

Leveraging Motivation, Social Connection, and Reflection to Apply New Learning

Capstone

Vanderbilt University

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### **Laura's Gratitude Statements**

“If you work really hard and are kind, amazing things will happen.” This quote is framed and mounted on a wall in the office I spend most of my days in. It's true- hard work and kindness can result in rewards, visible and invisible growth, and a doctoral degree. However, the quote fails to mention the importance of the support of loved ones, the power of social connection, and the impact people have on each other to help make these “amazing things” happen.

To my parents and siblings- thank you for your consistent check-ins, for making me feel your support from the hundreds of miles that we are apart, for continually expressing how proud you are of me, and for your comments on how close to being “finished” I have been since the very beginning of this journey.

To my students and colleagues, my FAmily- your thirst for knowledge, the compassion you have shown to others and me, and your desire to make our school and world more inclusive is what helped to keep me motivated during the past three years. I thank you for nudging me to reflect, grow, and continue to be a daring leader with heart.

And lastly, to my family, Matt and Cooper- this three-year journey has been hard for all of us. Matt, thank you for being my partner, my proofreader, the best father to our son, and for “doing it all” in my absence. Your love, laughter, and support have kept me both strong-willed and strong-minded. Cooper, this journey started when you were only one year old. You will likely have no memory of the number of nights I could not tuck you into bed, the blast ball and soccer games I had to miss, or the weekends we missed out on spending together. But I hope you will always remember that you are so very much loved, that your parents will always support you, and that “If you work really hard and are kind, amazing things will happen.”

### **Frank's Gratitude Statements**

My passion for learning and my study habits were instilled in me by my mom. I vividly recall her helping me with homework every day after school. She helped me review for tests, proofed my writing assignments, and encouraged me when I became frustrated or overwhelmed. She is brilliant and she does not give herself enough credit. I have the skills to complete a doctoral program and capstone because of the time, energy, and love that she put into the foundation of my learning. Thank you, Brenda Patranella, my first, and forever, teacher.

School for my dad was always a struggle, and although he was an outstanding businessman, academics were a challenge. I believe these difficulties made him more proud of me when I would accomplish a new milestone. I always knew that my accomplishments in the academic arena made him proud. His passing in 2017 was the catalyst that drove me to apply to doctoral programs. I know that he would be so proud calling me Dr. Patranella if he were alive today. Thank you, John Patranella, for believing in me. I wish you were here to celebrate this accomplishment.

When we take on the mammoth task of a terminal degree, it not only turns our life upside-down, it impacts those who are closest to us. Thank you, Brent Sybert, for being patient with me over the past three years. You dealt with take-out meals, an unkempt house, and me being absent often because you knew this goal was important to me. I am blessed to have you because you are such a supportive and understanding spouse.

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## Executive Summary

Since 2016, Earnest Journey has provided leadership training and coaching to working professionals both virtually and in person. This quality improvement project was developed to better understand the effectiveness of Earnest Journey's preprogrammed training, Dare to Lead, at helping participants acquire and apply new learning in the short and long term. Adult learning theories (andragogy and heutagogy) and self-determination theory (SDT) with a primary focus on motivation, social connection, and reflection shaped this study, which focused on four research questions:

1. What do observations of the Dare to Lead workshop and research literature on adult learning suggest about the elements Earnest Journey currently includes and should consider when developing and revising their leadership training offerings?
2. Did participants apply Dare to Lead principles, in the short term (within two weeks of the workshop) and long term (six weeks after the training), following the workshop?
3. What aspects of motivation, social connection, and reflection do participants report engaging in as part of the training? How are these aspects helpful to the application of new learning and skills in the short term and long term following the workshop?
4. What additional opportunities related to motivation, social connection, and reflection do clients of Earnest Journey desire after completing the workshop?

Through our own participation in two separate Dare to Lead workshops, surveys and interviews of workshop participants, and an extensive examination of literature, the following findings emerged:

***Motivation Findings***

**M1:** Interviewed participants indicated that they desired for the content to be tailored to their needs and familiarity level with the work of Brené Brown.

**M2:** Participants expressed that they would be more motivated to apply new learning if more concrete, systematic skill development and practice were included in the workshop.

**M3:** Participants struggled with motivation to implement new learning and change behaviors following the workshop.

***Social Connection Findings***

**S1:** Discussion in small group settings during the weekly sessions were meaningful and appreciated by participants.

**S2:** Participants desire an ongoing connection with course content and fellow attendees beyond the workshop.

**S3:** The facilitators created a safe space for vulnerable sharing and interactions.

***Reflection Findings***

**R1:** Assigned homework in the Dare to Lead workshop was not effective in helping participants apply new learning.

**R2:** Reflection was mostly retroactive and did not connect with the formation of actionable and measurable goals or objectives to impact future actions and decisions.

Based upon the findings, five recommendations have been developed to share with Earnest Journey: one recommendation to implement before each workshop begins, three recommendations to be incorporate during the span of future eight-week workshops, and one recommendation to implement after each workshop has concluded.



1. Develop an onboarding process that supports participants' baseline knowledge prior to the first live session.
2. Engage participants in goal setting, self-monitoring, and reciprocal feedback throughout the workshop.
3. Intentionally incorporate skill practice and habit-forming strategies for each concept introduced.
4. Infuse choice, feedback, and collaboration into small group breakouts and homework reflection.
5. Provide a safe space for ongoing opportunities to reinforce motivation to apply workshop skills, to maintain social connection, and to encourage continued reflection.

Implementing the five recommendations developed as a result of this study will better support participants in applying what is learned in Dare to Lead workshops in both the short and long term.

## Introduction

A primary aim in facilitating adult learning is to create a learning environment and experience that optimizes the likelihood of participant short-term and long-term application of new learning and skills within their current role. Well-designed adult learning intends to move learners along a continuum from facilitator-led learning to more autonomous, self-determined learning to create life-long habits (Hagan & Park, 2016; Chacko, 2018). The formation of habits that align with new learning and skills are determinant upon several factors, such as motivation, social connection, and reflection (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Our partner organization, Earnest Journey, has been providing leadership training to novice and experienced leaders in various industries since 2016. Like many organizations in the adult learning space, Earnest Journey is struggling to determine the effectiveness of its workshops and how to improve its offerings to provide meaningful learning that is applicable in immediately and in the long term. The company offers leadership coaching, on-site custom leadership training workshops, as well as preprogrammed workshops focusing on building relationships, empathy, and creativity within leaders. Earnest Journey aims for the leadership development workshops they provide to impact the lives of their clients and be “sticky”; supporting the development of leadership competencies while empowering them to be curious, resilient, and creative leaders.

Through collaboration with Earnest Journey, we conducted observations, surveys, and interviews during and after their Dare to Lead workshops. This data provided insight into practices and strategies for Earnest Journey to support participants in the application of Dare to Lead content. The study centers on the ideas of motivation, social connection, and reflection and how clients perceive them before, during, and after the completion of a Dare to Lead workshop.

Findings from this project will be used to improve participant application of Dare to Lead content and to inform the design of future workshops offered by Earnest Journey.

### **Organization Context**

Earnest Journey is owned by Angela Wiggins, an International Coach Federation certified professional coach. She is the sole proprietor and facilitator for Earnest Journey; therefore, with primary control of the company, she can immediately implement new learning and ideas into her practices. Mrs. Wiggins primarily coaches individuals and in-tact teams and works as a leadership consultant with local Nashville organizations. While based in Nashville, TN, Earnest Journey's leadership development teachings extend globally, as training opportunities are available to clients both in person and virtually.

Earnest Journey has a wide range of training offerings. After becoming a certified Dare to Lead facilitator, Mrs. Wiggins added the Dare to Lead workshops to Earnest Journey's training offerings. Dare to Lead is a 16-hour facilitated leadership training program designed by Dr. Brené Brown of the Brené Brown Education and Research Group. After 20 years of research on shame-resilience and vulnerability, Brené Brown created the Dare to Lead leadership training. Workshop facilitators undergo rigorous training, which includes teaching the concepts, practices, and skills that bolster Brené Brown's four skill sets of courage: rumbling with vulnerability, living into our values, BRAVING trust, and learning to rise (Brown, 2020).

Earnest Journey offered its first Dare to Lead workshop in fall 2020, and a subsequent workshop was offered in the winter of 2021. Both workshops were delivered virtually, via Zoom, due to COVID-19. Each Dare to Lead workshop was led by Mrs. Wiggins and a co-facilitator, and lasted eight weeks, with each virtual session lasting two and a half hours. Weekly pre-session work, which included modules, asynchronous content, and workbook exercises, were

required components of training for all participants. The use of music, Zoom's chat feature, and interactive group activities within the larger group time allowed for a welcoming and relaxed virtual atmosphere. Facilitators provided a break during the middle of each live class and typically guided participants through a weekly mindfulness activity.

The Brené Brown Education and Research Group prohibits the public advertisement of Dare to Lead workshops outside of the research group's website, leading Earnest Journey to recruit participants through word of mouth referrals. Certified Dare to Lead Facilitators are required to deliver the Dare to Lead curriculum with fidelity and are unable to change course content. However, Mrs. Wiggins has autonomy regarding how she delivers course content and incorporates non-Dare to Lead activities into the workshop. Such independence includes the ability to partner with other coaches as co-facilitators. Holly Grathoff was hired by Mrs. Wiggins to co-facilitate both the fall 2020 and winter 2021 sessions. Mrs. Grathoff's role was to support the logistics, chat questions, small group discussions, and participant breaks within the virtual sessions of the workshop.

### **Problem of Practice**

In initial conversations with Mrs. Wiggins, we collaboratively brainstormed several needs for Earnest Journey, along with desires Mrs. Wiggins held for her organization. Mrs. Wiggins expressed that, at this time, Earnest Journey does not have a method for identifying why clients register for preprogrammed workshops, the effectiveness of the workshop delivery, or the needs of clients in the short and long term. Subsequent meetings with Mrs. Wiggins confirmed that making learning "sticky" and creating systems for learning were desired areas for exploration and improvement. Mrs. Wiggins defined "sticky" as having workshop strategies and content applied into daily practice by her clients, creating added value for them. She felt that clients who

value what they gained from Earnest Journey's trainings, would be more likely to register for future trainings and share their positive experiences through referrals.

To better understand adult learning theories and practices, we consulted an adult learning practitioner with decades of experience who provided multiple concepts linked to how individuals learn which we later presented to Mrs. Wiggins. Three of the concepts presented resonated with Earnest Journey's mission: motivation, social connection, and reflection. These areas frame the design of our improvement project which seeks to understand how motivation, social connection, and reflection can be leveraged to support the application of new learning. Developing this understanding allows for recommendations to be shared with Earnest Journey that align workshop design with the needs of clients, goals of the organization, and best practices in adult learning.

### **Literature Review**

Before embarking on this project with Earnest Journey, we analyzed relevant literature regarding the adult learning continuum from facilitator-led learning to autonomous, self-determined learning. Three core concepts related to learners becoming more self-determined are motivation, social connection, and reflection (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Hagan & Park, 2016). Motivation is a key topic because it is connected with the way adults seek learning opportunities, and there is a direct link between motivation and autonomy (Kusurkar, 2013). Social connection is essential to adult learners because it is married with relatedness, a basic human need and a motivational factor for adult learners (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Kusurkar, 2013). Adult learners also have a need for competence in order to apply learning, and competence is built through repeated cycles of reflection (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009; Knapp et al., 2017). In this study, we utilized literature on adult learning, motivation, social connection, and reflection in conjunction with

skills for application of new learning. Before diving into each of these pieces, we provide an overview of the research on adult learning.

### **Adult Learning**

The study of how humans learn has identified that there is a learning continuum that begins with pedagogy, the art of facilitating learning for children. As children mature, they become more autonomous, utilize social relations to foster learning, and gain competence in their learning abilities (Chacko, 2018). With these shifts in the drive for learning, the research-based modes of instructing within pedagogical practices are no longer sufficient to sustain motivation for learning in adults (Knowles, 1980). In a departure from the way youth learn, new assumptions and principles specific to the needs and desires of adult learners have been developed (Hagan & Park, 2016).

