in a male-dominated career. She noted that being a female MFT faculty member is a minority position, and that makes her feel compelled to speak up or accept work so she can represent and bolster the voices of women in the field. This was one way in which she felt challenged to maintain good work and personal life balance.

Half of the men with whom I spoke had wives who were at home full-time or part time while the men worked full-time for wage outside of the home. On the other hand, all of the partnered women with whom I spoke were in relationship with others who worked full-time. The others were single men or women who had no partner in their home (one was in a long-distance partnered relationship). It is interesting to note that, in our society where it is common for women to work for wage outside the home, it is still virtually unheard of for a heterosexual woman to be the wage-earner and her male partner to manage the domestic sphere. One faculty member put it well when he said, "…culturally speaking, the male has traditionally been the one who's supposed to spend the time, all the time, at work and all that kind of stuff. And to say, 'Hey I'm going to draw boundaries and be at home more' is a little out of character.'"(13m) He added that, as a male, his work environment would be more tolerant of him taking additional time to be at home, especially because he perceived his colleagues respecting that part of his spirituality that gave him the message that family is the most important element in his life. But it is interesting to discover that none of the women faculty talked about their spouses or significant others reducing their work load to pick up additional responsibilities at home to relieve them of some of their burden. All of these pieces contributed to the men's sense of better overall work and personal life balance and satisfaction and reportedly continue to make balancing work and personal life a challenge for their female counterparts.

As mentioned previously, expectations differ for these men and women at home and at the office, according to many of the faculty with whom I spoke. Both men and women spoke about the expectations they see working on themselves and their colleagues, many of which take on the form of double standards. One woman stated it simply, "…there are certain expectations on females in academia that aren't there on males…there are certain expectations that [women] have to perform at a different level to prove ourselves. I think it's the gender stereotypes and I think it's the discrimination that's still there." (6f) Yet another woman echoed this sentiment by saying,

> I think it's really tough on women because there are still
> expectations….You know that they manage a lot of things in the family
> and then they manage a lot of things in their work… I think there are still
> some questions, if a woman gets pregnant, you know, will she still be
> effective at her job or as productive at her job. And I don't think people
> question that with men. (9f)

Earlier on in her career, one woman looked around at herself and the others in her department and said to herself, "'Gee the male colleagues aren't taking on so much and aren't worrying about this and not worrying about that. So I don't think I will either.'" (11f) She went on to describe this internal monologue as part of the phenomenon of expectations in the workplace and wondered to herself,

> Is this what the students expect of us, is this what the staff expects of us, is
> this what we expect of ourselves? I think it's a combination of
> expectations. Our expectations that that's what women are supposed to

do, our students look at us as, 'You're the ones that will help me because I can't bother this male faculty member with this. And the staff the same way. (11f)

Another expectation-laden gender issue that emerged is the notion that female faculty carry more of the emotional weight of student problems than male faculty. This was a theme that more than one person mentioned, and toward the end of the interview process I began to check with others about their experience of this issue. A number of faculty members noted that when students are troubled, stressed, and need a shoulder on which to cry, they more often seek the female faculty members for this sort of support. One female faculty member stated,

I think females are seen as the caring faculty members by students. And therefore I think students tend to want to meet with you more often, have I think a different set of expectations for females in many instances than they do of male faculty members… I think they expect to be nurtured [by the female faculty]. They expect [female faculty] to be understanding. (10f)

Another female faculty member stated, "I get all of the crying people… somebody's unhappy with another faculty member, they're more likely to come to me I think than they are to a male…so that just makes more work for me in my job." (3f) Still another mentioned, "…students will approach female faculty members about stuff they would never, ever approach male faculty members about." (11f) This additional role that female faculty members find themselves filling creates an extra burden on them, according to their reports, though at least one of them admitted that she also enjoys that part of her job. At least one male faculty member said he did not have the same experience. He reported that plenty of students come to him with emotionally-related personal issues. He acknowledged that it could be that his female colleague does get more of the students' emotional experiences, though he added it is not something he can be sure of since it is not an issue he and his colleague have ever discussed.

Coping and Rebalancing Strategies

One of the questions I asked faculty members was to describe any methods they have used in their past or current life to bring their balance from a place of poor balance to better or good balance. The question produced some responses related to rebalancing strategies, but some faculty also provided information throughout their interview that indicated ways they rebalanced their work and personal lives. Some of those strategies detailed below included reprioritizing temporarily, schedule full days away from the office, keep a personal planner, and actively seeking support from others.

In terms of a rebalancing strategy, one faculty member described a metaphor he came up with of depositing and withdrawing money from a bank in terms of his rebalancing process. He explained that there have been times in his career when work took precedence because of grant proposals and other requirements where he spent an exorbitant amount of time at the office. At other times he noted that circumstances at home led him to have to be there more than at work in order to help solve problems and carry more responsibility there. He explained that because of these times when one arena of his life had to take precedence, the other had to take second priority. This worked well for him because, as he explained,

>…the key to it is you have to have enough money in the bank in both accounts [home and work accounts] so that if I have to slack at work for awhile, the good will is there, my reputation is there, my productivity is there. So they know that if I'm kind of scarce for a month or two that it all evens out. That I have enough in the bank that I can get away with it.

He went on to describe a situation when he had to put a lot of time in away from the home as well, and how supportive his wife was because of the excess of "funds" he had stashed in his "home account." (16m)

Another faculty member explained that she had a number of coping strategies for trying to improve her work and personal life balance, including scheduling down time, working one day a week away from the office instead of at the office, exercising to improve her health, and keeping a detailed personal organizer. She elaborated on her strategies by saying that she takes,

>…one day a week when I do not schedule appointments. And that is a workday or a play day. Um, mostly it's a workday [laughs]. So that's one strategy that I have. I have a new strategy of exercise. My blood pressure was up and I decided I wanted to not do medication so I've been walking for 20 minutes every morning… When I had a paper planner I wrote some things in pencil, some things in blue ink, and some things in red ink. [Activities I could not miss] was a red ink thing. Blue ink things are vacations and lunches. Most of it's pencil. Black ink is class. So that's another strategy I have. And so I plan once a week. I look at my schedule for the next week and the next month and think about, can I take new clients? Should I look at a couple of clients and think about making their next appointment a couple of weeks ahead? It works for me. Some people probably need more spontaneity, but that allows me spontaneity, too. (1f)

These were just some of her tried-and-true balance enhancing methods. She reported that not all of them worked perfectly all of the time, but that as she has used them and modified them to fit her needs they have become balance enhancing.

One faculty member found himself mid-career with a number of very stressful changes in his personal and professional environments. When I asked what things helped restore his balance to a positive state, he described not only ways in which the circumstances resolved themselves, but also the part he played in resolving many of the problems in order to rebalance the two spheres. He said,

>I called my pastor one day and went over and dumped on him for an hour. I became more intentional about getting time to do clinical processing with my colleagues here on the faculty. I got more chances just to go out to lunch with them. And I was able to spend...a lot of the time that was spent doing physical care things for my wife I was also able to have just conversation time with her, which was nice. (15m)

When I asked about ways in which he was able to impact the hiring process at work, he emphatically stated that he did in fact push vigorously to have his choice of candidate interviewed and eventually hired to replace the previous faculty member. To emphasize the importance of this to him, he finished his thought with, "So yeah, if I hadn't done that I'd be screwed!" (15m) This example shows the intentional ways in which some faculty

attempt to shift their balance at times. It also demonstrates the responsibility some faculty take in helping to change their circumstances in ways others might not think they could.

