Ennobling Each Other Through Collaborative Inquiry: Exploring Music as a Provocation for Leadership Development

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ENNOBLING EACH OTHER THROUGH COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY:
EXPLORING MUSIC AS A PROVOCATION FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

by

Ihan Anita Ip

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

May 2024

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TITLE OF DISSERTATION: ENNOBLING EACH OTHER THROUGH COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY: EXPLORING MUSIC AS A PROVOCATION FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Amid the challenges in a global village, leadership education needs to surpass traditional methods, nurturing creativity, flexibility, and adaptability. This study is a collaborative action inquiry that considers music as an arts-based method in service of leadership development. The study unfolded over five cycles, in which 14 coinquirers collaborated in a process of exploration. The study illuminates the strong potential of music as a provocation for leadership development and reveals crucial realizations in the area of facilitation in collective processes.

This dissertation tells the story of the inquiry with the voices of its coinquirers and offers insights on facilitation through my reflections as the researcher. It honored the fluidity of the process by gathering data through a combination of questionnaires, workshops, and individual conversations. Akin to the process of birthing or composition, both data collection and analysis occurred iteratively, accessing emergent, musically informed methods of sense-making.

This study found the intersection of music and leadership development emerged as a novel exploration. The findings underscore the importance of cocreating a holding environment, an awareness of the dynamics within collective leadership situations, scaffolding, and the profound value of experiential learning. Further, the findings reveal the necessity of strong mutual trust among group members. Music was shown to catalyze meaningful leadership education along the dimensions of identity, inclusivity, and belonging. The study also demonstrated music facilitates leadership learning at multiple levels—embodiment, awareness, and engagement in emergent processes—underscoring its potential as a transformative tool in leadership development.
Despite successfully designing musical leadership workshops, however, coinquirers experienced concern about taking their learning outside of the study. Implications for future research and practice include investigating the use of music in leadership in organizational contexts, finding ways to support leadership development facilitators to creatively use arts-based methods for their work, applying the use of music in social justice spaces, and developing more applied methods of leadership and facilitation through inquiry to deepen our ways of engaging with each other in our world.

*Keywords*: leadership development, arts-based methods, music, aesthetic knowing, facilitation, holding environment, safety, group process, collaboration, collective leadership, dialectics, paradigm shift, identity, inclusivity, belonging
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all of us who are embodiments of the In Between; that space in between identities, in between roles, in between the systems and paradigms that exist in our world. It is dedicated to those who desire to be comfortable travelers in this space, and who desire to invite others to join them.

This dissertation is dedicated to those who want to create internal music through which to discover their beauty and find their calling for their work. It is dedicated to those who act from this place of beauty, brave enough to show themselves to the world in their fullness. And yes, doing this requires an enormous amount of courage.

This thesis is dedicated to the communities, past, present, and future, who uplift each other; who operate from a place of love and are willing to commit to a stance of curiosity rather than judgement; who are willing to name what they see and challenge each other to be better.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to the children of the world, in particular my own children Phoebe Mulan (葉慕蘭) and Lyra Anrong (葉安蓉). You are part of this eternal line, this spiral of being. May your communities challenge you, embrace you, and love you. You are my universe. I love you both to Saturn and back.
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This dissertation is a story of collectively facilitating an experience of community. It is the story of a group of people discovering and living what collective leadership may look like and how music may support the endeavor. This dissertation did not begin in the proposal stage. Not even when I started in the PhD program at the University of San Diego. This dissertation is an expression of who I was, and who we, the coinquirers, were in our humanity.

I acknowledge my ancestors and all ancestors that came before us. I am here today because of what they afforded me. I am eternally grateful for my parents, Ta-An Diana Ip (馬大安) and Wing-Huen Ip (葉永烜), who immigrated into Germany one snowy February in 1978 with a 3-month-old me and courageously made their life there, where I became engulfed in music. I am grateful for the names that I was given that connect me with my ancestors, my parents, and the universe. I am grateful for my grandparents on both sides of my family who connected me to my Taiwanese/Cantonese identity. I still feel their presence. I am joyful for my sister Betina and her family who have done their bit in keeping me steady in my life.

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I want to send my deepest gratitude to my students and coinstructors in the leadership studies minor. Leadership does not happen in siloes. Leadership is not easy. I am awed by how much we can learn from each other. Thank you for being my teachers and allowing me to hold space for you.
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Sound of Silence (1965), Simon and Garfunkel

Hello, darkness, my old friend
I've come to talk with you again
Because a vision softly creeping
Left its seeds while I was sleeping
And the vision that was planted in my brain
Still remains
Within the sound of silence
[...]
And in the naked light I saw
Ten thousand people, maybe more
People talking without speaking
People hearing without listening
People writing songs that voices never share
No one dared
Disturb the sound of silence

It is early March 2024. The world seems to be standing at an impasse. Right now, there are global conflicts between Russia and Ukraine, between Israel and Palestine, tensions amount in China–U.S. politics, politics in the United States are becoming increasingly polarized. As a leadership studies scholar, coach, and parent, I sit with fluctuating amounts of hope and despair as I see the state of the world that I bore my children into. I recognize the need to talk and to
process in myself and with one another; and I that we often become speechless. So often, we dare not say the wrong thing, and so we stay silent in our words while we are in a furious internal conversation. Simon and Garfunkel’s Sound of Silence (1965), written by Paul Simon (linked in the title above), speaks to this dynamic that we still find ourselves in today.

This study is a collaborative inquiry about how music (and silence) could play a role in the process of finding our voices through the lens of leadership development. On the journey we found out how we could use music as an intervention, but also experienced how generative an inquiry in community could be to our understanding of ourselves individually and with others. Crucial to this study are two items: this is a collaborative action inquiry, thus a collective effort of cocreation; secondly, the coinquirers were all leadership development professionals, but professed no equal skill in music. This chapter presents an introduction for this study.

For years leadership scholars have called for rehumanizing our organizations (Macy & Johnstone, 2012; Scharmer, 2009; Wheatley, 2010, 2017). Leaders that can lead with head and heart are critical to this effort (Adler, 2006; Scharmer, 2009). Leadership in our global village demands ways of education that exceed traditional ways of training and facilitation (Mintzberg, 2004; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015). Our organizations need more creative, flexible, and adaptive ways of functioning to find solutions to complex issues (Adler, 2006, 2011; Komander & König, 2022; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). In response to this need, leadership development has accessed arts-based methods as tools.

Arts-based methods, an experiential method using the visual and performing arts, poetry, and storytelling as a modality, are being used for leadership development to great effect (Adler, 2006; Kolb, 1984; Ladkin & Taylor, 2009; Peña, 2019; Sutherland, 2013; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015; Taylor, 2008). Some examples of arts-based methods employed in leadership development
are building organizational connection through communal painting (Alexander & Rosendahl, n.d.), using storytelling to emerge leadership identities (McCain & Matkin, 2019), or training managers by engaging them in directing choirs (Sutherland, 2012). Using arts-based methods gives learners access to deeper, alternate ways of processing that can catalyze creative problem solving and connection-building. This dissertation focuses on using music as an arts-based method for leadership development.

**Significance**

The need for arts-based methods in leadership development is growing, and there is a corresponding need for increasing the number of facilitators to implement these methods at individual and organizational levels. In the case of music, facilitators and researchers have mostly been people with significant musical backgrounds (Adler, 2006; Darsø, 2004; Jansson, 2018; Sutherland, 2012). There is currently no study on the experiences and processes of facilitators of leadership development without professional musical expertise using music as a tool for their work. This dissertation aims to begin the conversation and expand the pool beyond experienced musicians to include facilitators from all musical backgrounds.

This study addresses the guiding question, “How do facilitators with varying musical abilities use music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?” It is designed as a collaborative action inquiry, an action research methodology. A group of facilitators with leadership development responsibility and with varying levels of musical experience collaboratively explored and reflected upon how to use music to inform their work (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Lewin, 1946; Reason & Bradbury, 2006; Torbert, 2004; Torbert & Taylor, 2006). This study adds to the literature at the intersections of arts-based methods, leadership development, and music by turning the attention to facilitators who are not professional
musicians. The purpose of this study was to learn how to introduce music as an arts-based method for more facilitators, and how to better support a community of learning to use creative ways for deepening leadership growth in our organizations. The following pages continue with the background, literature review, methods, design, and data collection for this study.

**Background**

Music is a universal language we learned beginning with the rhythm of our first heartbeats (Brandt et al., 2012; Mehr et al., 2019; Welch et al., 2020). Music connects to the fullness of the human experience at multiple levels, from the intrapersonal in the way it accesses deep feelings of individuals, to groups in organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Heifetz, 2009; Jansson, 2013; Ladkin, 2008; Sutherland, 2012). Music can motivate, heal, and catalyze change, making it a powerful tool for leadership development (Komander & König, 2022; Welch et al., 2020).

As a leadership scholar and facilitator with musical background, I have used music in all parts of my life, including for designing and facilitating experiential modules for leadership education. I am a lecturer, coach and facilitator in the leadership studies field and view leadership education as a creative process. I have developed and facilitated a collection of musical activities to support identity exploration, communication, team cohesion, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) efforts, and to grow the capacity for system thinking to enhance leadership curriculum in my university and in organizational training. This is to say that I feel deeply connected to music and feel a natural drive to use it as a lens to enhance all parts of my life, including my work in leadership development and education. However, not everyone will come from the same place of comfort. In fact, often there is a reluctance on the part of participants in engaging in arts-based methods due to a lack of confidence in their artistic
capacity (George, 2006; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). One such example occurred in one of the workshops I had designed and facilitated at a conference. During the workshop we were gearing up for an experience creating group awareness through singing, when a participant declared, “I am not a musician, I can’t even hold a tune!” The participant was naming their anxiety for doing something outside of their comfort zone. Yet, a few measures into a familiar song they settled in with everyone else and began to sing along. They later shared that it was an almost spiritual experience to lose themselves in the oneness of the ensemble. I learned two things through this experience. First, it was confirmation that music is a powerful tool for participants with any level of musical experience as long as they felt safe enough to lean into their initial discomfort. Second, I realized that facilitators who did not have musical training may not be accessing music due to their unfamiliarity with music and therefore were not designing workshops and activities with it. I became curious about how facilitators with varying musical experiences could hold a safe space for themselves and others to access music as a method to enhance their work in leadership development.

The use of arts-based methods requires consultants to bridge the communication gap between arts and business by helping artists meet the specific needs of organizations, in other cases the artists themselves have acquired the skills needed to translate their artistic process into effective methods for improving and developing organizations (Darsø, 2004, p. 59). Darsø addressed a dichotomy here between artist and organization. Applied to facilitating leadership development with music, most training is provided by professional musicians. Musicians who are also experienced in leadership and organizational development are hard to come by. To bring the benefits of music to as many organizational spaces as possible, we need more facilitators who feel empowered to use it, regardless of musical experience.
Research Questions

My curiosities gave rise to the following research questions:

1. How do facilitators with varying musical abilities use music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

2. What is the experience of these facilitators as collaborative inquirers into the use of music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

3. How, if at all, does experiencing the process of exploring music as a facilitation tool for leadership development shift the participants’ professional practice?

Following is an overview of the literature on leadership development, arts-based methods, and the use of music in leadership development.

Literature

The literature at the intersection of music, leadership, and leadership development are few and far between. There are two systematic reviews that are tangentially related: Hadida and Tarvainen’s (2015) review on the use of improvisation in organization development, and Komander and König’s (2022) review on the arts as related to organizational development. Music was mentioned, but not centered. A significant number of studies exist on the varying roles of a conductor in choral and orchestral contexts (Jansson, 2014; Jansson et al., 2021; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Logie, 2012; ). The roles varied from putting a conductor on a pedestal akin to the hero and savior, to a conductor being a rather specialized member of the ensemble who was in a reciprocal relationship with the other musicians. The interpersonal nature of ensembles is also a nexus of research. Ensembles are evaluated for their ways of non-verbal communication (Glowinski et al., 2022), the levels of team cohesion in relation to the effects of the degrees of transformational leadership exhibited by the conductor (Boerner & Street, 2006).
Results show that conductors and ensembles are energetically linked. A conductor cannot be effective without the ensemble accepting them and permitting them to lead. By the same token, a leaderless group of musicians can fall into chaos if no conductor is present (Dabby, 2017). These studies all point towards an intersubjective space that musicians and conductors negotiate as they practice their craft.

Intersubjective spaces become highlighted in collective leadership models, including indigenous leadership (Buchanan et al., 2016; Getz & Sabbatini, 2017). There, the same reciprocal dynamics appear outside of music, but within group dynamics (Stapley, 2018). The field of organizational aesthetics views leadership as an artform and aims to propel leadership processes forward by thinking artfully about its intricacies, including leadership development (Ladkin, 2008; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, 2014).

Music presents itself as an arts-based method for leadership development. Music in leadership development is a burgeoning field. While there have been studies on the effects and affects of music in various music-focused disciplines such as music therapy, music theory, musicology, and music education, it has not crossed over into leadership education (DeNora, 2000; Huron, 2006). The fact that the latest literature review in leadership development, Vogel et al. (2021) omitted all arts-based methods including music, is testament to that. Instead, studies at the intersection of music and organizational development live in the field of organizational aesthetics where scholarship describes its use in leadership training (Nissley, 2002, 2004; Sutherland & Gosling, 2010; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Sutherland (2012) offers poignant studies on executive MBA students who are interspersed with a choir to learn team dynamics and group think. He also offers the possibility that music aestheticizes (makes more artful) a space so that participants within it can become more reflective and open to thinking differently. Arts based
methods including music fulfill specific functions in leadership learning, for example, projective technique, a way to project a problem outward for viewing and analysis, and making, a way to engage in the creation of art to experience a process (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). While robust scholarship exists at the intersection of music and leadership, the researchers are almost exclusively people with significant musical training. This is the first study that has been conducted with leadership development professionals without high levels of musical expertise.

**Methods, Data Collection, and Analysis**

This is a qualitative study based on a collaborative action inquiry model, a participatory action research design (Herr & Anderson, 2015; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014; Lewin, 1946; McNiff, 2016). This choice allowed for me, the researcher, to be a coinquirer with my fellow coinquirers. The iterative design also allowed for our learning to bloom and grow as it needed to, according to the needs of our group. Additionally, action research is a methodology that bridges the gap between theory and practice. This rang true with the purpose of the study, to bring music into leadership development as an actionable intervention. In addition to the learning itself, the collaborative inquiry model also allowed for the study of the process of learning and enabled the group to adjust our ways of learning from moment to moment, from cycle to cycle. This included some critical revelations I had about myself and my ways of enacting leadership among others. Revelations that continue to arrive as I work on this dissertation.

This study consisted of five cycles: a pre-questionnaire, three 3-hour workshops, followed by a post-questionnaire. The pre-questionnaire occurred through an online form, the workshops occurred in person on campus at the University of San Diego, and the post-questionnaire became a conversation upon consultation with the group. Each inquirer met with me individually for this conversation. Each workshop was recorded using the in-room cameras.
through Zoom. Additionally, a GoPro was set up to record different angles of our conversations. Audio was recorded through the Zoom application as well as a voice recorder. The post-questionnaire was conducted over Zoom through a conversation guided by the post-questionnaire form. This was also recorded with audio and video. The data was then transcribed using MacWhisper, cleaned and coded in MaxQDA.

**Transition**

This study is a beginning to opening the field of music to non-musicians in service of leadership. I hope to create some momentum in more studies to follow. Music’s ubiquity and its significant capacity to hold meaning should be capitalized upon by the leadership field, if not normalized in the future. For this we need facilitators from diverse backgrounds and experiences. As we saw in our study musical prowess is not a prerequisite. Openness, curiosity, and a sense of community is.

In the next few chapters I will introduce our process in detail. Chapter 2 offers the literature review, which you have gleaned here in part. We begin with a detailed presentation and synthesis of literature in music and leadership, then funnel towards leadership development, arts-based methods, and finally, music as a leadership development tool. Chapter 3 presents the study’s methodology. It includes background on collaborative developmental action inquiry, the participants, and the process of doing the study. There, I describe what was planned, what changed, and how our group engaged in coresearchership. Chapter 4 presents the findings and answers to the research questions. You will read about four major themes that emerged from the study and engage in the discussion of these themes. In Chapter 5 you will glean answers to the research questions, the implications, and recommendations that surface from these results. Inset within the entirety of the dissertation you will find interludes, offered through music and its
accompanying lyrics, where applicable. These interludes create moments of reflective pause and artistic dimensionality. Chapter 6 finally closes the thesis in a coda, with an invitation for future research and final reflections.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Music is a universal language we learned with the rhythm of our first heartbeats (Brandt et al., 2012; Mehr et al., 2019; Welch et al., 2020). Music connects to the fullness of the human experience at multiple levels, from the intrapersonal in the way it accesses deep feelings of individuals, to groups in organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Heifetz, 2009; Ladkin, 2008). The power of music to motivate, heal and catalyze change makes it a powerful tool in many different fields, including leadership (Komander & König, 2022; Welch et al., 2020). This study grows out of my drive to combine two elements of my life into one: music and leadership. Music makes me feel whole in many ways. Using music as a lens I conceptualize complex dynamics in behaviors that I notice in myself and as part of a group. It helps me to make sense out of the world around me. This data helps to enact leadership for change that is grounded within myself and the needs of others. How can music come into its own as a methodological tool for leadership? How can the power of music help to connect us more deeply with ourselves and our personal, unique way of leading at organizational levels? How could music help us connect to each other in our groups, and how could leadership development facilitators of varying musical experiences help enhance their work with it? How could music assist in provoking more awareness of our intrapersonal dynamics? These are some of the curiosities that I pursued in this study. This chapter is a review of literature, guided by the questions,” how has music been used to learn about leadership?” and “how has music been used in leadership development?”

Part 1: How Has Music Been Used to Learn about Leadership?

Academic scholarship on music is represented in the fields of music theory, musicology, music psychology (music cognition), and applied in music performance, conducting and composition. Within leadership studies, references to music are not very common and often
unconnected. For example, studies from the 1990s examined the process of jazz improvisation and learned about improvisation in organizational contexts (Komander & König, 2022). More recent research covered styles in individual leaders, namely conductors (Jansson, 2013; Jansson, Elstad, et al., 2021; Kolvunen, 2011), and collective styles within ensembles (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012; Särkämö et al., 2013). Researchers have focused on music as a staging ground for relational dynamics as well as rich group processes such as listening and knowing (multilevel verbal and nonverbal communication; Boerner & Streit, 2006; Lindvang & Beck, 2015). A few authors have used music to go deeper and trace the aesthetics of leadership by studying music (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012; Heifetz, 2009; Ladkin, 2008). Regarding research methodologies music appears predominantly in qualitative and arts-based research (ABR) modalities (Leavy, 2020; Sutherland, 2013; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009).

The topic of music is not well-developed in the realm of leadership publications. This may be a result of musical notation being a specialized language that is not as easily accessible to non-musicians. Consequently, literature represented in this paper is an interdisciplinary collection of sources from a variety of different publications from leadership, organizational development, music, education, neuroscience, psychology, and engineering.

This first part presents the search strategy and offers synthesis and critique of the literature within the following themes: salient literature reviews, leader-centric vs. relational research, aesthetics, connection to group relations, the act of listening, and methodologies. This literature review portion shows that the interdisciplinary field of music and leadership is emergent, and ripe to establish itself in the greater context of leadership and organizational development. It further points towards a polarization between research from music scholars studying leading for pedagogical reasons (Dabby, 2017; Hegecoth, 2018), and leadership
scholars studying dynamics in music to enhance leadership in organizational contexts (Jansson, 2018; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). There is substantial potential for robust interdisciplinary work from multiple perspectives. Study of non-Western and collective leadership should be expanded upon further. An opportunity exists for leadership in practice to utilize music as a conceptual lens for multilevel communication processes such as they are found in group relations (Green & Molenkamp, 2005; Monroe, 2004; Stapley, 2018). Furthermore, music can expand pedagogy regarding DEIB along the axis of listening and perspective-taking. This can have an impact in applied leadership areas such as organizational development, leadership curriculum development, and coaching.

**Search Strategy**

This chapter focuses on studies and conceptual pieces using music as a lens to learn about and help improve leadership. The time bounds were set between 2005-2023 to capture the more recent literature from the last 2 decades (Booth et al., 2021; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Sources were excluded if they were in relation to music therapy, music education, creating mindfulness as a way of setting a scene. The very rich area of music and spirituality was not included in the bounds for this review as the focus was leadership in organizational contexts. Sources that were single perspective non-study narratives or were biographical narratives were also excluded. The search strategy relied on Boolean searches through Google Scholar, which acted as gateway to other academic databases, as well as elicit.org, an AI search engine for scholarly articles that is based on entering questions rather than keyword searching. The process was visualized by using mind mapping through Mind Node. Reference management was supported through Zotero. Sources were screened initially for relevance in the title, then in the abstract. In cases where the abstract seemed more directly related the full article was screened in detail. Relevant sources
were saved in Google Scholar, entered into Zotero and coded by adding tags. Sources published before 2005 were excluded. Citation mining was utilized, in which citations used in literature with a strong correlation to the research topic were explored for further sources. Additionally, references were mined from particularly relevant sources to uncover patterns in research. The author decided to cast a wide net with the Boolean search [music AND leadership] in Google Scholar within the time bounds of 2005-2022 and to work through as many references as possible within time limitations (see Figure 1). The large number of initial results was further narrowed by adding additional keywords.

**Figure 1**

*Example of Search Process*

Other keywords used in conjunction with “music” and “leadership” to narrow the search were: methodology, framework, leadership development, listening, communication, aesthetics. After exclusion the search yielded 36 sources that fit the parameters. Out of these 16 were studies: 14 qualitative and two quantitative. The other sources were conceptual or theoretical.

**Salient Literature Reviews**

There are no systematic literature reviews on the role of music in leadership. However, there have been three literature reviews published since 2015 that relate to this paper’s inquiry.
Komander and König’s (2022) review on the role of the performing arts in the form of dance, theater and music combines studies from these three disciplines within the context of organizational development. Komander and König categorize research into four quadrants, including one on “organizational phenomena through the prism of performing-arts practices” (Komander & König, 2022, p. 1).

Hadida and Tarvainen (2015) offer a review of literature on organizational improvisation. Improvisation in the organizational context is relevant in the growing need for the ability to pivot on changes in the environment and shifting needs of stakeholders. The authors include elements of jazz and theater improvisation (p. 27). Both literature reviews call for further study on using the ability of the arts to inform organizational development. Hadida and Tarvainen (2015) call more attention to learning how improvisation on an individual level could be scaled to group and organizational levels, and also call for more research on multilevel relational aspects where audience and performers co-create an experience with shared energies.

Music was not highlighted as prominently as one could have hoped for. Literature at the intersection of theater and organizational development seems better developed than in music, and with the greater prevalence of studies in theater in the organizational context, this dominated in the reviews. Komander and König (2022) found their musical sources in a very limited time frame between 1994 and 2001 as it related to jazz as a method for improvisation. Significant research that occurred more recently was missed. For example, research on choral conductors and leadership in ensembles was omitted (Jansson, 2018) as was a seminal article by Bathurst and Ladkin (2012) that proposes a paradigm shift in the study of leadership through a musical framework. A comprehensive literature review on music and leadership is still needed.
Leadership in Music: The Individual and the Collective

A significant number of studies into the leadership of musicians focuses on the role of the conductor as leader of an ensemble. Literature here mainly covers the realm of Western classical music. Conductors are identified as the archetypical leader in a musical ensemble who makes meaning from the music through the interaction with the group. The dominant studies here are Jansson (2014), Logie (2012), Jansson, Elstad, et al. (2021), and Koivunen and Wennes (2011). Three of these studies are qualitative and one mixed method. The described role of the conductor includes being a sensemaker and liberator (Jansson, 2014), interpreter, communicator (Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Poggi, 2011), transformational leader, teacher, and mentor (Logie, 2012).

Jansson is a choral conductor and experienced music director who straddles leadership studies and music. It would be easy to accuse him of a romanticized, self-effacing perspective. He manages his potential bias skillfully, catching relational aspects of choral leadership as well as the role of the conductor. His perspective is still that of a conductor, however, which creates a power dynamic between him and the choir members he interviewed. Similar to Jansson, Poggi (2023) considers the role of the conductor as a leader in choral situations, tracking interpretive movements of the conductor in relation to the chorus. It should be noted that earlier sources used the figure of the conductor as a stand-in for the “great man,” the charismatic leader. Western musical tradition is dominated by European music and Western paradigms. The conductor was often seen as the hero without whom the ensemble would be lost (Santino, 1978). This mirrors acceptance of the great man theory where charisma and inborn competency were highly valued. Sources championing this view have been excluded. The studies named here are a newer stream in musical leadership research that offers a more critical view on a conductor’s role as a member, albeit a specialized member, of the ensemble. As such these studies are more aligned with
servant-leadership, transformational leadership, and other relational leadership models. Music and music-making in an ensemble becomes a laboratory to study human dynamics and psychodynamics.

**Relational Dynamics, Listening and Knowing**

In their quantitative study Boerner and Streit (2006) offer a robust inquiry on cooperation in orchestral settings. They find that a higher level of team cohesion (*Teamgeist*) is correlated with higher levels of intrinsic motivation within the orchestral members in connection with the transformative leadership ability of the conductor. Neither works in isolation. Leadership in the collective is also studied in conductorless ensembles such as a string quartet where detailed tracking of head movements was used to trace power dynamics during a performance (Glowinski et al., 2022). This study will intersect with the topic of aesthetics in a later section. D’Ausilio et al. (2012) offer a quantitative study of an orchestra working with two separate conductors to research conductor-musician relationships and expression via gesture and body movement. Their results show that, while the conductor does have a dominant role, relational dynamics within the orchestral players are critical. Without an energetic connection between conductor and orchestra, directive gestures are not translated into musical expression. A longitudinal study of engineering students embarking on a 4-year leaderless orchestra experiment demonstrated that music in groups can give space to collaborative learning (Dabby, 2017). Located at Olin school of engineering, this conductorless orchestra is a pedagogical construct that is built into the curriculum of the college. The motivation behind this endeavor was to create a way for engineering students, who tended to be solitary, to find a way to develop leadership, teamwork, and communication skills in an experiential environment (Dabby, 2017). It suggests that musical engagement, particularly in groups, can be attributed to different ways of knowing than through
words. Similarly, Hedgecoth (2018) studied a leaderless concert band in a mixed methods study. His results showed that the students had to deal with at times stifling social dynamics when a conductor was not present. Music offered opportunities to interact through verbal and non-verbal communication, such as Glowinski et al. (2022) and D’Ausilio et al.’s (2012) studies show. Music shaped an intersubjective space in which communication and learning could occur through the act of listening (Jansson, 2014) where it otherwise may not have. In Dabby’s (2017) study, survey results showed that students reported a high level of skill increase in team working and communication, but not so much in leadership. In Dabby’s words this was to be expected since the orchestra was conductorless. This might have resulted from the way that the students defined what a leader was. It is possible that the low reported level of leadership skill was linked to the assumption that a leader was a single authority. What the experiment proved, however, was that the group was able to engage in collective leadership successfully. It might be interesting to return to Olin and restate the questions after some targeted leadership sessions on collective leadership and communities of practice. A theoretical piece comes from Goryunova and Lehmann (2023) who discuss aspects of collaboration, leadership, and followership in the context of an orchestra. In doing so they find benefits to integrate values into our leadership processes.

Relational dynamics describe a process of reciprocal communication. Jansson (2014) makes this connection directly with the act of listening, Dabby (2017) to communication, D’Ausilio et al. (2012) and Glowinski et al. (2022) show this process through mapping kinesthetic, non-verbal “speaking” and “listening” in an ensemble. Communication in a musical ensemble is more subtle, inviting different ways of knowing than verbal communication. Having a well-developed ability to listen has been linked to a higher level of leadership capacity (Kluger
Itzchakov, 2022; Scharmer, 2009). Studies have measured listening efficacy in conjunction with leadership style and efficacy in individual leaders, in small group and organizational settings (Baker et al., 2019; Wolvin, 2012). Listening is distinguished from hearing (Thomas & Parker, 2021) and recognized as a critical domain in leadership skill (Baker et al., 2019). Schein (2021) asks leaders to use deep listening to communicate effectively within their organizations. Researchers noted that listening created an intersubjective space between individuals; a space in which perspectives of two or more individuals could be negotiated into a new whole. Listening was a process through which this collective sensemaking could occur. Kluger and Itzchakov (2022) state that “listening can lead to a fleeting state of togetherness, in which dyad members undergo a mutual creative thought process” (p. 2). There is an opportunity for music to play a role in deepening the capacity for listening and knowing in organizational contexts, which has not been taken yet. This can have implications in leadership development, and particularly in DEIB spaces where non-judgmental, open listening and perspective-taking are critical for the learning process.

**Multilevel Dynamics in Leadership and Music**

Leadership studies in the present day have moved away from leader-centric models towards relational and collective leadership models. Engaging in these relational and collective models poses the challenge of scalability: how can we understand ways of leading that emerge in collectives? How can we replicate them? The relatively recent interest in indigenous leadership is one example of such work being done (Buchanan et al., 2016; Getz & Sabbatini, 2017). Entering the study of collective leadership also expands the scope of stakeholders. No longer can we manage leadership processes on an individual level (intrapersonal). We must attend to interpersonal and group-level dynamics as well (Stapley, 2018). With the increase in
stakeholders the dynamics and processes become exponentially more difficult to study and to understand. Music lends itself as a framework to manage these multiple layers of interaction. It can be a mental map to understand complex psychodynamic processes, and perhaps train and predict events in leadership. This is consistent with Hadida and Tarvainen (2015) who champion an integral view of organizational levels regarding improvisation.