The particular needs and desires of adult learners have led to the field of study called andragogy. Andragogy is a set of learner-centered assumptions which are grounded in the role of teacher as the creator of the learning atmosphere and facilitator of mutual inquiry and learning (Knowles, 1980; Chacko, 2018). Based on the work of Malcom Knowles in the 1960s, andragogy was distinguished from pedagogy because adult motivation for continued learning differed from that of children (Chacko, 2018). For adult learners, a more self-directed, autonomous approach that contains experiential learning and embedded opportunities for the learner to reflect on what is learned has been described in Knowles' six assumptions of andragogy (Knowles, 1980). The six assumptions claim that:

1. adults have a **self-concept** and are able to identify their learning needs,
2. adults have formed a **foundation** of knowledge and skills through experience,
3. adults possess a natural **readiness** to learn when it integrates with their lives,
4. adults are **oriented** to apply new learning immediately,

5. adults **need to know** why they are learning what they are learning, and
6. adults are **motivated** toward learning more by internal drives than external ones  
(Hagan & Park, 2016).

These six assumptions are important because they are widely held beliefs about how adults learn and are instrumental in designing adult learning opportunities. They buttress adult learning theory with current practices in the field of adult education (Chacko, 2018). These assumptions lay a foundation for the next phase of adult learning on the continuum, heutagogy (Figure 1).

### Figure 1

*Adult Learning Continuum Visual (Chacko, 2018).*

Adult Learning Continuum	
Andragogy	Heutagogy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-directed learning</li> <li>• facilitator-led</li> <li>• linear</li> <li>• increase competency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-determined learning</li> <li>• learner-centered</li> <li>• high level of autonomy</li> <li>• non-linear</li> <li>• increase capability</li> </ul>

By shifting from self-directed learning, which is facilitated by an instructor, to self-determined learning, which is nonlinear and maintains an increasing degree of autonomy, one moves into heutagogical learning (Chacko, 2018). Heutagogy, as described by Chris Kenyon and Stewart Hase in the early 2000s, is focused on increasing capability instead of mere competency, so that deep learning and application of learner-determined knowledge can occur (Chacko, 2018). All of the assumptions of andragogy remain the foundation for heutagogy, yet there is a departure from the control of the facilitator in andragogy to a learner-centered format in heutagogy (Hase & Kenyon, 2001). Heutagogy is the most self-determined end of the spectrum

of adult learning, culminating in the learner's full actualization of their autonomy (Hase & Kenyon, 2001). Aligning adult learning opportunities with heutagogy is the aspiration for learning designers who want participants to internalize and incorporate learning into their everyday lives to form new habits (Blaschke & Hase, 2016).

## **Motivation**

Both andragogy and heutagogy hinge upon motivation to spark an initiation of new learning and persistence in order to attain goals (Knowles, 1980). Three concepts that are important when understanding human motivation are implicit theories and mindset in the research of Carol Dweck, goal setting as outlined by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham, and the continuum from intrinsic motivation to amotivation outlined in Richard Ryan and Edward Deci's self-determination theory.

### ***Implicit Theories and Mindset***

Implicit theories are focused on peoples' core assumptions. Unlike scientific theories, implicit theories refer to a person's common-sense explanation of everyday events (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Implicit theories can also have an effect on developing personality and can shape the way in which a person will respond in social situations or conflicts (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Two implicit theories outlined in the research are entity theory, the belief that one's mindset is fixed or unchangeable, and incremental theory, the premise that one's mindset is malleable and able to grow or develop over time (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

Incremental theory is central to andragogy. Knowles' second assumption outlines that adults bring knowledge and expertise from years of experience and practice with them when they enter a learning environment (Hagan & Park, 2016). In addition to this foundation of knowledge, individuals approach learning situations with beliefs about learning that fall on the spectrum



between entity theory and incremental theory (Dweck, 1986). According to Yeager and Dweck (2012), individuals who approach a learning situation from an entity theory stance are typically more focused on measuring their own ability and proficiency. As a result, they are less likely to take on challenges and more likely to give up in the face of setbacks due to a fixed mindset.

Learners who function from the standpoint of incremental theory believe they can change and grow; therefore, they approach new learning as an opportunity to develop new skills and knowledge (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). Having a growth mindset can impact how a learner shapes their goals, values their effort, reacts to setbacks, and incorporates learning strategies into daily life (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

Entity and incremental theory have also been applied to team and group settings. It has been identified that individuals or teams that function from entity theory experience more competition and less collaboration than individuals or teams with an incremental theory orientation (Gocłowska et al., 2017). When forming connections and relationships, implicit theories have also shed light upon an individual's willingness to self-disclose information of a personal nature within a group. Individuals who internalize incremental theory allow themselves to be known or self-disclose within group settings more frequently than those who function from an entity mindset (Levontin et al., 2018). Growth or fixed mindset correlate with a willingness to learn, an ability to apply new learning, and an openness to collaboration with others. Studies have also found correlations between mindset and self-efficacy aligning high self-efficacy with incremental theory and low self-efficacy with entity theory (Taberner & Wood, 1999; Taberner & Hernández, 2011).

### ***Goal Setting***

Goal-setting theory arose at the end of the 20th century to consider motivation for individuals to attain and use new skills, and it is regarded as one of the more scientifically valid and practically applied theories related to motivation (Latham, 2012). Setting a specific, high goal and attaining quality feedback regarding goal progress have been linked with applying new learning in work settings (Locke & Latham, 2013).

Motivational processes are influenced by psychological factors, not ability. These psychological factors, which are embedded in a socio-contextual approach, form patterns of behavior that can be productive or counterproductive to the application of new learning (Dweck, 1986). Goal setting is productive when an individual is mastery-oriented and finds the establishment, maintenance, and attainment of challenging and personally valued goals meaningful. On the other hand, when goal attainment is associated with helplessness, challenge avoidance, or low persistence in the face of difficulty, goal setting can be counterproductive in supporting new learning applications (Dweck, 1986).

Studies by Locke and Latham (2013) identified that specific learning goals lead to feedback-seeking behaviors by the individuals attempting to achieve the goal. They also found evidence that individuals needed both proximal (short-term) and distal (long-term) goals for growth and habit formation (Locke & Latham, 2013). Research by John Campbell found that three factors - goal setting, feedback, and self-monitoring - together are highly effective at creating new behaviors for learners, and that feedback without goal setting has no effect on behavior (Latham, 2012).

There are important limitations to consider regarding goal-setting theory. First, the number of goals that are actively pursued at one time impacts the probability of goal attainment.

Research has indicated that focusing on two or more goals simultaneously in the absence of prioritization may result in conflicting goals and limited goal attainment (Edminster & Locke, 1987). Second, the difficulty of the goal may impact perceptions of progress on the goal (Latham, 2012). When individuals prioritize a complex and difficult goal that will take more time to attain, their persistence and motivation to work toward the goal may diminish; therefore, setting incremental, attainable goals may help individuals build momentum toward achieving difficult goals because they can track progress on smaller milestones attained (Amabile & Kramer, 2011). Lastly, self-efficacy, the belief that one is capable of attaining a goal, is a high predictor in performance regarding goal attainment, and low self-efficacy decreases the probability of effectively forming new habits based on goal setting (Latham, 2012).

### ***Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, and Amotivation***

Motivation is about activation and intention; therefore, it is concerned with energy, direction, and persistence. It takes energy to approach new learning opportunities and persistence to maintain the new learning until it becomes a habit. Human motivation is considered to lie upon a continuum from amotivation to intrinsic motivation according to self-determination theory or SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This continuum (Figure 2) does not represent a linear, step-by-step progression toward intrinsic motivation. On the contrary, individuals may find themselves at different points on the continuum when embedded within different socio-contextual situations, and that individual may leap from one end of the spectrum to the other without going through all intermediary phases (Kusurkar, 2013).

Self-determination theory has its roots in Herzberg's hygiene theory and the six assumptions of andragogy from Malcom Knowles (Latham, 2012). Self-determination theory begins with the premise that the natural state of humans is to lean toward intrinsic motivation,



relatedness, and competence are either intact or lacking (Ryan & Deci, 2013). When humans act from intrinsic motivation, they are more likely to seek novelty and challenges, try new opportunities for learning, and stretch their capabilities through exploration. Self-determination theory and cognitive evaluation theory do not focus on what causes intrinsic motivation; instead, they examine the conditions that spark and sustain the innate drive toward motivation.

On the opposite end of the continuum is amotivation, which is characterized as lacking determination or the intention to act (Ryan & Deci, 2013). Not being a natural state, amotivation occurs when a person has endured a trauma connected with one of the basic needs of autonomy, relatedness, or competence (Kusurkar, 2013). When unmotivated, people either do not act or act without intent. Not acting or merely going through the motions occurs when individuals do not value an activity, do not feel competent doing the activity, or do not expect the outcome of the activity to be beneficial (Ryan & Deci, 2013).

Ryan and Deci (2013) developed a second sub-theory of self-determination theory to explore extrinsic motivation. Organismic integration theory claims that there are varying degrees of extrinsic motivation between amotivation and intrinsic motivation on the continuum of self-determination theory (Gagné & Deci, 2005). A key finding from organismic integration theory states that it is not realistic for all adult learners to approach learning from an intrinsically motivated standpoint; however, instructors can design the learning environment to facilitate a shift from lower to higher levels of extrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2013). This shift enables the internalization of motivation and makes the learner more closely connected to the intrinsic side of the motivation continuum.

Much can be gained from focusing on self-determination theory; however, other theories of motivation provide different perspectives and factors which are important in understanding the

bigger picture of human motivation. Social-categorization theory, rooted in identity theory, focuses on identity as a motivator and explores how individuals seek to identify and classify themselves and others into groups (Ellemers & Haslam, 2011). Being associated with a group or striving for acceptance into a social setting can be strongly tied to motivation. Also, psychoanalytic theory, based on the work of Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, and George Herbert Mead, focuses on social interaction as a driver for motivation (Hogan & Blicke, 2016). This theory primarily studies two needs: the need to fit in and the need to get ahead. Both of these needs are motivators in the workplace (Hogan & Blicke, 2016). Social-categorization theory and psychoanalytic theory approach the study of motivation through a different lens than self-determination theory.

### ***Basic Needs for Self-Determination: Autonomy, Relatedness, and Competence***

Self-determination theory is also linked to autonomy, relatedness, and competence which are the three basic needs required for humans to move along the continuum of learning towards self-determination (Gagné & Deci, 2005). A basic need, as defined by self-determination theory, is considered to be an “energizing state that, if satisfied, leads toward health and well-being, but if not satisfied contributes to pathology and ill-being” (Ryan & Deci, 2013, p. 74). When these three needs are satisfied, one experiences an ongoing sense of integrity and well-being over an individual's life span. These needs are vital not only for adult learning but also for one’s general well-being.

Autonomy in self-determination theory is a feeling of volition related to any act, be it dependent, independent, collectivist, or individualist (Ryan & Deci, 2013). The understanding of autonomy can be misinterpreted when narrowly focusing on one’s independence detached from a connection to society or community. This narrow view paints autonomy as selfish and

individualistic. Since autonomy facilitates the internalization of motivation, it is connected with a sense of choice, acknowledgment of feelings, and freedom from excessive external pressure which limits ways of thinking or acting (Ryan & Deci, 2013).

Competency is the second basic need in self-determination theory. Perceiving oneself as capable of mastering content and being knowledgeable is a way of viewing competency. It is important to note that competency and self-efficacy are not synonymous in self-determination theory; in fact, competence is more than believing in oneself or having confidence in one's skills or knowledge to effectively act (Ryan & Deci, 2013). Competency is related to motivation, if and only if the individual experiences their behavior as self-determined, and competence will not support the internalization of motivation unless it is paired with autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2013). Socio-contextual events like feedback, communication, and rewards can increase feelings of competence and enhance intrinsic motivation (Knapp et al., 2017). Competence is also married to the central concept of reflection. Since competency is not static or an end in itself, it is an iterative process that requires continued attention and ongoing self-reflection. Competence is viewed as a habit that leans upon reflection and is best developed through social interactions with others (Knapp et al., 2017).

Relatedness is the third basic need that is outlined by self-determination theory, and it is viewed as a feeling of belonging to a learning group or community and valued by significant others (Kusurkar, 2013). Relatedness is clearly associated with the central concept of social connection in adult learning because it relates to the need for belongingness and connectedness to others. Being social, humans are more likely to adopt activities that they observe relevant social groups displaying or ones they perceive that these social groups value. Motivation is also part of relatedness because when actions are extrinsically motivated, individuals first perform

them since the behaviors are prompted, modeled, or valued by significant others who they feel, or desire to feel, connected to (Ryan & Deci, 2013).