<p style="text-align:center;">Suggestion For Future MFT Faculty Members</p>

One of the final questions I asked the MFT faculty with whom I spoke was what experiences or advice would they share with up-and-coming MFT faculty about work and personal life balance. All of the faculty came up with at least one piece of advice while most had multiple suggestions, and they ranged widely in the types of suggestions they made. Some of the more common ideas MFT faculty wanted to share with others who were thinking of embarking on a career in academia were that it's not a race, care for yourself, be intentional, strategize, and prioritize. The following sections provide more detail about these insightful suggestions.

It's Not a Race

A number of faculty produced a very similar suggestion to up and coming MFT faculty members that seemed to come directly from experience. The general notion was, "It's not a race" and a few faculty actually phrased it that way. The idea is that some of them found themselves rushing at the very start of their career to accomplish as much as they possibly could and ended up feeling burned out and having developed some bad habits that have been difficult to dismantle. One faculty member said, "It's good to know that you don't have to do it all at the same time. That even if you're not writing the book that you wanted to write when your child is under two [years old], that you'll have time later. You don't have to do everything at the same time." (F12) The idea that faculty can slow down the pace and create a healthier, more balanced existence early on in their career seemed to be an important lesson that these faculty wished they had learned early, and they were eager to share that information with me.

Self Care

Because most faculty members described the work of an MFT faculty member as often difficult and stressful, they recommended that others do things for themselves that are nurturing and stress reducing. These suggestions are grouped into the section called self-care. One faculty member felt it so important to mention another piece of advice to new MFT faculty that she e-mailed me after the interview to mention it. She explained, "For two years now, I have been able to have a cleaning lady come in every other week for four hours, and this is a major contribution to my mental health. So this is a good deal and I highly recommend it. You can't do everything yourself." (12F) Another faculty member offered more advice about self-care when she said, "I would also encourage them to make sure that they're taking care of themselves physically as much as possible. That they have outlets for stress." (10F) She went on to suggest having strong friendship networks as an important source of support for MFT faculty members, both within the field and outside of the field of MFT and academia. Another participant suggested going into therapy if the stress, strain, and boundarylessness of their careers prove overwhelming.

Be Intentional

A common theme among MFT faculty in discussing what experiences they have had that they would pass on to up-and-coming faculty is to "be intentional." As with other pieces of suggestion, this seemed to come from their own experiences and, in some instances, a case of "do as I say not as I do." Being intentional encompassed activities at

home, at work, in relationships, and within the participant. As the faculty members described it, being intentional means actively doing things to affect a desired balance outcome, and not to be passive participants in the quest for good work and personal life balance.

In speaking on the issue of being intentional, one faculty member began with an acknowledgment of how hectic most faculty members' lives are in the first few years, especially if they are trying to get tenure. Nearly all of the faculty members thought this to be a relatively normal, expected aspect of being new to the field. But one faculty member added the following advice:

> …you have to make a conscious effort to build in that personal life. And making sure that you do it, not just assuming that it will happen on its own because it probably won't…and making sure that you have people around who can say, 'You know you need to have this balance. What are you doing for yourself?' And I try to do that a lot with my supervisees. You know especially when they're starting to get stressed out. (6f)

Another faculty member described how he sees being intentional as a function of his relationship with his spouse. He described, for himself, how important it is to not only take days off, but to intentionally take them off on days when he knew his loved ones could also be home with him. He added that being intentional also meant, "…really pushing to be the best therapist and teacher and theoretician that I knew how to be in the time I was going to work." (15m) Yet another faculty member described being intentional with those whom you share your primary relationships by saying,

> …let's not forget that we're marriage and family therapists. We're supposed to be the one group who understands and focuses on the importance of relationships….no matter how busy you get, no matter how intense you are, this is work. The real relationships are at home. These [relationships at work] are paid through tuition or employment or therapy. Real relationships where growth and healing takes place is at home. It doesn't matter what I know about an MFT theory if I can't live it at home. So that's one thing I would say. (5m)

Another fairly common piece of advice some faculty shared was the realization that sometimes work and personal life is easier to balance than at other times. Participants acknowledged that the nature of the work of an MFT faculty member is often too busy, rigorous, and stressful to feel good about their balance all of the time. One faculty member discussed the often frenetic pace of being an MFT faculty member when he advised,

> …the culture of intensity and mega hours and boundary-less-ness [in this field] never brings anyone happiness. The most successful people in our field are not the people who spend all their time doing work. There's no question that the work demands will eat up every ounce of time you give it….It will never stop unless you stop it. (5m)

Respondents suggested new faculty members learn what are their personal signs of poor work and personal life balance and to do something intentional about it before they get sick and be forced to take time off. Some respondents added that the more a faculty member knows their individual signs, the better able they will be to notice and monitor these signs throughout their career. Some faculty members thought it was

important to be in tune with their signs, but even more important was intentionally doing something about the lack of balance based on the obvious signs. For example, one faculty member said, in response to how being intentional in this case would be helpful, "Well I think just by taking time to take care of yourself and recharge your battery. I mean food is important to think. And rest is important for thinking. I mean if you're not doing those two things at the very least, you know, then you're not going to be able to be as productive. So being able to kind of recognize that." (9F)

Prioritize

A major piece of advice that some MFT faculty members provided was to prioritize early, often, and to stick to those priorities as well and as often as possible. One person felt it was very important to prioritize the parts of her job that brought her into this career, and to focus on those, nurture them, and make sure enough time was carved out for those. She described this as a way faculty can maintain their passion, and that if other things crowded in too much it is easy to lose that passion. Another person focused on family as a priority when he said he would tell new MFT faculty members, "…that it's important to honor their family life, their personal life. And spend time with their families, to turn off the [therapist] meter." (8m) Similarly, another faculty member simply advised, "Don't do what you don't want to do." (7m) As part of prioritizing, some faculty members thought it very important for new faculty members to define their most important values in life and stick with those as they go through their careers, renegotiating work and personal life around those core values that provide a foundation for their life. Making that which you value the most first and foremost and keeping that in the forefront of your mind is a key to prioritizing in order to better balance work and personal life. A few faculty members added that it is very helpful, if a new faculty member has a spouse or life partner, that they share these core values and priorities and can work together to keep each other on track. This also serves as a way to be accountable to someone else, to share the burden of balancing work and personal life, and to know that there is someone in your life who is working as hard as you to maintain your joint values and priorities.

Strategize

Some faculty members suggested that new MFT faculty members try to strategize ways of balancing their work and personal lives. Strategizing took a number of different forms, as discussed in this section. The themes of that emerged showed that participants have strategizing suggestions that are useful for people before they embark on a career as an MFT faculty member, suggestions during their career, and ideas for those who are in the later stage of their career.