Interpersonal and intergroup psychodynamics are complex in organizations. For example, a guest conductor to the Tampere Orchestra states, “The conductor must live with the fact that the orchestra hates him. If he can’t deal with this, he’s gone” (Koivunen & Wennes, 2011, p. 58). A conductor makes themselves available for projections of the orchestral members. It behooves a person in a leadership position to understand psychodynamic currents of themselves in relation to the people they work with. Music relies on the same nested dynamic levels as the field of group relations (group dynamics). In studies conductors and ensembles reported dynamics on the intrapersonal, interpersonal and group levels (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012; Glowinski et al., 2022; Jansson, Døving, et al., 2021; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Ladkin, 2008;). In their study Mehr et al. (2009) examined and tested musical relevance and associated behaviors across 315 societies. Using a mixed methods approach, their results showed that music was indeed universal from the intrapersonal to the system level (Mehr et al., 2009). The element of attending to the here and now, the present moment, is the main challenge of group relations work where all levels of group dynamics are experienced and studied (Ladkin, 2008; Monroe, 2010). Indeed, music is a meta-language that can and has been accessed in leadership (Jansson, 2014). Terminology like “resonance,” “dynamic,” “musical,” “orchestrate” are common in leadership studies parlance (Heifetz et al., 2009; Rogers, 2012). Leadership has already used musical terminology to describe the depth of its field and the dynamism of its interactions. This musical vocabulary is
used to describe elements in interpersonal and intergroup communication that are connected to feelings and impressions. In a sense speaking to these dynamics musically is to name a level of knowing and responding that exists below the level of words. It is like seeing a Monet painting or listening to a Debussy composition. The sense is impressionistic, not clearly outlined. These connections have been noticed but have not been named overtly in leadership scholarship yet.

**Musical Aesthetics in Leadership**

Artistry and creativity have become acknowledged as a leadership capacity (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Komander & König, 2022). The previously mentioned interest in organizational improvisation using jazz is one example of leadership wishing to learn to pivot in the moment to find solutions creatively and effectively (Hadida & Tarvainen, 2015). There is no time more urgent than now, in the global wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic, to study, reflect, conceptualize, and apply lessons from music to approach the problems of the world with a framework that is holistic and universally significant. To this end, research into the aesthetics of music applied to leadership is critical.

The field of music and leadership aesthetics, the framing of leadership as an artform, is small still. It is a complex topic to write about because it departs from more common linear, product-oriented leadership that attends to technical issues and can ignore deeper-set problems. Linear, logical processes create a sense of control in leadership, and can attribute to a sense of safety in its constituency, however, it only too often focuses on the technical aspects of a challenge and avoids dealing with adaptive problems (Green & Molenkamp, 2005; Heifetz et al., 2009; Monroe, 2014). Hierarchical structures prevent us from finding alternate solutions to problems (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012). This makes studying the processes of aesthetics in leadership multidisciplinary, because it connects with deeply personal domains such as emotions
and values. This requires leaders to have awareness of multiple simultaneous events in their groups and organizations in order to find ethical, empathetic, long-term solutions. Music is a framework that this complexity can be conceptualized through.

Music encompasses aesthetics, embodiment, and holistic and authentic leadership (Ladkin, 2008; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). This arm of studies approaches from a constructivist perspective, viewing music as an arena to study the aesthetic alignment of “mastery, form and purpose” (Ladkin, p. 2, 2008). Ladkin, for example, traces this alignment in the versatile musician Bobby McFerrin. Leadership, like music, is a collective “plural” endeavor. She considers McFerrin’s ability to actively engage his audience in music-making as a powerful act of leadership, evoked and embodied in a beautiful performance. Refracted against leadership and followership dynamics and micro-affirmative gestures. The importance of relational factors in leadership becomes a topic that flows through inquiries regarding leadership aesthetics (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012; Boerner & Streit, 2006; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011; Soila-Wadman & Köping, 2009). Authors agree that music is a framework through which leadership aesthetics can be viewed. However, there is no clear definition of what “aesthetics in leadership” means or how a high level of artistry in leadership could be replicated.

By studying conductors and ensembles (Jansson, 2014; Koivunen & Wennes, 2011) and through case studies (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012) researchers were able to highlight that aesthetics applied in musical contexts is a valuable and necessary lens for leadership development. Koivunen and Wennes (2011) offer analysis across three dimensions: relational activities, aesthetic judgment, and embodiment. Their qualitative study examined four symphony orchestras, two from the United States and two Norwegian, interviewing both conductors and ensemble members as well as staff. The data was distilled to learn about aesthetic leadership
styles of conductors. Their results show the conductor as the point of origin for aesthetic expression, but that this is impossible without synergy with the orchestra. Ladkin (2008) traced aesthetic properties along mastery, congruence, and purpose. Her case study was of a single musician, Bobby McFerrin, and his encounter with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra in 2003 and in 2005 with the New York Jazz Band and African Children’s Choir. Beautiful leading was embodied by McFerrin and enacted with the audience and the ensemble (Ladkin, 2008). This is consistent with Boerner and Streit (2006) who studied cooperation within orchestras in their qualitative study. Aesthetic synergy between orchestra and conductor resulted in the performance being perceived as an artistic success.

Both Ladkin (2008) and Koivunen and Wennes’ (2011) studies suffer from the same limitation: the passing of time. Koivunen and Wennes’ (2011) study is based on their respective dissertation work. It is a re-analysis of data from their studies 5 and 6 years preceding the publication of this paper. There was no additional research done to validate and check data. In Ladkin’s case the paper relied on her recollection of McFerrin’s performances 2 and 4 years prior. What is notable is that the experience during these performances was impressive to the degree that it motivated Ladkin’s paper years later. This speaks to the power of music and leadership aesthetics, but also points towards the authors openness to receive the performance in such an impactful manner.

Subjectivity, the very personal ways that music can be taken up, might be seen as a limitation. In this case this is not a point of critique as much as it is a noticing of a persistent challenge in studying music and leadership in concert (pun intended). The conversation must be deepened much further to render more perspectives such as are offered in this chapter. Chapter 4,
which presents the findings and discussions, illustrates how expansive our inquiry became. Next, we tackle question Part 2.

**Part 2: How is Music Used in Leadership Development?**

This part offers literature that connects more immediately with the subject matters of this collaborative inquiry: Music and leadership development. I weave these two topics together by starting with an overview of recent scholarship in leadership development, expanding upon arts based methods, arts based methods in leadership development, and finally introduce music as an arts based methodology into the field of leadership development. Some of the sources have been mentioned in Part 1 where I examined scholarship in music in leadership as a discipline. Now, I funnel down to leadership development as a field and begin to build a conceptual bridge towards music.

**Leadership Development**

Day et al. (2013) defined leadership development as the efforts for developing “effective leaders and leadership behavior” (p. 63). These efforts aim to train what Day (2000) called the intrapersonal and the interpersonal aspects of leadership: developing the skills of the individual as well as relational awareness (Hartley & Hinksman, 2003). The field looks to evaluate and develop leadership skills for the benefit of an organization. Increasingly, methods of leadership development have moved from on-the-job experience, to lecture style classroom training, to experiential learning (Hernez-Broom & Hughes, 2004; Hoffman et al., 2019; Kolb, 1984; Moldoveanu & Narayandas, 2019; Vogel et al., 2021). Vogel et al. (2021) recommend three different areas for future research: research adhering to traditional leadership development framing, expanding beyond the boundaries of existing frameworks to include under-researched demographics, and attending to research between the theory and practice of leadership.
development (p. 13). The authors point toward dichotomies in leadership development between negotiating between old (leader-centric, Western, patriarchal) and new paradigms (relational, minority demographics, praxis-oriented) in the field. There has been a push to expand beyond a functional, performative, and product-oriented leadership development paradigm into ways of leadership education that prioritize adaptability, creativity, and collective awareness (Adler, 2006; Heifetz et al., 2009; Macy & Johnstone, 2012; Scharmer, 2009; Wheatley, 2017). The stage is set for leadership development to design and embrace ways of facilitating leadership education that is outside of the norm to support leadership growth that is meaningful, impactful, and effective.

**Arts-Based Methods in Leadership Development**

Against the backdrop of the last recession, Nissley (2010) stated:

> Our world is shifting beneath our feet, and new thinking will be required to deal with the complexity and solve the more wicked problems that are now confronting us. Arts-inspired creativity has historically played a role and continues presently to enable innovation. (p. 9)

This statement echoes the call of others to use the arts for meeting the challenges of our time with open hearts, minds and with a capacity for evoking beauty within our work (Adler, 2011; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015; Taylor, 2013; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). The need for these methods to be further amplified in leadership development has become urgent in the wake of the COVID-19 global pandemic. Even though arts-based methods have increasingly been used and their efficacy for leadership development empirically evidenced (Sutherland, 2012), they are not mentioned by Day (2000), Day et al. (2013), or Vogel et al. (2013), authors of systematic reviews on leadership development research. Scholarly work regarding arts-based methods in the
context of leadership and leadership development emanates mostly from the burgeoning field of organizational aesthetics (Taylor, 2013; Taylor & Hansen, 2005), but has also found footing in management training (Nissley, 2002, 2004; Sutherland & Gosling, 2010; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). I would suggest here that Vogel et al.’s (2021) category of “transforming leadership development” should include nontraditional methodologies, in particular arts-based methods.

Arts-based methods describe the experiential application of the visual or performing arts to pedagogy, education, and training (Adler, 2006; Elm & Taylor, 2010; Sutherland, 2015; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015). In the context of leadership education, the arts are used as a way to step over the threshold of logical/practical knowing into aesthetic ways of knowing (Nissley, 2002; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). The premise of using arts-based methods is to give an alternate access to learning that engages the individual “below the neck.” The skills involved in artmaking are connected with the skills needed to be innovative and creative in organizational settings (Austin & Devin, 2003; Car et al., 2015; Komander & König, 2022). Art allows individuals and organizations to emerge solutions and come to insights that would not have been made aware in traditional linear processes (Austin & Devin, 2003). More importantly, using arts-based methods can build a bridge between the head and the heart, logic, and emotion, which honors the human experience for individuals and groups (Elm & Taylor, 2010). Normalizing arts-based methods for training in our organization has the potential to humanize our organizations. This can be accomplished by arts-based methods becoming normalized in leadership development, and by creating pathways for more facilitators to access these powerful methodologies. Next, I will spotlight music as an arts-based method for leadership development.
Music as a Holding Environment for Meaning Making in Self, Groups, and Systems

Like spoken language, music is a discourse that holds meaning (DeNora, 2000; Agawu, 1992; Grimault, 2020). It is a discourse created by humans for humans and carries meaning that is both intrapersonally and interpersonally relevant. Citing Frankfurt School philosopher, social critic, and musician Theodor Adorno, DeNora (2000) states that “music (is) linked to cognitive habits, modes of consciousness and historical developments” (p. 1). In linking music to cognitive habits, music can be operationalized to expand minds beyond existing paradigms (DeNora, 2000). Music can be used as a way to access the unconscious, widening the breadth of human experience beyond the obvious. Music can be loaded with multiple levels of meaning and encapsulate the contexts and interpretations of its composer, the performer, the audience and the societal circumstances. This is true for the original context the piece was written in, and for subsequent situations the piece is experienced in. Inevitably, listeners and performers of the music will project their own history, culture, and contexts into it (DeNora, 2000; Sutherland, 2013; Taylor & Ladkin, 2012). This makes engaging with music a deeply personal journey with significance based on lived experience (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012).

Music-composition is fluid, embodied and reciprocal with its context (Schiavio et al., 2022). The process of composing is “largely exploratory, it is grounded in bodily experience, and it emerges from the recursive dialogue of agents and their environment” (Schiavio et al., 2022, p. 303). The act of making music in a group is a fluid collaborative act in which relational leadership processes can begin to unfold creatively (Schiavio et al., 2020). Music-making becomes the locus for the interplay between individual and group dynamics: as people come together to play music, they negotiate their own parts relative to that of the people around them.
and within the group-as-a-whole. The process of music-making becomes a negotiation of the self within a group where the mode of communication is entirely nonverbal (Schiavo et al., 2018).

As an example, *Musicians Without Borders* is an organization that creates music leadership programs designed to train social justice advocates with musical backgrounds to work in underserved and traumatized communities such as Palestine, Kosovo, and Rwanda. Ana, a participant in a rock music program in the ethnically divided town of Mitrovica, Kosovo expressed her experience of using music in the following way: “This is the perfect combination of being individual enough to share your thoughts with others but being in a group of people who are like a family” (Musicians Without Borders, 2020). The music leaders with Musicians Without Borders facilitate group events that bring communities together. The participant speaks to music allowing her to express her individuality and be part of a trusted community. Music creates the space in which individual and collective processes can coexist.

Music has theoretical and practical implications for human dynamics. The examples above show that it is able to hold individual and societal meanings and has the capacity to express and to shift these dynamics. It creates a space for intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics to be negotiated in a peaceful and generative way.

**Music in Leadership Development**

What does music do in leadership development? Sutherland (2012) offers two categories in a study of MBA students who engage in a workshop immersed with a choir. In his qualitative study, he provides evidence of the deep engagement participants felt during the workshop. Learning through and being embraced by music and musicians provided the environment for leadership development. The author focuses on the creation of “aesthetic workspaces,” modified, familiar spaces that hold artful possibility (Sutherland, 2012, p. 31). This leads to a greater
likelihood for “aesthetic reflexivity” (Sutherland, 2012, p. 34), which is a type of deep reflection that engages the learner’s critical consciousness. He distills three types of modifications through music: framing, which outlines the purpose of learning, aestheticizing, which is the providing of art as a way to access learning by making it special; and de-routinizing, which denote changes that alter the context of a space using art to challenge pre-existing patterns of behavior routinely present in the space. These modifications then allow facilitators a way to emerge aesthetic reflexivity in their participants; a way of reflecting that is characterized by openness, presence, and a capacity to shift paradigms (Sutherland, 2012). These conditions are prerequisite to the mindset that leaders need to embody leadership with artful flexibility (Taylor, 2013; Taylor & Hansen, 2005; Taylor & Ladkin, 2014; Witz et al., 2003).

Taylor and Ladkin (2009) suggest four different ways that arts-based methods, including music, serve leadership development: Skills transfer describes skills learned through art and transfer to leadership. For example, using theater improvisation to practice collective leadership (Elm & Taylor, 2010; Wang & Chia, 2020). Projective technique describes art as a locus of projection to allow more objective analysis and deeper understanding. For example, using storytelling to narrate the story of an organizational problem, thereby objectifying it for ease of analysis. Third, illustration of essence, which describes art allowing for the distilling of the core of an issue, problem or thought. For instance, using sketching to draw out a challenge. Finally, making, which denotes artmaking as a process of intra and interpersonal connection and healing. An example here is the making of a vessel out of clay that can be a powerful experience in perseverance through multiple attempts at creation (Brenner, 2010).

The above focuses on the “what” and not the “how” of music’s efficacy in leadership development. In the “what,” music can create a space for participants to engage thereby leading
to an artful way of accessing critical capacity (Sutherland, 2012). Music has the function of a metaphor and allows learners to transfer skills, provides a locus for projection, distills essence, and allows for real-life experience (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). In a technical sense, the “how” is a question that is subject to research in the areas of music cognition and music theory. In a practical sense, music allows participants to access their learning in a way that can result in action outside of the leadership development classroom context. Music can aestheticize a person, “capacitate, to be able to use one’s senses, to be awake as opposed to anesthetized, dormant or inert” (DeNora, 2000, p. 153). From this state of being awake and energized we can create change.

**Methodologies**

Studies in these areas are predominantly qualitative, based on observations, interviews, and case studies. Studies into aesthetics are entirely qualitative. Studies into leadership styles are mostly qualitative. The quantitative studies included in this review are both based on neuroscientific inquiries using the Granger causality test, a test of motivated processes using movement tracking. D’Ausilio et al. (2012) tracked musician vis a vis conductor, and Glowinski et al. (2022) tracked head gestures and body sways in a string quartet (Glowinski et al., 2022). Jansson, Døving, et al. (2021) use a mixed methods design, coupling interviews with surveys \((N = 639)\) to determine leader sensemaking and perception of self-competence. While Glowinski et al. (2022) confirmed the first violinist as motivating most of the leadership events, Jansson et al. (2022) describe a strongly intrapersonal process of sensemaking that occurred in the conductor, which affected the musician’s way of interacting within the ensemble, as well as their sense of competency. Both studies emerged a single dominant actor but made note of relational aspects of leadership.
Hedgecoth (2018) and Dabby (2017) researched university student populations. Dabby relied on a qualitative approach with class surveys as data gathering methods over a period of 4 years. Her methodology was overly reliant on a single survey, and possibly biased in her wish to promote the model at Olin to other schools, as there were no limitations noted or critique rendered. Hedgecoth (2018) used a mixed methods approach with a combination of observations, recordings, interviews, and surveys during rehearsals for a single musical piece. His study on a conductorless band found “social obstacles (that) overshadowed the learning experience” (Hedgecoth, 2018, p. 21). His methods were thorough. He thoughtfully triangulated his data through multiple modalities (interviews, observations, and recordings surveys). Both researchers called for more research on leaderless musical groups; however, both missed connections to experiential learning (Kolb, 2014) and group dynamics. Hedgecoth (2018) in particular could have capitalized on the social dynamics being an adaptive problem within leaderless groups rather than dismissing it as a distraction. Both these studies also show that there is a disconnect between musical research and leadership research. Neither Hedgecoth (2018) nor Dabby (2017) refer to research about leaderless groups, collective leadership, followership, or other relevant areas in leadership studies. On the other hand, studies by Ladkin (2008), Taylor and Ladkin (2009), Bathurst and Ladkin (2012), Jansson (2013, 2018), and Jansson et al. (2021) approached the topic from a leadership perspective: They were curious to see how leadership processes unfolded in musical groups, and how music could add to the toolbox for better leadership. Their studies were robust.

ABR methodologies are an area of great potential within qualitative research designs. Still, none of the studies in this review fulfill the parameters of ABR. ABR intersects with music and leadership in two ways: firstly, it is a methodology designed to include the arts as a
framework to understand emergent processes (Bresler, 2004; Leavy, 2020), and secondly it acknowledges the embodied nature of the arts within the phenomena it studies, including leadership (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). As noted previously, Taylor and Ladkin (2009) identify four elements of ABR for use in organizational settings: skill transference, projective technique, evoking essence, and creating art (p. 1). The strength of ABR is that it is action oriented. As such it is combinable as an intervention within action research (AR). It sits at the boundary between theory and practice, which makes it a promising methodology for musical leading. However, outside of music therapy the applications of ABR are very few in regard to leadership. Taylor (2013) and Sutherland (2012) both champion ABR for leadership development. Sutherland’s research studied aesthetic workspaces by using music to create a relaxing space for MBA students who would then write essays. The essays were later evaluated for how environments could be influenced by art. Results show that the participants experienced a shift in their reflexive capacity and were able to experience parallels to their leadership issues in their organizations in a newly energized way. The use of music here though was as a shaper of the space, not to understand leadership processes themselves.

The qualitative and quantitative studies in this chapter approach the relevance of music to leadership from a variety of angles. They discover ways of leading in musical contexts, by studying conductors and musicians, and locating leadership processes within musical environments. Can the coin be flipped so that music can help find the lyricism in leadership processes themselves? I believe that ABR and AR have a large role to play in finding the many ways that music can make its own way within leadership processes. ABR offers an experiential avenue to study and learn about leadership, and experiential learning equips individuals to make connections between themselves and their organizations (Kolb, 2014). Learning and
experiencing through music become personal and meaningful. Adding this type of methodology can add to the tapestry of the role music plays in leadership. This next section will explore scholarship in the field of leadership development, the role of ABR, and finally the role of music in leadership development.

Literature shows that music is a multifaceted way of engaging with human experience. It is a discourse that holds cultural weight (Agawu, 1992; DeNora, 2000). It is a way to negotiate intra and interpersonal dynamics between the individual and the collective (DeNora, 2000; Schiavo, 2018; Lindvang & Beck, 2015), a way to access intuition, creativity, and emotions. a way to invite paradigm shifts (Sutherland, 2012), a way to communicate and listen without words (Schiavo, 2018), and a fluid process that enables emergence in individuals and groups, including shifting from single-leader paradigms to shared leadership (Dabby, 2014; Jansson, 2018; Schiavo, 2020). For now, scholarship on arts as a method for leadership development continues in the field of organizational aesthetics, which frames leadership as an artform (Strati, 2010; Taylor, 2013; Taylor & Ladkin, 2014). Framing it as such contributes to the notion that leadership, like music, is an emergent process (Bathurst & Ladkin, 2012). Music, then, is a way to create the conditions for emergence. It is a treasure trove for use in leadership development; however, it still must be embraced by that field. Using music for leadership development sits at the intersections of human development, education, psychology, music psychology and cognition, and musicology. The interdisciplinary nature of music in leadership development adds to its high potential and also creates the challenge of having to manage the complexity that comes with pushing beyond established scholarly boundaries.

In summary, the implementation of music as a method in leadership development is predominantly linked to a high degree of musical proficiency. Superior musical expertise can
lend an aura to the workspace that is almost magical (Adler, 2006; Sutherland, 2012). It has also been shown that music provides powerful affordances to humans universally (DeNora, 2000; Mehr, 2019). Music as a leadership development tool may be relevant for facilitators with across a spectrum of musical experience. I argue that organizations will benefit if musical facilitation could be more accessible to facilitators with little to no professional musical background.

However, there are currently no studies that research the processes of this population in using music in their leadership development work. This study begins to lay the tracks for facilitators to explore music in a community of peers through the process of collaborative action inquiry. The next chapter presents the methodology for the study: Collaborative action inquiry, an action research methodology.
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses collaborative action inquiry (CAI) as a research methodology. I investigated the ways that facilitators in leadership development spaces with varying levels of musical training coinquire into using music as a method to enhance their practice. I chose CAI, a type of action research method, because it combines collaborative inquiry, self-inquiry, and active processing in a highly inductive manner. In a way, the process of CAI can be likened to a compositional process in community: fluid, embodied, reciprocal and emergent (Schiavio et al., 2022). Through the collaborative process I aimed to answer following the three questions:

Research Question 1: How do leadership development facilitators with varying musical abilities use music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

Research Question 2: What is the experience of these facilitators as collaborative inquirers into the use of music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

Research Question 3: How, if at all, does experiencing the process of exploring music as a facilitation tool for leadership development shift the participants’ professional practice?

This chapter is structured in the following way: I begin with an overview of action research methodology and continue with making connections to collaborative developmental action inquiry. I consider each research question and the underlying motivations for asking it. Next, I introduce the coinquirers to this study in regard to their demographics, basic experience in music and leadership development, and make note of the total participation of each person within all cycles of the study. I note elements of the research design about the setting. A presentation of the data collection process follows which describes each of the five total cycles in detail. I also consider shifts from the original research design. Finally, I note the process of data
analysis after data collection, describing challenges in this critical phase and noting the final themes for the study.

**Research Design**

Action research is based on a sequence of cycles of action, observation, reflection and then planning anew (Herr & Anderson, 2015; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2014; Lewin, 1946; McNiff, 2016). The methodology was initially developed by Kurt Lewin in the 1940s in the societal chaos post WWII (Dickens & Watkins, 1999). It was a way to break the silos between theory and practice. In bridging that gap Lewin hoped to create a new scientific method to solve social challenges of the time. As Dickens and Watkins (1999) state: “Action researchers, then, generate context-bound, values-based knowledge and solutions from their public inquiries into system problems” (p. 128). Action research accepts—indeed requires—the researcher to be a participant in the study (Herr & Anderson, 2015; McNiff, 2016; Torbert, 2021). The researcher-as-participant coinquires a topic with their participants, who are themselves coinquirers. Together they engage in multiple iterations of feedback (Bradbury, 2006; Herr & Anderson, 2015; McNiff, 2016). CAI is an interplay of organizational development, relational leadership theory, and consciousness development as action research. In other words, in addition to being an action research methodology, action inquiry results in a culture within an organization in which reflection and the subsequent redesign of actions is alive at individual, interpersonal and organizational levels (Torbert & Associates, 2004; Torbert & Taylor, 2008). In addition to cycles, CAI also highlights three feedback loops. Cycles denote horizontal processes: the way the project unfolds over time. Loops denote vertical processes: a person’s capacity for increasingly complex and objective ways of perceiving, learning, and acting. There are three types of loops. Kwon and Nicolaides (2017) describe single loop learning as being concerned
with “doing,” or what needs to be done to fix a problem. Double loop learning is concerned with “knowing,” or what are the assumptions we make to come to a solution? How can we question our epistemological foundations? Triple loop learning happens rarely, as it denotes a major, and oftentimes jarring, shift in a person’s identity. Triple loop learning is learning that occurs through a deconstruction and reconstruction of the very boundaries that define who we are (Kwon & Nicolaides, 2017). CAI outlines a dialectic between emergent learning in practice and creating new knowledge for academia. It is both a mindset and a methodology (Ospina et al. 2008; Torbert & Associates, 2004; Torbert & Taylor, 2008).

CAI supported the research questions in the following way:

1) How do facilitators with varying musical abilities use music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

   This first question concerns the process of exploring music. What existing knowledge may facilitators of varying musical backgrounds access to help each other develop ways to facilitate with music? What methods or processes will emerge as we, as coinquirers together manage our different backgrounds toward this purpose? What aesthetic workspace do we need to do our work? Each cycle in the study informed the next.

2) What is the experience of these facilitators as collaborative inquirers into the use of music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

   The second question attends to the felt experience of the individual coinquirers. The facilitators reflected on their experience individually and shared their emotions, impressions, and thought processes as they explored music as a leadership development tool. In asking about our experiences, we utilized the reflective nature of CAI. Analyzing
the data that we collected offered in their reflections gave us insight into our level of learning, or the loop we were accessing in our process. We also detected a change in the depth of the way participants were learning, for example, moving from single to double loop learning. This was exemplified by our group emerging new dialectical constructs during our discussions.

3) How, if at all, does experiencing the process of exploring music as a facilitation tool for leadership development shift the participants’ professional practice?

With this question I hoped to learn if and in what ways the experience may shift how participants engage in leadership development facilitation professionally outside of the space of this study. What could this shift be attributed to?

Methods

The following sections give an overview of the coinquirers in this study. I present the recruitment process, methods of selection, intersections of relationships, and a short demographic portrait of each person.

Coinquirers

I planned to recruit 8–10 participants for this study. I anticipated some attrition during the course of the study and planned for a core of six to remain. Recruiting occurred through my current network at the University of San Diego where I am a PhD student and lecturer in leadership studies. I am also a facilitator for a coaching and consulting organization and reached out to individuals within that organization. Recruitment was done through an initial email invitation that included information about the study, and consent forms. I snowball-sampled for additional participants at the same time and was able to conclude recruitment by the initial target of mid-July 2023. Through this process I was able to exceed the target number of 8–10
participants, recruiting a total of 13 inquirers to the study. Including myself there were a total of 14 individuals forming our group. The range of coinquirers was between 9–11 in each of the workshops. All 13 of my colleagues filled out the pre-questionnaire and participated in the post-questionnaire phase. The exact participation numbers for each cycle are shown in Table 2.

As a result of my convenience sampling, all the participants were connected through the University of San Diego, School of Leadership and Education Sciences. All coaches were also connected through the coaching program at USD. A number of these individuals were colleagues in the coaching organization referenced above. All coinquirers knew me from classes or professional engagements. All participants were facilitators in leadership development spaces. For the purposes of this dissertation, “facilitators” are individuals that may have roles as instructors, coaches, consultants, or trainers. These individuals have responsibilities that focus on holding space for leadership learning and have leadership development as a focus of their profession. I introduce our group next, then delve into design and data collection.

The Members of the Band

The final workshop began with an experiential activity: 2 minutes of body percussion. After we ended, one of the coinquirers exclaimed, “Now we’re a band! I’ve always wanted to be in a band.” He stated this with infectious enthusiasm, and the rest of the group also joined in appreciative whoops, clapping, and laughing. In keeping with this musical analogy, I introduce the members of the band below.

Eight of the coinquirers were connected through the coaching certification program at USD; Seven through their work as instructors in the leadership studies minor at our university. Nine were part of or had graduated from the PhD program in leadership studies, while two were graduates of the MA program in Leadership Studies (see Table 1). All these individuals had had
some experience in spaces of inquiry and emergence, because this was part of the culture of our leadership studies department. All of us identified with being a leadership development professional. None of my coinquirers identified as musicians. I was the only one holding that identity firmly at the outset. There were crossovers in the spaces and roles we inhabited. The following table (Table 1) serves as a visual representation of the existing relationships between the people in our group.

Table 1

*Relationships and Contexts of Connection*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coinquirer</th>
<th>PhD program in leadership studies</th>
<th>Leadership studies minor instructor</th>
<th>Coaching certification</th>
<th>Primary recruitment cycle</th>
<th>Snowball recruitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kravitz</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoby</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maynard</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jaime</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliana</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belle</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Strong</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonia</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paz (Researcher)</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*N* = 10 8 9 10 2
**Demographics and Experience in Music and Leadership**

All coinquirers received a copy of the dissertation and an opportunity to give feedback for their portrait as well as the dissertation as a whole. The following section introduces each of the coinquirers by their chosen pseudonym, their stated demographics, and their musical and leadership background. These introductions were generated from the first cycle, the pre-questionnaire, and observations during the workshops. As part of the fourth cycle (Workshop 3) each person chose a pseudonym for purposes of the dissertation. These pseudonyms became another layer for the coinquirers to express their identity. For example, one coinquirer’s first choice was Captain Crescendo, then changed it to Hoby to pay homage to a member of the globally acclaimed K-pop group BTS. The following introductions paint the person in broad strokes. I included demographic information, information on what they hoped to learn by joining the study, what their biggest takeaway was from engaging in the coinquiry. More detailed findings will be given in the themes. What follows is the story that unfolded in our time together.

**Antonia**

Antonia comes to leadership from the restaurant sector and is now an executive in an environmental nonprofit organization. She is also a graduate student in the leadership program and former instructor. When asked why she wanted to participate in the study she said, “I love to learn about new ideas. I don't want to create an echo chamber for myself by just studying and trying the things that I am interested in and know well. Music is not in my comfort zone and so I think that this could open my mind to a lot of things I hadn't thought of before.” She has no musical training but came with humility and curiosity. Antonia has an uncanny ability to remember lyrics in songs and can sing even the most complicated songs from memory. She wonders how others see the role of music in leadership. Antonia took part in the first workshop.
Belle

Belle showed up fully with enthusiasm and vulnerability. She identifies as a first-generation American, an African American, a veteran, and a woman. She is a leadership coach and active on the boards of multiple organizations involved with social justice advocacy. She describes herself as a listener of music but has supported her son’s interests in musical performance as he was growing up. She joined the study because she thought that it was worthwhile to explore new approaches to demonstrating leadership, and to learn something about a new approach to leadership. Belle was an active coinquirer in all workshops.