### **Social Connection**

Adult learning and self-determination theory place high value upon social connection and relatedness within learning opportunities. Social learning theory, a model developed by Albert Bandura, suggests that people learn by observing other people, and when behavior is reinforced and rewarded, it will be repeated (Bandura, 1971). If learners are mindful of the skills and behaviors they are supposed to observe, and the model being observed is clear and interpretable, it can be stored within one's memory and retained for later use (Bandura, 1971).

Social learning theory is grounded in self-efficacy, a person's thoughts about their ability to learn and apply knowledge. According to Bandura (1971), self-efficacy can increase through modeling, accomplishments, encouragement, and the perception of relationships between new and mastered tasks. It can be developed by performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal (Bandura, 1977), all of which can be experienced through support and collaboration. When paired with self-determination theory, the view of self-efficacy under social learning theory is expanded beyond the belief of the ability to learn and apply knowledge toward autonomous, self-determined learning.

Within an educational setting, as learners exchange information, stories, and thoughts, they begin to uncover new ideas and concepts, thus resulting in new patterns of behavior (Williams, 2017). Williams (2017) believes that behavior can change how information is learned. As individuals bring their experiences into a collaborative environment, instructors can allow for personal and social learning, which through dialogue allows for the synthesis of information (Hagen & Park, 2016). Hagen and Park (2016) found that as social beings, humans seek to



identify the psychological traits of others, which in turn increases a desire to provide support. Within a supportive learning environment that values self-awareness, relationships, trust, and collaboration, knowledge has the potential to be shared, retained, and applied. Consequently, social interaction and connectedness are a strong platform for learning.

Adults view learning as a means to reach their potential by formulating new ideas and applying them (Knowles, 1970). However, the right conditions are needed for learners to do so. Knowles (1970) identifies one's learning environment as a key condition for learning. While the physical environment is considered, Knowles (1970) shares that physical comfort, freedom of expression, accepting others' differences, as well mutual trust, respect, and helpfulness are also components of an environment that will lead to adult learning. In exploring the components of learning, Kolb and Kolb (2017) reflect on the involvement of interactions between person and environment. Active participation is combining social knowledge and personal knowledge, which can be done through the development of one's sense of self, the fostering of relationships and trust, and the encouragement of collaboration (Kolb & Kolb, 2017).

### *Sense of Self*

Developing self-awareness and a more profound sense of self can aid in one's exploration of their true potential (Knowles, 1970). An absence of sense of self or self-awareness can result in a lack of connectedness with intentionality and a stunted perspective, thus resulting in an inability to connect with people (Brown, 2018). Learning, growth, and change can occur when learners are able to reflect upon their experiences, allowing for an examination of actions and contemplation of improvement (Page & Margolis, 2017). Self-reflection and mindfulness activities can provide learners with coping strategies, as well as help them engage with their own personal feelings and emotions. This exploration allows for a deeper sense of empathy for

oneself and others (Dougherty, Haddock, & Patton, 2020; Litvak-Hirsch & Lazer, 2020). Self-exploration can lead to embodied learning - an awareness of oneself and their relation to the world around them (Dirkx, 2008). Embodied learning helps individuals identify their relation to others within a physical learning environment, and it can extend beyond the space of an educational domain (Dirkx, 2008). When we develop self-awareness and view ourselves in relation to others, we are more equipped to be vulnerable, live into our values, and build trust with others (Brown, 2018).

### ***Relationships***

The relationships formed within a learning setting impact the quality of learning, as well as the community (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). The relationship that an educator or facilitator has with learners is unique. While educators are responsible for helping to foster the relationships they have with learners, there is also a duty to foster the relationships students have with one another (Bryk & Schneider, 2002). This can be done by providing an educational space for learners to feel safe to explore their personal feelings, opinions, and emotions, as well as develop empathy (Jordan, 2000). While creating a sense of self and self-awareness within a learning environment can help individuals explore these feelings, relationships are what help individuals explore their self-in-relation to others. Social connection is considered powerful because it is intertwined with mutual empathy, and it is only after a learner explores their position in relation to another that they can truly develop relational connections (Jordan, 2000).

Relationships also provide the space for individuals to grow and change. As learners explore authenticity and develop respect for others in the learning environment, relationships can help bridge learning through shared experiences and active participation in discussion (Kolb &

Kolb, 2017). Students who value the relationships formed with their instructor are more likely to be motivated to learn (Ismail et al., 2017).

### ***Trust***

Trust is a critical component to fostering meaningful relationships both in and outside of a learning environment. Byrk and Schneider (2002) identify four components of trust: respect, competence, personal regard for others, and integrity. These four components are built gradually as relationships between individuals form. Power, when coupled with authority in a learning environment, can decrease trust (Cook-Sather, 2002). Changing the power structure within a learning setting can help encourage conversations that lead to learners sharing their perspectives and experiences, thus promoting respect. Trust can also be built through empowerment as learners are able to trust themselves and those with whom they are collaborating (Cook-Sather, 2002).

### ***Collaboration***

Through the development of one's sense of self, and the formation of relationships and trust, collaboration can aid in the connectedness individuals feel within a learning environment. Through collaboration and conversation, learners are able to better understand their roles and relationships (Hagen & Park, 2016). Relating to the third assumption of andragogy, which is focused on readiness, adult learners value learning through social relationships and connecting prior knowledge to new learning through social interactions (Hagen & Park, 2016). The connections formed through collaboration can help support the motivation behind an adult's desire to learn and grow (Hagen & Park, 2016). Additionally, creating a collaborative environment, one that welcomes different perspectives and open dialogue, can allow for a deeper

level of shared experiences and perspectives, and this dialogical space and community connection can lead to a shared sense of self (Armstrong & Hyslop-Margison, 2006).

### **Reflection**

Reflection is an undercurrent throughout the assumptions of andragogy and has a direct link in leading to self-determination in heutagogy. Bound to competence, reflection is one of the three basic needs under self-determination theory and also serves as a means for internalizing motivation and building social connections (Knapp et al., 2017). Reflection is the catalyst to actualizing autonomy, deepening relatedness, and engaging in the ongoing development of competence (Ryan & Deci, 2013); therefore, it is a foundational adult learning practice.

Reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action posed by Donald Schon in the 1980s leans mostly toward a constructivist framework believing that reflection is merely an act of the mind (Comer, 2015). For Schon, there was a type of “knowing” that is inherent in the actions of a skilled practitioner, and if this “knowing” were brought to light, it could be utilized after or during an action to guide an individual’s decision-making (Comer, 2015). His theories, reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action, are two aspects of metacognition with the former taking place by thinking back on a past event, and the latter occurring “in the moment” of action (Comer, 2015). Reflection-on-action is an *ex-post* practice that takes place following the completion of an activity or role; therefore, the reflection only has bearing on future incidents which would call on similar reactions (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). Practicing reflection-on-action requires an analysis of experience and looking back to make meaning of what occurred in a given situation. Reflective feedback can be provided to oneself or conveyed by peers to analyze the past event (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009).

Reflection-in-action, on the other hand, can impact decision making at the time of the decision since it is embedded within the day-to-day actions an individual is practicing.

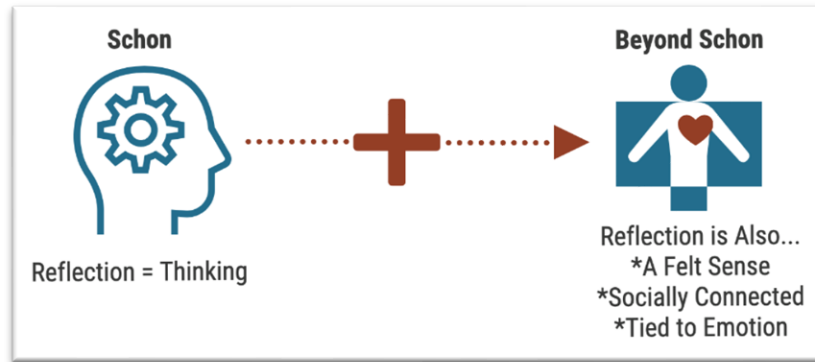
Reflection-in-action always takes place within a social context and is responsive and experimental in character (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). This improvisational quality requires the reflector to think quickly in order to reflect and respond while acting.

### ***Beyond Schon***

The work of Schon is a strong foundation for meaningful reflection. However, there is criticism within the work of Schon regarding the limited constructivist stance he takes and his belief that reflection only takes place in one's mind (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). Schon did not consider the emotion and feeling involved in reflection-in-action or the kinesthetic aspect of improvisation required to reflect. In addition, the social aspect and context of reflection was overlooked by Schon. A more complete picture of reflection emphasizes "its embedded (social), engaged (practice), and embodied (material) aspects" (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009, p. 1342). Schon believed in a kind of "knowing" that helps with meaning-making that he contributed to thinking within the mind, yet a full view would consider a "felt-sense" which is a kind of knowing that is embedded in the body (Jordi, 2011). This "felt-sense" does not have words. It is communal and observed through interactions within the social realm (Jordi, 2011).

### **Figure 3**

*Reflection Beyond Schon* (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009 and Jordi, 2011)

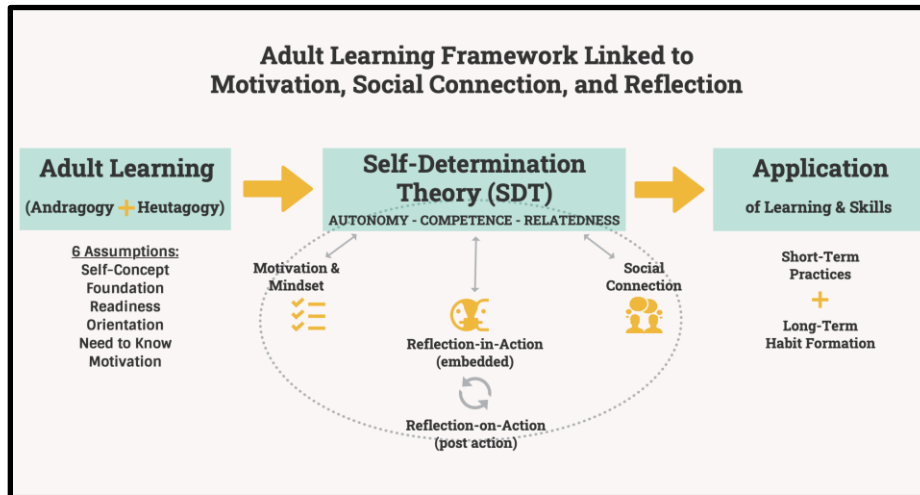


### Conceptual Framework

Earnest Journey's objective is to engage leaders in learning that is meaningfully applied in their daily lives during and following the workshops they provide. To support this objective, adult learning assumptions in andragogy and the understanding of heutagogy are the backbone and framework for studying adult learning. The continuum from andragogy to heutagogy parallel the transfer and internalization of learning from facilitator-led to self-determined and autonomous.

Within andragogy and heutagogy, the linkages to motivation, social connection, and reflection are the central concepts for this study. These concepts are embedded within self-determination theory; thus, forming a link between the theory and andragogy and heutagogy. The basic needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence in self-determination theory are tethered to motivation, social connection, and reflection. These three concepts serve as the guardrails for exploring the goals and objectives expressed by Mrs. Wiggins. By examining the perceptions of Earnest Journey clients regarding these central ideas and basic needs, this study provides insight to better understand Earnest Journey's challenge regarding practical application of content following workshop attendance.

Figure 4 below visually represents the connections between the assumptions of andragogy and heutagogy and the theories utilized to frame this study.

**Figure 4***Conceptual Framework Visual***Motivation**

Self-determination theory by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci, and their three basic needs of autonomy, relatedness, and competence, are the lens through which motivation, social connection, and reflection are explored. Self-determination theory is comprised of two sub-theories, also coined by Ryan and Deci, which are utilized in this study. First, cognitive evaluation theory explores the variability of intrinsic motivation and second, organismic integration theory which further classifies extrinsic motivation into four sub-categories with each demonstrating a varying degree of internalization of motivation (Kellenberg et al., 2017). These two sub-theories are under the umbrella of self-determination theory, and they provide more specific insight into the movement of individuals along the continuum toward internalized and self-determined learning. Because Earnest Journey is a learning organization that supports leadership development, the continuum of motivation in self-determination theory, as outlined by these two sub-theories, is important in gaining acuity regarding the client's drive to apply learning in the short term and long term following workshops.