Pre-Career Strategies. A number of faculty members talked about students they have mentored who have been unsure whether the life of an MFT faculty is manageable and desirable. A number of the faculty responded to these concerns and used them as an example of the need to strategize around balance issues early in their career. According to a few of the faculty members, strategizing around balance issues should begin before prospective MFT faculty members actually embark on their new careers and accept their first faculty positions. They suggest that it is important for potential faculty members to seek enough information about the career to have an adequate sense that it is appropriate for them. It is also important for them to determine what aspects of the career they feel passionate about and want to focus in on; teaching, research, practice, administration, or

some combination. Participants said it is important to know the expectations of academia, to talk to people in the field, and to be as informed as possible from many of perspectives. One participant suggested new faculty members also be very intentional about selecting the correct environment in which to work as a way for them to begin to develop a career-long strategy that will produce higher rates of satisfaction and a better sense of balance. This includes, for example, deciding between research versus clinically focused positions, master's versus doctoral programs, and the type of department in which the MFT program is housed. Another faculty member suggested that it is important not only to know what aspects of the career a potential faculty member wants to focus on, but also to negotiate with colleagues and administration ahead of time to have those aspects more present in their careers. These intentional strategies are all part of making creating a career path for the future and focusing on those things that will lead to the most satisfying and balanced life.

Mid-Career Strategies. For those who make the choice to become an MFT faculty member, some participants had suggestions about ways to strategize in the middle of their career in order to help improve work and personal life balance. One faculty member described a strategy he uses to get the most out of his work and personal life on a daily basis. He described himself as being purposeful in his attempts to balance his long days at the office by going home around dinnertime to have a meal and bed time ritual with his family, then continued to work from home if necessary once his children had gone to sleep. That way he said he was able to fulfill his obligations at work while also getting to spend valuable time with his family each day. He stated, "Rather than coming home at 9:30 from work, I'll come home at six o'clock, do family time, and then after they're in bed go back to work." (16m)

One faculty member gave advice for managing the many competing demands of work and family life. She stated, "I think it's really important to schedule dates with your spouse if you find that you don't have regular time together. If you need to make appointments then do it, don't feel bad about it. And the same with kids." When I asked this same faculty member what she would tell someone to do if they had a strategy that wasn't working, she emphatically suggested they, "find another strategy!" She added that people can talk to friends and colleagues about their own strategies as a way to "think outside of the box," and maybe try someone else's strategy that sounds like it might work for them. She was clear about recommending MFT faculty find strategies that work for them, and to be creative in their strategies throughout their careers.

Late-Career Strategies. While strategizing before and during one's career as an MFT faculty were suggestions the respondents made, a few also suggested strategizing at the end of one's career if and when one realizes that this was not the right career for them. One person felt it very important that faculty members not to stay in a job that is so stressful that their health and well-being is at risk. He felt it was important to give MFT faculty members the feedback that it is all right to leave their organization, university, or the entire field of MFT in favor of a career that is more health promoting and enjoyable. He felt so strongly about this that he asserted,

> …if you find yourself having to fight and struggle to the point where
> you're stressed out, get out! Put out your resume, get the chronicle of
> higher education, find another place. Your health is very important, your
> life is important. And if there are barriers there that are difficult for you

that you can't do what you love to do, then you're in the wrong place. (8m)

All of these strategies, whether they be pre-career, mid-career, or later in a faculty member's career, are meant to help faculty members think through their balance issues and come up with creative, innovative, and functional methods for creating a satisfactory balance between their work and personal life.

Qualitative Results Summary

The qualitative results show that more men than women reported that they were satisfied with their work and personal life balance. In addition, many factors impact how MFT faculty members make sense of their work and personal life balance. Some include the indicators they use to provide information about how they feel about their balance, the messages they notice within themselves and from those around them, the observations they made as members of their families of origin, and their gender. From these indicators it is clear that faculty members use a lot of data in determining how the feel about and make sense of their balance.

Faculty members also mentioned a number of factors that served to enhance their work and personal life balance. Some of those included job flexibility, setting healthy boundaries, their ability to say no, incorporation of non-work activities into their lives, their ability to speak up for themselves, spirituality, and positive work esteem. Some of the factors that served to reduce their balance included developing bad habits, negative work esteem, problematic but short-term circumstances that led them to feel they had poor balance, and poor work boundaries. They articulated some key coping strategies they use in helping to improve their work and personal life balance, and they also used their past experiences and creative idealism to articulate a range of suggestions for future faculty members on how to better balance work and personal life. Some of those included recognizing that work is not a race, good self care, being intentional, prioritizing, and strategizing before, in the middle of, and later in their careers.

CHAPTER V
Discussion
Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the experiences of a sample of MFT faculty members in terms of their work and personal life balance. To accomplish this objective I used a mixed-method approach to data collection. Forty-three MFT faculty members responded to a largely quantitative, web-based survey. The majority of the findings were qualitative and came from in-depth phone interviews with 16 of the 43 faculty members. Qualitative studies that are small in scale and in-depth produce good accounts of respondents' experiences and their understandings of their experiences (Becker & Moen, 1999). I asked about their sense of balance, the indicators that told them how balanced they were, what messages have impacted their balance, how their gender influences their balance, and what advice they would give to new therapist-faculty entering the field. I used a phenomenological framework to preserve the voices of each participant as well as to guide the analysis describing their experiences and meaning making. In the previous chapter I outlined the more salient findings from the qualitative interviews as well as demographic details gleaned from their quantitative, web-based questionnaires. I used quotes as often as possible, not only to retain the voice of the participant, but also to more precisely capture the nuances of the concepts outlined in the previous chapter.

I begin this chapter by integrating my findings with the previously published research related to this topic. I follow that with a discussion of the limitations and strengths of this study as well as the implications for future research. I end with a section on my personal reflections of the study and the people who were so generous with themselves, their time, and their experiences.

Integration of Findings with Published Literature

MFT faculty members in this study began by responding to an e-mail request for their participation in a study about the work and personal life balance of MFT faculty. They filled out a web-based questionnaire first and for those who volunteered and were purposively selected, a subset engaged in a dialogue with me over the phone about their experiences balancing their work and personal lives. The study was intended to provide detail and insight into the specific issues facing MFT faculty in terms of their work and personal life balance. After examining the qualitative data carefully, a number of major themes emerged that will be summarized here: their feelings about their balance, balance enhancers and reducers, and gender issues.

Feelings About Balance

About equal numbers of MFT faculty members in my initial sample of 43 questionnaire respondents described their balance as poor as described their balance as good. Other research has shown similar percentages of people who indicate that their work and personal life balance is satisfactory or not satisfactory (Hill et al., 2001). While Wetchler and Piercy (1986) used relationship stressors and enhancers as constructs, not work and personal life balance as in my study, they found that the therapists reported twice as many ways that their work enhanced their personal life than ways they stressed them. So there is evidence that some clinicians' work serves to benefit their work and personal life balance. On the other hand, all of those in my study who said their balance was poor were women. No extant published research supports the finding that women

have poor balance. It seems from my study, however, that balance is both a struggle and a challenge for many people, even many of whom say they currently experience their work and personal life balance as good.