Diana

Diana joined at the last workshop. She is a doctoral student in leadership and an instructor in the leadership studies program for undergraduate students. She did not mention any formal music training but is a ballroom dancer. She has also held mentoring positions on undergraduate dance teams. She identifies as a Chinese-Cantonese cis-female and straight; a first-generation American and emergent adult (her words) at age 25. She was intrigued by the possibilities that music could hold for leadership and joined the study for that reason.

Eliana

Eliana brings a quiet yet energetic calm to a space. She uses her voice judiciously and uses all her senses as she gives and receives in conversation. She identifies as a white Latina, heterosexual, and intercultural. She has been in various leadership positions since high school, is a graduate student in the leadership studies, and has taught and facilitated leadership workshops and leadership development courses in the university context. Her practical engagement with music occurred mainly in middle and high school, when she played piano, cello, and sang in a choir. She no longer engages in these activities regularly. She joined the study to gain a better
understanding of what role music plays in her life individually and collectively. Eliana attended all cycles of the study.

**Gates**

Gates joined the workshops for the second and third workshops. He holds a PhD in leadership studies and has been an instructor of leadership for ten years. He identifies as an Asian male. He does not play an instrument but likes listening. Gates listened and observed. He wondered about the connections between music and leadership and suspended judgment on a personal opinion. Gates went with the flow of conversations, holding the curiosity in the group. When asked why he joined the study he answered, “I am now interested in exploring the potential of right brain functions for leadership and human development and assume music is one of the catalysts to work for the right brain functioning.”

**Gin**

Gin identifies as a Han-Chinese female. As an international student from China, she brought a different cultural lens to the study, which was dominated by persons from Western cultural contexts. She held stoic wisdom as well as an air of factual honesty. She is a graduate student in leadership, is an instructor in the undergraduate program, a coach and has been in leadership positions in her previous company. She has grown up around professional musicians but never showed an interest in studying music herself, though she listens to music. She found the study topic “fascinating” and wanted to explore what art could contribute to our professional lives. Gin attended the first workshop.

**Hoby**

Hoby is the type of person that lights up a room. She brings a constant sense of wonder and has an infectious way of inviting more conversation and connection in the group. She is a
vivacious cisgender woman and identifies as white and queer. She gained her leadership experience in positions in the Marines, as a leadership development trainer and program manager in the private sector, and as a leadership coach through the university. Her whole family gravitated towards music, listening to a plethora of musical styles from classical to popular music; she also learned to play multiple instruments. During her graduate studies she found a deep connection to the Korean K-pop sensation BTS and wrote her thesis on the group. She joined the study because she wanted to connect with other people over music and leadership and wanted to learn about new music to listen to. Hoby attended all three workshops.

**Jack**

Jack is curious, thoughtful, and supportive. He comes from a leadership background in large retail corporations. He identifies as a white male and is a graduate student in leadership as well as an instructor in leadership studies in the undergraduate program. He is also completing a leadership coaching certification. He does not have any musical training but is an avid listener. He joined the study because he wanted to gain “new knowledge and insight to strengthen (his) understanding and leadership.” Jack attended all workshops.

**Jaime**

Jaime is an artist, a creative soul, a visual artist. He comes from an education background in K-8 in predominantly LatinX communities in the United States. He worked in leadership development spaces as an instructor and is pursuing his leadership coaching certification. His musical experience includes playing guitar using tablature and being an enthusiastic salsa and bachata dancer. He joined the study because he was “curious to learn different ways of using music as a leadership development tool” and “hope(d) to take away activities or frameworks to use in (his) future classes or coaching.” Jaime was a part of all cycles.
John Strong

John Strong is an avid observer. He is reflective and leans willingly into new concepts and ideas. He identifies as a mixed Asian-European male. He has held various leadership positions in the corporate world and served in capacities of mentor and trainer. He is also a leadership coach. He does not profess any musical training but uses music in his daily life. He joined the study to find a “deeper insight into how music can affect people, and how I might be able to apply that in my coaching practice.” John was part of the second workshop (third cycle).

Kevin

Kevin is a longtime leadership development manager and trainer at a quickly growing retail company. He has built up the leadership development program at his company from the ground up and has simultaneously pursued his own leadership development through various educational programs. He identifies as gay, male, and white. His way of engaging is thoughtful and analytical, and he has a way of summarizing and deepening a conversation that brings clarity to complexity. He grew up with music in the family, with his father having a metal band when he was a child (“with the hair down his back and everything!”). Kevin recalls himself being an “ultimate band nerd,” still playing saxophone casually to this day. He does not identify as a musician, however. He joined the study because he was intrigued “at exploring the crossroads of music and leadership development.” Kevin joined all three workshops.

Kravitz

Kravitz is a deep thinker. He has a thoughtful, quiet air about him that carries gravitas. He identifies as queer, black/Latin-Caribbean. He has moved in leadership spaces as a practitioner and academic for 8 years now, both as student, administrator, and instructor. He now works in prosocial and conscious leadership development, having moved out of the classroom
into the nonprofit and philanthropic sectors. Outside of his leadership roles, he is a professional dancer and dance educator. Before joining the study, he stated, “I'm extremely interested in learning how I might be able to further integrate art medium into practice as it would be reflective of me and who I would like to be as a practitioner. (I hope to gain) insight into myself, what resonates, and what's possible with music as a learning tool.” Kravitz grew up playing cello and trombone, but never identified as a musician. Kravitz was present for the first and third workshop.

Maynard

Maynard has an extensive background as executive officer and commander in the Marine corps. He initiated and led leadership development initiatives in the military and took his skills to the private non-profit sector after retirement. He identifies as Caucasian/Hispanic male. When asked about his musical experience he answered that he had “Absolutely no experience with any musical instruments or choirs.” Maynard listens, shares, synthesizes, and acts. He was able to join the last in-person workshop and jumped right into the group. He joined the study “to explore ways that I did not realize regarding the intersection of music and my leadership, and to explore and learn more ways on how to use music more effectively in developing leaders.” Maynard attended the last workshop.

Paz

Paz is the researcher of origin for this study. She is a doctoral candidate in leadership, a leadership coach, program coordinator and leadership studies instructor. She is a cisgender female, a Taiwanese Cantonese with European roots, a 1.5 generation Asian American, and a spiritual individual. She is a trained singer, plays violin, and holds a graduate degree in musicology. Her dominant identity is that of a mother. She was driven to this study by the
possibilities that music holds for all parts of life, and especially for leadership and leadership development.

**Design**

The workshops took place in a classroom on the campus of the University of San Diego. I was keen to create a setting that was not reminiscent of a traditional classroom. My background as an early childhood educator and identity as a mother came through strongly in the design of the physical environment. As an early childhood educator, I especially ascribed to the Reggio Emilia methodology where the environment is the third teacher (Edwards et al., 2012). In Reggio philosophy the environment is just as important as the teachers in the classroom. The environment mirrored home and nature as much as being a practical space. This meant using natural materials such as wood, rocks, plants, and fabrics instead of hard plastic surfaces and artifice. Reggio brings nature and family into the classroom.

I had a desire to instill what one coinquirer later called a “ritual sacredness” in our holding environment that enveloped the space of the study energetically. I incorporated items that added an element of Eastern philosophy, which is a perspective that I operate from. Three rings on an antique singing bowl opened every workshop, ritual objects such as candles, a sphere with a pattern of spirals on it, representing our earth, and a living plant were present at each event. Additionally, there were subtle signs of musical objects and symbols present in the space, evident in the treble clefs on a tablecloth, the musical score on the napkins, and the ritual sounding of the bowl. Tables were always set up together, family style, and dressed in a tablecloth with a centerpiece in the middle. The purpose for this setting was to give the participants a feeling of belonging and community from the very beginning. The intention was to
ease the transition from exiting their previous context outside of the study (work, school, etc.) into our space visually and energetically.

The following pictures (see Figures 2 and 3) show a typical setup for the table, and one photo from Workshop 2 (Cycle 3), showing the group in conversation.
Figure 2

Table Setting for Workshop 1

![Table Setting for Workshop 1](image1)

Figure 3

Coinquirers During Inquiry, Workshop 2 (October 5, 2023)

![Coinquirers During Inquiry, Workshop 2 (October 5, 2023)](image2)
Data Collection

Data collection for this study occurred in an inductive process of five cycles (see Figure 4 below). Methods used in these cycles are a questionnaire, focus groups (collaborative inquiry), journaling, and a post-questionnaire in the form of a reflective conversation.

Figure 4

Depiction of Research Design in Five Cycles

All coinquirers completed Cycles 1 (questionnaire) and 5 (individual post-questionnaire). The total attendance and participation are noted in Table 2 below:
**Participation Tracking**

The following section presents the attendance of the individuals in our group.

**Table 2**

*Tracking Attendance and Participation in the Cycles*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coinquirer</th>
<th>Cycle 1: Asynchronous</th>
<th>Cycle 2: In person</th>
<th>Cycle 3: In person</th>
<th>Cycle 4: In person</th>
<th>Cycle 5: Zoom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antonia</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belle</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gin</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diana</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliana</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
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*Note.* Seven coinquirers attended the full series of five cycles. All completed Cycles 1 and 5.

Two attended 2 out of 3 workshops. Five attended one workshop.

The first cycle was a questionnaire which individuals filled out on their own time electronically. I used Google forms to create the questionnaire and sent it to the participants over
email. The questionnaire gathered basic demographic information in short answer format and gave space for participants to reflect on their practice as leadership development facilitator, their personal experience with music, and their experience using music in their professional life. Doing the initial data gathering in a questionnaire was more flexible and time-efficient than doing one-on-one interviews (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015). The questions I asked regarding their use of music in their personal and professional spaces gave me an idea as to the musical experience these individuals perceived themselves to have. Finally, the questionnaire asked co-inquires to reflect on what music affords for them. What does it allow them to do or access? What do they hope to gain from participating in the study? The results gave me an opportunity to see what population the participants typically engage with professionally, what areas of leadership development they focused on, and what interventions they currently were comfortable using in their classes, workshops, or trainings. It also gave the participants a way to reflect on the questions and carry the idea of a music and leadership connection into the second cycle, our first in-person workshop.

The second through fourth cycle were in-person workshops where all participants engaged in collaborative inquiry. Each of the three evening workshops, participants inquired into music and its relevance to leadership and leadership development. Each session followed a structure of a meal, a check-in activity to build the communal workspace (holding environment), collaborative work, individual reflection, group sharing and planning for next time. The sharing and analysis of the dynamics in the group became data that I used to adjust for the next evening, a few weeks later. The study is based on a succession of three in-person cycles, each separated by 3 weeks to allow for processing between sessions. The time between cycles allowed me to
take our data into account to re-plan the next cycle. Each workshop was 3 hours long. Following are the dates and times for the workshops:

- **Cycle 2**
  - September 14, 2023; 5:30pm - 8:30pm

- **Cycle 3**
  - October 5, 2024; 5:30 - 8:30pm

- **Cycle 4**
  - November 10, 2023; 2:30pm - 5:30pm

Data gathering occurred in two ways during these workshops: I planned to video record all three sessions fully. The room we used has recording capabilities. In practice I was able to use that recording equipment in the room using Zoom for the first two cycles. There were technical issues in the last workshop due to a room change, and I was not able to get a bird's eye view on the process. I recorded the inquiry using a voice recorder that was placed into a centerpiece on the table. I also used a GoPro camera to video record our process from different angles and in better quality video than the in-room camera could offer. Initially I planned to recruit a person to assist with logistics such as audio and video recording so I could remain in my role as coinquirer and co-facilitator. However, decided against introducing a non-participant into the space to maintain a confidential space within the group. During the first cycle the coinquirers journaled by writing on their devices into the folders that I had set up for them on a shared drive. One person preferred handwriting. When we did not have paper handy quickly enough, we jokingly took a paper plate. She then decided to write her reflection on it. The following picture shows this plate.
All entries and recordings were saved on a shared Google Drive that was accessible by me and the participant. In the second workshop (Cycle 3), the reflection moved to being part of the inquiry and checkout process rather than writing in journals. We decided to move the reflective journaling out in the second workshop (Cycle 3) because we preferred to process in our group. The folders remained available for us to continue using. During the first workshop we also decided to create a playlist, which has become an artifact we co-created in our group. It contains music that speaks meaningfully to a coinquirer’s lived experience.

The fifth and final cycle was an individual reflection of the learning that took place during the collaborative inquiry process. Initially imagined as an application and reflection cycle where the coinquirers would apply their learning in their workspaces, then reflect on it, the group
decided to opt for individual reflective conversations instead. I met with the participants individually to reflect and process their experience and learning during the study, using the post-questionnaire questions that guided this cycle at the onset of the study. This last cycle was the only time I was able to dedicate time to my colleagues individually, and having the opportunity to reflect upon our inquiry together created a way to close out our time together. The conversations centered on the thoughts and emergences that the coinquirers shared.

Data Analysis

Our group reflected continuously as we engaged in our collaborative inquiry. Post-cycle each set of data was analyzed in detail and mined for patterns. The information gleaned from each of the cycles informed the planning for the next. For example, we made the decision for our reflections to move to our shared inquiry space after the first workshop because the group felt that it allowed all of us to stay in flow. The pace of our conversation was such that we preferred to have more time to reflect in dialogue than individually. I did not use software to code the data until after the final cycle concluded. Instead, I listened to and watched the recordings and wrote comments in the margins of the transcript. Transcriptions were assisted by MacWhisper, then cleaned. It became apparent that coding software was going to be necessary after the last cycle due to the sheer amount of data that was collected in the process of the five cycles. The totality of data amassed to 13 questionnaires, over 10 hours of focus group transcripts, 22 hours of videos, and 13 individual conversations for the post-questionnaire in the last cycle. I decided to use MaxQDA to help in the coding process.

Coding, like action research, is somewhat of a moving target (Saldaña, 2013). A code is a word or a short phrase that captures a possible meaning of a participant’s reply. Codes can be applied to verbal answers, nonverbal aspects, and/or artifacts (e.g., pictures, moments in videos)
(Brinkman & Kvale, 2015; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2013). To a large extent the wide variation of ways to code has to do with the abundance of perspectives of qualitative researchers. Each person sees their data in different ways, through different “lenses,” resulting in variations in interpretation and thus in coding (Saldaña, 2013). The coding lens in this study will be most akin to descriptive coding, which is an attempt at creating a descriptive phrase for something that is generalizable across different participants.

In addition to coding individual reflections, I included our observations on the collaborative inquiry process of the group as a whole in a narrative format. The observations on the group as a whole shed light on the work processes of facilitators as we negotiated interpersonal dynamics and collective leadership; in essence engaging in collaborative improvisation as we explored music together to do their work.

**Finding Themes: The Process**

The following section gives a narrative of the process of data analysis as it unfolded during and after data collection. The themes in this chapter are a result of multiple iterations of inductive and deductive coding in MaxQDA, field notes, and continuous reflection on my part while data analyzing. Other elements that became salient were spontaneous conversations with the participants when we had chance meetings outside of the bounds of the study. Throughout I continuously reflected and journaled on processes observed, heard, felt, and sensed.

As this was action research, I analyzed the data after every cycle to inform the planning of the next. I considered using data analysis software at this early stage and utilized OtterAi to transcribe the first workshop, and MaxQDA to code. There was a desire to do data analysis using software because it lent a sense of organization and validity to the study. Using these tools at this point did not prove helpful, however. I needed a way to conceptualize the first workshop in a
more organic, flexible fashion. I had come across another web-based application, Milanote, in a recent engagement. Milanote is an application that is akin to a whiteboard. It lends itself to design, vision-boarding, conceptual processes; It offered the creative freedom that my data analysis needed due to its inductive and dynamic nature. I proceeded to use Milanote to visualize all three workshops, each in a different way according to the flow and content of the workshop itself. I also used Milanote to visualize the flow of the study as a whole, themes, outlines and gathered images and associations that arrived in my process.

Emerging the themes was difficult. The fluidity and expansiveness were designed into the study and also expressed my personal ambition to hold space for exploration in service of the wholeness of the human experience. In the study, I hoped to offer a space in which this exploration of human wholeness could occur. It was important to me, therefore, to hold the individual perspectives that were offered in the study; to tell the stories holistically. As a result of this stance, deciding on the themes for reporting the findings was arduous, and it was difficult to find clearly stated answers to the research questions. There were (too) many directions and layers to choose from. As I said to one of my advisors, “I think I am not seeing the trees for the forest.” I had to, however, decide on somewhere to start.

**Next Phase**

Sitting with the data more I was present to my gut feeling that I had not found the right timbre yet for the themes to make sense. There was more. I wondered whether the themes were aligning at a depth that was good enough for this particular expression of the study, the dissertation. As the cycles continued and our work in the group deepened, I noticed that there was more happening in the space than we could communicate in words. There were simultaneous processes occurring under the surface. I also noticed how difficult it was to find
words to describe what it was that music actually did for us in our lives. This difficulty was familiar to me. In my work as a musicologist, I had to analyze pieces of music using music theory and interpret the theory in relation to a narrative interpretation. These analyses always seemed wanting. Words did not capture the fullness of the experience that music evoked. It is no wonder that we in our study also had trouble using words to talk about music. This was a parallel process to what I was experiencing in trying to find themes. I was trying to categorize in words something that was resisting clarity. It was as solid and as ephemeral as a feeling. I was trying to catch smoke.

Realizing this, I decided to change my own process of writing. Instead of sitting over the data in front of a computer screen or listening back to the recordings, I recorded a mock interview in which I interviewed myself about what I had learned from the study. What are the themes? What stood out, and why? The result of this “interview” was a recording of about 80 minutes, which allowed me to process the study orally. From a cognitive perspective this way of processing helped me keep my very active metacognitive mind in check. In essence, I was telling the story of the study without second-guessing myself. I transcribed the interview and reorganized my thoughts using this transcript as a guide. This resulted in a new set of four themes: container, journeying, vulnerability, fluidity.

Once I sat down to write I hit an impasse again. The story I began to tell did not flow with these four themes. What was I writing felt disconnected; but disconnected from what? I had a feeling of sensing but not seeing. As I was reviewing the transcripts I found that I could fit those conversations into at least two themes at the same time. What was happening? The fluidity and ambiguity made it maddeningly tough to write about in a linear way, and the themes were resisting linearity. Again, I had to find a different way to frame the themes to tell the story of this
study, and I knew that I would not get there sitting at a desk. I decided to take a hot shower, tapping the four themes I had come up with onto the outside of the shower door. Perhaps catalyzed by the fluidity of water, things began to flow differently. I conceptualized and redesigned the themes into a visual model that, I hoped, encapsulated the process and product of our group’s inquiry into music and leadership (see Figure 6). The resulting themes from this phase of analysis are the following. I add my initial phase of visualizations of our process in the pictures below. The first picture arrived first, a 2D model of our process, starting from the outside swirling in. The next illustration shows a 3-dimensional, model that has quasi fluid-dynamic properties (see Figure 7). The movement inside the funnel expresses the fluid, sometimes the confusing way it felt to us to converse in our inquiry. This inquiry nevertheless resulted in our creating original designs in our last workshop (Cycle 4), which are represented by three smaller copies on the bottom of the illustration, each encapsulating their own dynamic process.

**Figure 6**

*Initial Sketch of Our Process*
Intermittent Themes

1) The Holding Environment (the container that held our group and our work)
2) Fluidity (the dynamic property that carried our work)
3) Journeying (the movement from disconnection to connection)
4) Operationalizing music for Leadership Development (coinquirers developing leadership education modules)

Still, this was not the endpoint. I had conceptualized the patterns of engagement in which our dialogue had unfolded over the three workshops (Cycles 2-4), but it was still not concrete enough to begin writing comprehensively about. I realize now that this is the process of data
analysis, which is a dialogic inquiry, as the researcher circumspects a large amount of data. The themes that I finally decided upon found their inspiration in the birth metaphor, which was evoked in the literature review during the proposal stage of this study (“music is a universal language we learned with the rhythm of our first heartbeats”), and then surfaced in one of the original workshop designs of one group of coinquirers, who had created an activity around the importance of a holding environment and connected it to the womb. These became the four themes described in the next chapter (Chapter 4). Next, I discuss trustworthiness and limitations of the study.

**Trustworthiness (Validity) and Limitations**

Research aims to generate knowledge. In the case of action research this new knowledge (theory) is nested within practice (McNiff, 2016). CAI approaches research from a participant-researcher perspective. All participants including the researcher are co-investigators. Validity is a contested topic when it comes to action research because the same empirical goals of traditional research may not be satisfied. Herr and Anderson (2015) argued that the notion of validity has to be redefined given the growing research methodology landscape. In action research/action inquiry the cycles continuously fine-tune the research question through feedback. In this way the action inquiry cycles themselves create the conditions for consistent re-validating of the data as it is salient to the research population. Action research is therefore particularly useful in the education field where classroom needs and dynamics change with each new group of students. It is built on a culture of emergence and continuous learning. In CAI, the coinquiry format creates conditions for constant member checking for internal validity (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Validity in AR is thus measured against the intent and process of emergence. McNiff (2016) identified four elements: the generation of new knowledge, making tacit knowledge explicit,
contributing to the wider body of knowledge, and formative and summative assessment procedures (pp. 217–218). This study generates new knowledge by gaining insight on the processes of non-musician facilitators in leadership development, a new inquiry. It makes tacit knowledge explicit by studying the process, spoken, and unspoken as a collaborative inquiry unfolded. It contributes to knowledge in the fields of leadership development, arts-based methods, music and leadership development, human development, coaching, and music sociology. Finally, it used multiple methods for data collection and analysis, as well as member checking through each cycle, including sending all coinquirers a copy of the dissertation 3 weeks ahead of the defense date.

**Limitations**

Learning takes time. This thesis encapsulates some of the learning that was gleaned from this study up to the point of handing this document in. However, the new awareness continues to arrive almost daily. This study is a beginning, and it will be exciting to see what emerges with the passing of time. Further, this is but one study \((N = 14)\) with a CDAI design, which means that this is a snapshot of a limited population. In addition, as leadership development facilitators and teachers well know, every group is different. I hope that the process-oriented lens that I employed in the data analysis might point towards macro patterns that exist in groups engaging in an inquiry model, however, the outcomes will shift depending on the coinquirers in the group and the context the study emerges from, among other factors. This is to say that AR and CDAI are in its core ongoing processes. The research methodology is based on cycles of feedback given by the current participants, and actions shift with the dynamics of each group and the needs of each participant. Collaborative inquiry also is careful to manage a power dynamic between the knowledge that emerged and then claimed as research for academia, and its
postpositivist personality that prioritizes democracy and equity of voice (Ospina et al., 2020). This is not as much of a limitation as it is an expression of critical social constructivist paradigms applied to leadership development and leadership in practice. Because people change, the methods also change. CAI creates a culture of collaborative inquiry in which whole organizations could work with each other to maintain and emerge from their curiosity and values (Reason & Bradbury, 2008; Torbert, 2004; Swantz, 2008).

**Summary**

This chapter offered insight on the methodology of this study, a collaborative action inquiry studying the potential of music as an arts-based methodology in service of leadership development. It occurred with a group of 14 coinquirers associated with the University of San Diego, including the researcher. The coinquirers were sampled from a group of leadership development facilitators such as instructors in leadership studies and leadership coaches. None of them identified as a musician apart from the researcher. Each coinquirer was introduced, attendance patterns in each of the cycles noted, and the intentional holding of the space in “ritual sacredness” described. The study was outlined in five cycles: a pre- and postquestionnaire bookending three workshops. I described the process of data analysis and focus particularly on the long journey of deciding on four themes for this thesis. Trustworthiness and validity were maintained through the inductive, reflective process of collaborative inquiry itself where constant member checking was employed. The study also generates new knowledge in the fields connected to leadership and music alike, including coaching, facilitation, human development, musicology, and arts-based methods. The next chapter includes the study’s findings and discussions.
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences and processes of leadership development facilitators as they engaged in an inquiry using music in leadership development. Through this research I hoped to discover how leadership development facilitators with varying degrees of musical training might be able to access music for their professional work. The methodology employed collaborative action inquiry. In this chapter I present the findings gleaned from five action research cycles with a total of 14 participants (me included). The cycles included a pre- and post-questionnaire and three 3-hour workshops in between. There were four major themes that emerged from the study. I anchor each of the themes using a narrative and quotes from the coinquirers. Each presentation of a theme is followed by a summary and discussion of the findings.

Like most of this study, the structure of this chapter was emergent. The themes present different layers of the findings and relate to more than one research question at a time. I aimed to strike a balance between a structured chapter and honoring the fluidity and effervescence of our process. Therefore, there is an element of braiding as the chapter unfolds. Elements of one or more themes will appear in another. I hope that the themes and subthemes themselves will give enough of a center of gravity as grounding while reading this document.

Research Question 1: How do leadership development facilitators with varying musical abilities use music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

Research Question 2: What is the experience of these facilitators as collaborative inquirers into the use of music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

Research Question 3: How, if at all, does experiencing the process of exploring music as a facilitation tool for leadership development shift the participants' professional practice?
The four themes are as follows:

Theme 1: The Womb: Holding and being held (Co-creating a sacred space)
Theme 2: Expanding and warming up: Processing through dissonance.
Theme 3: Birth: And the orchestra begins to play (Braving the unknown together)
Theme 4: Separation anxiety: Managing complexities in roles.

A foundational concept that contains this inquiry is the metaphor of the womb. The womb is the ultimate container for growth and new life. It is a place where we (our group) were nourished, where we built ourselves up in mind, body, and spirit. Unexpectedly, this came alive in the study in more than one way. Theme 1 honors our process of co-creating our sacred space in which our study unfolded and grew: Our collective effort of constructing our holding environment. There, we considered the connections between music and leadership that, at first, seemed almost non-existent. The process of growing and changing, the process of emergence is the topic of Theme 2, for which I invoke the musical metaphor of an orchestra warming up before a concert. In Theme 3 we connect the birthing with the development of three original leadership development workshops that were designed by the coinquirers without my guidance. We liken this to the orchestra beginning to play. The last theme considers barriers to the coinquirers going outside of the holding environment that our community had cocreated, connecting this to a complex negotiation between holding multiple roles during the study. I also include some pivotal personal learning that occurred during a meta-analysis of my initial round of making sense of the data.

An Invitation for Joining

The unfolding of this study did not seem to follow linear patterns. One defining element in this study, its methodology, and its subject matter is its fluid character. Action research is by
inductive (Bradbury, 2006; Herr & Anderson, 2015; McNiff, 2016). The dialogic inquiry (Heron & Reason, 1997; Ospina et al., 2008; Wells, 1999) as it unfolded during our study was emergent, catalyzed by sacred curiosity. The essence of music in itself turned out to be hard to define. Coupled with the fluid definition of leadership and leadership development, the whole study was an exercise in managing being in a space of not-knowing. Or better, a space of emergence in which we all knew something but differently from one another. We had to find a way to combine our individual ways of being and knowing in our collective as we overlaid music with leadership.

We began our process by sharing prior experience with music both in personal and professional spaces. Without exception, all 14 coinquirers (including myself) had impactful musical experiences in our lives. These experiences and our associations to these experiences formed the matrix for our holding environment that encompassed our collective experience. Our stories formed the backbone for the four themes. Each of the themes is expansive in character. Neither music nor leadership are purely linear, and I invite you, the reader, to be present to a fluid process as you continue with us on this journey. While you read you may experience the sensations we called “expansive, confusing, vast.” To add wholeness to your experience, the essence of each theme is illustrated with music that surfaces in a regular rhythm after each theme is presented. This can be accessed by clicking on the link provided. You will also see a presence pause, a moment of respite that I learned from my coaching program in a book offered by Silsbee (2008). Silsbee used presence pauses in his presence-based coaching framework to hold space to center ourselves. It is a pause for you, the reader, to reconnect with yourself. The pauses are also a way to honor silence, an important element in this study. These presence pauses also invite me to follow an inward flow in which I allow myself to surrender to the process of writing, away
from academic styles. I will offer reflective vignettes in those moments of pause, motivated by the music offered, before continuing into a discussion of the theme at hand.

Thank you for joining us.

**Theme 1 - The Womb: Holding and Being Held (Cocreating a Sacred Space)**

Child psychologist Donald Winnicott lectured and wrote about the dependence of children on their parents. His vantage point was children in infancy and their mothers whom he saw in his office. The parent had to provide a “good enough” holding environment for the child to feel just safe enough to develop (Winnicott, 1961). Winnicott studied the mother’s literal holding of the child as the first holding environment. This environment does not have to be perfect, only “good enough.” Further, as the child develops the concept of holding expands outwardly into the child’s environment, first in the bodily separation from the mother through birth, then by including other adults into its zone of care (Wasdell, 1979). The holding is thus not physical alone but incorporates a psychological component as well. As the child develops in this good enough holding environment, their sense of dependency towards the caregivers begins to shift towards a greater sense of independence (Wasdell, 1979). This concept becomes important in the context of social work, where “holding” is fraught with complexities (Applegate, 1997).

Creating and maintaining a good enough holding environment for a group is a highly dynamic process, which includes unconscious processes as interpersonal dynamics unfold within a collective. I lean on this concept of the holding environment in this chapter, using the analogy of the womb as our first holding environment. This analogy emerged through an activity that was designed by a group of coinquirers during the last workshop (Cycle 4) where this group used instruments to evoke a womb-like holding environment. I honor this in this theme. Our holding environment was a space for our work and our growth in our study; a brave space for inquiry and
the people involved in it. It is that which literally contains the stakeholders and creates boundaries for the process to unfold. In this theme I present the elements that combined to form our holding environment: the symbols of community in its ritual sacredness and the act of sharing a meal. I note elements that contributed to a sense of belonging, our community of care and ways we approached an inclusive environment. I want to note that I am not projecting the parent role into myself completely, even though I initiated this study. At this point I will only note that I might have been the first parent, but that we became parents to each other in due course. Having said that, the way that I set this initial environment (through dressing the room in a family style manner, including a shared meal, plants, and candles) set the tone for our first engagement, and might have unconsciously encouraged a more willing expression of our culture of care that was exhibited in our shared space. The dressing of the room elevated our physical space to becoming a silent partner in our inquiry, that spoke loudly through our behavior towards each other. Figure 8 offers an overview of Theme 1.
Community and Belonging

Theme 1 focuses on the importance of building community and a sense of belonging in our group. The following sections paint the picture of our process of becoming a group.