Likewise, research on mindset provides additional insight into the clients' motivation to apply learning and the understanding of barriers that hinder its application. Implicit theories, which focus on fixed and growth mindset in the work of Carol Dweck, are paired with self-determination theory to investigate mindset and behavior patterns. These concepts reinforce the benefit of goal setting (Locke & Latham, 2013) and support the application of new learning habits (Duhigg, 2014).

### **Social Connection**

Social learning theory by Albert Bandura is the framework through which this study explores social connections between Earnest Journey's clients and facilitators. Since social learning theory is a broad scope of knowledge, this study has narrowed its focus to aspects which align with building a learning environment that fosters the application of new learning. To deepen the exploration of social learning, this study includes the concepts of: sense of self, relationships, trust, and collaboration. Through these four topics, we explore how relatedness to peers and facilitators can support motivation. In addition, social learning theory is supported by reflection to benefit clients in applying new learning.

### **Reflection**

Reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action by Donald Schon is the foundation for studying the reflective practices embedded in the Dare to Lead workshop; however, a more complete view of the human experience of reflection, beyond the constructivist perspective of Schon is utilized. Reflection is viewed in two ways: occurring in retrospection and occurring in the moment. It is useful to broaden the scope of Schon's work to encompass reflection in the mind, body, and through social context and relationships (Knapp, et al., 2016). Reflection is also



connected to the way in which practices and habits are formed - two key components for supporting Earnest Journey's clients in the application of new learning.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guide this study:

1. What do observations of the Dare to Lead workshop and research literature on adult learning suggest about the elements Earnest Journey currently includes and should consider when developing and revising their leadership training offerings?
2. Did participants apply Dare to Lead principles, in the short term (within two weeks of the workshop) and long term (six weeks after the training), following the workshop?
3. What aspects of motivation, social connection, and reflection do participants report engaging in as part of the training? How are these aspects helpful to the application of new learning and skills in the short term and long term following the workshop?
4. What additional opportunities related to motivation, social connection, and reflection do clients of Earnest Journey desire after completing the workshop?

### **Methods and Analysis**

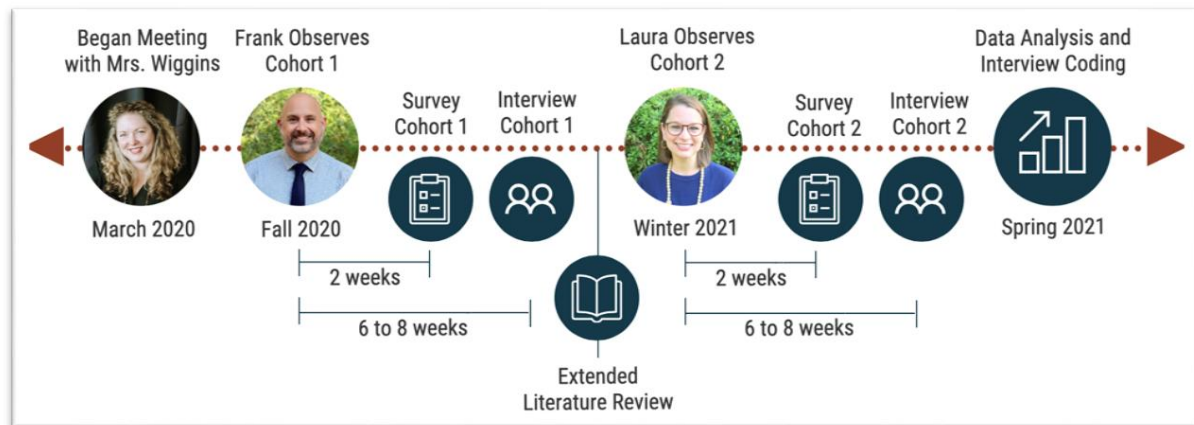
The following data collection methods were used to answer the questions: literature exploration, observations of the Dare to Lead workshops, participant surveys, and interviews to determine to what extent the leadership training could better leverage motivation, social connection, and reflection. To address our first research question, we used the review of the relevant literature summarized in the earlier section of this paper and observations of two trainings. Observations of Earnest Journey's Dare to Lead training for the fall 2020 and winter 2021 courses were conducted virtually through Zoom. These observations noted current practices

and teaching methods that support the internalization of motivation for adult learners, learning through social connections, and opportunities for reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action.

Data was collected from two Dare to Lead workshops to inform the research questions for this study and address Earnest Journey's problem of practice. Observations, participant surveys, and interviews were gathered and analyzed over a full year. We observed two separate eight-week workshops beginning in October 2020, and again in January 2021. Two weeks following the completion of each cohort, we collected survey data, and six to eight weeks following the end of each Dare to Lead workshop, we conducted interviews with participants. The data collection and analysis process from the observations, surveys, and interviews are detailed in the sections below.

### Figure 5

#### *Timeline of Data Collection*



In addition to observations, we relied upon an electronic survey and interview data to inform how participants applied new learning and how motivation, social connection, and reflection contributed to the short-term and long-term application of learning. This data was used in response to our second, third, and fourth research questions. Relying on information from the literature review, we designed the electronic survey using Qualtrics. The survey link was

distributed two weeks following the completion of the course by our partner organization to the fall 2020 and winter 2021 Dare to Lead cohorts. Interviews were conducted with clients from both cohorts between six to eight weeks following the completion of the course. Laura Nevins conducted interviews from the first cohort and interviews from the second cohort were conducted by Frank Patranella.

Following the fall 2020 cohort, participation was lower than expected on the surveys and interviews; therefore, we partnered with Earnest Journey to provide incentives for the winter 2021 cohort to increase participation. We donated \$5 per survey completed and an additional \$5 for each interview conducted to a charitable organization chosen by Earnest Journey called Girl Up. In addition, Earnest Journey decided to match the donation and personally connected with participants to encourage survey and interview participation. As a result of these efforts, survey and interview participation during the winter 2021 cohort doubled from the fall 2020 cohort.

While gathering data from participants was a vital component of this study, correspondence with Mrs. Wiggins, the founder and lead facilitator of all Earnest Journey workshops, was essential. All means of data collection and conversations with Mrs. Wiggins centered on the four research questions for this study as noted below in Figure 6. Following the survey analysis for the fall 2020 cohort, we discussed preliminary findings from observations and the first round of surveys with Mrs. Wiggins. One significant area focused on participants' request for more breakout groups and time discussing topics with peers. In response to this feedback, Mrs. Wiggins made breakout groups a more significant component for the winter 2021 cohort.

## **Figure 6**

*Table of Data Collection*

Research Question	Means of Data Collection	Analysis of Data Collected
<b>Question 1:</b> What do observations of the Dare to Lead workshop and research literature on adult learning suggest about the elements Earnest Journey currently includes and should consider when developing and revising their leadership training offerings?	Literature Review  Extended Literature Exploration	Identification of best practices and skills aligned with adult learning related to motivation, social connection, and reflection.
<b>Question 2:</b> Did participants apply Dare to Lead principles, in the short term (within two weeks of the workshop) and long term (six weeks after the training), following the workshop?	Observations  Surveys  Interviews	Analysis of survey and interview responses helped gain insight into how participants feel new learning and skills have been applied in the short and long term.
<b>Question 3:</b> What aspects of motivation, social connection, and reflection do participants report engaging in as part of the training? How are these aspects helpful to the application of new learning and skills in the short term and long term following the workshop?	Literature Review  Extended Literature Exploration  Surveys  Interviews	Analysis of survey and interview responses conducted to develop an understanding of how motivation, social connection, and reflection have contributed to the short and long term application of learning.
<b>Question 4:</b> What additional opportunities related to motivation, social connection, and reflection do clients of Earnest Journey desire after completing the workshop?	Surveys  Interviews	Analysis of survey and interview responses to assess the additional needs of clients after completing Earnest Journey's Dare to Lead workshop.

### Dare to Lead Workshop Observations

Given that we attended both of the Dare to Lead workshops, observations related to the general participation of the attendees, the perceived perceptions of course content and course work, and the observable motivation, social connection, and reflection of participants were noted. Two cohorts were observed - Frank Patranella participated in the fall 2020 cohort and Laura Nevins participated in the winter 2021 cohort. As observers, we did not script detailed

notes about observations. Instead, we sought to gain insight into the format of the training, current practices, and content delivery methods, as well as to experience the training as participants.

The Dare to Lead workshops were facilitated by Mrs. Wiggins and Mrs. Grathoff via Zoom. Prior to the first week of the workshop, participants were required to complete a self-inventory called Armored Leadership Versus Daring Leadership created by the Brené Brown Education and Research Group, and this inventory was referenced several times throughout the workshop. In the inventory, current leadership abilities were evaluated in eleven different categories which aligned with the work of Brené Brown. Participants were asked to consider opposing descriptions of leadership in each category to determine which of the two best described their leadership style. The ratings of each participant were entered into a form, and Earnest Journey received a broad overview of the results. Earnest Journey was not able to see individual scores, but they were able to identify areas of strength and opportunity among the eleven categories for the entire cohort. This data was meant as a pre-assessment for Earnest Journey to support clients in areas identified as opportunities; however, no other demographic or interest data was collected from participants.

### ***Observation - Cohort 1: Fall 2020***

In addition to the two facilitators, the fall 2020 workshop was attended by ten adults, and workshops were held on Tuesdays from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm CST. Seven of the ten participants lived in or near Nashville, TN, and the remaining participants lived in other states. The Dare to Lead workshop attendees for the fall 2020 cohort were professionals in non-profit organizations, start-up organizations, or other corporate settings. All registrants, except for three, signed up for the workshop with one or more coworkers. The use of music, Zoom's chat feature, and

collaborative activities within the larger group time allowed for a welcoming and relaxed virtual atmosphere. Facilitators provided a break during the middle of each live class and typically guided participants through a weekly mindfulness activity. These activities allowed for revitalizing and reframing participants' mental states. All participants had a previous connection with either Mrs. Wiggins or Mrs. Grathoff, and 80% of the participants were female. All participants of the fall 2020 cohort expressed having some prior familiarity with the work of Brené Brown through her books or TED Talks.

The workshop was well attended, though three different participants were absent, one from each live session in weeks five, six, and seven. When participants were absent, a recording of the session was shared, and the absent participant was given the opportunity to share their reflections based on the content from the week missed at the beginning of the following week's workshop.

### ***Observation - Cohort 2: Winter 2021***

The winter 2021 Dare to Lead workshop attracted participants from Earnest Journey's home city of Nashville, TN and participants from the east coast of the United States, Australia, and South Africa. Of the 12 participants, 11 were female and one was male. Workshops were held on Tuesday evenings from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm CST. The timing of the workshop was a change from the fall 2020 cohort, as Mrs. Wiggins received feedback from participants regarding the need for a program that working professionals would be able to attend after their workday.

The majority of the participants from the winter 2021 cohort knew either Mrs. Wiggins or Mrs. Grathoff, as they either had previous working relationships with them or learned about the workshop directly from them via the Nashville chapter of Ladies, Wine & Design's social media platform. One of the participants of the winter 2021 cohort led the Nashville chapter and knew

some of the participants on a personal level. However, these personal relationships did not overtly hinder the cohort's interactions collectively.

Most participants worked in creative fields, including graphic design, web design, copywriting, film, and illustration. Others represented areas such as foreign policy, human resources, and consulting. Participant interactions remained pleasant throughout the course, and attendance was steady, with only a few individuals needing to miss live class because of work commitments. Workshops were recorded for absent participants on the days of the live sessions, so they could view them prior to class the following week. Conversation flowed well in the larger group Zoom setting, but breakout groups were leveraged to encourage deeper conversations amongst participants. In the breakout groups, empathy and compassion were observed, and participants quickly began relating to one another.

### **Surveys and Interviews**

Since existing survey or interview templates related to the specific needs of Earnest Journey were not available, we utilized the literature on adult learning, motivation, social connection, and reflection, along with discussions with Mrs. Wiggins to develop our survey and interview questions. The survey and interview questions were designed to align with the four questions of this study to address Earnest Journey's desire to provide learning opportunities that are applicable and meaningful to their clients. In the following three sections, the design of these measurement tools is articulated, and the analysis plan is outlined.