This current study also indicates that work and personal life balance is not something that is simply experienced as always good or always poor. Instead it is a complex, dynamic phenomenon that must take into account the context in which it is experienced and described. So it is not surprising to note that a quarter of faculty were either undecided or reported that they were unable to say definitively one way or another how they currently felt about their balance. Just as in Wetchler's and Piercy's (1986) study, family therapists said both positive things and negative things about the impact their work had on their marital and family relationships. So too it is with balance, as you can see from this study. There are both positive and negative factors that play into a faculty member's experience of their balance. As one psychiatrist wrote about therapist mothers in the workforce today, "We have learned to juggle more balls in less time. Thus we must learn the art of choice and balance to counteract the hectic, rat-race quality so prevalent in our time and culture" (Eckardt, 1998, p. 359).

Balance Enhancers and Reducers

Faculty members highlighted a number of factors that served as work and personal life balance enhancers and/or reducers. Some of those include job flexibility, parenthood, domestic work, and spirituality. Those things that faculty members described will be compared and contrasted to the extant literature below.

Flexibility. It came across very clearly in the current study that work flexibility was a key enhancer for work and personal life balance for some faculty members. So too have other researchers found flexibility to be a key factor in people's sense of work and personal life balance (Clark, 2001; Friedman, 1985; Hill et al., 2001). Not only did the respondents in the research by Hill and her colleagues (2001) tend to be more satisfied than the respondents in the current study, but their work flexibility also allowed them to work longer hours before workload negatively affected their work and family life balance. Similarly, Clark (2001) found that flexibility of the work in which an employee engaged was linked to increased satisfaction and increased family well-being. Still another article described the personal and professional experiences of pregnant therapists (Korol, 1996). The researcher concluded that a supportive, flexible work environment is important for therapists to be able to pay attention to their own needs and emotions while adjusting to their pregnancy. Clearly job flexibility is an important balance enhancer for many MFT faculty members, and it is an aspect of the job they appreciate and of which many take advantage. On the other hand, my results indicated that, while many faculty members appreciated the flexibility they experienced in their work, it did not always lead to reports of good work and personal life balance. This finding was not supported by the research noted above.

Parenthood. I was interested to find that no clear pattern of satisfaction with work and personal life balance appeared based on whether the faculty members had children or not. On the other hand, with such a small sample it is not altogether surprising. The majority of faculty members in this study had children, and they were split on whether they felt balanced or not balanced. One study supported this finding in that they found that parents and non-parents considered themselves equally burned out and equally successful in their work lives (Galinsky et al., 1996). When looking at the issue of

balance, however, employed parents in the same study reported significantly poorer work and personal life balance than employed non-parents. Working parents reported considerably more home-to-job spillover that served to reduce their balance. Yet another study, this time by Barnett and Rivers (1996) found that 75% of the dual-earner couples in their study reported strain in combining work and parenting.

In the current study, however, faculty members who were mothers seemed to be less satisfied with their work and personal life balance than faculty members who were fathers. The study published by Galinsky and Bond (1996) supports this finding. They found that employed mothers were consistently less satisfied with various aspects of their personal lives than the working fathers, and working mothers reported higher incidences of minor health problems, nervousness, and stress than working fathers. In fact, most of the fathers in my study said they have good work and personal life balance, though nearly all of them have either a stay-at-home wife or have grown children who no longer live at home.

Domestic Responsibilities. One of the balance reducers some faculty members described was having too much domestic responsibilities along with their full-time status in a "boundaryless" career. All of the women in my study who have children at home were also in dual-earner families and reported some difficulty with their work and personal life balance. Some participants suggested this was because working mothers also have the lion's share of the domestic responsibilities. This notion is supported by some research (Galinsky et al., 1996). Galinsky and her colleagues found that working mothers and fathers in her study agreed that the majority of the household work was done by the female. Many of the women feel it is part of their responsibility to do most of the childcare activities, including the emotional care of their children. This undoubtedly causes a great deal of role strain for these mothers and serves to reduce their sense of balance.

Spirituality and Religion. Spirituality and religious affiliation were balance enhancers that emerged in the current study even though I did not directly ask any questions about these topics. More than half of the men but none of the women said their spirituality is an important element in their sense of good balance. Very little research has been published on religious affiliation and work and personal life balance among therapists, no less MFT faculty members. In addition, there was very little variance in the type of religious affiliation represented in my sample with the majority being members of the Church of Jesus Christ (also known as Mormon). Much more information is needed on how religion and spirituality are factored in to people's sense of work and personal life balance. There is also a need to differentiate between the impact of religion or spirituality versus the impact of the cultural norms that exist in some religions.
Gender Issues

While it is true that one of the findings in this study was the gender division of reports of satisfaction with work and personal life balance, it is also important for me to mention the feminist lens with which I conducted this study and analyzed this data. My feminist perspective is well-integrated into my world-view, therefore when interviewees began discussing gender-related issues I followed their lead. I may not have done this with other issues of interest to the interviewees, but my bias certainly led me to examine the gender issues more carefully. It is not only my feminist perspective that led me down this path, but also my previous interest and studies in gender issues. Therefore it is

important when interpreting the results to realize that my feminist perspective certainly influenced my choice to examine gender issues more carefully once they were brought up by the first few participants.

While nearly all of the women reported that their balance was "way off," no men said the same. This may be due in part to the fact that all of the women interviewees were in dual earner relationships or were single. On the other hand, most of the men in the current study who said they had good balance were married to a wife who stayed at home full-time or part-time. This finding is mostly supported in White's (1999) research. White found that in general the relationship between type of earner in the family (dual- or single-earner family) and work and personal life balance is different for men and women. Females in dual earner families were less satisfied with their work and personal life balance than their male counterparts. White also found that work and personal life balance was significantly better for one- versus two-earner families. My research confirmed this for married or partnered faculty members. However, I found that faculty members who were not in partnered relationships or who were dating said they had poor or middle-of the road work and personal life balance. In most cases this was because the faculty members felt they poured too much of themselves into their careers and retained far too little for their personal lives.

White (1999) cited a persistent gender difference among levels of work and personal life balance and whether respondents were in a dual- or single-earner family. My research did not confirm this finding. In fact all but one of the men in my study who were in single-earner families where their wife was a homemaker reported being satisfied with their work and personal life balance. In terms of their gender roles, these families are considered traditional. Barnett and Hyde (2001), however, found that liberal gender role beliefs led to better work and personal life balance for both men and women. These results do not support my findings.

In addition, while many of the married men in my study were sole earners in their homes and reported that their wives carried the lion's share of the domestic responsibilities, it was quite different for the married or partnered women. All of the partnered women reported full responsibilities at work and nearly full responsibilities at home. This is consistent with other research that shows that women tend to balance a qualitatively and quantitatively different set of demands than their male counterparts (White, 1999). Women carry more of the work at home and with child care issues. This phenomenon was supported by my findings. It is no surprise, then, that all of those who said their balance was "way off" were women.

There are a number of interpretations that I can make on this issue of men reporting better balance than the women in this study. One reason could be that the men in my study were in the life stage of having school-aged children while most of the women either had grown children out of the house or no children. One study supports this interpretation in that they found that men and women in the life-stage of having children used a strategy of placing limits on work more than people in other life-stages (Becker & Moen, 1999). Placing limits on work came in the form of refusing to take a new job or promotion, refusing work-related travel or relocation, and refusing to engage in the materialism that they associated with the fast-paced life where career is the priority. Indeed, even the women whose children had grown and moved out of their house remarked at times that they scaled back on work when they had young children.