**Familiar Strangers: Building a Community Within a Community**

The group that gathered intersected socially and professionally at the University of San Diego’s School of Leadership and Education Sciences, which also offered the coaching certification program and graduate programs that the individuals had engaged in. Not everyone knew each other, but they all knew me from various spaces in the university. The prior connections meant that we had the loose foundations of a community by way of proximity. Kevin shared a few thoughts on leaning into unexpected prior connections:

*I think we just leaned into the other community that existed because when Diana, right away..., when she came in earlier that day was like “I recognize you from somewhere and I don't know,” and we realized, oh, it was a group relation (conference)... oh, you*
had the same group conference. ... so, I think we just leaned into the connection and it and it just flowed. - Kevin

John Strong was able to make it to the second workshop. He was a graduate of the coaching program but not a student at the university. As a newcomer in Workshop 2 (Cycle 3), I was worried if he would feel included. In his interview, however, he stated:

*(the people were) very welcoming. very welcoming. And I and I appreciated how everybody contributed. Yeah. That made me feel like I was really part of that group, you know, just the camaraderie that that got established early on. (nodding)*

Gin knew others from the PhD program and had stronger connections. She shared the community feel this gave her. Gin is one individual who has cross-relational connections in the group since she is a graduate of the coaching program, a PhD student, as well as an instructor in the Leadership Studies Minor program. She shared thoughts about the setting in the room and her relationship with others:

*I think I'm like I didn't pay a lot of attention to the like the physical setting. ... I remember there are flowers or something on the table, but I feel comfortable or like I feel that's a kind of easy talking space, because I know you and I know, like Eliana and Hoby and Kravitz, and at all, I remember maybe like a lot of people like they're my friends, so that familiarity can... being very helpful for me, too. Just fit in and listen to others and also share my thoughts.*

**Breaking Bread: Giving and Receiving**

Our community began forming as we broke bread (see Figure 9). I organized a meal that was served at each of the workshops, offered buffet style. All participants were invited to freely enjoy the food at any time during the 3-hour period. Before we entered into our inquiry, we
would spend 15-20 minutes talking to each other, greeting each other as we arrived, and generally catching up. The atmosphere was relaxed conviviality. The following picture shows our group sharing a meal and reconnecting with each other in Workshop 2 (Cycle 3).

**Figure 9**

*Breaking Bread and Arriving Into the Space, Workshop 2 (October 5, 2023)*

Beyond the communal aspect of sharing a meal, sharing the responsibility of getting the food from the caterer also became an aspect of creating a feeling of belonging. The next scenario emerged in an interview with Antonia.

Antonia had been feeling disconnected from the graduate program she was a part of. As work got busier and demanded more attention she had been less in touch with her cohort at the university. She was feeling isolated and wondered whether she belonged to the group. Ahead of the first study I realized that I did not have enough time to pick up the dinner from the restaurant. I reached out to Antonia for help and was grateful that she was up for the task. I did not know that my reaching out would make a difference to her feeling part of the community.

*And I think that one of the things that brought me in was being offered the opportunity to pick up food for everybody on the way in like that gave me a reason like Hey, no, like I am in it. I am a part of this .... I guess it just gave me like access rather than just showing*
up and being like I don't belong. No, I do belong. I brought you all the food, so I belong here.

Over the course of the next few workshops, we developed from a friendly group of people to a community that became a haven during times of geopolitical upheaval. Just after the second workshop the Gaza conflict had broken out and was causing widespread instability globally. The Russian/Ukraine war had been raging for well over a year. U.S. politics were becoming increasingly polarized. One coinquirer, Belle, spoke to her sense of being replenished in our meetings:

There is so much really awful stuff going on in the world right now. Being able to sit in this space with relatively like-minded people and have a soothing, reflective conversation... It's just so refreshing.

Another similar statement of appreciation came from Kevin:

I don't know, there was just a lot of joy on my part being in that group and engaging in the conversation that felt like a very special community that was created in a very short amount of time and the depth and nuance of the conversations that we have... was really incredible.

The following picture shows our group during our inquiry process in both Workshop 1 (Figure 10, Cycle 2).
Community of Care

It was important for us to instill a sense of being taken care of, of being safe. As described in the design of the physical environment earlier, I accessed my identities as a mother and early childhood educator in creating the setting for the study. The sense of care was not exclusive to my mindset, as the behavior of the coinquirers showed. Coinquirers helped in the setup and breakdown of the space, offered to assist, and asked others whether they needed anything. Being offered help or feeling free to ask for it, receiving and giving support became a factor in the community building process, a way for the group to build trust. One such moment occurred when Belle arrived late to the first workshop. Entering the room she was flustered and harried, out of breath. The group welcomed her, and Jack (who did not know Belle) asked her if she needed water. Upon her acceptance he proceeded to run to the vending machine and purchase a bottle of cold water for her.

Belle (out of breath): I am so sorry. ... the day just completely got away from me.

Voices: If the day got away, the night is here!
(someone offers her a chair)

Belle (sits): Thank you so much.

Jack: You need water or anything?

Belle (looks at him): Water would be fabulous.

Jack (looks around, doesn’t see any water): I feel like... let me run and grab one.

(Leaves the room with his wallet and returns with a bottle from the vending machine.)

Coinquirers helped in the setup and breakdown of the room. For example, Kevin and Hoby took over resetting the furniture setup allowing me to update John Strong on the goings on of the study, since it was his first time attending. Maynard, who arrived early to Workshop 3 (Cycle 4) offered his help with setting up the meal. I reached out to Jack ahead of Workshop 3 (Cycle 4) to bring some office supplies from another building for use with that days’ activities. The reciprocity of caring was a strong foundation of the container this inquiry unfolded in.

The instinct/willingness to help is something that I have observed in the individuals within this group outside of the study space also. Being of service is a value that is integral to the coaching program that many of us graduated from and was also a tenant of the Leadership Studies Minor that individuals were instructors in (see Chapter 3, Table 1). Jack, for example, is an instructor in the Leadership Studies Minor, in which I also am involved. I knew therefore that he had knowledge of where supplies were located and asked him for help. When Jack started as an instructor, I helped onboard him into the position and showed him where those supplies were, and also assisted in getting him acclimated to the teaching position. I have observed such reciprocal helping behavior in other places in our program and believe that the reciprocal care that our group showed towards each other had its roots in our prior engagements with each other.
The first workshop created the frame for our subsequent engagements. After arrival, the coinquirers would share in a meal, then I would invite the group to join in our inquiry. We shared our musical experiences around the table. More than presenting our musical experiences though, we were also laying out our experiences for others to examine and connect to.

For Kevin, being part of a community in the process of inquiry opened new possibilities. Instead of speaking into an echo chamber he credits the flow of the conversation for forming connections between music and leadership he could not have considered on his own. Kevin shared:

*I really felt that as the conversation and dialogue flowed it's like it flowed exponentially I think is a good way to put it like as we got started the more we talked the more we talked it wasn't and the more we talked the more like substance and relevant relevance came through and for me I wouldn't have gotten to any of that I think in my own capacity or through like personal reflection I think I would have kept it if it was just me thinking on this in a singular way I it would have stayed in the very tangible literal sphere and we took it until like many different levels and I think the community in the group directly supported that can happen at least through the lens by experience. [...] like pulling the thread and taking it deeper, and to me that felt very present and alive in the flow of our meetings.*

Gates also shared a similar sensation where he recalled his internal process as we as a group entered the conversation. Gates joined at the second workshop (Cycle 3) and found himself doing a meta-analysis of our discussion as he was sitting at the table. He was initially vocal about his curiosity, and then found himself holding an observant and analytical role for our
group. Being part of a coinquiry gave him the possibility consider music and leadership in relationship as he actively listened in between the lines of the verbal communication being offered. Gates stated:

_We talked about something that we cannot (talk about). So that's very... that's very inspiring. We ... talked about music and the potential connection between leadership and music. But we, yeah, each of us explained a lot of different opinions. And I felt, I ... yeah, ... I became quieter gradually, because I noticed that I noticed myself that I'm kind of trying to express or understand something we cannot explain._

Both Kevin and Gates speak to the dynamism of our dialogue that enabled them to consider different possibilities. As the conversation progressed, each of our various thoughts, opinions, and ideas about music and leadership presented many opportunities for meaning making. As Kevin expresses, he was able to view multiple perspectives that he would not have been privy to on his own. In Gates’ case, he began to discern that there were more subtle dynamics at play where spoken and tacit information was being negotiated in the group.

**Emerging Personal Identity**

Music was linked directly to personal identity. In the following statements, inquirers share in the cultural weight that music holds for them, and also speak to using music as a way to lean into aspirational identities.

Jaime shares that, from Mexican background and having studied in France, missed hearing Spanish or French in his U.S. context. All he had to do to transport himself back into the culture of his choosing was to play music in Spanish or French. He also notes that he time-travels when he puts on Edit Piaf chansons. Jaime said:
Sometimes being away from home and not hearing Spanish, if I want to full-launch just all, you know, like Mexico, corridos, banda, I put in the music and I am there, you know? [...] And when I want to escape the U.S. and go somewhere else I put on the French playlist and it’s like old stuff like Edith Piaf ... and like very old, very French and I imagine myself living in that time and ... I think of it as exploring alternative identities for sure.

Jack had a realization during the first workshop that he had strong associations to his childhood memories hearing specific songs. He recounts a song that takes him back to a memory with his father, and another that he associates with his grandmother’s funeral. Jack reminisced:

I have core memories when I hear a song. There’s this specific song that I was probably say 7 years old, and I was bowling with my dad, and like trips like that, you know. .... It just takes me back like time never passed. [...] (There’s a song) at my grandma’s funeral, every time I hear it, it’s like, ok, I’m right there with my grandma, but it’s cool.

Music also gave access to self-exploration and reflection. Co-inquirers shared ways that they leaned into identities, processed identity matters, or tried on different personalities through music. Kevin, for example, liked to listen to a heavy, bassy, explicit hip-hop song when he had to go to the gym. It hyped him up for the task ahead and “wear” a different skin than the one he felt like he was in. Kevin said:

I’m realizing .... That I almost use (music) to step into another persona. [...] It’s like I think I’m way cooler than I am. You know, with a little hype in there. ... I’ve definitely utilized music as a means to explore maybe an alternative identity.
Music served as a symbol or mnemonic device for these coinquirers. The songs were placeholders of moments, people, or desires in their lives that they could recall when they heard the music. The effect of emerging the memories through the song was immediate and visceral.

An Inclusive Container: The Playlist/Call and Response

Early in the study we decided to create a playlist for our group. I had avoided playing music as background when people arrived because I did not want to impose my taste or assumptions on them. I shared a Spotify link with the group, which populated the playlist. It consists of 52 songs collected from the coinquirers in the group. Played at random, this became our soundtrack during breaks. Conversations bloomed as coinquirers resonated or countered with each other's tellings. As we shared our experiences (call), others picked it up (response). In a parallel process, the creation of our group’s playlist became a call to a later event (the response) that also centered a playlist as a technology of inclusivity. This can be seen in the following exchange where a dialogue between Belle, Kravitz and myself emerged a way to use a playlist to include songs of all participants in a leadership training:

Paz: Can music be a space in which you can actually honor each individual's interpretation, core memories, whatever comes up for them while you're doing your leadership development work?

To this, Belle made a connection to a coaching organization she, Paz, Hoby, and Gin are part of:

Belle: Well, it reminds me of something that we say at [our consulting firm], where you don't get to the belonging until you ask everyone who's coming to the party to give you a song to add to the playlist. So that when they get there, they feel welcome in the playlist that's playing as opposed to you, the host of the party, playing your music and trying to get everybody to dance to it. So, it's like, I don't know, that's kind of how I think about it.
Kravitz: Or you give them the aux cord and they play the song. (laughing) - And then everybody has to dance to it ... Or not.

Belle continued to create an impromptu leadership development intervention leaning on a playlist as a way to promote inclusivity in a participant group. She answers Kravitz and says:

Belle: I mean, something that came to mind to me why you were saying that is like, you know, we're moving into spaces where we're using more virtual reality and like maybe instead of virtual reality, like if you need a group to come together around a project, you have everyone come in with their choice of music and some headphones. And before getting started, you tell them to listen to 5 minutes of whatever inspires them and makes them feel creative. That way you're honoring the individual, or cultural experience their relationship to music. And even if they're choosing silence (speaking to Eliana), like you were sharing earlier on, and if that's what boosts their creativity and gets them to be engaged in the project, it's still individual, but it still creates whatever landscape of harmony and creativity and motivation they need with themselves, but it contributes to the group dynamic as well.

I clarify and confirm her statements by creating a leadership development objective out of her statement, to which she emphasizes the importance of individual agency and creativity in the participant:

Paz: So then in that case, your goal for that particular use of music is “how do I create--creating a space for intentional inclusivity in your session?”

Belle: With an outcome of creativity towards whatever they desire.

This dialogue reflects a deep understanding of the intrinsic ability of music to embody and express individual identities, as well as its power to foster inclusivity and creativity within
groups. Music captured the essence of personal experiences, emotions, and cultural backgrounds. By allowing participants to select music that resonates with them personally, Belle’s example honored her participants’ identities by actively incorporating their identities within their workspace. The playlist that our group put together allowed Belle and the rest of our coinquiring group to experience the same effect.

The Shadow Side: Restricting and Limiting Access

The group surfaced that music could include but could also exclude. In the following examples this access and exclusion was linked to cultural contexts and commercialization. Gin shared that she had music she listened to in her native China and music that she listened to on U.S. streaming platforms. Often, these two types of music did not overlap, forcing her to change applications when she wanted to listen to certain content. To her, this was yet another way that she was culturally split:

*I just realized that my world has been divided into two pieces, even regards to the music, because I think since I was in elementary school, I was a huge fan to the Japanese animation. So, I listened to J-pop for my entire children, teenage, college graduate from college time. So, it’s all J-pop and little bit Chinese pop music. And then since I moved here, I suddenly found all of the most- I guess maybe over 80% of those songs, they don’t have copyrights in here. So, I couldn't get access to those songs from either Apple music or Spotify. [...] So I need to switch manually, which is very annoying. So that is, I feel like that somehow reflects my life. It’s very hard to have both. I need to pick A or B. It’s really hard to get both A and B.*

The group also considered this commercialization of music in relation to salsa and bachata dancing as this dialogue between Jaime and Eliana shows:
Jaime: “And then I was thinking about how a lot of the salsa music comes from a variety of different cultures mixing literally together and it's liberation music, right? But the thing that sits difficult with me is that in the U.S., it loses that because it becomes commercialized. To participate, you need to pay an entrance. While in the origins of the countries, it's free for the public, right? So that's really interesting, 'cause then the container is also, in this U.S.-centric space, it's problematic, right?”

Eliana: “Cause it's still doing what it's intended to, but there's now a paywall that you have to enter. Instead of it being in the center of the town, in the park, or-- - Yeah, exactly, yeah. An access issue.”

Finally, music could act as a container for identity and empowerment when entering a hostile environment. It builds an internal safe space in which you can carry yourself fully, even in places that are oppressive. In the following statement Belle, an African American woman, shares the experiences of Black Americans who work in predominantly white spaces often being faced with overt or micro-aggressive dynamics. One way to cope with this was to listen to loud hip-hop music before going to work. She calls it “a personal leadership thing that people do…” She tells the story as follows:

Music is resistance, right? Music is maybe something that you, like if you see Instagram videos, particularly African American people, are sitting in their car listening to something that gets them into the mindset to go into this office and deal with white people's bullshit. Like, that's a very real thing. It's edifying in the spirit, you know, can buoy you enough to get through 8 hours of who knows what you're going to face in a day in a micro aggressive environment. And then as soon as you get out of the office, you get out of the performative stance that you have to be in all day to navigate the system and
the environment. And then you can turn up your hip hop music, which might not be socially acceptable in the office or whatever it is that you like, right? You're not code switching. You're not conforming. You're not. I think that's a personal leadership thing that people do. I think it's a cultural leadership thing that people do just to be able to tolerate and navigate hostile spaces all day.

The group reacted with an air of empathy and contemplation to this. On that day, Belle was the only African American coinquirer present. She held the experience of racism in the United States in our group through this statement. She was also able to give an example of coping mechanisms that Black people have had to develop. The use of music to find a space for authenticity and the upholding of core identity is a deeply powerful act of self-leadership.

Summary of Theme 1

As we embarked on our journey to inquire into music and leadership, it became apparent that a safe holding environment was necessary. This first theme explored the concept of cocreating a sacred space in a community, connecting it to the nurturing environment of the womb. It delved into how a supportive holding environment is essential for personal and communal growth. I emphasized the importance of cocreating our sacred space and noted ways that a sense of belonging and inclusion was fostered in our group: through the breaking of bread, the showing of reciprocal care, and the authentic sharing of our experiences in music. As I offered in Chapter 2, music has the potential to shape an intersubjective space, an in between locus for listening and processing between people (Jansson, 2014). Likewise, in this study music created an intersubjective space between us in which we could come towards each other. It also created a space for inclusivity and identity expression. I also noted the shadow sides around social dynamics in music, restrictive access to certain types of music, but also how music can
serve as a form of resistance and empowerment, particularly in navigating hostile environments. This theme underscores the significance of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for unfolding the processes of an action inquiry.

We are coming upon our first presence pause (Silsbee, 2008). These pauses offer a moment of respite from the reading. I encourage you, the reader, to take as long as you need to sit and be present with yourself. You may do this by connecting with your breath, by taking a turn around the room, or by any other means that resonates with you. The presence pauses will occur before each theme’s discussion.

**Presence Pause**

As I am sitting at my desk feeling stuck. There are so many words on the page. Some are unsatisfactorily flat. At this moment I have spent hundreds of hours on this passion-project. Yet now that the study is done, I am noticing that words are not enough to tell the story, and what is the story anyway? I know that something very special happened in the study. There was something about people coming together, joining in head, then heart that was deeply moving. The joining in heart happened in almost magical moments of conversation around the table where we listened to each other with curiosity. At this moment, synchronicity knocks, and Roberta Flack is singing “Killing Me Softly” (Flack, 1973) in a speaker somewhere. The essence of this song holds much of what I am trying to convey from our experience: what this theme about being held in the safety of the community, developing as if in a womb, felt like for the group (RQ2), and what it says about how these coinquirers might use music in their work.
**Killing Me Softly** *(Flack, 1973)*

I heard he sang a good song
I heard he had a style
And so I came to see him
To listen for a while
And there he was this young boy
A stranger to my eyes
Strumming my pain with his fingers
Singing my life with his words
Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly with his song
Killing me softly with his song
Telling my whole life with his words
Killing me softly with his song

Like the protagonist in the first verse, we had answered a call to join a concert. For me it was a call that I could not ignore, the unrelenting drive to connect the depth and the lessons that music has taught and continues to teach me with leadership in service of healing and connecting the disconnected islands that make up our intrapersonal landscape, our groups, and our systems. For my courageous coinquirers it was a call of curiosity and friendship. Curiosity about a novel proposition, that music and leadership could be connected somehow; and friendship because they wanted to support me in a study that they knew meant so much to me. What we could not foresee (like the protagonist arriving at the show) was the flow that we would get into, the beautiful connections we began to form to each other. We did not expect how healing it would be to tell
our life stories in music. We did not expect others to speak into our lives. We did not expect others to be able to hold us like we did.

Discussion of Theme 1

*Deep River (traditional spiritual)* *(Voyces 8, 2021)*

Deep river, my home is over Jordan,

Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground.

Oh, don’t you want to go to that gospel feast,

That promised land where all is peace?

Oh don’t you want to go to that promised land,

That land where all is peace?

Deep river, my home is over Jordan,

Deep river, Lord, I want to cross over into campground.

More Than “Teamgeist”

The spiritual *Deep River* tells of a yearning to “join the gospel feast” where “all is calm, and all is peace.” It is a song that is laden with cultural significance in the African American experience. The piece speaks to the character of this first theme in that it expresses the invitation to join, our wish for community, and our journey towards each other. It also has a sense of “stuckness” on the other side of the river. To cross it involved risk.

What grew in our little community was more than “Teamgeist” *(Boerner & Streit, 2006)*. The statement “listening can lead to a fleeting state of togetherness, in which dyad members undergo a mutual creative thought process” is one academic way of describing what happened in our group *(Kluger & Itzchakov, 2022, p. 2)*. In Kravitz’ words from our final post-workshop conversation: “We were all … We're all a part of the same, essentially the same fabric of souls.”
Another way to describe our experience would be that we fell into a flow with each other (Czikzentmihalyi, 1990). We noted multiple times that “3 hours would just fly by.” Indeed, we were very sorry to leave after the last workshop. Multiple people asked for a reunion of the “band” once the study was over. We had established a connection that we were eager to continue.

Czikzentmihalyi (1990) states that “while humankind collectively has increased its material powers a thousandfold, it has not advanced very far in terms of improving the content of experience.” …. And “he asks, …. What can we do to improve our future?” (Czikzentmihalyi, 1990, p.16). His answer is that “To overcome the anxieties and depressions of contemporary life, individuals must become independent of the social environment to the degree that they no longer respond exclusively in terms of its rewards and punishments. …. She has to develop the ability to find enjoyment and purpose regardless of external circumstances.” (p. 16) How does one gain this independence?

How does one surrender to the flow of a study with people they knew only little? The findings in my study show that this group of leadership development facilitators needed to build their holding environment first to begin considering the ‘novel’ connections between music and leadership, which each lived in a different paradigm for them. The cocreation of our sacred space of learning, thus named because it is a space of curious engagement, of wonder and emergence, was the first compositional process for our group. We were like a group of jazz musicians who met for the first time to play a set. We had to set the stage first with our own stories to build trust. This cocreation was vital to the inquiry that unfolded within the holding environment. I am seeing our process as a group of people trying to engage in a flow state collectively. As a
researcher I hoped that we could find a way to transfer this collective flow state into organizational contexts through music.

Aestheticizing Ourselves

DeNora (2000) linked music with the ability to awaken something in an individual that has been asleep. DeNora (2000) stated, “...music provides a basis of reckoning, an animation force or flow of energy, feeling, desire and aesthetic sensibility that is action’s matrix. The study of music and its powers within social life thus opens a window on to agency as a human creation, to its ‘here and now’ existential being” (DeNora, 2000, p. 20). Later, “..., to be aestheticized is to be capacitated, to be able to perceive one's senses, to be awake as opposed to anaestheticized, dormant or inert. … It is in this sense, then, that aesthetic materials such as music afford perception, action, feeling, corporeality” (153). Our work in the earlier stages of joining within our space was akin to waking each other up. John Strong stated his “awakening” in this way when we were concluding our second workshop:

It's a very fascinating discussion. I've never really thought about it ... like that, especially somebody from your background, you're listening to it differently. So, from your background, when you were talking about, you know, I need to check out of this quite dominated environment and never really thought about it from that perspective, that that might be what's going on there. So that was eye-opening.

As we began to resonate with each other's stories we seemed to slowly rise to our musical memories and began to realize how interwoven our leadership and our music actually had already been.

Music acted in a few ways as a space holder for our group: firstly, it created what Sutherland calls an aesthetic workspace, a space made aesthetic by music to offer a holding
environment for creativity to arrive (Sutherland, 2012, p. 31). In our study we aestheticized our workspace from the inside out, using our own musical experiences as points of departure. Sutherland’s qualitative study created a environment with a choral ensemble as a way to imbue an existing space with artfulness. In our study, we coinquirers each brought our own lived experience with music into our space to build a holding environment uniquely ours. The action inquiry framework asked us instead to riff on our music as we understood it, to share it and to combine it in our collective. Sutherland’s study interspersed executive students within a choral rehearsal to invite them to feel the flow of an ensemble. In this study, each of the coinquirers was a “singer” in the choir. Each coinquerer “sang” with their own wholeness and authenticity, to the degree that they felt comfortable enough to be vulnerable. This is why our holding environment needed to feel right: to hold our true selves in such a way that we could show ourselves to each other.

Secondly, the process of remembering and conversing about musical experience allowed us to make our intrapersonal aesthetic workspace, our internal sacred space, more concrete. In external spaces where the environment is hostile, such as in Belle’s sharing of African Americans empowering themselves through listening to hip hop in the car before entering their microaggressive workplace, one’s true self is protected in this internal sacred space. For some coinquirers the invitation to reminisce about musical experiences surfaced core memories and ancestral connections.

Lastly, the realization came to the group that they, despite not owning musician status, had all used music to hold space for their students and clients. Most called it “set and atmosphere” or “as background.” What they were doing in the context of Sutherland’s study though, was aestheticizing their workspace, which is closest to his idea of “de-routinizing,”
which describes taking a space like a classroom out of its normal “routine” by creating a different setting using music. According to that author, this would offer conditions in which individuals and groups could engage in “aesthetic reflexivity” with greater likelihood. As we emerged in our study, we realized that we were engaged in a meta-cognitive process: We were aestheticizing our study workspace by inquiring into possible connections of leadership to music, and in the process emerged that we had been using music to aestheticize our professional environments somewhat unintentionally all along. This realization was somewhat of a paradigm shift, as Jack’s comment underlined.

*I think it's interesting when some of us said, "Oh, I don't use it professionally, but I did this thing in retail, I did this thing in a restaurant, and I did this thing on a hiking...*[Group chuckles, nods head and agrees]. So, we've done it subconsciously or unconsciously, which I think is cool. Music has that power.

These findings show that music was truly proven to be a universal force in our group (Brandt et al., 2012; Mehr et al., 2019; Welch et al., 2020). Every single person had impactful lived experiences with music. Moreover, the findings show that music had already been in use in leadership development spaces by these same people. One person said that they did not use music, nevertheless they reported using a playlist that was inherited from a previous professor. Their use of music in the classroom was imitating what they had seen modeled through their mentor. This dynamic shows that the coinquirers were not always conscious of the effects that using music afforded them in their work. Bringing awareness and intentionality to the use of music in the leadership development space expands the opportunity for facilitators to engage with their clients more fully.
Theme 2 - Expanding and Warming up: Processing through Dissonance

I will begin this section with an analogy from the world of classical music to lend dimensionality to this second theme (Figure 11). If you have ever attended a live symphony concert performed with a Western orchestra you may be familiar with the cacophony that is the warm up before the orchestra tunes. The orchestra is arriving on stage. Musicians are playing their instruments as they get ready to enter the performance. There are many reasons for the “noise:” this accustoms them to the acoustics in the concert hall and serves as additional exercise for their bodies to enter the physical work of being a musician (being a musician can be quite an athletic venture).

Another purpose for the warmup is for musicians to become familiar with the way the orchestra as a whole fills the space. Musicians can determine how they sound in relation to others. The cacophony also serves as a transition for the last musicians and audience members to take their places. The warmup ends when the concertmaster enters the stage and begins to tune the orchestra. There is a sudden silence that hushes the hall. The concertmaster invites an oboist to sound an A. The concertmaster tunes their violin to the pitch and then “gives it” to the orchestra who begins to tune. All in attunement to this pitch, the concertmaster sits down, and the conductor comes on stage to begin the concert.
Theme 2 describes our process of warming up, which at times matched the dissonance in an orchestra before tuning. The process felt disorienting because our associations with music covered a wide range of opinions and interests. Sometimes these differed to the degree of seemingly being opposites. Having co-created our holding environment enabled us, however, to process through these various associations and opinions with curiosity. This was a critical step in our inquiry because it allowed us to explore how to negotiate our space when there was dissonance and an absence of concreteness. We were challenged to help each other hold both/and, all possibilities at the same time. Our first workshop (Cycle 2) was predominantly about starting to build our holding environment using our life stories as told through music to connect (see Theme 1). In Theme 2 we began discussing the contradictions among us and emerged the importance of scaffolding for our group’s development into musically aestheticized leadership development facilitators.
Into the Unknown: Being in Process

The breadth of possible ways to use music was wide. The very definition of music followed suit. Our process of inquiry around music and leadership in our group was experienced as “amorphous,” “vast,” and “expansive.” This was a space of modulation, of potential change. Coinquirers were arriving at questions that critically examined our paradigms in which we hold music and leadership. Even though we had gathered with the knowledge that our purpose was to study the potential of music and leadership development, we had only a foggy idea what our task really was. This statement by Gin undergirds this:

*I feel confused about the task or the “assignment” that we need to do throughout the whole session. There were interesting conversations and inspiring ideas, but it’s hard to relate, both to the intention of “helping you with your research” and how I can use this to facilitate my learning. I try to find more clarifications or instructions, as you know me, clarification is something I am always looking for. So, I wonder if this process or reflection is helpful for your research.*

Participants used metaphor to describe our process. Depth of conversation the topic of music led to was likened to “as deep as a fjord.” Kravitz named this “being committed to being in the process.”

*I think Paz would be the proxy for actually being in process. And I think that as a collective, because we all share an identity of being souls, being comfortable with the process and not knowing the product. Similar to what this exercise was, not knowing what it was going to sound like, but being committed to being in the process. And I think that's something that needs to be established around the space for anyone to engage in like, you know, this type of intervention and leadership development be willing to be in*
Maynard connected being in process directly with leadership. Not everything in leadership is clearly laid out. Coming from the military perspective he shared that sometimes there were moments in leadership when he just had to go with the flow and let things develop. Maynard shared:

*So one is, first thing that comes to mind is, sometimes leaders are expected to know which direction their group is going, right? But not all the time. Sometimes it's okay for the leader to say, I don't know which direction this is going to go. But I'm going to go with what we're feeling right now, you know, for the benefit of the group of standing up. So that's what I think, really, that to me is it right now. That's what I'm sitting with. You know, the fact that as a leader, yeah, sure we may be expected to, yeah, which direction are we going? Sometimes they're like, well, I don't know, but I have a general idea that this is right, and let's just go with this for a while. And the direction will come.*

**A Struggle to Hold Dialectics**

As our inquiry progressed we discovered that different individuals could have very different associations to the same type of music. I highlight two of the more poignant topics in the following sections. The first concerns the military cadence, the second silence.

**Military Conformity or Liberation?**

There were four military veterans in our group. Belle and Hoby attended all three workshops, and shared their experience with the cadence, a call and response chant that is used for synchronizing a troupe’s marching routines. Hoby stated:

*And then the Marine Corps has like a John Phillips Souza as a tradition. All the music is like marching music. But we also call out running cadences. And that I found to be a*
really powerful like community act. act or activity, and it's great for your lung capacity.