#### ***Survey Design***

Survey questions were underpinned by research, which was backed by empirical studies and recognized as foundational in the study of adult learning. Prior to making the survey live, a cognitive interview with Mrs. Grathoff, the co-facilitator, was conducted to ensure both the

validity of the survey and to determine if the questions, as they were written, were aligned with the focus of the study. Data from the cognitive interview was not included in the participant survey data collected; it was used for validation purposes only. Based on the cognitive interview, some questions were adjusted to remove jargon and confusing phraseology identified by Mrs. Grathoff.

Dare to Lead workshop participants from fall 2020 and winter 2021 received an email with a link to complete a survey two weeks after the workshops concluded. The link informed them that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. The survey was divided into three sections. Using a five-point Likert scale, measuring the degree of agreeance from Not at All True (1) to Very True (5), Section A of the survey required participants to assess how they are currently applying the Dare to Lead principles post-course completion (Figure 7).

### Figure 7

#### *Likert Scale from Survey*

Not At All True		Somewhat True		Very True
1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Also using a five-point Likert scale, Section B of the survey assessed the participants' perceptions on motivation, social connection, and reflection throughout the workshop. Lastly, Section C required participants to complete four short answer questions, assessing how their needs were met through the workshop while also assessing how motivation, social connection, and reflection were perceived during and after the course. (See Appendix A)

Following each cohort, survey results were shared with Mrs. Wiggins to inform the preparation for the following cohort. This iterative model allowed us to track how participants in



the successive cohort perceived adjustments or changes. In addition, the ongoing conversation between the two of us and Earnest Journey supported the development of trust and collaboration, making the program evaluation more participatory.

### *Survey Analysis*

Surveys were completed by 90% of Dare to Lead workshop participants. Quantitative data was collected using Likert scales in sections A and B. Open-ended questions were asked of participants in Section C; however, five of the participants who began their survey did not complete this section. Data collected in Section C was coded according to the main themes of motivation, social connection, and reflection, and the following secondary themes were identified under the main headings: desire to complete homework, meaningfulness of the learning, benefits of connecting with other participants, desires to maintain relationships with cohort members, and changes needed for future cohorts.

The main and secondary themes served as categories that we used to group the comments from Section C of the survey, which were triangulated with data from interviews to ensure reliability. All survey data were collected to better understand the short-term (within two weeks) application of Dare to Lead workshop learning. Figure 8 outlines the number of participants who attended each workshop (not including the researchers of this study), along with the number who completed the qualitative and quantitative portions of the survey.

### **Figure 8**

*Summary of Number of Workshop Participants and Survey Responses*

<b>Fall 2020 Dare to Lead Cohort</b>			
<b>Number of Workshop Participants</b>	<b>Survey Responses Sections A and B (Quantitative)</b>	<b>Survey Responses Section C (Qualitative)</b>	<b>Interviews Conducted</b>
8	7	7	4

<b>Winter 2021 Dare to Lead Cohort</b>			
<b>Number of Workshop Participants</b>	<b>Survey Responses Sections A and B (Quantitative)</b>	<b>Survey Responses Section C (Qualitative)</b>	<b>Interviews Conducted</b>
12	12	7	7

### *Interview Design*

To develop an understanding of how Earnest Journey’s Dare to Lead workshop participants have applied the knowledge and skills learned in the long term, interviews were conducted approximately six to eight weeks after each workshop concluded. Since survey data focused on the short-term application of learning, which occurred within two weeks of the workshop, participant interviews were conducted to gain insight into long-term, ongoing application after some time had passed following the workshop. An interview protocol was developed, and ten questions, which aligned with the research objectives of this study, were used to guide the discussions with participants. Figure 9 outlines the number of questions asked per theme.

### **Figure 9**

#### *Number of Interview Questions Based on Desired Theme Analysis*

<b>Number of Questions</b>	<b>Theme</b>
2	General Background
3	Motivation
3	Social Connection
2	Reflection

We drafted an invitation for participants to provide input through an interview, which was emailed to all participants by Mrs. Wiggins. The invitation contained a Google Form which allowed participants to share preferred meeting dates and times. Once they completed the form, they were contacted to schedule a virtual interview. Interviews were conducted through Zoom

and recorded to maintain a transcript to review during the coding process. Participants were informed the interviews would be recorded and that all responses would remain confidential.

Responses to the interview questions helped understand how clients learned about the workshop and explored how motivation, social connection, and reflection were impactful during the workshop. Additionally, interview responses informed us about how the Dare to Lead participants have applied the knowledge and skills from the workshop into their daily work (See Appendix B). As previously stated, interview participation was low during the first cohort; therefore, incentives were put in place to increase subsequent cohorts' participation in the interview process. The incentives were effective at increasing participation by 10% on both surveys and interviews.

### ***Interview Analysis***

Since interviews were recorded on Zoom, transcripts of the content were auto generated and used for coding. The interviews focused on adult learning, motivation, social connection, and reflection as the four main themes used for coding. We further grouped responses from interviewees as they aligned with or elaborated upon secondary themes identified earlier in Section C of the survey. Interview responses also identified additional secondary themes from our literature review which discussed mindset and the internalization of motivation, perceived impact of social learning opportunities, and meaningfulness of reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action. The qualitative results were utilized to identify patterns and findings and operationalize terms in order to provide recommendations to Earnest Journey.

## **Findings**

Both research literature and data collection, which included observations, surveys, and interviews, have informed the findings of this study. The section below begins with our findings

from an extended literature review to address our first research question. Further studies on adult learning, motivation, social connection, and reflection were considered. Finally, data from participant surveys and interviews were grouped into three categories, motivation, social connection, and reflection.

### **Findings From an Extended Literature Review**

This section outlines the key literature findings related to Earnest Journey's problem of practice, and how the findings were used to provide research-based recommendations to support Earnest Journey's goals for Dare to Lead. Following the completion of data collection through observations, surveys, and interviews, four themes arose which warranted extended literature exploration:

- activating motivation,
- goal setting,
- habit formation,
- and trust building.

Although these topics were addressed in the original literature review, participant responses from data collected during the surveys and interviews continued to show a correlation to these themes. The sections below outline insights from the literature review and additional research on the four identified topics.

#### ***Activating Motivation***

Autonomy is one of the three basic needs outlined in self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2013). It is linked to other ideas which activate motivation, such as freedom and choice (Wang et al., 2015), personal values (Esteve et al., 2017), well-being (Gagné & Deci, 2005), self-identity (Haslam et al., 2000), and a drive to get ahead or fit in (Hogan & Blickle, 2016). Using

autonomy as a springboard, we more deeply explored these related topics to glean insight into what motivates individuals to actively apply new learning and skills into their daily lives.

Freedom and choice have been directly linked to motivation. When learners are given the opportunity to choose what they are learning and how they learn it, the motivation for task completion increases (Wang et al., 2015). Freedom and choice are achieved through personally tailoring learning activities (Keefe, 2007). Personalized learning requires adaptation of the instruction to the needs and interests of the learners rather than fitting the learners to the instruction (Keefe, 2007). Being a preprogrammed workshop, freedom and choice are not inherent in the Dare to Lead curriculum; therefore, the opportunity for personalized learning falls on the facilitator.

The Dare to Lead workshop supports the identification of personal values and emphasizes living in alignment with one's values. When one's personal values are aligned with the work they do, motivation for the work is positively impacted (Esteve et al., 2017). In a large-scale survey conducted to study the correlation between motivation and personal value alignment with work, Esteve et al. (2017) identified two significant findings. First, they found that when employees perceive that their personal values are aligned with their work, even the effects of poor working conditions do little to reduce work motivation (Esteve et al., 2017). Second, the study identified that doing work aligned with one's values increases job satisfaction and motivation which does not decrease when work pressures increase (Esteve et al., 2017). In other words, high motivation can be maintained when values align with work, despite poor working conditions and high-pressure jobs.

Another motivational factor from the literature was psychological well-being. Maslow's hierarchy of needs outlines two psychological needs, esteem and love or belongingness, which

are foundational for human motivation (Latham, 2012). Esteem is related to the feeling of confidence and respect by others, and love or belonging is associated with social connections to family or friends and intimacy (Latham, 2012). For well-being, humans desire and work toward actualizing their esteem and searching for love and belongingness. On a quest for well-being, Dare to Lead participants often seek the work of Brené Brown to live wholehearted lives.

A cluster of theorists focused on motivation from the perspective of identity and self-image. Similarly to well-being, the needs outlined in Maslow's hierarchy support self-categorization theory (Latham, 2012). This theory identifies a relationship between self-identity formation and motivation (Haslam et al., 2000). Social connection is also intertwined with this theory due to the basic assumption that self-actualization is a collective endeavor rather than a personal one (Haslem et al., 2000). According to self-categorization theory, one's identity is formed by the groups they identify with or groups they are not members of, whether by choice or personal circumstances (Haslam et al., 2000). Each participant in a Dare to Lead workshop becomes part of the community of learners within their cohort, developing a sense of self and a sense of self in relation to others.

A final theory was explored to provide a different perspective to human motivation: socioanalytic theory. This theory focuses on a social need to assimilate with others to 'get along' or differentiate oneself from others to 'get ahead' (Hogan & Holland, 2003). The focus on 'getting along' or striving to 'get ahead' were two identifiers that serve as motivators in the workplace (Hogan & Holland, 2003), and was, for some, a consideration for Dare to Lead registration.

### ***Goal Setting***

Knowles identified that adults are independent and self-directing because as learners, adults already have formed a self-concept that is not in-tact in children (Hagan & Park, 2016). A self-concept enables adults to assess their own needs and formulate goals for learning. By actively participating in needs assessment and goal formation, adults can increase self-intentionality, intelligence, and agency which impacts their motivation for learning, sense of autonomy, and competence (Hagan & Park, 2016). As we explored in the above section on activating motivation, identity formation can be a motivator, and in a similar way, goal setting to form new habits is related to identity change (Clear, 2018). Who an individual wants to be and what they value contributes to identification of goals, and incremental accomplishments toward the goal forms short-term and long-term habits (Clear, 2018).

Goal setting is not currently a component of the Dare to Lead workshop. Empirical studies have found that goal setting, when proximal (short-term) and distal (long-term) objectives are set and monitored, leads to more significant likelihood of habit formation (Locke & Latham, 2013). Feedback, goal setting, and monitoring of goals are interconnected, and when combined, all three factors can affect changes in behavior (Latham, 2012). The Dare to Lead workshop includes a section on teaching participants how to provide clear and kind feedback (Brown, 2018; Brown, 2020); however, facilitators are not engaging in the practice of giving feedback to participants during the workshop. Delivery of high-quality feedback is not currently being modeled.

When goals are established, it is important that they are few in number and attainable while still being challenging (Edminster & Locke, 1987; Latham, 2012). Long-term goals need to be broken down into short-term objectives and prioritized (Latham, 2012). Ongoing

monitoring of short-term objective attainment and celebration of progress increases motivation for reaching the long-term, distal goal (Amabile & Kramer, 2011). Without goal setting as a part of the Dare to Lead workshop, monitoring and celebration of goal progress cannot occur.

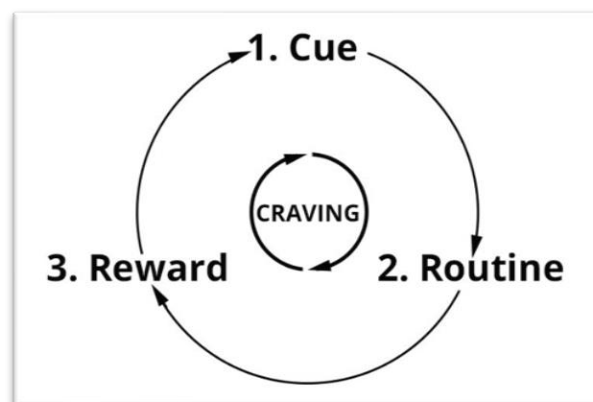
### ***Habit Formation***

Research and beliefs about habit formation have evolved over the years. Beginning with a behaviorist perspective, then shifting to an association with rewards and consequences, habit has more recently become connected with goal systems (Wood & Neal, 2007). Our understanding of habit will use the foundation of the behaviorist and stimulus/response theories in order to actualize goals systems. Habits formed through the use of goal systems can effectively modify existing behaviors or add new ones (Duhigg, 2014).