Some of these women reported worse balance now than before when they had school-aged children for whom they felt responsible. This certainly could be one of the reasons why the men in this study appeared to be more satisfied with their work and personal life balance.

Another interpretation could be that many of the men in the study, while they admittedly do less of the work at home than their spouses (even if their spouse works), they are actually doing more than their fathers did or are doing. This may increase their sense of well-being about the tasks in which they engage. On the other hand, the mothers with whom I spoke may be doing less at home and with their children than their mothers did, even though they are doing more than their mothers in terms of earning and career building. It may be that maternal guilt is a significant problem with women who work full time. This did not seem to be as true for the fathers with whom I spoke, however.

<u>Limitations and Strengths of the Study</u>

There are a number of important limitations and strengths in this study. The first of which is that the finding from this study are not generalizable to a larger group of MFT faculty members but only representative of the 16 interviewees. Secondly, I grouped faculty members based on whether they said their work and personal life balance was good, bad, or middle of the road. However, the concept of work and personal life balance can be illusive. Based on their lengthy and rich explanations of how they perceived and made meaning of their balance, it seems that work and personal life balance is not something that can be measured using a simple set of indicators. Further research is needed to determine whether balance is a single construct or a multifaceted one (Clark, 2001).

One faculty member who I interviewed thought that I did not focus enough on the experiences of single MFT faculty members. Another noticed that I did not ask questions specific to sexual orientation or ethnicity. Each of these variables may be important, though focusing on them was beyond the scope of the present study. For some faculty members these issues were germane to their experience, so they became part of the research. To more fully understand the intricacies of what goes into MFT faculty members' experiences of their work and personal life balance, though, it may be important to study those variables in the future.

Another possible weakness of this study is that data collection occurred at various times during a one-year period. While the majority of respondents were interviewed during the early summer of 2001 after the semester had ended, some were interviewed at the end of the fall semester of 2001 and the beginning of the spring semester of 2002. Undoubtedly a person's sense of work and personal life balance will be different depending on what time during the academic year they are interviewed. Future researchers should try to collect data from faculty members at about the same time during a semester. In addition, the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001 undoubtedly impacted all Americans, regardless of how close or far they were from New York City or Washington, DC. Four of the 16 interviewees were contacted post-September 11, 2001. Though none of them specifically discussed the impact the terrorist attacks had on their work and personal life balance, it is reasonable to expect that this could have impacted their experience and responses in ways not known.

This study is limited in its ability to comment on the long-term work and personal life balance issues of these MFT faculty members. While I gathered some information

about the past balance issues of participants, that information is retrospective and the accuracy of retrospective data is questionable. Future research should consider using a more longitudinal design to better understand the work and personal life balance of faculty over time. The current study would have also been improved had I interviewed participants six months after the first interview to explore how faculty members' views had changed based on their experience of being a subject in this research. Future studies would benefit from incorporating that element.

As a systemic thinker talking to other systemic thinkers, it would have been useful to interview the participants' significant others to gather information about their balance. Not only were these interviews exclusively self-report, which in and of itself tends to reduce the researcher's ability to cross-validate data, but it also lacked the perspectives of the people who impact the participants and who are impacted by them. This would also allow for additional levels of context to be added to understanding how faculty members experience their work and personal life balance. Future research should include data collected from significant people in the faculty's work and personal lives (i.e., partner, spouse, children, friend, boss, colleague, student).

One of the strengths of this study was the number of faculty I interviewed. Sixteen respondents is average if not above average for a descriptive study on a never-before-studied population. Using qualitative analysis software helped deal with the sheer volume of data. Another strength is that the 16 respondents were divided equally by gender and there was good representation by other demographic variables. Had I interviewed all or just the first 16 who volunteered I might not have gotten such balanced representation of the original self-selected sample.

A strength of the semi-structured interview protocol is that it allowed me to ask a core set of questions to each faculty member while giving me the flexibility to navigate down different paths in pursuit of confirmation, new insights, and more illustrative information. A strictly unstructured format does not always allow for qualitative comparisons to be made or themes to emerge with only 16 respondents. On the other hand, a strictly structured format prevents the researcher from investigating the broader set of issues people bring with them.

<div align="center">Implications of the Study</div>

There are a number of important implications that come from this study. Some of the implications are for the self of the therapist, some for training programs and their trainees, and some are for the body of research on the topic of work and personal life balance. Some of the implications will be discussed in the following sections.

Training

This study provides some insights into the importance of providing additional training to students who are embarking on a career as MFT faculty members. Faculty members need to consider themselves as role models to their students, setting good examples of how to balance work and personal life. In addition, coursework, workshops, and experiential exercises that allow students to explore their challenges with work and personal life balance can enable them to develop competencies in rebalancing strategies that they can use for a lifetime. Faculty members can be instrumental in not only instructing students on work and personal life balance issues, but in being positive examples for them to emulate in the future.

Career Decision Making

One of the important implications of this study is that it has the potential to provide up-and-coming MFT faculty with a broader glimpse of what to expect based on some of their expected life circumstances. For example, younger women who are embarking on this career will need to carefully think through their desire to begin a family, especially in the few years leading to a tenure decision. A couple of the women with whom I spoke who did not have tenure or children could not imagine what their life would be like if they were trying to begin a family. This, to them, seemed unimaginable considering how much difficulty they were having balancing their work and personal lives without children.

Because social change is non-stop, it is likely that women will find increasingly more female role models in the field of MFT academe as the years go by (White, 1999). My research certainly paints somewhat of a grim picture for female faculty members as role models for a good work and personal life balance. However, the more attention the issue of work and personal life balance for MFT faculty gets, the more likely it is that this trend could slow, showing more female role models successfully balancing the two spheres of their life.

Self of the Therapist

This study also provides insights into self-of-the-therapist issues. Aponte and Winter (1987) wrote an article on training therapists from a self-of-the-therapist approach. They noted that the alterations therapists make in their lives strengthen their ability to help clients create change. They go on to say that therapists' effectiveness is limited to what they have learned to recognize and work with in themselves. The faculty members who participated in this study may have had an opportunity to reflect on and learn more about themselves by articulating in some detail how they make sense of their work and personal life balance. This may positively impact their work with their clients in the short and long term. By learning more about or resolving issues like poor balance, clinicians attain greater clarity about themselves, are more able to use their whole selves with clients, and can set positive examples for those they mentor, teach, or work with.

Clearly the faculty with whom I spoke felt it important to strategize, prioritize, and be intentional. Strategizing, prioritizing, and being intentional were often reported as ways in which faculty members could care for themselves, their families, and their clients. Many of them found a great deal of grounding through their spirituality, which seems to guide some people through tough times and help them feel even more grounded when life is chaotic. People who are looking for a way to feel more grounded might consider becoming more involved with activities that deepen their spirituality or making a shift to include a spiritual element if they do not already have one active in their life.

Personal Reflections

An important element of reporting on qualitative research is the response and reaction of the researcher. The following sections detail some of the reactions and responses I had during my role as researcher.