But we would, those were the times I was happiest in our training was when we were calling cadence together because you become a voice.

In response to the sharing of the military cadence, Kravitz named his struggle to hold his desire to lead for liberation and the notion of military conformity. He said:

I don't know how useful this data is, but like my heart started beating fast when you started the cadence. When I heard your voice to it, and then it started beating even faster when you talked about social order. And I'm like, when I think about leadership now and what I aspire for leadership to be is about liberation and it's not about order. And so, when I was like trying to hold the two, the paradox of the two, I was like, oh shit, like why am I, why is my heart beating so fast? It's like, I don't know. And then now I'm with you. I'm like, are they two, not holders, like, ... dialectical... I don't know. something about the two almost don't fit for me?

Powerfully, Kravitz was accessing his embodied sensations as data to make sense out of the cognitive dissonance he was experiencing. Instead of pushing the conversation into a discussion about polar opposites (is music conformist or liberating?), he was beginning to sense a dialectic forming.

Silence or Music?

It became apparent that a dialectical construct of silence/music already existed in Eastern culture. The following dialogue shows this from the perspective of Chinese culture. This continued into a discussion about the Taoist paradigm around silence and music, which was offered by Gin, a Chinese international student:
Gin: I think from my understanding, I think those two can like, goes together, become one. Because from the article of the Chinese character, the character from music, actually it's kind of the mimic of nature, the nature of sound. So actually there is a story in the whole Taoism structure is that there's an ancient musician. So because in the ancient Chinese music system, they believe that there is five different sounds. It's like there are everything, but there is only five.

So he tried to capture all the songs that he can receive from this universe and to not represent, kind of repeat or represent them through the music. But then he found that no matter how hard he tried, as long as there is one sound, it's sounding. And then he would lose the rest of four sounds. So the only way to keep all five sounds exist is no sound. So it's like the opposite way of presenting the music is nothing and that nothing actually offers the space for absolute freedom. Like all the sounds can't exist in that moment. At the same time, there's no sound.

Gin’s statements created a sense of wonder around our table. I felt the energy shift in that moment. It was perhaps a moment of liberation from our Western paradigms around music and silence when each had to exist as polarities. Kravitz continues this train of thought and makes a connection back to the idea of conformity. His mind goes towards liberation as a reaction to conformity:

Kravitz: And now I'm thinking about our question earlier about what we've kind of associated or implicitly associated with music. And I think it is conformity. We listen to rhythm because there's this (beats on his thigh), right? And then you hear one note at a time or something like that and not other notes at a time. And so now I'm thinking about
this idea of the fullness and the wholeness liberation might be no sound. So, your music is silence.

I recall feeling that we might be slipping back into polarizing the concept of music and silence again, and offered another way to consider a more dialectical way of understanding music/silence/sound:

Paz: And you have to also take into account though that each note combines in it many other frequencies. So, when you hear one pitch, like when I was ringing that one, the sound bowl, you were actually hearing at least two and then a whole range of harmonics.

So, also every single pitch contains the entire universe.

(Silence)

I experience the above exchange as a negotiation of Western and Eastern paradigms around sound, and the process of negotiation as a dance in which we coinquirers were presenting views, thoughts, and associations so that we could all consider and study them. It was as if we were defining the outer boundaries of our discussions.

We had one coinquirer who preferred silence over music: Eliana, who used to be very engaged in music and loved going to concerts found herself needing and appreciating silence more in her adulthood.

So, I listened to a lot of music growing up, and there was a cultural element to it's a way to connect to my different heritages. But the older I'm getting; I almost need more silence. And so, music is only played if it's the only thing that I'm focusing on. Because if it's going on when there's something else happening, it's too much for me.

I joined Eliana in the appreciation of silence. In the second workshop I offered,
Yeah, I can't listen to music in the morning when I'm driving. And I actually have written whole, you know, papers, emails and poems in my head. Just driving in silence. Because it's not silent. You look at the window and you see stuff, and then stuff will come and find you. So, I feel like music a lot of times (...) if I really have to get it to flow, I cannot listen to music. It just takes too much brain space up; you know.

Our awareness of the silence grew slowly in our time together. The following exchange illustrates the coinquirers trying to hold music and silence at the same time:

_Belle:_ You said something last time about music also being the silence, right? (...) Like maybe the silence as well, the absence of the sound.

_Eliana:_ We can't have sound without... or notice the sound without the silence too.

_Paz:_ It's the yin and the yang, right? We can't have one without the other.

The process of holding dialectics, in these subthemes the space between silence and music, conformity and liberation, gave us a way to consider the original subject of this study: music and leadership. Somehow, during the second workshop (Cycle 3), our dissonant associations with what music stood for allowed us to view music and leadership as a dialectic as well rather than two items that did not fit together. (I hesitate to call them polarities because the group did not conceive of them as opposites. They did not conceive of them as connected at all.) Figure 24 in Appendix A gives a visual of the way being in process felt for our group. I will return to the tensions that emerged in negotiating this music/leadership connection in Theme 4.

**Scaffolding**

Here I want to recall the group rejecting my initial invitation in Workshop 1 (Cycle 2) to move us towards creating an activity using music. In that instance the group decided to build our holding environment and moved on to share their personal stories. In Workshop 2 I sensed that
we were starting to see the connections between music and leadership clearly enough. I invited
us again to jump into action. The group once again declined, however, this time the group
reacted by having a discussion around readiness and a need to scaffold. I had shared an instance
where I had underestimated the readiness of a group of graduate students to engage in an
experiential lesson using musical metaphor. I showed up with a guitar and sang an example of a
song that illustrated the subject at hand. I was met with closed body language, confusion, and a
general pulling away. In our group of coinquirers I noticed yet again a pulling away from the
invitation to move into action. We as a group were not comfortable still, however, we were now
able to discern what we desired. The following conversation illustrates this:

   Jaime: I think if you're grounded in a medium that you feel comfortable because of the
   background you have in painting or music, whatever, it gives you a foundation to then
   explore. But if you go out there with no medium or no expertise in a field, then it's really
difficult because then you don't have a grounding.
   
Paz: But everybody here has that grounding, I think, from what I've heard.
   
Jaime: Leadership, grounding?

   Paz: No, the music grounding. Everybody has had an experience, a deep experience with
   something, sound or silence or, you know, every single person that is sitting at this table.
   And all of your students and all of my students and everybody in the world, right?
   So there's got to be something. ... Oh, I'm leading. Sorry.

   Jaime: But I think you have degrees of expertise because I don't think, and that's what's
   interesting about your research, is that facilitators at different levels of music experience,
   there’s a spectrum. So you might not necessarily feel comfortable being the artist or the
   musician in the field to push.
This conversation about scaffolding began considering comfortability, then connected it with a self-perception of expertise. In the next statement Hoby continues our train of thought and brings in the factor of vulnerability:

Hoby: And I think it also has to do with your level of comfort with expression. And how much of yourself is appropriate or proper to express? Because the other thing art demands is expression. To make art, you are expressing an aspect of yourself. I was talking about, like, the Bob Dylan thing earlier, but like, until I moved out here, in my mid-30s, I did not realize how reserved the culture that I grew up in is. And going back to visit and realizing how much more expressive this environment is, being in a master's program, being in a situation like this, where we're all here because we think this is interesting and engaging and we're used to expressing vulnerable pieces of ourselves. And especially the other thing I was thinking was that foundation, if you didn't grow up with it, can you find a way to connect with one? Are you willing to be vulnerable and be a beginner at a different point in your life? And are you open to moving into that expression?

Belle joined in and bemoaned the reaction of the students I tried to engage with music. She said:

I guess that just goes to show how institutionalized we are as human beings, that we have such a limited lens of expectation for how people can show up in certain spaces to only be able to process and receive you as an academic authority as opposed to a whole human being with this breadth of expression and experience of life and culture. That's sad.

Eliana tried to hold the dialectic that emerged: the way graduate students expected to be taught, instilled by an educational system that did not encourage stepping outside of the box
when it came to being a professor; and the professor's responsibility to meet their students where they were.

Well, I also think about like the both the and of; did they know you were going to come up with a guitar? Like if you had scaffolded and introduced the invitation to music one day or started to play songs or like it was the boundary of the artistry to beyond the norm of the expectation in the moment. (100%, yeah). Yeah, and it's not like reflection or critique. It's like I'm wondering that I can't remember how eloquently it was phrased of the artist is on the boundary and then the leader can help pull them towards it. It's like, is there a way to do it in a scaffolded, like almost developmental way that's appropriate to. So, I don't think it's just a (...) thing [here] in terms of how people expect their instructor to show up in the classroom.

This particular exchange is relevant for this theme (scaffolding) as well as Theme 4, when we examine barriers in relation to role.

Summary Theme 2

Theme 2 delved into the process of growth within the group, drawing parallels to the warmup process before a symphony orchestra's performance. Working through our dissonance reflects the process of our group to hold diverse perspectives and opinions within the group, leading to discussions on music's various associations and its connection to leadership. We emerged seemingly oppositional elements such as conformity versus liberation and silence and music. These oppositions transformed into dialectics in the process of our inquiry. Additionally, the concept of scaffolding was a major point of discussion. We discovered how important it was to emphasize creating a supportive environment for individuals to explore and express their vulnerability. Before we continue, let us take a presence pause.
Presence Pause

*When the Earth Stands Still (Macdonald, 2024) performed by Lyyra*

Come listen in the silence of the moment before rain comes down.

There’s a deep sigh in the quiet of the forest and the tall tree’s crown.

Now hold me.

Will you take the time to hold me and embrace the chill?

Or miss me,

will you take the time to miss me when the earth stands still?

- Don Macdonald

These are the first lines in a choral piece for women’s voice *When the Earth Stands Still* by Don Macdonald. It is performed in the link above by Lyyra, an ensemble for high voices that serendipitously shares their name with my older child. Seeing the ensemble’s name offered on the YouTube recommendations called me to listen to this in the moment. It is what I needed. I encourage you to click the link and listen to the piece. The poetry is stunning, but it only becomes fully embodied when hand in hand with the music. I incorporate this piece because it encapsulates an essence of this second theme: the ineffable quality, the complexity of holding both/and, the loss and the gain, the sometimes-frustrating sensations we managed while being in process into the ambiguous. This was our collective process towards coalescence.

**Discussion of Theme 2**

Theme 2 described our process of growth and warming up to each other. We experienced corresponding growing pains and dissonance on this journey. The way it felt in our group in the moment was sometimes joyful, healing, perplexing, and exhausting at the same time. As a researcher I find that the learning continues with the passing of time. I consider different parts of
the study, different angles at a moment and the study as a whole. I am hoping that the learning continues in the rest of the group as well. Some of the coparticipants confessed frustration and impatience with the perceived aimlessness, the process of searching for a concrete task during the study. Yet, as we discovered, being in process was the greater part of the work. In fact, as I outlined in Theme 1, an invitation for a task (the creation of a product, a leadership development activity) during the first workshop (Cycle 2) was dropped by the group. In our second workshop (Cycle 3) the challenge to own music as a leadership development tool resulted in us needing to pay more attention to scaffolding. The shift came in the final workshop (Cycle 4). There the coinquirers coalesced into designers of their own musical leadership development modules. I will present the ways we crossed the boundary into “doing” in the next theme. This section will consider Theme 2 (Expanding and warming up: Processing through dissonance) through the lenses of emergence and inquiry.

**Process of Emergence: Letting Come and Adapting through Inquiry**

Having cocreated our holding environment we were able to shift from sharing our life stories in Theme 1 to naming ideas that sometimes sounded conflicting. We had shared our life stories, and now some of these experiences clashed with personal associations from other coinquirers. Any disagreement was potentially a conflict with someone else’s life story. However, our holding environment was able to flex around this. Our collective operated from the stance of curiosity and goodwill as we debated these differences. The capacity for curiosity is a skill that the Leadership Studies program and the coaching program both instill in their curricula. In addition, we were a diverse group of people, with a varied representation along the lines of race, sexual orientation, as well as age. We were all active in DEIB spaces and had practical experience in having and facilitating difficult conversations. I believe that we were able to lean
into our conversations with more ease I am reminded of some stages in Theory U, “let go” and "let come,” which are placed at the sides of the pivot point at the bottom of the U-model (Scharmer, 2009). We had to unlearn before we could let the new learning come. More than letting go of our own learning, we had to expand our awareness to that of others. In this sense our process was more of a letting go of attachment to our own opinion and allowing us all to embrace possibilities we had not considered before. This, however, was not enough to allow us to move into designing workshops. I was still the only one in the group who was confident enough to use music in leadership development.

If the previous paragraph constitutes the orchestra warming up through moments of cacophony, our conversation around scaffolding was the tuning of the orchestra. The learning was immense on my end, as I learned through the group how important scaffolding was. The findings in that subsection show that our group desired to feel more strongly grounded in their understanding of music as a tool. Before that condition had been met they felt hesitant to become an active facilitator in designing learning experiences. We needed to build more collective confidence prior to using music as an arts-based method to the extent that they could invite others to engage. At the same time the group was communicating to each other, and especially to me, that -while we were not quite there yet- their awareness around the value of music for leadership development was growing. I reflect on my statement in which I consider how I can meet people where they are in this work: “And so if I'm going to invite people, I can't hit them over the head with a guitar. I can't do that. That's going to make people run away.” I experienced this exchange on scaffolding as a pivot point in which we as a group created a new dialectic that we then synthesized in our last workshop. My eagerness and comfortability with music on one end and the anxiety and perceived inexpert status on the other. The discussion allowed me to
assess where my coinquirers perceived they were, and how I could plan for the next step in the best and most generative way in the final workshop (Cycle 4). We were tuning and adapting to each other.

In Chapter 2, the literature review, I had mentioned that musical language is used consistently in leadership scholarship to bring depth to the leadership process. One such source is Heifetz’ (2009) Adaptive Leadership Practice. There he pointed out that organizations must be able to reach beyond technical solutions that often turn out to be Band-Aids to adaptive problems. To be future facing we have to be able to change, to experiment, to improvise. He emphasizes that successful and lasting change must be “built on the past rather than jettison it” (Heifetz, 2009, p.15). He further pushes the critical importance of diversity so that different types of knowledge could combine into new opportunities. Adaptive Leadership is a leadership framework that engages leaders to be vigilant and intentionally add enough dissonance (“heat”) to keep their teams on their toes to work better- and dare I say- find more creative ways to solve their problems.

The organizations Heifetz was writing for tended to use traditional top-down methods in engaging with each other. A person in a leadership position would orchestrate conflict and keep the team in an adaptive zone where it is just “hot” enough to not be too comfortable. This would then push the group to do adaptive work. Our group was different. Given that ours was a collaborative action inquiry we had built enough trust with each other to work through disagreements. We as a group engaged collaboratively in orchestrating our conflict, simply by stating them openly, then talking through them. We prioritized adaptation above the technical.

What did music have to do with this? Music was the matrix that held it all together. Music was a multitasker for adaptive work: it allowed for the process to organically emerge, it
created the conditions for diversity of knowledge by enabling us to share our identities through lived experiences. There was no need for anyone to add any more heat to the room than we had already put on ourselves, simply because we were working with two topics that usually are not spoken in the same breath: music and leadership development. Considering these two items as a pair required us to bring our paradigms around each into awareness and then shift them towards each other. This was cognitively difficult work. Because music, as a multitasker and as a holder of both/and has, by this definition, many faces. All of these had to be discovered and considered as existing in the same field of possibility, even if some elements seemed directly opposed to each other. Wells (1999) states, “Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory offers an alternative solution, placing stress on dialogue and co-construction of knowledge” (331). Through our own inquiry process we uncovered dialectics where before there seemed to be polarities. We co-created the contexts in which we were willing to do work around music and leadership and became aware of the importance of process in our group. We had tuned our orchestra. But what would it take to start playing?

*The Shadow Side of Theme 2*

Up until now I have discussed this theme in terms of our group process, a modulation from dissonance towards consonance. I have also stated that music was a multi-tasker and a valuable tool for leadership development. I realized that I was, in essence, trying to “sell” music as an asset to leadership development work. What this data emerged, however, is that it was a tough sell. What was going on underneath?

Parallel to our attunement with each other, we were also becoming more conscious of the deep meaning that music held for our identities individually. We now had to negotiate our own identity that was contained through our experience with music with that of the other coinquirers.
Our personal stories were encapsulated in our music, which gave access to deeper, more vulnerable places in us. Music seemed to hold so many possibilities, some of which there were no words to describe. As Jack had offered “music has that power.” I had puzzled over why there was so much hesitancy to “just do it.” If you had powerful experiences with music in your personal life, why would you not want to use it in your professional life? It became clear to me in our dialogue around scaffolding, that we were still scared of wielding a power that we did not quite understand. We were also hesitant to model vulnerability to our participants in the “real world” if it was not going to be received. The group did not want to experience what I experienced in my lesson with the graduate students. And yet the coinquirers in the last workshop (Cycle 4) successfully created three original leadership workshop designs using music, completely without my involvement. I will speak about what the prelude to this shift was as part of Theme 4, where I discuss my own process of negotiating my roles within a collaborative action inquiry, which involves some meta-analysis of my meaning-making process for this dissertation. For now, I will present Theme 3- Birth… and the orchestra begins to play (Braving the unknown together).
Theme 3- Birth … and the Orchestra Begins to Play

(Braving the Unknown Together)

The orchestra has concluded its warmup and its tuning. The concertmaster sits. After a moment of silence, the conductor comes on stage and steps onto the podium. All eyes are on them. The baton raises and the concert begins.

Theme 3 (Figure 12) predominantly emerged from data in the third workshop (Cycle 4) where the respondents had an experiential learning moment facilitated by me, then designed three original leadership development activities on their own in small groups. In using a term from theater terminology: we broke the fourth wall. The saying supposes a play on stage where actors are surrounded by the background and the sides of the proscenium. The audience watches the scene through the “fourth wall” as if it was a glass surface. The saying then denotes a moment where the actors on stage look back at the audience and acknowledge their existence. The audience becomes an actor in the play. I challenged the participants in this last workshop to move from ‘talking about’ to ‘doing.’ This theme describes how we arrived at this “doing” and what designs were offered by the coinquirers. This following section offers a synopsis of each workshop, then highlights the processes that I observed during their creation. We begin with our first experiential large group activity: the collective drum circle.
Figure 12

Theme 3: Theme and Subthemes

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Collective Drum Circle

As a coinquirer in the researcher role I had a few challenges: After the second workshop (Cycle 3) I knew that we only had one meeting left. This was the last chance to invite us into an experiential learning moment. I knew in my gut that it was critical for my colleagues to have this moment so that they could have an embodied experience. Having had the opportunity to talk about scaffolding (Theme 2, Subtheme 2), I realized that there was not enough of a feeling of safety quite yet for coinquirers to brave the unknown space of using music themselves. We were stuck. However, I also knew that I trusted us to take the leap, I sensed that a critical mass of folks might be ready to play, but I knew that it would put the integrity of our holding environment to the test. In planning the last workshop (Cycle 4), I had to balance the needs of the group as a whole with this last push. In order to be confident about yourself in a new musical skill you have to have an embodied experience. It cannot be theoretical only. I hoped that the experience would
launch them into the level of confidence and comfort that they were asking for. I hoped that inviting playfulness and joy in our community would catalyze their creativity. I remember clearly how panicked I was to get it wrong. I was trying to keep the integrity of the holding environment, while also negotiating my dual role as researcher, coinquirer, and “group leader.” As stated earlier, the challenges to this will be the object of Theme 4. For this section it is relevant that I decided to own the role of the “conductor” for this moment. I was holding anxiety ahead of the last workshop. Would I meet my fellow coinquirers where they wanted to be met? Have we scaffolded enough? Given my worries, I decided that simple was best, and decided for a sequence of drum circles around the table using body percussion, no instruments.

This exercise was a series of two 2-minute drum circles in the collective large group. The goal was to build intra- and interpersonal awareness through non-verbal communication in groups. We transitioned into the drum circle after our routine check in for the day. For the first round I explained that we would be engaging in body percussion for 2 minutes. I invited my coinquirers to look inwardly at their intrapersonal process and outwardly at their interpersonal processes. How do you react and respond to others? We debriefed our experiences and associations after the first drum circle.

I started the rhythm and the group joined in. There was a general feeling of unease, perhaps some anxiety, anticipation, a feeling of walking over a ledge. There was some nervous laughing and murmuring. The chuckles and giggles made me feel nervous anticipation. This is maybe the first time in this entire study that they had to really lean across the boundary actively and in an embodied fashion. Everyone joined in. I signaled the end of the drum circle after 2 minutes (which I had timed on my phone), using my head to anticipate the ending of the exercise. There was a moment of silence, then a collective breathing and laughing. It was a
sudden effervescent moment. When soliciting impressions and feelings from the group the sensations ranged from embodied elements such as “tingling” to energetic connection. Two individuals who had experience with being in musical ensembles lead with the technical elements of staying with the initial tempo, and the feelings the acceleration of the tempo evoked:

_Kravitz: Tingly._

_Eliana: Connected_

_Jaime: Relaxed._

_Kevin: Actually, the opposite. I was feeling anxious…. I think it was the intention of synching in with what was, what was going on and engaging with part of it._

_Hoby: I was noticing that I wasn't speeding up. Every ensemble I've ever been a part of that has to keep its own beat, inevitably has sped up and had to stop and start over. So, I found myself withdrawing when I felt it speeding up and trying to move back to a slower rhythm. [...]_

_Kravitz: I was trying not to be fixated on how pretty it sounded. But I found myself gravitating towards what sounded right. And so wanting to match what synchronicity here. I don’t know where I ended on that._

_Paz: There was this moment where we had sped up and then there was a different pattern that was introduced. That was not on the beat. And then we started breaking apart. That's when I felt my anxiety kicking in. The speeding up actually really enjoyed [...]._

Diana, who had joined us for the first time in person during this third workshop reported an internal process, in which she wrestled with her own nerves to step into the rhythm of the circle. She described the journey from being nervous to being excited when she felt synergy with the group:
At first, I was nervous because it sounded like everyone was picking up on the same thing. And I thought I was missing out on something. And so, I just looked down at my lap and just went for what I was like, I was going to do my own thing. And then that moment when we did start speeding up and it felt like we were all working together, I was like, whoa, this is exciting! Yeah.

During this workshop Belle repetitively declared her low confidence in her musical ability despite her enthusiasm and appreciation for listening to music. She arrived just after the end of the first round of the drum circle and declared:

*It's a good thing I got here when I did. I am not the most super-rhythmic person. I would be throwing it all off.*

It is worth noting that Diana has a dance background while Belle did not confess such experience with embodied rhythm.

The debrief after the first round centered on the dynamics in the group; particularly in the way individuals responded, varied, abstained, or consented to following another person’s lead. It seemed that engagement in body percussion allowed the coinquirers to become more aware of the ways they felt pulled to lead or allowed themselves to follow. The following statement from Belle relates to the dynamics of an individual in relation to the group.

*I found it like the experience really touched on commonalities within group dynamics.*

*Right? Like how do people feel when they're not quite fitting in? How do people feel when they feel compelled to comply with what they perceive to be the expectation of the group? Do people emerge within the group that are going to chart their own path? And then maybe entice others to join them on that path?*
Kravitz had considered the role of silence in the collective body percussion. Silence had been brought up by Eliana in the first workshop, and he said:

_It was thinking back ... something she had offered to the group on our first meeting, like silence being a part of music, I think. And like in my pauses, I was trying to think, you know, if that was also considered part of the music, like when I was not clapping, and then if I needed to continue on the same pattern, or could I like pause and then go to something else and then like shake it up or something. And then I started following your kind of, I think a triplet kind of thing, and then I had moved on, but I tried to stay with it. I don't know, I'm still sitting with the silence part and pause as being a part of it as well._

As Kravitz considers his actions in the drum circle he names his throughs about pausing and silence, those areas where he was consciously experimenting in. What is unmentioned are his negotiations in a leader-follower dynamic where he follows a triplet pattern, then decides to continue it although my triplet pattern had changed. It seems that he may have been experimenting with how to be in the spectrum between conformity and liberation in that moment. All these thoughts were given physical expression through his clapping, giving his conscious (and unconscious) thoughts embodiment.

The second round I challenged the group to end together. I would also not begin the circle this time and gave authority to the group to whomever felt called to begin. There were a few nervous looks at each other before I started the timer. I had to push back the instinct to start clapping and wished for someone to begin soon. I suspected that Hoby would be the one starting because of her practical experience with music and her self-identification as a “band nerd.” Indeed, it was she who started this round with a rhythm that felt familiar. It turned out to be the rhythm from the _cup song_ (Kendrick, 2012) from the 2012 movie _Pitch Perfect_. This time the
percussion was more cohesive, more synchronized. There was more confidence but also more conformity in the group. I did signal the ending again and noticed a momentary flash of anxiety as people were trying to fall into the final few beats; then we all stopped together. The group exploded in a shower of laughter, giggles, exclamations. Most notably Kevin shouted, “Wow (chuckles) we did it. We’re basically a band! Let’s go on tour!” Once we quieted down, we shared our impressions. Gates compared the first and second rounds:

_I was a little bit more nervous. I was a little bit more nervous. I was a little bit more nervous the second time. I don't want to be kind of out of the tone. So, I want to stay in the rhythm. So, I pay more attention to the rhythm of what's happening from the beginning. And especially at the end, I don't want to miss. It was more work for me. The first time was when I was pretty experimental. I had a sense of freedom. The second time, I want to be a member of the team. That's how it works. But it worked out._

The second round was also where people felt free to experiment with making different sounds than the first time. Their sense of play and exploration seemed to have been heightened. Their sense of self-in-group was also elevated. Kravitz stated:

_I was experimenting with what body part I was using. I went to the test and I was like, I don't know if people can hear this, but I can hear it. (Others: Yeah, you could.) And when you watch the test, I would just (beats on his thighs). But yeah, even in its low octave, I guess, I still felt like I was a part of the group, but I'm not sure if the group could hear it. I could feel it. (Paz: Did you want to be heard?) That’s a great question. I don't know if I felt it was necessary for me to be heard. Not a desire, but if it was necessary for the group to hear me in order to keep going._
I noticed that “I felt completely locked into a four pattern. I couldn't break out of it. If I did a rhythm, I would have to do it four times before I get to switch. And I tried and it just didn't feel right. So, I was like, I guess, biased towards that four pattern.” A 4/4 pattern is a very common rhythmic pattern in Western music. It seemed that I felt acculturated to this pattern, so much so that it felt wrong if I tried to do something different. I had a visceral feeling of disorientation in my chest and stomach when I attempted to go against the underlying pattern.

Hoby, who had started the round with the rhythm from the cup song, found herself inquiring the reason for her choice. In her eagerness to not lose time she instinctively chose to start with something familiar rather than doing something original. Hoby shared:

“I found it kind of interesting that when I started, I went for a beat that I heard somewhere else. It was the Cups song. Because it's interesting enough to keep my attention. And I felt like it also was basic enough for other people to build on. But I just felt that it was interesting in retrospect. I didn't make something up. I just grabbed a pattern that I'm really familiar with. How was that? Why did you choose not to? I didn't want to sit in silence when we only had 2 minutes.

This pointed towards a reflex to lean into what was already known in a moment of urgency.

We turned our discussion towards a connection to leadership more overtly next. Maynard pulled a parallel to emergent process in leadership:

“You know, the fact that as a leader, yeah, sure we may be expected to, yeah, which direction are we going? Sometimes they're like, well, I don't know, but I have a general idea that this is right, and let's just go with this for a while. And the direction will come.
Kravitz wondered about the performative aspect of leadership and the performative aspect in our rhythmic engagement, and the deeper level embodiment of expression. His sense was that performative aspects can seem more solid and rational, but may be purely technical, while embodied and emergent processes could seem “messy” but may be more effective in their adaptability. Kravitz stated:

I was sitting with a feeling of anxiety, not that I felt anxious, but like that it was present in the group around expectations of what it's supposed to sound like, or what it, you know, how we are in the space or engaging in it. And with expectations, I think there's an assumption or implications of like judgment by others or something or judgment of self. And then I'm like, still working through it, but like this idea of like performative practice and embodied expression, and like how the performative might feel and look and sound neat and together, but it might not be the most effective thing, whereas the embodied expression can be disjointed and messy and all the things, but it has meaning behind it.

Kravitz’ thoughts were poignant in that they addressed outward and inward facing processes in leadership, both of which were enacted in sound and without words. The debrief gave us a chance to make meaning out of our collective non-verbal communication. Kevin linked this to identity and its relevance to leadership in a group. How does leadership identity shift in the moment and according to whose need? Hoby took Kevin’s comment from the individual perspective to the group level: could music be used as a way to assess team dynamics, conscious and unconscious? Kevin explained:

I'm not sure if this like parallels with that, but like what I keep coming back to is like this element of identity. Like we talked a lot about how music can be like a means or mechanism for our identity to allow us to show up in one way, but what I was present to,
like regarding my own anxiety, was how the musical capacity I showed up in a totally
different way through the lens of my identity as it related to what I was putting on myself
in terms of expectations for how I needed to contribute to the identity of the group and
what we were creating. So, from a leadership standpoint, this question is like how
someone shows up in a group dynamic, is it based on who they are, is it based on the
dynamic of the group in that moment? How can that awareness help us curate and
support the group and the individual?

Hoby responded:

That just made me think. This exercise could be a really interesting way to assess a team
and find out how they're doing in a way they might not be able to verbalize, because I
was just thinking about my work team. If we did this right now, it would either be totally
different clashing rhythms, or it would be one rhythm imposed on the team. And the way
I'm thinking about what we've all said, that would tell me so much about how the
members were doing, based on how they responded to the prompt and to what was
brought into the circle. We've been kind of figuring out is there a way to use music in a
development area, and just listening to what you guys just said, I had found myself
thinking, if we were trying to help a team get out of their conscious self, their conscious
dynamics, this might be a way to surface some of the unconscious dynamics.