Building a habit is divided into three steps called a habit loop: cue, response, and reward (Duhigg, 2014). The habit loop is a neurological feedback loop that, over time and with repetition, can become more automatic (Duhigg, 2014).

### **Figure 10**

*Habit Loop Visual (Duhigg, 2014)*





When the habit loop is completed, a craving to repeat the loop forms, and this craving drives long-term habit formation (Duhigg, 2014). A behavior cannot occur without these three steps of the habit loop, and the behavior will not be repeated without forming a craving (Clear, 2018).

The cue is a trigger that initiates a craving that leads to a behavior response (Clear, 2018). Some systems of habit formation, such as stimulus/response theories, attempt to change behavior by addressing the reward or punishment; however, studies have shown that by addressing the cue, learning can be improved (Wood & Neal, 2007). The use of cues, which can include questions, information, and exercises, can help to improve self-regulated learning (Van Laer & Elen, 2019). Combined with problem-solving skills, cues can aid in the formation of new habits and change learned behaviors, thus improving one's ability to apply new learning (Van Laer & Elen, 2019).

Studies have found that when self-regulation is used in conjunction with external reinforcements, learners are more likely to change habits and behaviors (Karppinen et al., 2018). Essentially, when learners are given the tools to recognize and reflect upon their own behaviors, a deeper awareness is developed to allow for the acceptance and vulnerability that comes with behavior change (Brown, 2018). Coaching individuals on how to utilize cues in habit formation and self-regulation were not deliberate parts of the workshop. Participants who may have used cues to help form new habits did so without the recommendation of the workshop facilitators.

### ***Trust Building***

Learners build learning communities upon common interests and a similar foundation (Lave & Wenger, 1991) which facilitates trust. Trust is a “psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behavior of another” (Rousseau et al. 1998, p. 395). Trust is central in the work of Brené Brown (Brown,

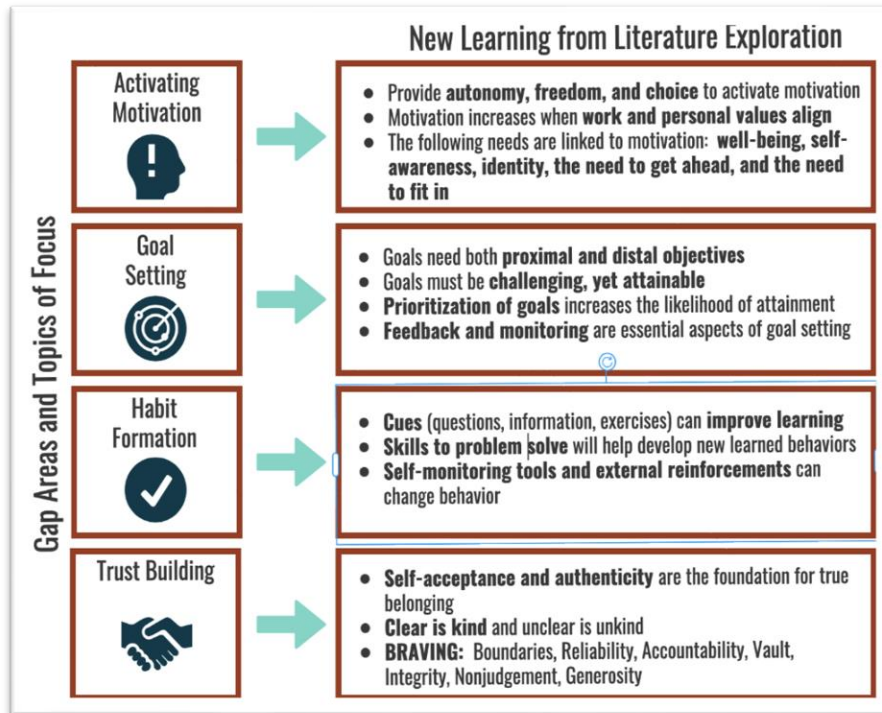
2018). The Dare to Lead content can lead to discussions about personal and vulnerable content. For this reason, building trust must take place early in the workshop.

Brené Brown (2018) has explored how trust building is an essential component of working with others through her BRAVING Inventory, which contains seven elements of trust that are important when working with others in a group setting (Brown, 2018). The seven elements of BRAVING are: 1. respecting Boundaries, 2. Reliably maintaining commitments, 3. being Accountable for mistakes, 4. maintaining a Vault of privacy and confidentiality, 5. acting with Integrity, 6. responding and acting Nonjudgmentally, and 7. extending Generosity of intentions (Brown, 2017). While these elements are what Brown (2018) deems to be behaviors that define trust, she also affirms that being transparent is part of building trust: both in feedback and in expectations (Brown, 2018). Using the phrase “Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind.”, learners are reminded that clarity and understanding help to bring about trust for both people and content (Brown, 2018, p. 44).

Not only can the BRAVING Inventory be used to reflect on working with others, but it should also be considered when reflecting on self-trust (Brown, 2018). Self-acceptance and authenticity are the foundation for true belonging (Brown, 2017). Trust building facilitates true belonging, and true belonging exists when you can be your authentic self without fear of lacking, punishment, or criticism (Brown, 2017).

## **Figure 11**

*Summary of Findings from Extended Literature Review*



**Key Findings**

The comprehensive survey and interview analysis from both the fall 2020 and winter 2021 Dare to Lead cohorts revealed key findings that have been grouped into the three central areas of this study: motivation, social connection, and reflection. There are three key findings under motivation (labeled M1, M2, and M3), three for social connection (labeled S1, S2, and S3), and two tied to reflection (labeled R1 and R2). Information from observations and the extended literature exploration bolster the findings in this section.

**Motivation Findings**

<p><b>M1 – Motivation Finding 1</b></p> <p>Interviewed participants indicated that they desired for the content to be tailored to their needs and familiarity level with the work of Brené Brown.</p>
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An initial survey distributed to participants was provided by the Brené Brown Education and Research Group. This standardized self-assessment allowed participants to rank their current

leadership qualities on eleven different elements. Although it gave insight to participants on their areas of strength and opportunity, the assessment did not allow facilitators to learn the expectations and goals of each participant or their familiarity with Dare to Lead content.

Survey comments revealed that participants had varying degrees of familiarity with the work of Brené Brown. A participant from the first cohort noted that “little content was new” to them because of their previous study of Brené Brown's work; however, a participant from the second cohort stated that they felt confused with “jargon” associated with specific, Dare to Lead content. For facilitators, this range of participant knowledge poses a challenge to how learners collectively apply motivation, social connection, and reflection in the short and long term - a challenge connected to this study's third research question. Lacking knowledge of individuals' needs and readiness levels for beginning the course hinders the ability to understand each learner to tailor content, pacing, and activities to meet learner needs.

Participants who enter the Dare to Lead workshop with less exposure to the work of Brené Brown, immediately begin at a disadvantage. Participants with less connection to the vocabulary and teachings within the scope of work can become mired down in the “jargon” and new terminology. On the other end of the spectrum, those with much experience with the videos and writings of Brené Brown requested differentiated and fresh stories, explanations, and content.

### **M2 – Motivation Finding 2**

Participants expressed that they would be more motivated to apply new learning if more concrete, systematic skill development and practice were included in the workshop.

In the short term, survey data revealed that participants were applying new learning from the Dare to Lead workshop into their personal and professional lives; however, interview data revealed that the ability to apply new knowledge decreased in the long term. Two weeks after the

workshop, 27% of participants did not feel that they were forming habits based on the Dare to Lead course, but this percentage increased six to eight weeks after the course. Based on interviews, 66% of participants felt they were not using Dare to Lead content to fully form habits in their daily or work lives. This finding is linked to the second research question guiding this project which seeks to explore the short-term and long-term application of Dare to Lead principles and the third research question which addresses what helps individuals to apply new learning. Without skill development, participants cannot develop new habits.

As explored through the literature, alignment of personal values and work can activate motivation (Esteve et al., 2017). An intentional effort to form goals, align the goals with personal values, or monitor goals does not currently exist in the workshop. The only reference to identifying opportunities for leadership development stemmed from the Armored Leadership Versus Daring Leadership self-evaluation, but this inventory was not used to set actionable, measurable, and specific goals. Course discussions gravitated toward theoretical concepts and connected to personal experiences, but practical ways for adding new skills or modifying current habits were missing. Moving from theoretical understanding to practical habit formation in an eight-week course is challenging.

Participants craved opportunities to practice and change behaviors to align with new learning even beyond the eight-week course. One participant expressed concern with developing skills or being able to “skill up”. She noted that discussions occurred around the need to increase skills, but specific direction on how to do this was not evident. While the content knowledge has remained with participants after the workshops, the skills for applying what was learned were reported to be a deficiency within the program. Merriam-Webster defines a skill as “the ability to use one’s knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance” (Skill, 2021). Theory

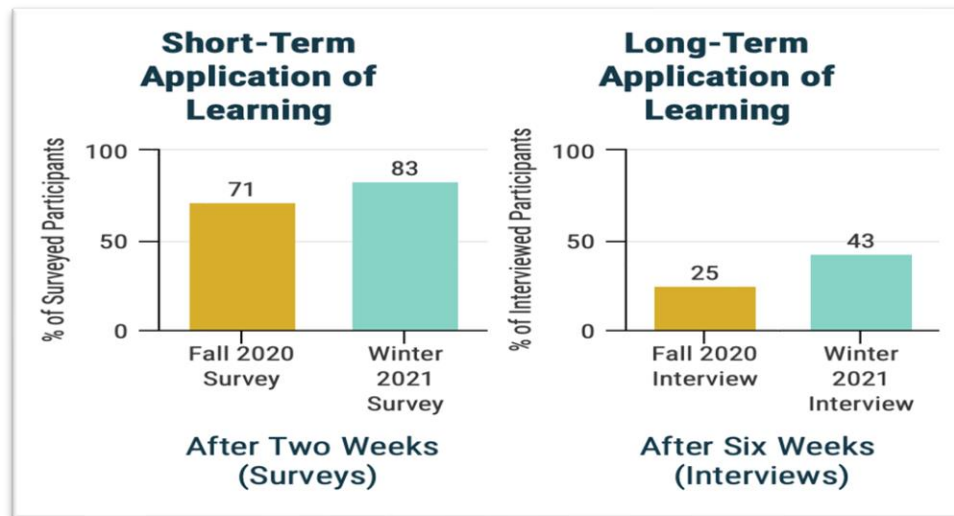
and practice are discussed throughout the Dare to Lead workshop but how to put the theory into action is not. Participants desire the ability to acquire skills to support applying new learning.

### **M3 – Motivation Finding 3**

Participants struggled with motivation to implement new learning and change behaviors following the workshop.

Survey and interview comments supported the belief that all participants possessed an innate desire to learn, grow, and become more vulnerable leaders, but creating long-term behavioral change was not an outcome. This finding informs the second research question presented in this project: Did participants apply Dare to Lead Principles in the short and long term following the workshop? Questions three and four are at the heart of this finding because they seek to explore how motivation, social connection, and reflection are helpful to the application of new learning and skills and what additional opportunities participants desire related to the three focus areas of this study.

Nearly all of the participants in the study shared that the motivation to apply what was learned within the Dare to Lead workshops has been slow. All survey participants indicated they had used and reflected upon the content from the course in their personal lives since the workshop ended. Seventy-two percent of participants from the fall 2020 cohort stated that they regularly reflect on what they learned from Dare to Lead in the short term and 75% from the second cohort. At the time of the survey, 71% percent of the fall 2020 cohort and 83% of the winter 2021 cohort stated they were forming new habits based on Dare to Lead. By the time interviews were conducted, the percentage of participants maintaining habits from Dare to Lead significantly decreased. Only 25% of interviewees from the fall 2020 cohort and 43% from the winter 2021 cohort felt that habits were fully developed six to eight weeks after completing the workshop (Figure 12).

**Figure 12***Short and Long-Term Application of Learning*

Habit formation addresses the cues that can jump-start the habit loop (Clear, 2018).