Future Career as MFT Faculty Member

Before embarking on this study, I knew that I planned to enter a doctoral program in order to one day become an MFT faculty member. This created an interesting researcher bias for the current study, not as a participant of a group but as a future participant. I was on the outside looking in and am on the cusp of a career that will be

very similar to many of those with whom I spoke. I had both positive and negative reactions to some of what I learned from the experiences of the interviewees. I sometimes felt I was learning more about my chosen future career than I wanted to know in terms of the struggles and difficulties many of the female faculty members described. As a woman without children, I was especially disturbed to learn about how much the female faculty members without children struggled with their work and personal life balance. I was also disheartened hearing first-hand that the first few years of work as a junior faculty member are inevitably difficult and may be full of challenges for those seeking work and personal life balance. After each interview where I learned about someone's struggles, I found myself mentally checking where I currently am on some of those issues. I would often ask myself questions about how I am balancing my life, what challenges I feel I am most vulnerable, and what advice I could take and apply to my own life now and in the future in order to stave off the imbalance many women described.

I have determined that some of my personality characteristics give me some unique strengths that may help me protect myself against long-term imbalance when I become a junior faculty member. One strength is my ability to monitor my own levels of stress and take action to correct those early rather than late. I am also not so driven that I cannot slow down before or once I notice myself over-working. In addition, I have a life partner whose company I value and enjoy, and time spent with him is a motivator to manage the amount of energy I put into work. On the other hand, there are some areas in my personality and life that may be areas I need to monitor more carefully. Many of these are the warning signs I picked up from the faculty members who I interviewed. One of those warning signs is that my partner is a workaholic. His priority is often his work and his career, and he often opts for his sense of obligation to his bosses and colleagues over his sense of obligation to his personal life. This can put me at risk for overworking in times when he is overworking. We will need to get clarity on our priorities, set limits, and reevaluate how we are each doing in terms of carving out enough time for our relationship and time together. Another warning sign for me is that I am a multi-tasker. I have some problem saying no to people, especially when the task or activity is something I like, something I want, or something that will significantly further my career. Part of this is that I tend to be adequately good at a lot of different things, though not expert at anything. This characteristic, I have noticed, draws people to me to ask for help with tasks and take on projects. I will need to learn to prioritize my output of productivity so that it does not completely deplete what I have to give!

Spirituality

I was struck by my hesitance to delve too far into the findings regarding spirituality in this study. It seemed to me on the surface clear that the more religious a person is the more likely he was to say his balance was good. Because I am not a highly religious person, and because I believe that fundamentalist, conservative, traditional religions preach an "our way or no way" doctrine, I was resistant to the notion that people who espouse some of these more traditional, religion-based beliefs would be reaping more benefits than those who did not describe such affiliations. In the interest of letting the data speak for itself, however, this information is an important addition to the findings. Clearly there is something to learn from those who are affiliated with conservative religious organizations about how to balance work and personal life. The

question is how and whether the lessons can be incorporated into the lives of less religious or spiritual faculty members.

Doctoral Applicant

One interesting phenomenon, related to being an outsider looking in was that during the data collection and analysis periods I was looking into Ph.D. programs to which to apply for admission in Fall, 2002. Although I had no idea who the faculty were when we purposively selected them, I quickly learned that many of them were at universities I was considering applying to. Undoubtedly this impacted my ability to be a true outsider as an interviewer. In fact I met a number of the faculty members later in the Fall of 2001 at the Annual Conference for the AAMFT. I felt nervous meeting faculty members who had shared so many personal details about their life but who did not know they were speaking to a future doctoral applicant in their program. I felt deeply conflicted about this, though I understood that just as they play many different roles in their work and personal lives, so too do I as a student. It just so happens that in this case, two of my roles that merged were that of researcher and potential student/mentee. I am under no illusion that the faculty members felt as uncomfortable about the situation as I had. In fact many of them have conducted research that involves other professionals, students, and therapists with whom they may interact in the future. So for them this may have been of little consequence. Still, I continued to feel honored and humbled by what each of the faculty members had so generously contributed to this study because I knew that I would be their colleague not too far in the future.

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Informed Consent

Project Title: How do marriage & family therapy faculty balance work and their personal lives: A qualitative investigation.

Investigators: Karen H. Rosen, Department of Human Development, Virginia Tech
William Northey, Director of Research, AAMFT
Jennifer Matheson, Department of Human Development, Virginia Tech

Purpose of the Study

This study will investigate what coping strategies Marriage & Family Therapy (MFT) faculty members use to balance their professional responsibilities -- teaching, clinical supervision, conducting therapy, and research -- and their personal lives outside of work. We will use qualitative methods to investigate what MFT faculty think are the factors that lead them to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the balance they have achieved. The findings of this study will help to inform the MFT field about how MFT faculty cope with and mediate the stresses in their lives. Participants will provide their ideas and experiences in achieving a work-personal life balance.

Procedures

Researchers will e-mail you an initial questionnaire containing demographic and open-ended questions related to the research topic. The initial questionnaire will take approximately 20-25 minutes to complete. You will then receive a follow-up questionnaire via e-mail that will take 10-15 minutes to complete which will be based on themes that emerge from the initial questionnaire. You will be asked to e-mail your responses from both questionnaires to the research team. You will also be asked if you would agree to be contacted for a 30-minute telephone interview to discuss your work-personal life balance in more detail. A purposive sample of participants who agree to be interviewed by telephone will be contacted.

Risks and Benefits

The researchers anticipate no risk to you based on your participation in this study. This study is completely voluntary. In addition, no one will be informed of who chooses to participate and who does not, so we anticipate no risks to you personally or professionally regardless of whether or not you choose to participate.

A potential benefit to is the opportunity to think about, and perhaps discuss with a third party, how you balance work and personal life. Your input will be part of a larger report that may help others in the MFT field, or those thinking about entering the field as a faculty member, by providing valuable information about how some faculty cope with and mediate work and life stress.

Confidentiality

None of the information you provide as part of this study will be in any way connected with your name. Upon receiving your questionnaire responses via e-mail, a survey manager will detach your e-mail address and other identifying information from your responses and will assign your responses a unique number that will not be associated with your name. We will temporarily keep in a secure database the e-mail addresses of those who answered the initial questionnaire so that the follow-up questionnaire can be sent to them. Your original e-mail message containing your data will then be deleted from the computer system so that your name and data are permanently disassociated.

If you participate in the in-depth telephone interview, your name will not be associated with any of the information you provide. We will ask your permission to audiotape the interview for transcription purposes only. No last names will be used during taping to preserve your anonymity, and all audiotapes will be kept in a locked cabinet and erased after transcriptions are complete. The only people who will have access to the audiotapes are the research team.

The final report that is written for this study will be a summary of responses from all participants. Your name will not be included in any publication or presentation of the data. There will be no way to identify you in any written reports.

Compensation

There will be no compensation for your participation in this study.

Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this study at any point with no negative ramifications to you personally or professionally. You are free not to answer any questions that you choose without penalty.

Approval of Research

This research project has been approved, as required, by the Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and by the Department of Human Development.

Subject's Permission

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I have read and understand the Informed Consent and conditions of this project. I hereby acknowledge the above and give my voluntary consent for participation in this project by typing the word "YES" in the blank provided below. I know that if I participate, I may withdraw at any time without penalty.