Hoby’s response in itself was an example of learning through experience, then
transferring that learning into a learning experience for others. She states, “... if we were trying to
help a team get out of the conscious self, …, this might be a way to surface some of the
unconscious dynamics.” This surfacing of unconscious dynamics was, of course, exactly what
the body percussion allowed her and the rest of the coinquirers to do. This was an experience she
was excited to share. Subsequently, the workshop that her group (Small Group 1) designed included rhythmic improvisation to elevate the awareness of joy and vulnerability in leaders. Belle applied these observations to team trainings that she had facilitated. She considers the possibility that using music in this way might allow people to show up more authentically. She said:

*It makes me think of when you go to maybe facilitate a workshop or something for a group or an organization, and you can tell that people are there because they have to be. And so you're trying to do some sort of a group activity. And there's always the one person who's just sulking and kind of nonparticipating, because they're like, ‘[...] I don't even want to be here. This is not even work. Team building.’ You know what I'm saying? There's always that one person that really resents the leader for making them show up for a performative engagement thing with their team that they don't even feel good being a part of. But you created a space in the activity where people who were willing to voice their anxieties or performance concerns still were willing to participate and engage in whatever way they could offer to the group.*

The drum circles were the first active experiential learning moment for us. It emerged a plethora of associations, conscious and unconscious dynamics in the way we related to our own leadership, the people next to us, as well as our collective. All this emerged in a total musical engagement of 4 minutes without words. Much to my relief we all engaged in it with curiosity, then joy and enthusiasm. We also had two new coinquirers join us for this workshop, who were welcomed and included into our group.
The Conductor Takes the Stage: An Invitation to Leap

The preparation for this last workshop (Cycle 4) was different than for the preceding two. We were in a much larger room that allowed us to spread out and move more. In addition to food and our usual ritual objects, I had also brought two suitcases full of percussion instruments. One was my personal collection, the other I had borrowed from a school I used to teach at. Ahead of the group’s arrival I arranged the instruments visibly on two tables on one half of the room. My coinquirers walked around the instruments as they arrived. I hoped that this would signal to them that we were going to be stepping into experience in our session. I was also hoping that this would ease our shift from talking to doing. Below are some pictures of the instrument setup (Figures 13a, 13b, and 13c):

Figure 13a, 13b, 13c.

Instrument Setup for Workshop 3 (November 10, 2023)
After our drum circle we took a short break. When we got back I stepped fully into the facilitator role and gave directions for the activity ahead. This was akin to the conductor stepping on stage and raising their baton. I gave instructions and stated purpose and task:

*Okay. So, we're going to break into small groups of about three. You can spread yourself anywhere in the entire building, honestly. And you'll have, let's say, 25 minutes to do your work as a group. Your task is to create an activity that uses something musical, whether recorded or used with instruments or silence or, you know, whatever it might be, whatever resonates with you as a group. And then come together with an exercise, you know, similar to what we did, right, just with the clapping, right? It can be as simple or as complicated as you wanted to make it. Ground your exercise in an objective. So, your small group will have to figure out what is it that we want to teach in leadership development, like what is the purpose of this exercise, what's our objective, and then build something around that. And I'm sure, like, what happened with us, like, other things will emerge. But what is your primary objective for using this?*

This statement was very similar to something I would prepare a group within workshops that I had run or classes I had taught. This would also have been a familiar mode of engagement that all my coinquirers would have been familiar with since we all had had experience being students at USD. The transition into the design process that followed this was smooth, joyful, and full of energy.

Ahead of the break we had decided that I would hold an observer role for the greater part of the small group design phase. I was thus able to move between the rooms and record videos as well as witness the work in progress. Each small group was asked to record their own group
process using their phone and share it with me after conclusion of the workshop. The first task, however, was for the group to find their small groups. I did not give any direction on this.

The Concert Begins

This subtheme covers the three designs that were created in small groups. The titles name the members of each of the three groups, a short description of their activity. Pictures are provided with permission from my coinquirers and are meant to create a sense of immediacy in this part of the chapter. We begin with Hoby, Kevin, and Diana:

Small Group 1 (Hoby, Kevin, Diana): Vulnerability and Joy in Management Spaces

This small group created a workshop to invite vulnerability in a professional space (Figure 14). The group process showed attention to some of the same elements that were alive in our study group: building a holding environment through community and conversation using music. They used inspirations from the drum circle and their own learning from their lived leadership experiences, leadership development work, and lived experience.

Kevin: Yeah, so maybe that yeah maybe that is before the pair up. So, if it's like what we're setting up the container okay we invite you to these instruments like everyone just take 5 minutes to play around with them and then pair up.

Hoby: And then this like musical conversation or whatever does that sound good? Yeah. [writing] .... And I'm just going to say like passing a riff. Yeah. And passing a building on a riff.

Kevin: Do we even want to add like a “why” here like to support open partnerships. Or conversation.

Diana: Community building.

Kevin: Yeah, I like that.
Figure 14

*Designing a Workshop: Vulnerability and Joy in Management Spaces (November 10, 2023)*

Notably, this group wanted to offer a space in which vulnerability would invite play and joy through music. The participants would then connect this embodied sensation with their leadership. A full debrief followed the musical activity, which included a token for their participants to remember their learning. The hope was for them to continue this in their time outside of this activity. The picture shows this small group at work on the whiteboard. They developed a full morning-filling workshop.

**Small Group 2 (Belle, Jack, Maynard): Self-as-Instrument/Leadership Identity**

This group created an activity in which their participants, people in executive positions of leadership, would choose an instrument out of a selection. They would then reflect on their own leadership identity and use the instrument as a way to project their identity onto the qualities of the object (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Maynard, for example, chose a range of instruments to exemplify different modes of leadership that he would access in different situations. Belle chose three different-pitched bells because her opinions and physical voice were “as clear as a bell.” Jack chose a single wooden instrument that had different-length bars for a variety of pitches. His share evolved into the group’s discussion on the symbolism of musical instruments. Jack explains what pulled him towards this particular instrument (see the group at work in Figure 15):
I gravitated towards this because it's one instrument, but I enjoyed the different levels and notes that it makes. So, I took it as one cell, but I can wear and do different roles depending on where I'm at, as well as even in the same role, there can be different, different degrees of my involvement or my leadership in there. So that's why I enjoyed this. It can do so many different things just in one instrument.

Belle responded: I mean, I think it really speaks to the notion of a flexible presentation of a leader, right? Like they are a singular thing that can have all of these different impressions.

Jack replies: Right. Like which role do you need me to play today? And like, find out how to use the tool.

**Small Group 3 (Eliana, Gates, Jaime): The Womb/Emergence/Holding Environment**

The third group formed around their interest in one particular instrument: a thunder tube spring drum. This instrument, when shaken, gave thunder-like sounds that could vary in severity depending on the character of the shaking. All three of the members in this group reported that they found each other around these instruments and decided to form a unit for this activity. The group also added one frame drum and experimented with the addition of a rain stick (see Figure 16). These three individuals also happened to be the ones who were more quietly observant for the duration of the study: holding more silence than speaking within the large group.
They designed a leadership activity that encouraged leaders to be aware of the importance of an emergent process and consider the concept of a holding environment. Their technique was to sit with the sound of the instruments, spending up to 3 minutes at a stretch with their eyes closed and being with the sensations that the sound of the instruments evoked, then sharing their associations with each other. The picture shows the three participants experimenting with different sounds.

*Jaime:* What are we feeling? I think we could be led by this instrument.

*Eliana:* This one?

*Jaime:* Yeah, these instruments. Pretty interesting.

[playing the instruments: thunder tubes and frame drum; their heads are lowered, eyes closed.]

*When I hear this, I almost think of what is rumbling, what is growing.*

*Eliana:* What needs to emerge this? That we haven’t fully held yet?

*That's what I'm associating with this. Can we tie that to leadership? What other thoughts do we want to think about?*

Between the three of them, these coinquirers emerged an association with being in the womb from the sounds and landed on the importance of considering a safe enough holding environment for individuals and teams to work in. The holding environment became a vital consideration for
this group of leadership development facilitators.

**Summary of Theme 3**

This section described data that emerged Theme 3, which revolves around experiential learning and the transition from discussing concepts to engaging in and designing practical activities. The first activity described is a collective drum circle. This formed our first embodied engagement with music in the study. Our collective group explored intra- and interpersonal awareness through non-verbal communication in the form of body percussion. Our debrief centered on experiences and reflections during the drum circle, emphasizing themes of anxiety, experimentation, and group dynamics as they related to leadership. We then shifted to creating leadership development activities in three small groups. As a collective we decided to have me in an observer role for this process. Each group designed a unique leadership development workshop focusing on themes such as joy and vulnerability, leadership identity, and the concept of a holding environment using percussion instruments that were provided. We will take a presence pause next and transition into the discussion of Theme 3.

**Presence Pause**

*Goldberg Variations, BWV 988 by Johann Sebastian Bach,*

performed by Glenn Gould, keyboard (1981)

To me, there is nothing that is more healing in music than the compositions by 18th century composer J.S. Bach. A Baroque composer who was already out of fashion in his compositional style when he was working his trade in Germany. These keyboard pieces were commissioned by a nobleman who had one of Bach’s students in his employ. The story goes that this nobleman had insomnia and asked his keyboardist, Johann Gottlieb Goldberg, to play him to
sleep every night. Bach complied and offered this set of pieces that are based on 30 variations on a theme.

Bach connects directly to my own identity. I grew up singing in church choirs in a small town in Germany where Bach’s music was a constant presence. As a violinist Bach was also ever present. I have memories of my mother and I playing the Bach d-minor double violin concerto together. We sang and played a lot of different composers, but there was something about the ever-driving rhythm, the melodiousness, the elegant yet provocative ways that Bach managed to weave the layers of voices in his pieces that, for me, resulted in a sense of being seen, of being in the process of feeling and healing. Even now as I listen to the fourth variation of this set of pieces, I can feel my heart swelling.

Discussion of Theme 3

When I reflected on what this third theme might represent in a musical equivalent, I landed on the genre of themes and variations. Themes and variations are a grouping of pieces that use one theme and is followed by a number of variations on that theme. In essence, themes and variations are Baroque jazz improvisation. The variations in the Goldberg variations are literally grounded in the very foundations of the aria: its bassline and harmonic structure. They tell the story of the aria, then tell the story differently, 30 times over, all the while maintaining its fundamental harmonic relationship. This harmonic structure provides the vessel for playfulness and improvisation.

Variations

Schiavo et al. (2022) stated the following in relation to the compositional process. It was “largely exploratory, it is grounded in bodily experience, and it emerges from the recursive dialogue of agents and their environment” (p. 303). Applied to the creation of our activities in
small groups, this points towards their design emerging out of the embodied experience of the coinquirers, using their own lived experience and the shared experience in the group, and the context in which we were in. As such,

   music may be used by other types of actors or agents as a framing device (...). … Music provides a potential map for making sense of the thing(s) to which it is attached. In this way music can be understood as providing non-cognitive resources to which actors may orient and that they may mobilize as they engage in interpretive action, as they formulate knowledge. (DeNora, 2009, p. 26).

Similarly, our variations (our small group designs) encoded the experiences we had in our study. They became a container for our sense-making from our collective process, and served as a projective device for us, making aspects of ourselves available for analysis (Taylor & Ladkin, 2012). Some of these aspects might have been woven into the designs unconsciously, as we will consider next (DeNora, 2009)

   I initially considered the three original designs as separate units. Once I pulled back my perspective, however, I realized that each unit was part of a greater whole. Perhaps unconsciously, the three groups had—without having consulted with each other—designed learning activities that highlighted the pillars of our process: the importance of a holding environment, the inclusion of our personal identities to foster belonging, and the desire for space to show joy and vulnerability in our leadership. As a whole, these leadership development activities were telling the story of our study. Moreover, they told the story in a way that had the potential to invite participants outside of our space to experience the learning for themselves. The designs were variations on the theme of our study as a whole and was an invitation to join in and to share in our learning.
Stepping over the ledge from theory into practice feels risky and vulnerable, as we had discussed in Theme 2. Yet that day, our entire group did it with joy and an air of excitement. One possible interpretation of this is that the members of these small groups had resonated strongly with our inquiry. They felt safe, grounded, and connected within our group, which was enough to try on the role of being a musical leadership facilitator. The community was strong enough to embrace two brand-new coinquirers, Diana and Maynard, into the fold. They fully participated in our activities. This was a very big step for us, because there were several shifts that we had to make to arrive at this moment. What the study demanded from us was more complex than I had anticipated. In order to step into the unknown our group had to expand our collective mindset to connect and accept a few things:

1) Shift from “music and leadership are not connected” to “music and leadership are connected.”

2) Accept that “music is powerful” and “music is also a utility.”

3) Accept that “music can be a utility for leadership development.”

4) Realize the necessity of scaffolding.

5) Remind ourselves that greater learning can come with feelings of discomfort.

6) Be willing to engage in an experience.

7) Be confident enough to translate that experience into a design for their clients.

The above describes a gradual widening of our lenses, starting from our own intrapersonal views and knowledge of music and how we related to it, to expanding into our communal intersubjective space, where we worked to include each other’s stories into our own narratives (Green & Elson, 2010; Jansson, 2014). As we widened our lenses we replicated elements from our inquiry in other places of the study. To transform theory into practice (Step 3
to Step 4 above) I decided to step into a more directive “conductor” role by engaging us in an experiential activity around music and leadership. The drum circle empowered the group with their own embodied experiences and lent them enough momentum to brave the task of going out to design a leadership development activity on their own. It took time to foster the coinquirer’s confidence in themselves to step into a new identity: that of the leader-as-musician whereas before we were in the firm clutches of societal expectations of leaders to exhibit certain more strait-laced characteristics. Heifetz (2009) offers that finding this independence to find joy away from the clutches of social pressures is like a muscle that needs to be flexed regularly. “... it must be earned through trial-and-error experience by each individual, generation after generation. ..... It is not enough to know how to do it; one must do it, consistently, in the same way as athletes or musicians who must keep practicing what they know in theory” (p. 21).
**Presence Pause**

*Don't Stop Me Now, Queen (music by Freddie Mercury, 1979)*

Tonight I'm gonna have myself a real good time

I feel alive

And the world, I'll turn it inside out, yeah

I'm floating around in ecstasy

So (Don't stop me now)

(Don't stop me)

'Cause I'm having a good time

Having a good time

I'm a shooting star, leaping through the sky like a tiger

Defying the laws of gravity

I'm a racing car, passing by like Lady Godiva

I'm gonna go, go, go, there's no stopping me

We felt on cloud 9 in Workshop 3. As a group there was synergy, playfulness, and joy. Once we opened the floor for the groups to start designing there was a move towards the tables where the instruments were. Suddenly there was a whole, beautiful cacophony in the air. Diana was dancing. Kevin was sounding the tambourine very convincingly. Others had their ear close to an instrument, trying it out. There were conversations like, “what is this one? How do you play it? Oh, how cool!” and people picking up an instrument and telling a story of what that instrument reminded them of. It was literally music in our ears. The shift in energy was also palpable. The coinquirers seemed liberated. I personally felt relieved that they had accepted the challenge and leaned in with so much enthusiasm.
Queen’s “Don’t Stop Me Now,” is a soundtrack to joy and motivation to have a good time. It is how we felt after we built our bridge to our “doing.” We had done it. We had made music a tool in leadership, and we had owned it in our community of facilitators with varying degrees of musical experience. It had been meaningful to all of us. The energy in the room was buzzing with joy. But as the final theme will show, once we had done it we began to put on the brakes. We stopped ourselves.

**Theme 4: Separation Anxiety**

Theme 4 (Figure 17) is closely related to Research Question 3: How, if at all, does experiencing the process of exploring music as a facilitation tool for leadership development shift the participants’ professional practice? I present findings that show a significant shift in our group’s perception of a connection between music and leadership. I show that there was equally significant doubt whether the coinquirers would be willing to take their learning and their capacities outside of our space. I highlight the importance of the intersection between the role of a leader and the identity as a musical being, which became a barrier in extending their musical leadership development in their professional contexts.

**Figure 17**

*Theme 4: Theme and Subthemes*

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**Shifting Our Perspectives**

By the end of Workshop 3 (Cycle 4) we had transformed ourselves from curious coinquirers to activity-designing facilitators. Prior to the study most coinquirers did not perceive a connection between music and leadership. All participants were very curious to explore the possibility, however. The following statement from Maynard undergirds this finding: “I’d like to explore ways that I did not realize regarding the intersection of music and leadership” Likewise, Diana said:

*I've never considered the use of music in leadership development, and I think it has interesting implications. I'm especially intrigued with the idea because music has been so important for me. So, I'm curious as to how I could share the potential benefits or implement the benefits.*

There was a fascinating dynamic in the group: even though coinquirers stated that they had not seen a connection between music and leadership they had all nonetheless used it in leadership spaces. There seemed to be a disconnect between combining music with leadership consciously. This ran parallel to the separation of personal and professional space. Jack’s statement in the first workshop speaks to this:

*The other thing you mentioned too, I think it's interesting when some of us said, "Oh, I don't use it professionally, but I did this thing in retail, I did this thing in a restaurant, and I did this thing on a hiking... [Group chuckles, nods head and agrees]. So, we've done it subconsciously or unconsciously, which I think is cool. Music has that power."

Another example of this phenomenon is Hoby, who in her pre-questionnaire stated that she never even thought of any connections, saying, “I'd never considered the connections...
between leadership and music before and am fascinated to think about and learn more about the possibilities.”

In the first workshop, however, she shared a direct application of music into her master’s thesis. She had been feeling overwhelmed and disconnected from herself during her graduate program. She stumbled upon the Korean band BTS one day and, not knowing any Korean, latched onto their music. The music gave her sudden access to parts of herself that she had repressed. Here is Hoby in her own words:

“So, it took me a little while when I left that world (work world) and came to school to kind of figure out, “what do I actually want in my spaces, and in my own ears?” And I ended up, my first year of the masters was really difficult, and I found K-pop halfway through. And it gave me this straight line connection to an emotional layer that I had not been able to connect with, despite the fact that the music I loved the most was entirely in Korean, and I don’t speak any Korean at all. So, I shared my capstone video with Paz because I incorporated it into my capstone project. It was so powerful. And I think that was the first time that I made like the personal professional link that it was having this impact on how I show up for other people. And it was giving me ways to connect to vulnerability that as like a Minnesotan, you're not supposed to show any emotions. So, it was giving me access to these different ways to be there and then to be inside my own head.

The development of the group was such that the connection between music and leadership/leadership development became a palpable possibility by the third workshop. The following statements from Kravitz are evident of a significant shift in his thinking around the
subject. In the first meeting he stated, “I don't know what music comes to mind when I think of leadership. So yeah, retail, yes; restaurant, yes; leadership, I have no idea.”

In the debrief after our drum circle in the last workshop, however, he had connected music in nuanced ways around the question of identity and development of self in leadership:

There's a piece that you named, you named, and I think Jaime as well, around removing self from role, removing self from identity, or finding a new identity and then play. And then I was thinking about, so, when you all hear music, do you just hear it to hear it, or does it take you somewhere? It's about imagination, it's about visualizing. So, music is not the, I don't know what to say, music itself is a tool, or a portal that gives you access to visualize something else. So, you're using different senses, so you're hearing it, but then it takes you somewhere, cognitively or spiritually, wherever you define it or characterize it. And so, if we approached leadership development with music as a portal to imagine self in a different role or identity other than self, how can we leverage the, I guess it's potential, it's the word I'm thinking about, like the potential of leadership, of one's leadership or collective leadership, utilizing music. (silence) Yeah.

Jaime reflected on the importance of being in the right frame of mind in creating the music, and inferred resonance with leaders from there. He is also in touch with the value of a novice mind, comparing it to the carefree outlook of a child:

I was sitting with, especially before you actually started, there was a tension of bringing in kind of like the inability or the weaknesses of like, oh, I don't can't hold the rhythm, right? Or like, I'm not musically talented. If you compare that with a child, maybe a younger age, they're not even thinking about the weakness. They're not even thinking about the lack, but they're thinking about the, it's fun, you know? It's play. And in that
playness, also once we started, I realized that certain frequencies invited me to participate in, right? While others less so. So, in leadership, I think everybody kind of resonates a certain frequency of a leader, and it's either open or closed, right? And then when Novi was saying about trusting in the process, you have an idea or a vision, very much like leaders do or musicians or artists, but they don't know until they're actually at work. The process, through the process, it reveals the thing that they're working towards, but you can never occur until they're actually at work or in play or action.

**Barriers to the Outside World**

There were concerns with the transferability of the shift that we had undergone in our study. Could we create a space and achieve buy-in into other contexts? Eliana’s question below garnered nods and body language of agreement around the table. Eliana stated:

*The question that I'm sitting with then is how do we foster that level of trust or like buy-in to the process? If you were to translate it to a different space, like if one of our named, unnamed, I can't remember, outcomes is like “how do we use music as a developmental tool outside of this space,” how are you this (recreating) shared identities, trusting or (if) the intense level of trust enhances the, with the need allows us to trust others or (our university’s) shared connection. How do we do that elsewhere? We might not have connections we need or with (the institution) or even with each other.*

After the drum circle the group contemplated the potential of using such a musical activity to unearth hidden dynamics in their teams at work. After some conversation, Hoby flat out states that she would not want to do this with her team at work:

*Kevin: So, from a leadership standpoint, this questioning of like how someone shows up in a group dynamic, is it based on who they are, is it based on the dynamic of the group*
in that moment? How can that awareness helps us curate and support the group and the individual?

Hoby: That just made me think. This exercise could be a really interesting way to assess a team and find out how they're doing in a way they might not be able to verbalize, because I was just thinking about my work team. If we did this right now, it would either be totally different clashing rhythms, or it would be one rhythm imposed on the team. [...] I had found myself thinking, if we were trying to help a team get out of their conscious self, their conscious dynamics, this might be a way to surface some of the unconscious dynamics. ... I also don't want to do this exercise with my team.

Maynard: And how might they do it, right? And what it may surface?

Paz: Do you mean that, for example, if the manager or the director is just not, people are resistant, but they can't say it, and they're not an exercise that just is, they just don't follow?

Hoby: Yeah. Or people feel they have to follow the person who holds the title or a role.

(a few nods around the table) So I report to Brenda and I'm watching what she's doing. I'm not doing the same thing. I'm not going off on my own. I'm not breaking the rule here.

Complexity in Managing Roles

Managing a multitude of different roles became a challenge for us. In the following sections I present ways that role became a salient issue as we engaged in our collective facilitation. At the heart of the dissonance were dominant paradigms on what a “musician” was, and what they were not. Similarly, there were dominant paradigms as to what a “leader” was, and what they were not. Musician and leader, as we emerged in this study, are not typically
uttered in the same breath. Our group grappled with this at the boundary from our space into the outside world.

**Musician vs. Leader**

The identity of a musician was quite complicated in itself. It also held the both/and/also. Throughout the study coinquirers would make a point that they had no musical experience and were not musicians. This would come out in declarations that people “had no rhythm” or “wasn’t musical.” There was an observation that being a musician was not a viable way of earning a living, as Hoby offered: “I have so many of my friends, ‘I wish I could have studied music or art, but my parents wanted me to have a real job.’” At the same time, the group was eager to discuss musicians (and artists in general) to be at the boundary of society, and therefore having the power to push societal boundaries beyond its borders. Examples the coinquirers mentioned were Brandi Carlile who offered *Girls Just Want a Weekend* concert packages that are marketed as a vacation getaway but were *de facto* safe spaces for the LGBTQ+ community. Protest music and music for resistance also took the stage. Hoby offered that participating in protest through music is scary, “because there's an access to a different way of thinking through art or music that can be really scary to the norm and like the status quo.” Eliana wonders: “So, does music help us navigate the transitions or pushing boundaries as leaders to events, not just in social movements or protests individually?” We puzzled over role. Was it acceptable for a person in a leadership position to show up with music? As our group shared our opinions we brought into awareness how fully music held parts of our identity, we began to create new dialectics from our shared stories, and also stated that musicians were at the boundaries of social causes, possibly eccentric, somehow imbued with an almost magical power of expression that “normal” humans did not have access to, but had the privilege to opt into if they needed.
A Reluctant Conductor: My Challenge of Managing Multiple Roles in the Study

Throughout the study I felt a tension within myself in regard to my dual role. I was the researcher who had called others in for a study, but I was also supposed to be a coinquirer, a participant in the study like anyone else. I spoke to this worry in the introduction to the first workshop:

*Okay, so a little bit about my role, which is an understanding and awareness that I'm emerging because this is a kind of a very intersectional overlapping role that I have. 'Cause clearly you all are here to do the study with me, so I'm like the main researcher, right? And this study is an action research study and a specific type called action inquiry, which is a participatory action research methodology. So that means that I am actually also part of the group. So, I am kind of in... and slightly nuanced in my role, but part of all of you on a level or another. And this can manifest in different ways. It could be like, you know, if we talk about leadership, like, you know, our leadership might kind of travel through the group. I invited the group into a collective leadership framework where we would shift leadership and followership dynamics as needed. I also signaled that I would, in my case, ask for help facilitating if I felt like I was taking up too much space:

*We might decide that, you know, okay, ..., I'm feeling like, Hey, y'all, I'm feeling or I'm facilitating too much. Somebody else would like to jump in here, you know, and I will ask for help, for example, right? 'Cause I am aware, I don't wanna speak to the fact that, you know, this is kind of my study and I am a musician, but my interest is in figuring out how a group of people who are of different types of levels of music would use it, you know, so the combining factor for all of us leadership development, not music.*
I was keen to not overwhelm the group because I had had a few experiences in my previous attempts outside of this study using music in leadership settings where I had grossly overestimated the readiness of my group. It did not have a beneficial effect on the learning for them and left me feeling deflated at that moment. This study was designed as an action inquiry precisely because I needed the spirit of collaboration and inquiry to relieve my role as sole facilitator. After the second workshop we had not yet had an experiential moment in our group yet. I had suggested to the group to use music in a leadership development activity at the first workshop, which was avoided. In the second workshop the invitation was also not taken up; rather it moved our inquiry deeper into what barriers to the “doing” might actually be. The conversation turned towards scaffolding and readiness. I was managing paradoxical sensations: reluctance to let it be, and also a feeling that we could do it with a little push. I also sensed that we had developed our community well enough to embark on the *doing*. I wrote the following in my journal on October 25, 2024:

*Scaffolding. Where is this group at, and what do they need to scaffold into using music for their work with confidence? They enjoy each other in community. They know what their work is. They know that music is important for them personally, but in between there is a gap. How can they use music for their own work? They do not know because they have not learned. It is not just about their perceived inexperience in music, it is also that they have not had this experience in their education.*

*I cannot expect people to just jump into a bucket of ice, even though it is - or I think it is - the best and most amazing bucket of ice ever. This would replicate a large group experience in a group relations context. This is not focused on that. My question to myself is then: how can I help this group scaffold next time, to make their experience
valuable and gentle enough so that they become more curious about the power of music in LD? Can I encourage them to try something new? To do this, I will have to step into more authority than I have previously felt comfortable.

This decision led to my planning a drum circle activity around interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics in the third and last workshop, which resulted in very rich debriefs connecting the coinquirer’s patterns in engaging in body percussion around the table. The prompts for these drum circles were simple: doing two rounds of body percussion any way you wanted to, then debrief the experience in terms of sensations, processes, ways you reacted or pushed back on others. I held both relief and regret taking on this more traditional leadership role: relief because this time the group was willing to go with it, and regret because I had to step into this more directive position. It turned out that, no matter how much I had spoken to wanting to be at the same level as my fellow coinquirers, the leader identity was still projected onto me.

Belle stated:

But it's like the leader and follower dynamic, right. Like you've built relationships with each of us individually in such a way that we've been willing to show up for you in this process, right? So that means that we are willing to subjugate ourselves to the process in trust of the relationship with you. Because I mean some of us knew each other before this, but not all of us. So, we don't inherently have trust with each other, but we have a trust with you, and you are perceived as the leader in this space.

I remember reacting in stunned silence to that statement then mumbling something like “okay…,” because it confirmed what I had suspected but had been trying to avoid: that I was still the ‘leader.’ The group was still dependent on me. I recall feeling like I had failed in becoming a bonafide coinquirer, and that something must have gone wrong. I must have taken
the wrong turn somewhere. It took me a few months to realize that this was only part of the process. Developmentally, we as a whole were not ready yet to fly the nest, so to speak. They still needed me, the musical “expert” in our space, to support our work in its newness.

What follows next is the meta-analysis that I had referred to in Chapter 1. I experienced first-hand one of the so-called limitations of the study: that learning continues far beyond the time bounds of a study and its immediate aftermath. I say “so-called” because I see this continued learning as one of the biggest strengths of action research. The iterative process does not stop. The way researchers make sense of the data evolves with time, and with context. In my case, one deciding factor for writing this next section was receiving feedback from my committee members, who unequivocally pointed out the same blind spots: What actually led to the creation of the original workshops? And can you own your own ability as a researcher, facilitator, and leader?

Finding That Which was Never Lost: Owning my Role

On March 12, 2024 one of my committee members, Dr. Donna Ladkin, commented on a draft: “I would have liked to have seen more discussion about HOW you got the group to shift in the 4th Cycle so they were able to create the workshops.” And then, “At the end of the day, Paz, I think I’m asking for you to ‘own up’ a bit more to your own skills as a facilitator and leader. I sense that might be a challenge for you!” The comments gave me great pause. In processing them I reflected on the ways that I exhibited my leadership in action and the way that I imagined leadership should show up: With humility and with utmost attention to the voice of the collective. I reflected on my reluctance in stepping into a more directive role for Workshop 3 (Cycle 4), which I presented in Theme 4. After a week of sitting on these questions I went back into my data, listened to the recordings, read the transcripts, and reviewed the videos of the
study. I was shocked to see how much process I had missed, particularly between the ending of Workshop 2 (Cycle 3) and Workshop 3 (Cycle 4) where the original designs were created. I came away shocked. There was critical data that I had included, and I wondered why I skipped over it. The following sections tell a different layer of the story of the study that had remained hidden till now.

In Theme 2 I had shared my futile effort of teaching a leadership topic armed with a song and guitar. The graduate students had not received any scaffolding from me, and the lesson was not received well. My coinquirers discussed my experience, taking different perspectives on the story. One of the perspectives was considering the value of “being jarred.” Belle, Kevin, and Hoby discuss the experience of being jarred:

Belle: I don't know, sometimes I love to just jar people. I think people don't get quite enough jarring in our world. So confined to the way that we expect to live lives and the way that we've been socialized and the way that institutions have taught us to expect and to conform and to navigate that. You can think people have to go away and think about it. I think there's a real value in the jarring.

Kevin interjects that there needs to be a consideration for an expectation being set for being jarred. He attaches emphasis onto scaffolding, calling it “priming a curiosity.”