Although the workshop content cannot be changed, strategies can be embedded within current content to teach participants how to set up cues to replace old habits. Additionally, participants seek feedback from facilitators and peers regarding ongoing skill development. This finding addresses the third and the fourth research questions of this project. It describes the level of motivation to implement learning and how participants seek to explore what additional opportunities they desire after completing the workshop.

Self-monitoring was not viewed by participants as sufficient early in the habit loop, and external reinforcements were requested by participants to provide accountability and support. Important areas for feedback and external reinforcement are prioritizing goals and monitoring of proximal and distal objectives. Changing a habit and activating the habit loop requires strategic planning. Strategy is defined as a carefully developed plan or method (Strategy, 2021).

*Social Connection Findings***S1 – Social Connection Finding 1**

Discussion in small group settings during the weekly sessions were meaningful and appreciated by participants.

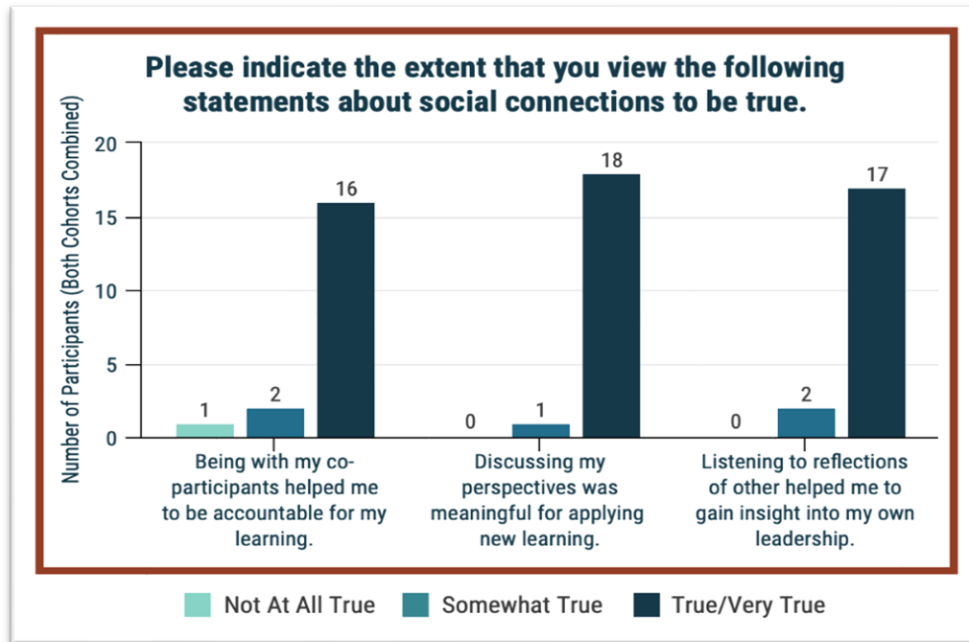
The relationships formed with both the facilitators and their fellow Dare to Lead participants were unanimously the most favored components identified by participants in this study. While participants from both cohorts may have lived in different areas of the country or world and engaged in various industries for work, they all desired to learn and grow. The growth and learning that occurred within the program happened due to trust built among participants. The small breakout groups, particularly those in the winter 2021 cohort, were cited as the most meaningful part of the program. Ninety-one percent of the fall 2020 cohort and 86% of the winter 2021 cohort indicated that listening to the reflections of others helped them gain greater insight into their own leadership (Figure 13).

Survey data indicated that 18 out of 19 participants valued discussing their perspectives and felt that more opportunities in small groups would give each person more time to share. For both cohorts, social connections and relationships were most positively expressed in the comments for Section C of the survey. A participant from the first cohort said, “the small group sessions were intimate and more meaningful when we each got to share.” This was echoed in the interview data when one participant shared that the breakout groups “were a reminder that you’re not alone in your feelings”. Another shared that “people all over the world and in all different industries, extremely bright, kind, people, have the same feelings... it’s a part of the human experience.”

**Figure 13**

*Survey Questions on Social Connections*





Due to the feedback shared with Mrs. Wiggins after data was collected from the fall 2020 cohort, breakout groups occurred during each live session in the winter 2021 cohort. Positive feedback from the winter 2021 cohort's interviews confirmed that breakout groups helped participants both bond with one another and reinforced that others shared their feelings or experiences. This finding addresses the first and third research questions that guide this study. Participants discovered that the social connections created with one another proved to be meaningful to their experience within the workshop and for their learning.

## S2 – Social Connection Finding 2

Participants desire an ongoing connection with course content and fellow attendees beyond the workshop.

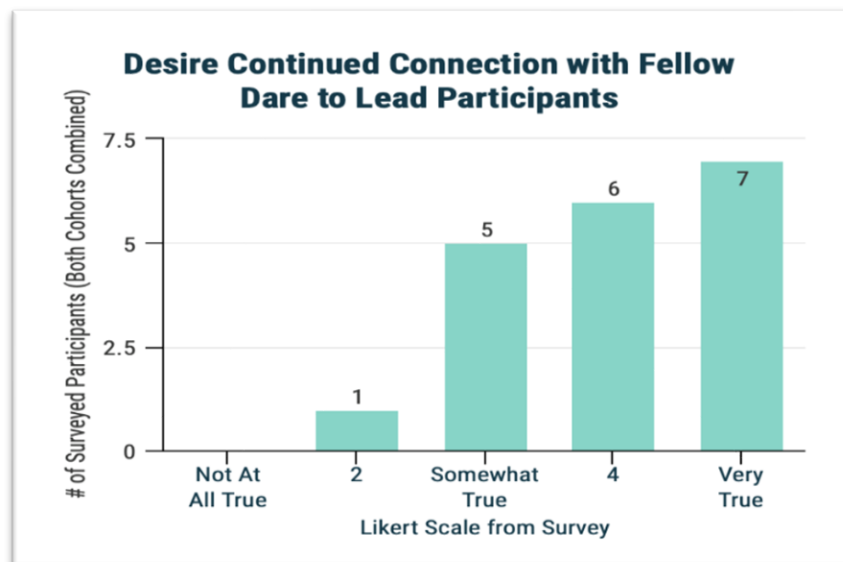
Survey and interview data revealed a desire for more social interactions with participants outside of the eight-week program to continue connecting with those they formed bonds with. This social connection finding is linked to this project's first research question which aims to explore what Earnest Journey should consider when developing future workshops, as well as the

fourth which questions what opportunities participants desire following the eight-week workshop.

From both cohorts, 95% of participants expressed that they wanted more connection with participants beyond the workshop and stated they highly valued discussing their perspectives with their fellow participants. In response to this demand, one month following each of the Dare to Lead cohorts, an optional virtual reunion was organized by Mrs. Wiggins. However, events were not well attended, with each session only having approximately one-third of the cohort's participants involved. Interview data indicated a desire for ongoing information to be distributed by Earnest Journey. External reinforcements, which were suggested, included a video library, a newsletter, or the creation of an "accountability cohort".

#### Figure 14

*Desire Continued Connection with Fellow Dare to Lead Participants*



**S3 – Social Connection Finding 3**

Facilitators created a safe space for vulnerable sharing and interactions.

The program facilitators were highly regarded and used the BRAVING Inventory to build trust (Brown, 2018). A sincere appreciation for creating a safe space for sharing, a space where trust was quickly formed, and a space where serious and lighthearted conversation could occur was evident from the data collection. Perspectives on trust as a factor that allowed participants to be vulnerable during the workshop rated high on the surveys: 100% for the first cohort and 84% for the second cohort. In Section C of the survey, participants praised the facilitators for helping the cohort to bond so quickly, and several participants stated that they felt safe and connected with the other cohort members throughout the workshop. One participant in the winter 2021 cohort said, “facilitators were always on-point, organized, concerned with our needs, intentional, and helped to build trust.”

Also noted were facilitator-designed activities that were interactive and conducive to establishing bonds with cohort members. Several individuals mentioned music as an element that helped both bond group members and enable a more relaxed learning environment. Ongoing collaboration and interaction foster the development of social connection which participants found to be helpful in their application of new learning and skills. Research questions one and three were addressed through this social connection finding by taking data from observations, surveys, and interviews into consideration.

***Reflection Findings*****R1 – Reflection Finding 3**

Assigned homework in the Dare to Lead workshop was not effective in helping participants apply new learning.

Participants revealed that motivation to complete weekly homework, a significant program component, was not always consistent. The first reflection finding ties to the first three research questions that guided this project. Based on survey data, 33% of attendees felt the workbook and homework was not beneficial, and 42% noted that they completed the homework out of obligation. It was reported that many of the anecdotal stories shared in the asynchronous material were stories previously shared by Brené Brown in her TED Talks or books, leading participants to feel that some of the material was all-too familiar. Additionally, completing homework and attending live classes for an eight-week period while working full-time and tending to personal/familial commitments was, at times, challenging for participants.

Section B of the survey raised concerns with the meaningfulness of the pre-work reflections and homework completed in the workbook between each live session. Sixty-three percent of participants in the fall 2020 cohort and 83% of participants in the winter 2021 cohort felt that the weekly workbook exercises impacted their daily lives. Quantitative data did not indicate that participants felt pressured to complete the homework; however, further reflection during the interview process regarding this topic was warranted. Based on interviews, some participants shared that they completed homework and asynchronous work just before weekly class time, allowing little to no reflection on the assigned material.

In Section C of the survey, two participants from the fall 2020 cohort addressed why they gave the workbook exercises low scores. One individual expressed a need for more choice and autonomy regarding reflection. This individual felt constrained by the fill-in-the-blank format of the workbook. They stated, “I struggled to connect with many of the activities in the book and that made me feel unprepared to debrief in class. The book activities weren't always clear, and I

often felt I was grasping for examples.” The other individual felt the workbook was not meaningful, but they indicated the weekly homework videos were helpful.

Because the homework was of little interest to some learners, the literature states that an explicit explanation of why the topics were important could have increased competence and motivation for learning (Hagan & Park, 2016). For some participants, the homework provided reflection and self-awareness; however, many expressed how unclear activities and the lack of motivation to complete assigned work resulted in the lack of reinforcement of learning objectives.

### **R2 – Reflection Finding 2**

Reflection was mostly retroactive and did not connect with the formation of actionable and measurable goals or objectives to impact future actions and decisions.

Participants reported that various activities in the live Zoom classes, most significantly the small breakout groups, allowed them to reflect on the course content. During interviews, participants reflected on the growth of their comfort engaging in conversations related to Brené Brown’s core principles and expressed a feeling of being more self-confident. Engaging with their classmates and listening to their stories, experiences, and perspectives allowed for reflection-on-action throughout the entirety of the workshop. Recollection of stories and sharing of past events served as a retroactive mode of reflection.

Reflection-in-action, which is to take place in the moment of decision-making, is more challenging to practice. The best time for reflection-in-action is when a habit has not yet become automatic (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). Some but not all participants mentioned the practice of reflection-in-action in interviews.

Key phrases, including “Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind.” and “Living into our values.” were cited as being the most impactful and repeated by participants. Reflection around the course

content was evident, and discussions regarding the real-life practical application of the content emerged. Reflection on course material led participants to question their next steps in vulnerable leadership. They desire more training, goal-setting opportunities, social connections, and resources to continue working towards the skills of being daring leaders. Also, survey data indicated a need for actionable and purposeful feedback from facilitators and peers to support reflection since 32% of participants did not feel that feedback from facilitators or peers highly impacted their growth. This finding is linked to the third and fourth research question presented in this project, as it helps to address the application of skills and additional opportunities participants desire.

### **Recommendations**

From the study's eight findings, five recommendations have been developed for Earnest Journey – one for Mrs. Wiggins to implement before the next Dare to Lead workshop, three to incorporate into the next workshop, and one to establish after the workshop has concluded (Figure 15). While these recommendations were developed to support the needs expressed by clients who had completed a Dare to Lead workshop, it is essential to note that they can better support the application of new learning by leveraging motivation, social connection, and reflection for any future Earnest Journey training.

### **Figure 15**

*Five Recommendations for Earnest Journey*



### Recommendation 1

Develop an onboarding process that supports participants' baseline knowledge prior to the first live session.