_____ , I voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.
(Please type YES in the space above if you agree to participate)

APPENDIX B
Work-Family Questionnaire

Informed Consent

We assume that you have read the informed consent, understand the parameters of your participation, and are voluntarily consenting to participate in this study. Remember, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. *Furthermore, you may choose not to answer a particular question(s).*

I. Demographic Questions

1. What is your gender?
   - ❑ Male
   - ❑ Female

2. What is your age? _____ years

3. What is your annual household income?
   - ❑ $25,000 - $34,999
   - ❑ $35,000 - $44,999
   - ❑ $45,000 - $54,999
   - ❑ $55,000 - $64,999
   - ❑ $65,000 - $74,999
   - ❑ $75,000 - $84,999
   - ❑ $85,000 - $94,999
   - ❑ $95,000 or more

4. What is your current marital status? (Check all that apply)
   - ❑ Not married, _not_ in a committed relationship
   - ❑ Not married, _in_ a committed relationship
   - ❑ Married
   - ❑ Divorced or separated
   - ❑ Widowed

5. Is your spouse or significant other employed?
   - ❑ Yes, full time
   - ❑ Yes, part time
   - ❑ No
   - ❑ Does not apply because I do not have a spouse or significant other

6. How many children do you have (biological, step, foster, adopted)? _____
   - ❑ None

7. How many children are currently living with you? _____

❑ I do not have children

8. In the space below, please list the age and gender of your children.
    ❑ I do not have children

    _____

    _____

9. What is your highest degree type? (Check all that apply)
    ❑ Ph.D.
    ❑ Psy.D.
    ❑ Ed.D.
    ❑ M.D.
    ❑ Other (Specify:_____)

10. How long (in total) have you been an MFT faculty member? _____ years
    ❑ Less than 1 year

11. Do you currently work as an MFT faculty member in a 9-month or 12-month position?
    ❑ 9-month
    ❑ 12-month
    ❑ Other (Specify: _____)

12. Is your faculty appointment a tenure track position?
    ❑ Yes
    ❑ No
    ❑ Other (Specify: _____)

13. What is your title?
    ❑ Professor Emeritus
    ❑ Full Professor
    ❑ Assistant Professor
    ❑ Associate Professor
    ❑ Adjunct Professor
    ❑ Other (Specify: _____)

14. In what state is your MFT program located?

    _____

15. What type of MFT degree or certificate does your program grant? (Check all that apply)
    ❑ Masters

❑ Doctoral
❑ Post Masters Certificate
❑ Other (Specify: _____)

II. Core Questions

1. The following are some of the roles that you may play in your daily life. Place a check in the box next to all of those that pertain to your routine responsibilities.
   ❑ spouse or partner
   ❑ parent
   ❑ step-parent
   ❑ grandparent
   ❑ child
   ❑ caretaker (of someone other than a child)
   ❑ sibling
   ❑ friend
   ❑ pet-owner
   ❑ therapist
   ❑ teacher
   ❑ supervisor
   ❑ employer
   ❑ researcher
   ❑ committee chair
   ❑ committee member
   ❑ author
   ❑ Other (Specify: _____)

2. During the past 12 months, what is the number of hours in **a typical week** that you spent doing each of the following:
   a. Working at the office _____
   b. Working at home (job-related work) _____
   c. Home chores and errands _____
   d. Tasks (e.g., PTA meetings, driving children to activities, taking significant other to the airport, etc.) related to your child, significant other, or other family members _____
   e. Leisure with family members _____
   f. Leisure on your own _____
   g. Other (Specify: _____)

3. Please describe the challenges you encounter when trying to attain a balance between work and family.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Please describe how you deal with the challenges discussed in question #3 above.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. How long do you envision yourself continuing your work as an MFT faculty member? _____ years

□ less than 1 year
□ I don't know

6. Which of the following do you find rewarding about being an MFT faculty member? (Check all that apply)
□ independence
□ financial rewards
□ variety of work
□ collegial relationships
□ student relationships
□ recognition
□ prestige
□ intellectual stimulation
□ emotional growth
□ personal fulfillment
□ Other (Specify:_____)

7. Which of the following are rewarding aspects of your family life? (Check all that apply)
   - ❑ independence
   - ❑ variety of activities
   - ❑ relationships with family members and/or significant others
   - ❑ appreciation
   - ❑ approval
   - ❑ recognition
   - ❑ comfort and security
   - ❑ intellectual stimulation
   - ❑ emotional growth
   - ❑ personal fulfillment
   - ❑ Other (Specify: _____)

8. If you had it to do all over again, how likely is it that you would choose to be an MFT faculty member?
   - ❑ Not at all likely
   - ❑ Not very likely
   - ❑ Likely
   - ❑ Very likely
   - ❑ Extremely likely

9. On a scale from 1 to 5, what is your **CURRENT** level of satisfaction with the balance you have between your work and family life?
   - ❑ 1 - Not at all satisfied
   - ❑ 2 - Not very satisfied
   - ❑ 3 - Satisfied
   - ❑ 4 - Very satisfied
   - ❑ 5 - Extremely satisfied

10. What are some of the reasons that you feel this level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction (in question 9)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Was there a time in your career as an MFT faculty member that you felt significantly differently about the balance of your work and family life?
   - ❑ Yes
   - ❑ No (SKIP TO Q14)

12. *(Only if you answered Yes on question 11)* On a scale from 1 to 5, what was your level of satisfaction at that time of your career?

- ❏ 1 - Not at all satisfied
- ❏ 2 - Not very satisfied
- ❏ 3 - Satisfied
- ❏ 4 - Very satisfied
- ❏ 5 - Extremely satisfied

13. *(Only if you answered Yes on question 11)* What specifically was it that made your level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction different from your current level?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. Since you have been a faculty member in MFT, has anyone else in your family (e.g., significant other, children, extended family member) expressed concern or dissatisfaction with your balance between work and family?

- ❏ Yes
- ❏ No (SKIP TO END)

15. If yes, what was the nature of this concern or dissatisfaction (who was concerned, what was he/she concerned about, what was the temporal context)?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for completing this survey!

If you agree to be contacted for a 30-minute telephone interview, please put your name, telephone number, and e-mail address below:

Name:
Telephone number:
E-mail address:

APPENDIX C
Interview Questions

1. Think for a moment about the balance you feel you have between your work and personal life at the present time. How do you feel about the balance you have between your work and personal life? Tell me what specifically makes you say that. What are the indicators you use to determine how balanced your life is?

2. To what do you attribute your current level of balance?

3. What messages have you heard throughout your life or examples have been set that shape the way you feel about the balance you have between your work and personal life? How do you think those examples or messages impact the balance you have between your work and personal lives?

4. How have you successfully adjusted competing demands in the past and present to achieve a more satisfactory work/personal life balance if your balance is or has been unsatisfactory?

5. What do the significant people in your life think of how you have balanced your work and personal life? **Before the interview, please ask someone in your life what they think of how you balance your work and personal life (in the past, present, or both).**

6. How do you think your gender impacts your work and personal life balance?

7. What experiences have you had as an MFT faculty member in terms of your work and personal life balance that you would share with others who are embarking on this profession?