Kevin: I think too though, like, that, I think there's a difference if there's an expectation set that you will be jarred versus just being jarred. Because if you're in an environment where it's like, okay, we're setting up the expectation, I'm going to come at you with music and you're going to engage. Okay. I'm going to come in hot with sound bowls. (chuckles around the table) I'm like, ‘oh, okay.’ Maybe there's something about priming a curiosity. Because I totally get what you're saying.
The statement about sound bowls brings up memories of some courses that all but one of us had taken part in with a certain professor who would teach his courses beginning and ending with three rings on a Tibetan singing bowl. The group reminisces, then begins to consider the value of being shocked, but emphasizes the critical importance of being reflective after such an experience.

Belle: Well, [he] jarred us. Every day. He jarred us from the very beginning. There was no priming for “I'm going to lay this Eastern consciousness mindset on you and it's going to change your whole life.” [...] Like, many of us clearly did not have that frame of reference of spirituality or being, you know.

Hoby: I think what I learned through that program was how to reflect after being jarred. And that has been so valuable because now when it happens, I'm like, I feel like I have a scaffold that will help me process this. Instead of just like sitting in, ‘ah, it's uncomfortable’ and ‘I don't like it.’ I'm like, ‘this is uncomfortable. Okay. Let's think about that. What and why.’ But I can remember before getting some of these tools, feeling like the only way to like self-preservation was to retreat from that experience. I'm more interested in engaging with things that are intimidating. I'm more interested in talking about things I don't know anything about because I now have more tools and people who I can be like, did you understand that? Can you tell me what's going on?

The arc of this conversation shows the speakers processing the dynamics that occurred in my experience with the graduate students, making inferences with their own experience of being jarred within their shared coursework as students, funneling towards their own learning through that experience of discomfort as a student, then considering the value of an uncomfortable experience as a facilitator. Hoby says:
“I'm more interested in engaging with things that are intimidating. I'm more interested in talking about things I don't know anything about because I now have more tools and people who I can be like, did you understand that? Can you tell me what's going on?”

My story had created a discussion point that was more than just my story, however. In a parallel process with those graduate students, the coinquirers had also been uncomfortable with using music without being primed. Now, at the end of the second workshop, we had arrived at a conversation when we were wondering if being uncomfortable was not a valuable learning experience. Indeed, something that one would rather do than doing the familiar.

I believe that my previous experience was on the one hand that of my misjudgment on the readiness of the students, and on the other an issue of authority and trust. In that course I was a teaching fellow, rather than the professor. I was not seen as a formal authority in that space, and I was not afforded enough trust from the students to lean into as extreme an activity as I was presenting that day. In this study, however, I had the trust and the authority. In fact, I could hear the coinquirers beginning to try to motivate themselves for doing something unfamiliar and potentially “intimidating.” I felt the energy shifting towards more willingness to take a risk, try something new. I hoped that we had in the group achieved a critical mass of coinquirers who were willing to lean into experiential learning, and that our community within our holding environment was going to be strong enough to carry those of us who were still on the fence.

I took this shift in energy as an invitation to create more momentum. In the last 10 minutes of Workshop 2 (Cycle 3), I reminded the group, “Next time is our last workshop together, which doesn’t mean that our relationship has to, we don’t have to be exes.” The group responded with bursts of murmurs. Exclamations such as “Can we just turn it into non-research music (group)?” - “This is so fantastic.” - “We could have listening sessions where we all contribute music.” I
offered, “Do you all want to sing a song?” to which the group laughed, then went into a conversation about how interesting the experience was. I saw this as a bit of an avoidance at the invitation of a song. The appreciative energy was now intermingled with a bit of anxiety. Given the previous conversation, however, I decided to take a risk and became more insistent this time. I stated, “I’m sorry, we’re going to sing a song!” The group quieted down, and I asked them if they would be alright holding hands, to which they agreed. I then invited them all to stand, and I sang the spiritual *Deep River*. I remember being nervous, and wondering how this would be taken up. Would my coinquirers be able to lean into this experience? Would we be able to pass some boundary together at this moment? After I had sung the last note, there was a short moment of holding our energy in silence while still holding hands, then I let the energy go and we all relaxed our grasps. We smiled at each other, there was some applause, then the group broke back into conversation and said our goodbyes to each other. This ended our second workshop.

**Figure 18**

*Closing Workshop 2 in Community, “Deep River” (October 5, 2023)*

In examining this, I now think that I shifted into the role of musician-leader at that moment. I stepped into a leadership role by modeling the ‘doing’ in our group. I did not presume
that they would sing. I modeled being musical to my coinquirers. I did this supported by their trust, and also by taking into account their invitation to do something different, leaning into that to which they had been avoidant: using music in practice. I was motivated by their reflection on being jarred, and I was buoyed by their enthusiasm for our collaboration with each other. I was also cognizant of the dynamic that I had seen unfold in other places, at times when an end comes near: There is a feeling of impending finality, perhaps even a bit of a death of a group as it was. This can generate momentum for action before the time is up. Stepping into a more pronounced leadership role was a step across the boundary that we had not been able to bridge yet. This act became that primer that Kevin was asking for. The access point that we would walk through together in Workshop 3 (Cycle 4).

It is apparent now, however, that I was not consciously aware of having shifted into this authority. What, then, was it that motivated me to change my role? Thinking back to that moment, I was alive to a visceral feeling in my body. It was an excited fullness. I became energetically activated by this feeling of wholeness, similar to special moments I remembered as a part of musical ensembles, when we were in alignment with each other. It is a feeling of connection that activates my wish to amplify and give voice to the sensation of ‘community.’ In my use of the word ‘community’ here I use it as an adjective, as an embodied feeling. It is an experience of deeply belonging to the people and the environment that you are sharing. It is something that is hard to put into words, so describing it in words seems wanting. Instead, music presents a more holistic way of naming the true sense of our connections with each other. In these moments I feel a pull to make music. In our coaching courses we call this internal process “using self-as-instrument.” This is way to make sense of context and content from embodied signals in our bodies. This becomes data to make our next decision. Such an example was
offered by Kravitz in Theme 2 as well, when he accessed his somatic response to make sense out of his reaction to music being conformist. In the case of the closing moments of the second workshop, my feeling of communal synergy affected a strong feeling of needing to embrace the group using music. Owning my role and my own authority turned out to be a muscle I had to practice cognitively. My growth edge was intentionally owning my capacities so that I could point them towards what a group might need in leadership with discernment. This can mean actively stepping into an authority role, stepping into a followership role, or traveling the spectrum in between.

**Summary of Theme 4**

Theme 4 explores the challenges and barriers to expanding the work outside the boundaries of the study. Initially, the group had doubts about connecting music with leadership, despite using it subconsciously in professional settings. However, over time, we began to recognize the potential of music in leadership development, leading to a significant shift in our perceptions. There were concerns about transferring our newfound understanding to other contexts, and hesitancy about using musical activities within our work teams. This theme also delves into the complexity of managing multiple roles within the study, with my reflection on my complex role as researcher, coinquirer, and perceived expert authority. Ultimately, our journey surfaced parallel dynamics in managing boundaries of role and identity in the myself and the coinquirers, that resulted in holding joy and belonging with reluctance and anxiety about integrating music into leadership practice. This theme also offers a view on my own learning as a researcher in a collaborative action inquiry, which challenges me to step into my own capacity as a leader and facilitator. Next, we will take a moment for another presence pause.
Presence Pause

*Yellow Submarine*, the Beatles (1966)

We all live in a yellow submarine,
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine.
We all live in a yellow submarine,
Yellow submarine, yellow submarine.
And our friends are all aboard,
Many more of the live next door
And the band begins to play.

I was struck by the strong sensation of community and belonging in our group. I was grateful and felt filled with joy for the privilege of spending time with all of us together. In my fantasy all of us would have been empowered to run out into the world and teach leadership development musically. And at the same time, we all shared the same worries and trepidations that incorporating music as we had was not going to be received well outside of our circle. We, me included, were feeling much safer within the boundaries of our sacred space, our yellow submarine. For myself I felt as seen as I had not in a long time. As the verse in the song reminds us though, “our friends are all aboard” but “many more live next door.” Part of my work will be to find ways to support our group and others who live next door to enter this way of being in the world of leadership development. We did it here. We can do it again.

Discussion of Theme 4

Safety is the most basic of human needs (Maslow, 1954). In cocreating our container (Theme 1) we had a collective experience at the boundary of safety to do our work. Feeling safe is not a state, it is an area of infinite shades that is painted by our lived experience, our learned
paradigms, the context and environments we hold in our minds, bodies, and spirits; as well as the environments we find ourselves in aka place, culture, social landscape. We instinctively veer towards the familiar. These are patterns and conditions that give us a sense of greater certainty—even if these patterns and conditions do not serve us. Assumptions like “I am not a leader” or “I am not a musician” or “I am not good enough” all come from thoughts along the boundary of safety. Pushing against that boundary feels dangerous, even if the rewards are great. There is a cognitive dissonance that occurs. To some extent the gradual pushing of this known boundary might be called “learning.” Other words may be “development” or “growth.” But then other words could be “resistance,” “rebellion.” They can all be true. The next sections consider the boundaries that our group was negotiating. Some we made more permeable, others even surmounted, and yet others we were hesitant to disturb.

**Recognizing my Facilitator Identity**

I had unconsciously ignored my own role in moving the group towards the design phase in my initial analysis. In missing the role that I had in generating momentum towards the designs, I had essentially erased myself. I hold humility in high regard and felt that this was compromised if I had focused on myself. Dr. René Molenkamp, another member of my committee helped me think this through in one conversation. I stated that I wished to engage in “powerful humility,” to which he reacted by saying that “false humility” can be unhelpful. I concluded that this erasure happened because of my insistence on being in equal standing with my other coinquirers. I felt that I was putting too much of a spotlight on myself if I focused on my leadership in the data analysis. In processing with Dr. Cheryl Getz, the chair of my committee she said,
(Regarding) owning your leadership. I think it’s a difficult thing to balance. You want to be in a co-collaborative space, and also be humble … But/and - I think you can do both while at the same time owning your own competence in this. Isn’t that what our systems need right now - this “is” the different model of leadership that we are seeking. One that can ebb and flow with and through community - and also take up authority when needed the most.

Reflecting on these nuggets of wisdom from my dissertation committee I find myself needing to shift my own paradigm about facilitation. The word comes from the Latin facere - to make. From it also derives the word “facile”“(easy). A facilitator then is someone who makes things easier but does not do the work for you. It is someone who can move the process along and who can create momentum for the doing and making. To step into a facilitator role when unnecessary is not helpful. Likewise, not to step into a facilitator role when it is necessary is also unhelpful. The challenge is to know that difference. Throughout our study different coinquirers have facilitated conversation, created new dialectics for the group to discuss, and led us closer and deeper into each other's narratives and beliefs. I stood at the boundaries of leader, musician, researcher, facilitator, coinquirer, and friend. I was authorized by my colleagues to lead them over the threshold to break the fourth wall due to my holding of all those identities and roles. I had to use myself as instrument to activate the leader/musician/facilitator in me, make a move to step into more directive authority to move the group past the door that they were wanting to go through, and for which they needed a little more encouragement. I am recognizing my own role as a facilitator at a critical transition point, which contributed to our community leaping into making our original workshops.
The caveat here is that this learning was done after the fact in a meta-analytic phase. I had mentors and other support systems in place who helped me view the study from an angle that I had not considered. They lent my own learning stability, which enabled me to shift my own paradigm.

**The Great Divides**

Up until the end of the second workshop (Cycle 3) we had considered our own personal practice in music and had created a collective theory: that music was powerful, multifaceted, held dialectics, and had contained data on our identity and culture. We felt safe with our group, contained, and intrigued. We had cocreated our collective theory of what music helped us do. When it came time to consider bridging our theory into practice, however, we felt anxious about it. Despite the anxiety we were able to bridge our collective theory into our collective practice. From a methodological standpoint, a collaborative action inquiry puts all stakeholders on the same level. The researcher is a coinquirer as are their participants. Considering our willingness to enter in the design phase, our reluctance and repeated resistance to it prior to the final workshop, I wondered what made the difference. Here, I recall my struggle with role, and finally deciding to become more directive and task oriented. Up until this point I have used the word “collective” interchangeably with “group” to describe our conglomerate of coinquirers. This shift in role is an adaptive moment that relates to relational dynamics in collective leadership situations (Uhl-Bien & Ospina, 2012; Ospina et al., 2020). Leadership emerges out of a group in a way that is situational and needs-based, grounded in a trusting relationship that allows authority shifts. My own shifting into a different role was a result of our co-created collective leadership. In Ospina’s words (2020)
However, contemporary constructivist social theories place actors in a more dynamic social reality, where roles are emergent and flexible rather than fixed. That is, roles have tentative and porous boundaries; they are continuously negotiated and co-produced, as social actors interact. (p. 448)

My reluctance, however, was in part because I had trouble holding my roles as a spectrum of ways to express coleadership, rather than separate defined roles with impermeable boundaries. There was a leadership dialectic in regards to roles that could be quite fluid in its manifestations. In truth, it was difficult for me to stay in what I interpreted as the coinquirer role as well, since I also fulfilled the third role as the researcher. Stepping into a more directive authority in this study in that moment felt like I was taking a great risk and caused me some anxiety. It is only later, in reflection, that I recognized that there was the space in between my three roles that created a liminal field for me to navigate smoothly within if I so chose to. I recognized that my roles were not static constructs in practice. They were only static in theory and by my assumption of what I had thought the role to be. In practice, negotiating the statis became suffocating. I resisted this by stepping out of the bounds of what I imagined a coinquirer to be, but in turn helped to cocreate the conditions in which we could make our process come to life in practice (and for practicing process).

Going back into the data during the meta-analysis, I became aware of the dynamics in the group and my shifting of roles. A new narrative presented itself: In the process of inquiry, we felt quite unmoored. The holding environment contained the process, but it was not enough to help the coinquirers feel grounded enough for them to use music on their own, nor were my invitations successful in encouraging my colleagues to find their own internal musician and step into designing with music for leadership development. As Jaime’s quote showed in Theme 2,
I think if you're grounded in a medium that you feel comfortable because of the background you have in painting or music, whatever, it gives you a foundation to then explore. But if you go out there with no medium or no expertise in a field, then it's really difficult because then you don't have a grounding.

In Workshop 2 (Cycle 3) we had also discussed the role of artists at the boundary. Artists who were able to push the boundaries of gender, for example, as Hoby’s statement shows:

So like, if Lil Nas X can show up in a ball gown, he's creating a space for someone else to just show up. ... The artists can push a boundary further than someone without that, like publicly recognized identity.

The group perceived these artists to have the authority to take the risk of pushing a societal boundary. Finally, our trust with each other. As Belle voiced in Theme 4, the group still saw me as the leader. They also felt a connection with me ahead of the study and had begun to form a network of trust with each other through the study itself. Early in the analysis I had created this model of our process (see Chapter 3, Figure 2). The new conceptualization follows (Figure 19):
Figure 19

*Conceptual Model of the Process in the Study*

The circles along the edge are us coinquirers as we entered the study. The swirling dynamics in the middle of the funnel depicts the process that our group engaged in. It represents the confusing, amorphous feeling of being in a field of emergence. The process is held in our holding environment, illustrated in by the edges of the funnel. The funnel splits into three branches but remains part of the whole. These three branches illustrate the three workshops my coinquirers designed.

Looking at this model, I realize how disorientating this makes me feel, even now. As a group we were able to hold each other in conversation, because exploring ideas and accessing our own experiences was something that my coinquirers were skilled in. We taught and coached our students and clients routinely on exploring beyond cognitive boundaries. The boundary my coinquirers were not able to breach on their own, however, was stepping into the experience of music as practice. The prospect caused cognitive dissonance and disorientation in the group. In this disorientation the group needed an anchor, something that would lend enough stability and confidence for them to step into the space of making workshops with music. The data shows that my coinquirers leaned on me as such a stabilizing factor to their leap into action. I held the space
steady enough for them to feel safe to funnel them into the design phase. Our communal closing with Deep River introduced the concept of participation in music, which scaffolded into an experiential portion with the drum circle, which enabled them to try on the role of a musical leadership facilitator. I was given the authority to lead them across the boundary. The image below shows the process model above with the addition of a stabilizing unit, which was the role that I fulfilled for the group across this threshold (see Figure 20). Once the groups had started, I was not needed anymore. The group became independent from my guidance, and I was there to hold space for the process.

**Figure 20**

*Conceptual Model of the Process in the Study with Stabilization Leading into Design Phase*

As Kravitz said, “I think Paz would be the proxy for actually being in process.” In the same way, I also became the proxy for music, as the only one who had more extensive training in it. As Belle stated in Theme 4, I was also the perceived leader of the group. Finally, even though some coinquirers knew each other ahead of the study, I was the relational common denominator amongst our group. I also sat at the boundaries of musician - leader - friend - facilitator - coinquirer - researcher. Embodying these multiple identities, I was able to pivot into the role that
the group needed to enter into their practical work: a leader in a directive facilitator role, who was an expert authority and a trusted member of the community. It seems that, to do the work of shifting paradigms, examining dialectics, and distilling action in this journey examining music and leadership development, we needed our entire group to enter with curiosity and a willingness for being in process. We then needed to cocreate our own holding environment to contain this process. We needed leadership to ground this process so that we did not feel directionless. I became this person because I sat at the boundaries of being an artist, who has authority to push boundaries; was trusted, was authorized, and needed to lead. The following figure (Figure 21) illustrates the dynamics that were alive around my role negotiation described in this section. The illustration centers my internal process. The liminal space between the roles expresses the space in which roles can be negotiated. All roles are present at the same time; however, the art lies in being adaptive to the situation in shifting our centers of gravity towards the area that is needed most by the group. Also consider that the other shapes are the coinquirers who also had their internal processes occurring at the same time. I believe that being able to do the shifting with intention is one way that leadership is an art and a craft.
All the while my coinquirers were also going through a parallel process of managing and expanding their boundaries (represented in the hexagons). We were all trying to negotiate our roles, our identities, our own assumptions and conceptions. Coinquirers took on cofacilitator roles, observed, reflected, challenged, and synthesized. Shifting our own paradigms felt risky and vulnerable. Our cocreated space allowed us to self-authorize for taking these risks and allowed us to shift together. Yet anxiety and puzzlement lived alongside curiosity, wonder and joy. Our journeys all mirrored each other as we tried to move through the process of processing the polarities that we uncovered, and which I spoke to in Theme 2 (Expanding). Beneath (or around) the elements we created dialectics from Theme 2, however, there were some significant others
that we were also grappling with at the same time, though sometimes not overtly. Figure 22 shows some of the constructs we were juxtaposing and negotiating:

**Figure 22**

*Juxtapositions Negotiated in the Inquiry Process*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Professional</td>
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<td>Serious engagement</td>
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Ospina et al. (2008) pointed towards collaborative inquiry as a significant method to work the space between a divide; a statement that we had proven to be true in our study. Ospina et al. argue that collaborative inquiry creates conditions in which the space between the academic and the practitioner could be bridged and become a dialectic. This is essentially what our group had done: to bridge the gap between thinking about music for leadership development to designing with it. However, the complexities are exponentially more difficult to manage when one considers all the different polarities that were alive in our holding environment. Bringing together music and leadership was indeed a large shift, and a significant one, yet it was not the only one. We had bridged the divide between music and leadership with our own meaning-
making, bridged the gap between theory and practice by engaging in shifts in authority patterns and leaning on each other, had begun to find play and joy in what we were cocreating, realized that our product was our process. However, we were stumped with the “us” and “them” distinction. Now that we had “done it” we were anxious about taking it “out there.” How would they take us up? How would they react to us?

Music and Leadership: A Craft in Their Own Rights

As indicated in the last section, I personally see leadership as a creative process and wholeheartedly agree with Taylor and Ladkin (2014) that leadership is a craft. Within leadership scholarship this concept is at hope in the field of organizational aesthetics (Ladkin, 2008; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). It follows that leadership must be taught, fostered, and practiced like sports, art of music (Heifetz, 2009; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Organizational aesthetics approaches leadership from the lens of leadership as art. Our group had accepted a connection between music and leadership, but they had not accepted leadership as an artform.

Music is an art and a craft. This is not a new idea. To invoke Bach again: He was a craftsman. Composing was his craft. Whether a leadership development activity includes music, another arts-based method, or any other modality that has no art involved, the design of the activity itself takes careful thought and creative thinking, attention to the needs and values of the stakeholders, and self-reflexivity. The additional challenge in our study was the centering of music as an arts-based methodology. This put us into a position where we were shaken up and challenged to use something completely new and different to most of us for the work. We had to accept that we were artists in our own craft, and while my fellow coinquirers had accepted their leadership identity, they had just begun to discover that they had access to a musician identity as
well. While they accepted the connection between music and leadership, they had not accepted themselves as artisans.

**Summary: Chapter 4**

This collaborative action inquiry explored how leadership development facilitators of varying levels of musical experience might utilize music in their work. It wondered about the way the coinquirers experienced the study and considered the effects of the study on their work in their professional contexts. The collaborative action inquiry consisted of five action research cycles with 14 participants, exploring themes such as creating a supportive environment, navigating diverse perspectives, experiential learning, and overcoming barriers to integrating music into leadership development.

Theme 1 highlighted the importance of creating a safe and inclusive space for personal and communal growth. Music acted as a critical factor in creating and maintaining a container for our work. This theme also emerged that cocreating our holding environment (our womb) was imperative in fostering our sense of connection and belonging. It also addressed challenges around social dynamics and access to music, while recognizing music's potential for empowerment.

Theme 2 drew a parallel to an orchestra’s warm up process: it focused on the group's development of social and cognitive expansion, as coinquirers began to negotiate a new communal understanding of the breadth and depth that music could contain in our lives and our leadership. This theme emphasized that the group became aware of being in process, then embraced diverse perspectives, fostered by vulnerability in our dialogues. Theme 2 also showed that appropriate scaffolding was a crucial factor to consider when suggesting music as a leadership intervention.
Theme 3 explored experiential learning through practical activities. We engaged in a collective drum circle and designed three original leadership workshops. It marks a moment in which the inquiry of the group extended into accepting music as an actionable way of teaching leadership development. The findings in this theme also show that the coinquirers experienced joy in moving from theory to practice.

Theme 4 delved into the challenges and barriers faced in expanding the use of music in leadership development beyond the study. It addressed initial doubts and hesitancy among the coinquirers, as well as the complexity of managing multiple roles within the inquiry and research process. The study showed the potential of music as a powerful and multifaceted tool for leadership development while acknowledging the complexities and challenges involved in integrating it into professional practice. I pointed towards the richness in learning about processes in a collaborative inquiry and the role of music in supporting such a methodology.
CHAPTER 5

RESEARCH QUESTIONS, IMPLICATION, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

_in Studio (Rez Abbasi & Josh Feinberg’s NAYA BAAZ (4tet), 2023)_

I offer this stunning improvisational, multicultural performance to start this chapter with a sense of drive. Guitarist Rez Abbasi lives at the edge of jazz, world music, new age. In this video he collaborates with three other musicians in an energetic quartet. I was taken by the parallels this recording has with the study. The quartet is made up from a diverse range of people, playing equally diverse ranges of instruments. Abbasi plays an electric guitar, his collaborators perform on an Indian Sitar, a drum set that includes a large tribal frame drum and ceremonial bells. The bass is carried by a cello with five strings instead of the traditional 4. The complex rhythms and modal harmonies allow for each of these four layers to shine through and keep their individual characteristics alive while at the same time combining into a synergetic texture. Upon closer listening you may hear that the Western guitar takes cues from the Indian sitar, and vice versa. The result is a powerful metaphor to how we can exist in groups while maintaining our own identities.

Chapter 4 presented the findings of the study in four themes. Using the voices of the coinquirers I narrated and discussed the story of the study as it unfolded along the lines of music, leadership, and as consequence, leadership development. Through the process of collaborative action inquiry, I found that music yielded multiple benefits for leadership processes. I also discovered that non-professional musicians could be empowered to use music as a design tool in leadership development designs if supported adequately. The findings also revealed that this adequate support required navigating a complex network of physical and psychological needs, including a collaborative formation of a holding environment, ability to create a strong feeling of
trust and belonging in the group, and careful negotiation of roles in groups and individuals, particularly in the case of the researcher. This chapter follows up on these findings by responding to the three research questions for this study. It also offers implications for theory and practice, suggesting future research and action.

**Reorienting to the Themes and Research Questions**

I had indicated in the opening of this chapter that themes would be braiding in and out of each other as they relate to elements from multiple research questions at the same time. I have therefore decided to hold off answering the research questions until this point. The musical image in my mind is that of a four-part choir or a string quartet that sounds in layers of four, but that spins forward in their own line. Voices can dip in and out of prominence, but they all hold an important role in the wholeness of the piece. To reach back to the visual of the braid: the four themes for represent the strands that became the braid. Sections dance in and out of each other. In this portion, I consider the research questions in relation to the themes. Another image is the metaphor of a two-sided tree. The coinquirers form the roots, giving the tree life and pulling in nutrients in form of the group member’s identities, lived experiences, and paradigms. Music and leadership each comprise a one side of a trunk: the two topics come towards each other and making a connection. The original workshops grow out of this double helix, but a barrier is experienced at the boundary of the holding environment. I worked in ChatGPT (DALL-E) to generate the following image and created the following figure according to the themes of the study.
The themes and research questions are listed again below.

**Themes**

Theme 1: The Womb: Holding and being held (Cocreating a sacred space)

Theme 2: Expanding and warming up: Processing through dissonance.

Theme 3: Birth: And the orchestra begins to play (Braving the unknown together)

Theme 4: Separation anxiety: Managing complexities in roles.
Research Questions

Research Question 1: How do leadership development facilitators with varying musical abilities use music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

Research Question 2: What is the experience of these facilitators as collaborative inquirers into the use of music as a facilitation tool for leadership development?

Research Question 3: How, if at all, does experiencing the process of exploring music as a facilitation tool for leadership development shift the participants’ professional practice?

Research Question 1: How Do Leadership Development Facilitators with Varying Musical Abilities Use Music as a Facilitation Tool for Leadership Development?

The answers to this question came from all four themes. Theme 1 offers the answer to the conditions that we needed for using music. This cocreation of our holding environment was critically important as it allowed us to build an aesthetic workspace (Sutherland, 2013) in which our engagement could take shape. In so doing, we leaned on a culture of reciprocal care, our sharing and holding of lived experiences as they were told through our music. We created a sense of inclusivity and belonging. Theme 2 highlighted how critical being committed to being in process was. It was important to be open, curious, and be comfortable with having a novice mindset. In doing so we navigated differences and transformed them into dialectics. It was in this phase that the holding environment became of paramount importance because the viewpoints that we shared with each other were able to be turned into dialogue rather than an argument. The coinquirers stepped into roles of listeners, observers, assumed voices of critical thought, helped the group track complex conversations by summarizing and reflecting, and created momentum through collective leadership that allowed for shifts in understanding. As the primary researcher, I then stepped into a more directive leadership role towards the end of the second workshop.
(Cycle 3) and became a quasi-conductor to the orchestra. Using experiential modalities, I assisted the group to find their footing as designers of their own musical leadership development workshops.

These collective leadership dynamics paved the way for the most product-oriented answer to this first research question, which Theme 3 offers: our group used music as a way to elicit leadership development learning. We did this through using music as a projective device in one group where the coinquirers invited leaders to find instruments that expressed their leadership identities. The same technique was employed in the team that created a workshop around experiencing joy and vulnerability for executive leaders. The final group used a specific musical instrument, a spring drum, as a way to distill the essence of the embodied feeling of a holding environment, likening it to being in a womb. In our use of music for this work, we as a group of coinquirers were making artifacts (workshops), thus utilizing music as an intervention to leadership development (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). Themes 1 and 2 collectively answered this research question by speaking to the comfort and dependence we had on our community. The feeling of trust that embraced us originated from our shared context of the university, the similar training we had received as coaches and instructors, and the coinquirers preexisting connections with me. Leaning on this we were able to take risks to experiment with leadership musically. As Theme 4 showed, however, this reliance on our holding environment did surface reservations to take the learning out of our study. Coinquirers were not sure that they could replicate the same conditions for the groups and individuals in their professional spaces. I want to note here that these trepidations were linked with consciously using music as a leadership development tool in the role of a musician-leader. As the findings also show, every coinquirer had also used music (or silence) to facilitate their lessons and workshops before the study began. Creating space with
music was thus not foreign to them, however, stepping into a musician-leader identity was. The answer then to this first research question lies somewhere in between what coinquirers had already done before the study, and what they had cocreated during the study. Time and further study will show how this new awareness might shift my coinquirer’s musical “doing” in their professional contexts.

**Research Question 2: What is the Experience of These Facilitators as Collaborative Inquirers into the Use of Music as a Facilitation Tool for Leadership Development?**

Research Question 2 spoke to the experience of the coinquirers within our process. It inquires about the feelings, sensations, and impressions that we had while being in the study with each other. Research Questions 1 and 2 are connected. As alluded to above, we insisted on cocreating our space to contain our explorations. We had to strike a balance between feeling whole in ourselves and whole as a group. This is exemplified by moments in Theme 2 (Expanding and Warming Up) where Kravitz brings in his embodied feelings of rebellion when he identifies conformity in the military cadence, which were championed by the four coinquirers with military backgrounds. The ensuing conversation allowed both parties to realize that music was not either or but could mean different things to different people according to their own experiences. A similar dynamic existed in Eliana’s preference for silence, which she brought in at every workshop. This attention to music led to our shifting into seeing silence as a kind of music, rather than what music is not. In one moment in Workshop 2 (Cycle 3) we even stopped and listened to the sounds of our room and of the space outside our classroom.

Other answers that emerged came from all four themes. There were feelings of enormous joy, playfulness, and wonder. We experienced moments of contemplation, reflectiveness, and transformation. We detected an increase in our awareness around the way we had used music
ourselves intentionally and unintentionally and discovered an expansion of our capacity to hold our own identities and that of others through the use of music. On the shadow side we also experienced confusion, frustration, a feeling of being in suspension, a pull towards wanting to have clarity while also knowing that being in the unknown was part of our process, and a critical part in exercising leadership.

Research Question 3: How, If at All, Does Experiencing the Process of Exploring Music as a Facilitation Tool for Leadership Development Shift the Participants’ Professional Practice?