VITA

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Ms. Jennifer L. Matheson has completed a Master of Science degree in Marriage & Family Therapy in the Department of Human Development at Virginia Tech in Northern Virginia. In addition to studying and working as a graduate research assistant, she working as a clinical intern in Intensive Family Therapy at the Inova Kellar Center. Ms. Matheson has a Master's degree in Sociology, and has worked as an analyst at Research Triangle Institute (RTI) since 1991 in the areas of social policy, health policy, and women, children, and community research. She has also worked in the areas of program and process evaluation. Ms. Matheson brings a well-rounded approach to her research with strengths in qualitative and quantitative methods, design, analysis, and technical writing. On the qualitative side, Ms. Matheson has worked on the development, pretesting, and revision of questionnaires, research protocols, and focus group moderating guides. She has experience in conducting, recruiting for, and writing reports on focus groups, as well as in the training of focus group moderators. Interviewing is one of Ms. Matheson's many strengths. She has conducted, and reported on, a wide range of interview types including in-person, telephone, cognitive, group, one-on-one, executive, structured, and in-depth interviews. Ms. Matheson also possesses quantitative skills in the design, analysis, and reporting of survey research. She has conducted literature reviews, designed instruments for surveys, pretested instruments, revised research protocols, managed mailing and receipt of surveys, and analyzed survey data. Ms. Matheson has strong interpersonal skills, a wide range of organizational talents, and a solid ability to communicate orally and in writing.

Education

M.S., Marriage and Family Therapy Program, Department of Human Development, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Falls Church, VA, May 2002.
M.A., Sociology, Concentration in Sex and Gender, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA, 1999.
B.A., Psychology, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, 1991.

Clinical Experience

2001 to date   Inova Kellar Center, Fairfax, VA
                      Intensive Family Therapy Intern. Provides assessment, intervention, and short-term, intensive therapy with families and their adolescents who are in crisis. Under the supervision of an AAMFT approved supervisor, utilizes the Kellar Center's Intensive Family Therapy model which includes 90-minute family therapy sessions two-to-

three times per week for three-to-five weeks, as needed for improved family functioning. Served as co-therapist for adolescent girls' therapy group, utilizing skills in psychoeducation, group support, and group therapy regarding symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder due to past sexual abuse and sexual assault.

2000-2001   Northern Virginia Hospice, Arlington Chapter
                   <u>Trained Bereavement Volunteer</u>. Provided support and guidance by phone to family members of loved ones recently deceased. Co-therapist for bereavement drop-in group.

2000-2001   Center for Family Services, Falls Church, VA
                   <u>Couples Domestic Violence Co-Therapist</u>. Multi-couple alumni group focused on resolving conflict in marriages that were once violent. Group members previously completed anger management and couples therapy program before joining this alumni support group.

2000   Church Street Center for Family Therapy, Vienna, VA
                   <u>Men's Anger Management Co-Therapist</u>. Provided psychoeducation and support to men who were court-ordered or self-referred for anger and violence issues.

Professional Experience

2000 to date   **Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Falls Church, VA.**
                   <u>Graduate Research Assistant</u>. Performs, and is responsible for, a variety of administrative and research tasks as needed, including literature searches, qualitative data analysis and report writing. Designs and conducts focus groups for faculty-run research projects. Aids in the development of various qualitative and quantitative research instruments such as surveys, focus group moderator guides, and interviews. Conducts qualitative interviews and transcribes data for analysis. Participates in proposal management and writing.

1991 to date	**Research Triangle Institute, Research Triangle Park, NC & Washington, DC.**
	Research Policy Analyst. Conducts a wide variety of qualitative and quantitative methods for program evaluations, needs assessments, and various other federally funded projects. Develops materials for and moderates focus groups, analyzes qualitative and quantitative data, and authors and co-authors reports and deliverable documents. Develops and pretests survey questionnaires and conducts many types of interviews with consumers, private and governmental agency staff, and service providers. Conducts detailed literature reviews. Leads site visits for data collection and develops site visit protocols and materials. Trains and mentors new junior staff.
1991	**Clinical Research International, Research Triangle Park, NC.**
	Clinical Data Coordinator (temporary). Ensured accurate, complete, and consistent databases for clinical trials by conducting a variety of quality control procedures. Led group who reviewed, proofread, and analyzed data entry output and data validation output to resolve errors and protocol violations. Met with clinical research personnel to help resolve discrepancies in case report forms. Performed medical abstraction on case report forms.
1990 to 1991	**Employment Opportunities, Inc., Raleigh, NC.**
	Intern. Conducted Satisfaction Survey to determine level of satisfaction of those who employ people with developmental disabilities. Designed instrument, interviewed employers, and analyzed data in order to recommend program modifications to improve job placements. Also helped develop jobs and taught curriculum for group seeking job skills for reintegration into the workplace.

Published Journal Articles

Rosen, K.H., Matheson, J. L., Stith, S.M., McCollum, E.E., & Locke, L.D. (In review). Negotiated Time-Out: A De-escalation Tool for Couples. Journal of Marriage & Family Therapy.

Spring, B., Rosen, K. H., & Matheson, J. L. (In press). How parents experience a transition to adolescence: A qualitative study. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*.

Kalof, L., Eby, K. K., Matheson, J. L., & Kroska, R. J. (2001). "The Influence of Race and Gender on Student Self-reports of Sexual Harassment by College Professors." *Gender and Society, 15*(2), 282-302.

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Griffith, J.D., L.L. Powers, L.M. Rist, and J.L. Matheson (1994). "Evaluation of the SCP/AoA Joint Initiative for the Vulnerable Elderly Program." Prepared for the Corporation for National and Community Service, RTI Report 4870.

Professional Presentations

Matheson, J. L., & Rosen, K. R. (Oct., 2001). *MFT faculty's balance between work and personal life: Preliminary results.* Poster presentation at the AAMFT Annual Conference, Nashville, TN.

Awards and Honors

James D. Moran Memorial Thesis/Dissertation Award, 2001.
Inducted member, Alpha Kappa Delta (International Sociology Honor Society) Tau
Chapter, 1999.
Invited panelist for the Carolina's Psychology Conference in Raleigh, NC: 1994 and
1995.
North Carolina Department of Human Resources Volunteerism Certificate: 1991.

Professional Affiliations

American Association for Marriage & Family Therapy, Student Member since 2000
Virginia American Association of Marriage & Family Therapists, Student Member since
2000
Member of the American Sociological Society since 1997
Member of National Organization for Women since 1990
Elected Secretary of local chapter of the National Organization for Women: 1993.
President of the NCSU Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Management: 1991-
1992.

Special Courses

QSR NVivo Qualitative Analysis Software training, 2001
QSR NUD*IST Qualitative Analysis Software training, 2000
Dealing with Difficult People, 1999
Effectiveness in Writing, April 1999
Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, 1998
Writing Effective Executive Summaries, September 1998
Managing the Troubled Employee, May 1997
Managing a Winning Proposal, Shipley Proposal Management Training, February 1996
Paradox 5.0 for Windows, September 1995

Volunteer Work

Hospice of Northern Virginia, Bereavement Volunteer, 2000.
Falls Church City Public School's Business in Education Partnership (BIE). Seventh
Grade Career Day Presenter, 2001.