The answers to the third research question are still arriving. Our findings showed that there were barriers to these shifts being enacted in the coinquirers outside environments. Overt musical intervention seemed to be doubtful. It is clear, however, that there were significant shifts in our group’s thinking about music, about its relevance to leadership, and our capacity to use it as an option for leadership teaching and learning. Coinquirers stated in our sessions that they had become more keenly aware of the effect that playing music in their classroom had and were more intentionally employing it for their students. However, every group that designed the workshops had hesitations about taking it out of our circle. The shift has then been detectable internally within each individual and within our collective. I want to reiterate here that learning and processing takes time. Using music in this way also takes comfortability and practice to continue growing capacity.

Since the end of the study, however, and at the writing of this section, one coinquirer, Kravitz, sent me this reflection in response to a full draft of the dissertation that I had sent all coinquirers for purposes of member checking and feedback. I had heard back from most coinquirers regarding their portraits. None required changes. Kravitz was the only one who wrote a reflection following the sharing of the draft. He was not present for the design phase of the
workshops because he had to leave Workshop 3 (Cycle 4) for another commitment. I will share his reflection in the following section. For context, at the time of this writing he was a director in the nonprofit institute housed in our university. The reflection he offered referred to a summit with nonprofit leaders from all over town, in which he, I and one other facilitator used music to invite over a hundred leaders and board members into an embodied expression of their leadership, not dissimilar to the drum circle we experienced together in the study. Kravitz wrote in an email:

The beginnings of some recent reflections: Though unconscious and unplanned, I actually have integrated music within my recent facilitation of curated experiences-- in partnership with my musical coconspirators of course :) Embodied Leadership for Liberative Artistry (ELLA) made its debut at the year's Governance Symposium with music (and creation of music) being the connecting tissue of the experience. While our intention was to create space for the exploration of embodied practice, there was an assumption that the experience would both prioritize and lead with moving the body (as a dancer or martial artist would); in actuality, of what was expressed through the embodied experience was far more palatable when transmitted through instruments-- an extension of the body. As your dissertation laid the foundation for, it was only achievable through collective efforts-- through both facilitators (who identified as musical artists and assumed the roles of conductors) and the "audience" (who assumed the role of symphony). Learning is still arriving...

It seems important to note here that none of my realizations about owning my conductorship had made it into the draft that Kravitz had read. Instead, his reflection had, quite separate from my own, arrived at the same conclusion: that there was a parallel process between
the role that I took in operative moments in our group dynamic, and the roles that we shared in
the symposium a few months after the study’s end. Through this experience in the symposium,
he and I had found supporting data to the study: that music offered a bridge between body and
expressing embodiment, that this was evoked in collaboration with facilitators with expert
authorities and skill (dance and music), and in a context of a community of nonprofit organizers.
In reflection on this event, I remember that there were a great number of participants who
engaged in the experience, but also some that allowed themselves to observe.

In the example above, learning had extended into spaces outside of the study after all. I
was called into the space to help plan and facilitate 2 days ahead of the event. For my own
learning: The study has affected the way that I engage in my teaching, my facilitation, and my
understanding of my identity as a leader. I have put more intentionality into the way I invite my
students to create moments of inquiry and dialogue. I have incorporated cocreating a holding
environment into my pedagogy and have helped my students process through the reasons why
we spend time on this. I have welcomed moments of discomfort in our discussions and have
supported them in managing their (ongoing) moments of unease with each other’s differing
perspectives by shifting my center of gravity in my roles towards instructor/facilitator as opposed
to a person holding space. Reflections of other coinquirers have not appeared on the horizon yet,
and I wonder if and how their learning has continued. This is the subject of another study.

Implications and Future Research

The following pages offer the implications on future research. I consider implications for
theory (research) and for practice (education, DEIB, facilitation, and coaching).
Expanding Beyond the Echo Chamber

Taylor and Ladkin (2009) proposed transferable skills (from music to leadership) as a main benefit of ABR. Indeed, some of the scholars in this literature review are artists in their own right. Ladkin has a background in music and is an oboist, Taylor an M.A. in performing arts, Heifetz is a cellist, Jansson a choral conductor, I am a vocalist and musicologist. It is safe to say that our motivation to engage with music as musicians and as leadership scholars greatly influences the way we see the world. Music has direct relevance to our true self and motivates our efforts to try to find the music and flow in other fields. In this study, we surfaced that music had deep relevance to all of us, regardless of our varying levels of musical training. The intense drive towards music is powerful. It can generate depth in perception and a way of seeing and knowing that is out-of-the-box. Of course, this also contributes to personal biases. Therefore, it is so important to widen the field of scholars in this branch of leadership studies to scholars outside of music. While the work done is essential it is also in danger of preaching to the proverbial choir. Expanding beyond that boundary offers a gateway for music to become more established in the leadership canon. This offers numerous implications and recommendations:

Firstly, the leadership development field should find ways of engaging leadership development facilitators who do not identify as musicians into working with music as a way to provoke leadership learning. As I identified in the literature review, arts-based methods, let alone music, was left out completely from two seminal literature reviews in leadership development (Day, 2000; Day et al. 2013; Vogel et al., 2013). More creative ways of engaging in leadership development need to be elevated. This study showed that music was truly a universal experience in this group of coinquirers. It also showed that most of these coinquirers shifted their initial perceptions of music to include music into the realm of leadership development. While every
person has different ways of engaging in the world, this indicates that there is a critical mass of individuals who are already dedicated to leadership development work who may benefit from an expansion to their toolbox. The coinquirers in this study, for example, voiced a desire to come back together again. These individuals would develop more confidence in their demonstrated capacities for using music for leadership development through further practice and support. It should be noted that, I am calling for an awareness of using music and the arts as a leadership development provocation. With awareness and more knowledge through research we can act from a place of intention. There is no expectation that everyone will flock to using music once exposed to it. However, it is the invitation to join in that needs to be given. As the study indicates, this invitation may have to come from musicians first, but that the enthusiasm and empowerment for this work can be awakened in others by thoughtful facilitation and the upholding of the right conditions.

Closing the Gap

Research implications exist on the similar axis: to get out of the blind spot this work must be published in higher numbers. This work must be continued by a wider array of researchers from different disciplines. Collaborations between musician-leaders and other disciplines would yield fruitful results and contribute to a more colorful tapestry of music-and-leadership research. This is a call for institutions of learning to incorporate music and the arts into their leadership curricula. Creative ways of being might be normalized to such an extent that crossing the boundaries between music and leadership, for example, might not have seemed such a wide gap. Arts based methods are already well-established and well-researched yet have not been routinely applied to leadership learning (Adler, 2011; Nissley, 2002, 2004; Sutherland & Gosling, 2010; Taylor & Ladkin, 2009, 2014). I believe that this is a further indication of an artificial gap
between traditional leadership development practices and artful ways of enacting leadership learning. To begin to close this gap we have to further build awareness in the field to the existential value that arts-based methods bring to our work.

**Implications for Education, Training and Development**

Leadership development professionals can move within groups as instructors, facilitators, or consultants, and can also work one-on-one as coaches. The lessons from this study reinforced the following ways that groups and individuals wanted to be engaged with. These points may serve to build more awareness of our own practice.

1. The establishment of the container is of paramount importance. It is imperative for the group to co-construct their holding environment, transcending icebreaker activities. Rather, participants should be afforded the opportunity to cultivate their own network of relationships through engagement and dialogue. This process fosters mutual trust by encouraging individuals to share personal narratives, thus catalyzing a collective sense of trust and rapport. Consequently, the onus lies on the group to undertake this developmental work, rather than relying on external facilitation. This in turn may lead to a greater sense of ownership over their learning.

2. The facilitator should familiarize themselves with the group dynamics and is encouraged to shift their technique situationally. While the facilitator may inherently assume a leadership role, this flexibility may facilitate the emergence of collective leadership, enabling more equitable participation. This integration ensures that the facilitator becomes an organic component of the group dynamic, contributing to the cohesion and efficacy of the collective learning.
3. The facilitator is tasked with thoughtful planning, continuous reflection, and recalibration to support the collaboration with the group. By maintaining an environment conducive to the unfolding process, the facilitator may gently hold the group as they find solutions to their goals. This iterative process of planning and reflection serves to nurture the group's cohesion and coherence, facilitating the realization of collective objectives.

4. The facilitator is balancing their own role, that of the participants, and their organizational needs as they meet the clients where they are. This requires the facilitator to be malleable, and unattached to any one specific set of objectives. Individuals and groups are to be held with gentleness and with positive regard. The facilitator has to actively engage their entire being to be present with and as part of the group.

5. Finally, the facilitator must navigate a field in the liminal space between multiple roles. They need to be aware of where their center of gravity needs to shift to in regards to role (coinquirer/friend vs. expert/leader/facilitator). This enables them to respond to the group’s needs, catalyzing progress, and process towards action. Likewise, moments of followership will also arise where a leader/facilitator will find it most appropriate to follow someone else’s lead in the group.

**Potential for Work in DEIB**

One distinguishing feature of the group of scholars who participated in this collaborative inquiry was their diverse range of life experiences. As demonstrated in Theme 2, we approached our investigation with openness and curiosity rather than judgment. Our co-created environment provided a safe space to intertwine our individual perspectives into a collective narrative, embracing our differences as integral to our exploration. While efforts towards DEIB have gained traction in recent years, organizations have introduced initiatives and training programs,
both online and in-person, to foster diversity and inclusivity among employees. However, the outcomes have been inconsistent, often for the complex issues that intersect in this area (Nunn, 2021; Rossi et al., 2022). Universities may encourage students to join a club to find inclusion and belonging but struggle to reach those students who do not feel like they are wanted in those groups (Nunn, 2021). Organizations may diversify their employee pool by hiring along various minoritized identities yet have no structures in place to support these individuals (Rossi et al., 2022). A major challenge in DEIB work is precisely the issue of diversity itself: how do you support people from diverse backgrounds in a way that honors those histories, yet allows everyone to feel a sense of belonging in the collective organization? New approaches would expand the lens for DEIB work.

Our study became an exercise in processing through this challenge. Our group was able to reach a state in which we each felt belonging without having to give up parts of our own identity. Indeed, we added our identities to our collectiveness resulting in a new configuration that was greater than the sum of its parts. Using music in our inquiry allowed for ourselves to remain intact as “me” became “we.” Music became a way to invite the experience of processing through difference. This further underscores the need to prioritize diverse voices and a diversity of lived experience in the leadership space in DEIB.

The simultaneous holding of individuality in the collective has implications in any organizational setting, also outside of DEIB. Organizations are conglomerations of people, each with their own lived experience. It is critical for the survival of the organization to align its goal and purpose, their task, with the stakeholders who benefit from the work as receivers, and with those stakeholders who do the work, the employees. There is constant negotiation between losing self and having the safety and protection of a group (Bion, 1961). Mapped onto the
organizational level, the challenge is to find ways in which everyone in the organization can be seen and express themselves to their fullest desire while the needs and character of the organization as a whole can be maintained. This requires attention to the fluidity of the dynamics within the organization on a system level (Stapley, 2018; Wells, 1995). It requires people in power positions to be comfortable with emergent processes as they work towards future-facing solutions. These organizations need support from leadership development experts who can meet the great challenges of the moment with an equal level of creativity in their interventions.

**Interdisciplinary Research**

Given that this study reached areas in music, leadership development, and collective leadership opportunities for interdisciplinary research are ripe. Next, I present a few areas that could intersect with this research.

**Music Therapy**

Belle commented to me that she found the study “healing.” This created an opening for this implication. While this study made connections between leadership, leadership development and music, another interdisciplinary opportunity exists along the lines of pedagogy and clinical practice: Music therapy. This field is an established clinical area using music as a therapeutic device (Michel & Pinson, 2012; Odell-Miller, 2019). This was an intervention method that came into its own in post-World War II years to help returning soldiers cope with their traumas (Michel & Pinson, 2012). Music supports many of the same considerations relevant to leadership, such as communication and social emotional capacity. Many of the same questions we asked in our study, such as “what does music do, and how does it do it?” are questions that are considered in music therapy (Ansdell, 2016; Odell-Miller, 2019). This field is directly relevant at the boundary of an application of music in leadership development and would be one
direction for future study. One joint that already exists between this study and music therapy is through the work of Tia DeNora (Ansdell & DeNora, 2016) who also studied the application of music as a therapeutic device in a community context. The connections made in this dissertation move in the areas of leadership and musicology, and a joining of the subjects in this study with the field of music therapy could be made more vivid.

**Listening Capacity**

Jansson (2018) presents the choral conductor’s way of listening as a parallel process of listening and guiding as the musical piece progresses. For Jansson (2018), the space between conductor and choir becomes an intersubjective space in which the expression of the piece is negotiated in real time. Listening as a leadership capacity is another nexus of connection between music and leadership that merits exploration. Listening to music has been a topic in music cognition and musical aesthetics, musical listening and listening in leadership have yet to come together (Copland, 2011; Huron, 2006). Listening and knowing is relevant to the area of group relations (system psychodynamics). Musical language is used as a matter of routine in group relations and in leadership to express deep level processes and to understand dynamic currents in human interaction. This connection, however, has not been overtly named and studied yet.

**Music as Conceptual Framework for Integral Systems**

There are opportunities for music to serve as a conceptual framework for integral systems. Music is an integral artform, incorporating single melodies that are embraced by harmony from others. Musical phrases combine, contrast and converse with each other, their dynamic currents weaving in and out as if in a tapestry, presenting a holistic whole. It would be possible to pull a parallel from integral musical processes to integral theory exemplified by the
work of developmental scholars such as Cook-Greuter (1995), Kegan (1982), and Wilber (1997).

This path also connects with the work of Heifetz (2009), Scharmer (2009), and Senge (2004).

As we have shown, music is a way to become more authentically connected with yourself. Leading from an authentic place will empower individuals to approach challenges with empathy. Moreover, the individuals in our study recognized themselves in each other within the group through musical parallels. Studies in this area would lend themselves to multiple methodological approaches. This study has also shown that ABR and action research/collaborative action inquiry are strong contenders for studies in this area. Taking this route has added to the literature in ABR and AR as it relates to music and leadership, which is still lacking.

**Beyond Western Paradigms**

The conversation in music and leadership is in the global north. This mirrors leadership studies being dominated from this area. It is not surprising that some of the more robust research comes out of Europe, Norway with Jansson, Ladkin in England, Boerner and Streit in Germany, D’Ausilio in Italy. These are all countries with a very strong culture in what we call classical music, exemplified by the music of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven. Furthermore, research is done mostly on Western ensembles: concert choirs, symphony orchestras. This narrows the field to classical repertoire from the 18th century onward because conductors were not common before then. Studies on music in countries outside of the Western musical tradition, or even in earlier times than the 18th-century would yield even wider arrays of data on collective ensembles. A non-Western example is Animawan and Koentjoro’s (2021) study of leadership in a Javanese Gamelan ensemble. In this study dimensions such as aesthetics, sensitivity, egalitarianism, and collective listening were evaluated. This split between East and West can be seen in the division
between musicology (the study of Western music sociology) and ethnomusicology (the study of non-Western music sociology), between global north and global south. It is a symptom of the tendency to binary paradigms. Expanding leadership studies to include music globally has the potential to close this liminal space between eastern and western paradigms.

Our inquiry yielded a plethora of musical experiences all over the world. Coinquirers shared their views on ancient music systems in China, had a parent with a metal band, were dedicated to K-Pop, J-Pop, Mando-pop, had deep connections with salsa and bachata, grew up with classical music and calypso, Prince, had dislikes towards Bob Dylan, respect for Michael Jackson, and a passion for Bach, listened to their car noises as music, or preferred silence. Each of these sound traditions were linked to memories, formative moments, and played a role in our engagement with each other. Research and leadership development work needs to have a diverse and varied representation such as this and more so that we can represent the viewpoints of different ways of being and therefore, different ways of leading.

**Listening with Your Entire Being: Coaching and Facilitation**

The wrestling with role and the instances of refusal or diversion from the coinquirers to step into the practice of using music gave me pause. I reflected on this dynamic for weeks during the study and during the data analysis phase. What was happening? My self-critical mind said that I was being too impatient, and that I was exerting too much authority. I was pushing too hard, and the group refused to follow. This is all true, however, I also sensed that there was more going on that went much deeper. There was a paradigm that I had to shift; I just did not quite know what it was yet. It was a conversation with one of my advisors and a series of group experiences in which I acted as a participant, professor, or student, that I finally understood: the group was not refusing me, they were consulting to me. The group was speaking to me, telling me what they were ready
for and what not. In group-speak, part of our group as a whole was saying, “not yet.” In reflecting on this, I realize that I was distracted by my worrying about the logistics of the study (food, setup, parking permits, time boundaries) and also concerned about not showing up as a good enough coinquirer/facilitator/researcher. It was only in repeated reflection that I was able to distill the most important skill a person working with individuals and groups has to exhibit: Listening with your entire being. A critical facilitator note here: In the meta-analytic phase in Chapter 4, Theme 4 I had stated a new awareness about my personal relationship with my leadership identity had surfaced through the feedback process on the dissertation. Consequently, this illustrated to me that I had to listen with my entire being, but that I could not do that at the expense of shying away from stepping into authority when it was necessary. Listening with your entire being is as much an intrapersonal as it is an interpersonal process.

This holistic mode of listening is not a new concept in coaching circles. The frequent presence pauses in the chapter illustrate moments when we can reset and refocus. The words “being present” are used to describe a state of being fully “there” (Scharmer, 2009; Senge et al., 2008; Silsbee, 2008). But what this study has made clear to me is that being present to others, especially being present in groups, is an intensely active process that happens without a single word. Silsbee (2008) speaks of connecting through the heart, a way of sensing connection or sympathetic vibration with another person. Senge et al. (2008) speaks of presence as a state of being connected, open, fully aware. A coach or facilitator must remember that, in Riordan’s (2023) words, “The synergy of a group is as important- if not more important- than the talent of the individual” (p. 377). Synergy being a fluid state in which individual talents combine to be more than the sum of its parts. This speaks to the facilitator needing consistent awareness of themselves as part of a group. The conductor is indeed a specialized member of the group. They are just as
specialized as all other members of the group, who bring their own histories to the fore when co-
creating a new whole. As such, the group dynamic is at its best in synergy. Note that synergy is
different from harmony. Synergy denotes a reciprocal relationship that is always in process, while
harmony may be construed as a state. The co-creation of our holding environment was therefore
crucial, to give us the space and trust to play our own frequencies through our stories, and to find
synergy with each other in our combined song.

Could we not have done this with any topic? How did music serve this synergy? How did
music help us reflect this process? As was discussed in Chapter 4, I had become the embodiment
of music in our group and was given authority to lead the group towards experimentation through a
process of inquiry. Could this have happened without my musical grounding? The reluctance my
coinquirers showed at the end of the study suggests not. I must admit that, initially, this conclusion
came as a bit of a shock. It meant that people with no secure grounding in music (like Jaime stated
in Theme 2) may not continue to use music as a tool for leadership development without support,
even though they have had an experience designing effective workshops. It meant that I might
have been a decisive factor in facilitating the group towards the design process because I held
music in the group. This put my initial hope of spreading music as a normative leadership
development tool into jeopardy. However, soon I realized that this also meant that this experience
could empower people in leadership positions to push whatever boundaries they felt grounded in.
Considering my coinquirers, these areas could include spirituality, dance, politics, brain
development, gender identity, social justice, DEIB, intercultural communication, the list goes on. I
was able to leverage my musician identity in relation to my leadership identity and our mutual
feeling of trust to motivate our community to explore our musical leadership in practice. Similarly,
others could use this learning about facilitating a collaborative inquiry to support others to push the boundary that they feel grounded in and passionate about. In Kravitz’ words:

Seeing you lean into it in its ambiguity and in its complexities, (and its) meaningfulness to you. And then providing that as a space, and then offering that to other people in a way that was, you know, palatable and encouraging. Yeah, I think that that was very encouraging to me to kind of lean more into that, you know, even more so than the music itself. But it's about expression. It's about creative expression. And how can you utilize what's innate? What's an innate gift to you and a talent to you, and offer that to the world?

So, the lesson here is about facilitating the self within the context of a collaborative inquiry and less about music. And still, music evoked powerful learning for every person in our group. The results from the study show that our prior experiences with music were rooted in our identities, even presented as mnemonic devices for critical portions in our lives. The listening to and hearing of a particular song, for example, brought up memories of the past, connections with culture and values. The way we felt our personal music touched our hearts, minds, and bodies. Some of the coinquirers embodied the music through dancing, which then became a way to express their true selves. We as individuals were called to listen to music with our whole being. When we entered our communal space with our music, we arrived as our whole selves. There are few spaces where you can arrive fully as the person that you are. Using our music as an artifact to share allowed for us to build trust relatively quickly. This deep listening continued underneath our spoken words as our process continued. Music helped to keep us in a state of listening with our entire beings and be fully present with each other. Music primes people to being fully present with themselves and others. It is from this place of communal presence that we were able to transition from “human being” to “human beings doing” by the last workshop (Cycle 4). Music
can help ground both the facilitator, the individuals, and the group as we co-create a whole new group composition. Music was also a way to invite being in process with a group of people. It offered ways to musically flow through our thoughts in conversation by allowing us to access our own lyricism. Music did not do this on its own. It needed the holding environment just as much as the coinquirers sharing in the space. As such, music was an active coinquirer and cofacilitator who asked, in their own musical language, “What am I? What else could there be? Why does it make you feel that way? What can you learn through me? Want to experiment?” So, it seems that the answer to the question, “What did music have to do with anything?” is “quite a lot and in many different ways.” And it took a field of influence and relationship cocreated by our group before and during the study to allow it the space to bloom within our collaborative inquiry. Music was managing many roles, just as we were. In the end, we gave music the authority to teach us because we trusted each other and trusted in our own lived experiences. Music served our synergy by being an integral part of our inquiry, and I was the one who felt called to offer the invitation in an act of leadership, emboldened by the passion I had for it.

**Closing**

This study grew out of my personal lived experience as a coach, facilitator, educator, and musician. It invites facilitators in the leadership development realm to discover music as a provocation to leadership learning regardless of their levels of musical experience. My hope is that this research will help to engage facilitators in music and instill some curiosity in using music and other arts-based methods as a matter of routine. I am also hopeful that the experience of having been part of this study will allow our group of coinquirers to grow their awareness to the relevance of music for every part of their lives including their leadership of self and others. The next and final chapter offers an invitation to join us on the road ahead.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION (CODA)

Music for a While - Henry Purcell

Poetry: John Dryden

Music for a while

Shall all your cares beguile.

Wond'ring how your pains were eas'd

And disdaining to be pleas'd

Till Alecto free the dead

From their eternal bands,

Till the snakes drop from her head,

And the whip from out her hands.

Music for a while

Shall all your cares beguile.

(linked performance: Reginald Mobley, countertenor and Brandon Acker, theorbo)

Music for a While was composed by Henry Purcell in 1692 to the poetry of John Dryden. It describes a scene in which Alecto, a fury, is soothed by music—just for a while. For that moment she becomes healed; the snakes on her heads drop and the whip in her hand falls. As Lawrence-King (2020) described, “The power of music to ‘beguile’ cares and ‘soothe the savage breast’ is part of the historical Science of the Four Humours. Music is Sanguine: the live-giving flow of warm blood, open-handed and generously offering love, courage, and hope. Music frees us from the cold, dry grip of Melancholy cares and pains.” As we have experienced in the study, however, music is able to hold melancholy and pain, and so much more all at the same time as it
holds love, courage, and hope. DeNora (2000) speaks to this when she states that music can create social unity for just a moment (xi). For that moment we can feel united with others in and through music. It is a shared experience, however fleeting, that connects us to the people around us. Our study was an exploration in how we could capitalize on these musical moments and, with consistency and communal support, learn to expand our thinking around music and leadership development.

And so, we have arrived at the final chapter in this study. Through this thesis we have offered a first look into how leadership development facilitators who did not claim a musician identity might use music for their work. Along the way we learned valuable lessons in facilitation, and in being part of a group in collective emergence. Through our inquiry process, we built a community, supported each other’s differences, and were able to turn our collective knowledge into actionable experiences, suitable for developing participants outside of our circle. Even though we had trepidations about taking our learning outside of our holding environment, we still emerged from the study having been aestheticized, artfully awakened (DeNora, 2000).

Despite all the learning it remains challenging to describe what exactly happened in our music and leadership exploration. DeNora (2000) stated, “... Music seems to be imbued with affect while, at the level of analysis, it seems perpetually capable of eluding attempts to specify just what kind of meaning music holds” (21). This seems to parallel a dynamic in leadership: In a forest full of leadership theories, it still is unclear what leadership actually is. Ladkin (2010) spoke to this phenomenon in quoting Alvesson and Sveningsson (2003): “The problem is exacerbated by its socially constructed nature, meaning it is held in the invisible, constructed, and cognitive worlds of those who experience it. ... ‘(W)hy is it that on close examination leadership often seems to ‘disappear’?’” (33). In essence these statements say that music and
leadership both share one aspect: their ineffability. Both disciplines become moving targets when one tries to define them in absolute terms. They seem to resist clarity. We know that they are, but we have a hard time explaining what they mean, or how they do what they do. Perhaps it is not necessary to see so concretely. I experienced our study like the way an astrophysicist might explore a black hole: you cannot see the black hole because its immense gravitational force eludes scientific instruments, yet we know that it is there because of the effects it has on its surroundings. Similarly, we can feel the pull of music and we can feel the call to leadership. They are both elements that are part of the life forces that move us. Music can help access the fluid and embodied portions that come alive in leadership processes. This study has shown that music can indeed combine with leadership. In concert with leadership development, we can deepen the way that we engage with leadership practices in our organizations.

This study became two studies in one. As we explored music for leadership development, we also explored how diverse people could understand each other. In a sense this became a meta-study in attempting to understand how we can understand each other through music, using a lens of collaboration and inquiry. Both of these strands braided in and out of each other, undivorceable through the entire project. Music held that which is us, and that which is the other in our respective truth without expecting us to really understand each other completely. What we cocreated was good enough to build and maintain a collaborative and curious atmosphere. Kevin wondered:

... How do we cultivate that intentionally back to mak(e) the connection between music and how it's supporting our capacity to be in the space or to lead and lead the people that we support?
Kevin asks a central question: now that we have awareness of music for leadership, how do we intentionally employ it? How can we use it to serve the people we lead? Perhaps most importantly we ask, how can we pluck up the courage to do this on our own outside of our community? The awareness we created and the community we established gave us the capacity to turn our newfound awareness into intention, intention into action. The power of music used intentionally for leadership creates a quasi-town square for music to become more than just a form of entertainment; it becomes a catalyst for dialogue, reconciliation, innovation, and self-expression. There the people in the town (the participants) can meet and gather, fight, and make up, realize blind spots and work through them, to let go and let come. By intertwining awareness, intention, and action, leaders can cultivate environments that inspire growth and collaboration. This study shows that to do this we needed the safety and courage cultivated in a community.

A side effect of this study is that I seem to have cocreated the community that I was yearning for. I felt lonely in this work of using music for leadership development. I felt lonely in how I was seeing music for the work. Even though I did not consciously set out to expand my own musical leadership community, I must have had that wish unconsciously. I feel like I have 13 other people who now understand me better. And this moves me. So, I echo my coinquirer’s statements that this study was refreshing, joyful, and unexpectedly healing. More of us may be able to experience the same feeling of belonging by grounding ourselves in music intentionally.

I invite other allies and curious parties in this work to join in the inquiry. The next task will be to support this learning to continue. This study is but one way to perpetuate the research and practice of music in service of leadership development. I plan to travel along this path as an academic and as a practitioner. I have planted the seed with 13 other leadership development professionals. I hope that I can continue to support the learning of my fellow coinquirers and
gather others to join us, whether this happens along the line of music, which I am indebted to, or the modality that grounds them in the core of their being. This study was one step into that direction of stepping into your passion in service of your own brand of leadership. I close with a quote from Rick Rubin’s (2023) book, *The Creative Act*:

“Wayne Dyer said that when you squeeze an orange, what comes out is orange juice. When you get squeezed, whatever comes out is what’s inside you. And part of that extract is the point of view you don’t even know you have. It’s baked into the art you make and the opinions you share.

Long after a work is completed, we may look back and understand our true point of view in it.

We don’t need to make a point of making a point. It will appear when it appears. The true point is already made in the innocent act of perception and creation. Knowing this is liberating” (Riordan, 2023, p. 179)

The learning continues… Thank you for being on this journey with us. :||
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Appendices
APPENDIX A

Figure 24

An Illustration of Our Process Generated by ChatGPT (DALL-E)

“Create an image that includes the compositional concept of counterpoint in the Baroque style. This will be an analogy to a group process in which each person holds their own line, but exists in harmony with each other. The bassline holds the foundational structure of the piece, but the critical component of leading tones and harmonic movement lend directionality and beauty to the piece. Express this sentiment as an image.”
June 30, 2023

Ihan Ip
School of Leadership & Ed Science


Dear Ihan Ip:


Decision: Approved. This study may start no earlier than June 30, 2023.

IRB Review Category: 7. Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies. (NOTE: Some research in this category may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects. 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) and (b)(3). This listing refers only to research that is not exempt.)

Administrative Check-In Date: June 30, 2024. Please submit a Renewal application for the study by this administrative check-in date. If the project is completed by this date, please submit a Closure application for the study instead.

Findings: This approval is based on the intended work and scope of activities outlined in the submitted proposal. If the research team makes changes to the project and/or its study protocols or materials used with participants, the PI or their designated team member must submit a modification application for IRB’s re-evaluation.

Research Notes: N/A

Internal Notes:
The USD IRB requires annual renewal of all active studies reviewed and approved by the IRB. Please submit an application for renewal prior to the annual anniversary date of initial study approval.
If an application for renewal is not received, the study will be administratively closed.

Note: We send IRB correspondence regarding student research to the faculty advisor, who bears the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the research. We request that the faculty advisor share this correspondence with the student researcher.
Applications for full review must be submitted at least two weeks prior to the next scheduled monthly IRB meeting; see [https://www.sandiego.edu/irb/updates/](https://www.sandiego.edu/irb/updates/) for specific deadlines. You may submit an IRB application for expedited or exempt review at any time.

*Sincerely*

Truc Ngo, PhD
IRB Administrator

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