Without an understanding of how much knowledge a cohort possesses related to the topics covered or the vocabulary that will be used, it can be difficult for a facilitator to lead conversations and develop activities that will be engaging and beneficial for all participants. To assess areas of concern, we recommend Earnest Journey develop a survey for registered participants to complete before the first week of a workshop. Responses to the survey could help inform Mrs. Wiggins regarding the motivation for participant registration, their familiarity with Brené Brown's work, and what participants expect to gain out of the eight-week workshop.

Participants who report having little to no knowledge of Brené Brown's work in the survey, could be provided video resources including links to her TED Talks, interviews, and articles to help them develop a baseline knowledge. This baseline knowledge would be helpful

for participants throughout the workshop and would also ensure that all cohort members understand the principles and language that will be deeper explored in the workshop. Mrs. Wiggins would also be able to use the survey results to tailor activities and breakout group discussions to what participants feel they would like to achieve in the leadership training workshop. Understanding each participant's motivation, background, and expectations will only further help Mrs. Wiggins ensure that she is providing the most value within the program for her clients.

Evidence to support this recommendation can be tied to three of our findings: M1, S3, and R2. This first recommendation speaks explicitly to our first finding under motivation (M1) which indicated that interviewees found the existing pre-workshop data collected did not include their motivation for registering for the workshop was or how familiar they were with the work of Brené Brown. This recommendation ties into our findings for activating motivation, as a more detailed onboarding survey will help with participant self-awareness and assimilation into the program. We believe this help with the investment of participants in the program and ensure that all daring leaders will be on the same page when the program begins.

This baseline starting point ties into our finding that facilitators created a safe space for participants (S3). Ensuring that participants have a baseline knowledge of the principles will deepen the ability for participants to trust each other, opening the line of communication quicker, which ties into the start of an effective feedback loop. Lastly, this recommendation supports our finding that reflection was mostly retroactive for participants and that they did not develop actionable and formal goals (R2). Assessing their motivation for enrolling in the workshop and their desires for the course is beginning the process of goal setting. This would allow them to reflect upon what they already know in order to begin formulating their short and long-term



goals. A sample onboarding survey has been developed to support this recommendation (Appendix C).

<b>Recommendation 2</b>
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Engage participants in goal setting, self-monitoring, and reciprocal feedback throughout the workshop.
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Goal setting, when paired with self-monitoring and feedback, has been recognized as a highly effective strategy for the application of new learning (Latham. 2012). Our extended literature review highlighted the value of utilizing a well-researched strategy such as goal setting to support applying new learning for Dare to Lead participants. Data collected from surveys and interviews affirmed the need for goal setting, self-monitoring, and feedback as a path to guide future internalization of new habits. This leads us to recommend a formal goal-setting process at the beginning of each workshop, monitoring of the goals set throughout the workshop, and reciprocal feedback to and from peers and facilitators.

Formation and monitoring of goals are initial steps in changing behavior. Since goal setting is linked to skill development and habit formation, this recommendation supports our second and third findings under motivation (M2 and M3). This recommendation for providing more structure around goal setting is also linked to our second reflection finding (R2). Through an increase in self-monitoring and feedback practices, Earnest Journey can facilitate the development of actionable and measurable goals which will impact future decisions and behaviors of Dare to Lead participants.

The workbook activity for the first session of the Dare to Lead workshop included a “call to courage”, and this section asked participants to set an intention for the course. This intention was a good start for goal setting; however, it lacked specific practices for goal setting which empirical studies have identified to correlate with creating new practices. The table below

identifies seven evidence-based best practices from the literature regarding goal setting which we believe would benefit participants taking the Dare to Lead workshop as they strive to apply new learning. These strategies can be employed in the planning process for goal setting by Dare to Lead facilitators (Figure 16).

**Figure 16**

*Research-Based, Best Practices for Goal Setting*

<b>Research-Based, Best Practices for Goal Setting</b>		
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Benefit(s) to Earnest Journey</b>
Limit the Number of Goals	When formulating and monitoring goals, it is best when an individual sets only one or two goals. Too many goals diminishes the focus and importance of the goal and leads to goal fatigue (Edminster & Locke, 1987).	There are many topics introduced and covered in the eight-week workshop. Helping participants identify one or two goals for the eight weeks, and revisiting these goals each week will help narrow the focus for participants. It will increase the probability that they will make progress on one or two important goals and not become overwhelmed.
Specific and Actionable	Writing goals requires specificity, and the strategy of “Paint Done” provides a strong format for describing the specifics of a goal (Brown, 2018). Goals must also be actionable - knowing how to measure the accomplishment of a goal is essential (Locke & Latham, 2013).	The “Paint Done” framework already exists in the workshop. Using this strategy to clearly articulate a timeline, objectives, measurable opportunities, and what goal attainment will look like will be beneficial to participants.
Proximal and Distal	Breaking a goal down into objectives helps individuals approach it incrementally. Proximal objectives are intermediary steps toward the ultimate goal, and they will build toward the completion of the goal. The distal objective is an ultimate goal and takes place in the long term (Locke & Latham, 2013).	When writing specific goals using “Paint Done”, participants will benefit from setting two or three proximal objectives and describe what achieving those will look like. The ultimate or distal goal will be the long-term achievement as a culmination of the proximal objectives.
Prioritize Objectives	Carol Dweck (1986) identifies that clear prioritization of goals and their	Once proximal and distal objectives are set, prioritization becomes

	objectives will support attainment. Goals are ranked and ordered to create a hierarchy and to draw attention to what is most important to the goal setter.	important, especially when working on more than one goal at a time. Ranking the importance of each goal and objective to highlight which is most highly valued will help participants target where to place their energy.
Align With Personal Values	Motivation for goal attainment increases when goals are aligned with one's personal values. A goal that is not aligned with one's values will likely be abandoned (Dweck, 1986).	Value exploration is an integral part of the Dare to Lead workshop. When discussing values, it is important to have participants link what they value to the goals they have set. If there is misalignment, a new goal may need to be established.
Challenging But Attainable	Goals which are set should challenge the goal setter, but this individual needs to have the self-efficacy to know they can ultimately meet the challenge of the goal. If the goal is too easy or deemed as being unreachable, the individual will not be motivated to pursue the goal (Dweck, 1986, Locke & Latham, 2013).	Honest conversations and feedback regarding goal setting will be important to help participants determine if their goal is both challenging and attainable. This filter is important before starting work on a goal, and it is key to make sure that participants in Dare to Lead are aware of the struggles and rewards associated with setting challenging goals.
Celebrate Incremental Successes	Seeing progress toward a goal builds momentum and maintains interest for the goal setter. Noticing and celebrating incremental gains and accomplishments can build to higher motivation for habit formation and continued drive to accomplish the goal (Amabile & Kramer, 2011).	Regular reflection on goal progress, sharing successes and struggles in small breakout groups, and feedback time with facilitators and peers will be essential in building a climate for goal celebration during the workshop and beyond. Public acknowledgement of progress can increase participants' drive for goal attainment.

By implementing these seven strategies, Earnest Journey can help participants leverage goal setting to form new habits. The other two components, linked to goal setting are self-monitoring and feedback. Earnest Journey can use breakout groups and homework reflection to

intentionally guide participants in developing practices for self-monitoring. Self-monitoring is linked to the habit loop, and individuals wishing to become better self-monitors can do so by being purposeful in planning cues for the desired practices (Clear, 2018). Helping participants identify cues to increase the number of times they are reminded of their goal would also be a recommendation. Cues may include, but are not limited to the following:

- sticky notes with a one or two-word reminder on them,
- pictures or a phrase on one's computer desktop,
- a timer or reminder on a calendar or agenda, or
- an object that visually represents the desired practice.

Creating time and opportunities to discuss cues, reflect upon goals, and vulnerably assess progress on objectives will benefit participants when it occurs each week during the workshop. We recommend that facilitators intentionally remind participants of their goals weekly and set these goals as top priorities throughout the course.

When partnered with goal setting and self-monitoring, feedback can be used to deepen an individual's commitment to applying their learning (Latham, 2012). Dare to Lead participants stated that they craved regular feedback from facilitators and peers. This will be further outlined in recommendation number four; however, it is crucial for Earnest Journey to focus feedback on goals and establish activities or protocols that support peer feedback during small group breakouts. It is recommended that facilitators provide written or verbal feedback on each participants' goals at least once during the eight-week workshop. This help the 32% of Dare to Lead participants who indicated that facilitator feedback was not helping them form new habits.

**Recommendation 3**

Intentionally incorporate skill practice and habit-forming strategies for each concept introduced.

The Dare to Lead workshop is densely filled with new concepts and ideas. As identified by interviewed participants, skills and strategies were not provided to help participants incorporate these ideas into daily practice. This recommendation stems from our second and third motivation findings (M2 and M3). Motivation finding number two (M2) identified a need for concrete, systematic skill development and practice, and motivation finding three (M3) centered on the need to support behavior change and habit-formation. In the short term, 21% of participants felt that they did not form new habits after the workshop. This number increased when participants were interviewed regarding long-term application of habits.

A few key questions can guide Earnest Journey when breaking down any idea or concept from Dare to Lead into practical tools, skills, and strategies for implementation:

1. How does this idea or concept show up in real-life application?
  - a. What tools are used to develop a new practice around this idea or concept?
  - b. What skills/strategies in personal or work life are connected to the idea or concept?
2. What old habit or behavior do I want to replace or change with this new one?
  - a. What cues can I set up to remind myself to change or replace this old habit?
  - b. What does success look like?

By considering these questions when a new idea or concept is introduced, the Dare to Lead facilitators can plan for a transition from abstract to practical by infusing tools, skills, and strategies. The facilitator does not need to have all the answers for how these ideas translate to practical use. Still, they can start a conversation by providing an example or two and opening a discussion for the group to consider other ways new behaviors can be formed.

Skills and strategies can come from outside sources and additional knowledge that Mrs. Wiggins has gained as a leadership coach and facilitator. Participants stated that the week spent on feedback during the workshop was one of the best because of the additional resources and knowledge Mrs. Wiggins brought to the conversation. This recommendation leans on Mrs. Wiggins' expertise and ability to support skill development. Figure 17 below identifies two examples of how concepts from the Dare to Lead workshop can be translated into tools, skills, and strategies:

**Figure 17**

*Examples of Transition from Abstract Ideas to Concrete Skills*

<b>From an Idea or Concept to a Skill or Strategy</b>			
<b>Example</b>	<b>Idea or Concept</b>	<b>Concern</b>	<b>Skill or Strategy</b>
Exploring Your Arena	Early in the workshop, participants are introduced to the arena, a metaphor for one's life. This discussion includes the different sections of the arena and the impact people in each section have on you, reflection questions about responding to critics, and identification of those who are your supporters.	The arena is described and players are identified, but how can we change or impact our own arena?	Possible strategies to bring in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to increase the number of empathizers in your arena</li> <li>• ways to silence negative self-talk or critics</li> <li>• opportunities for increasing self-efficacy and confidence</li> <li>• tools for self-compassion (gratitude, mindfulness, rest, etc.)</li> </ul>
Shame Shields	A key concept in the workshop focuses on shame and how we respond to it. The concept of shame shields is introduced, and participants reflect upon how shame shows up in their lives. Empathy and self-compassion	Although the solutions to help build shame resilience are identified, the practices and skills for developing empathy and	Kristin Neff's Three Elements of Self-Compassion are noted in the workbook. Time focused on how to practice self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness would benefit workshop participants in working through shame.

	are identified as strategies to counteract shame.	self-compassion are not explicitly taught.	Other strategies around self-compassion, such as circling back and values clarification, could be used as well.
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When most new ideas or concepts are introduced, Brené Brown often provides ideas for solutions, but these ideas are usually just briefly mentioned. By shifting the focus to applying skills and strategies, Earnest Journey can provide deeper value for clients. Bringing in other works by Brené Brown or other experts on the topics within the Dare to Lead workshop, Mrs. Wiggins will be able to supplement the existing workshop with skill practice and strategy development, leading to the internalization of the content for participants.

Once skills and strategies are identified and taught, we recommend connecting the new skills and strategies to the steps of the habit loop (Duhigg, 2014). Helping participants note the cues, responses, and rewards would facilitate the ongoing use of the new skills and strategies, and these three steps would create a craving that helps to sustain the habit loop. As identified in earlier sections, participants can set up cues by creating visual reminders to practice the new skill. This cue reminds them to start the new habit. Once they establish a new cue, they respond with a new action and begin to replace the old habit with a new one. The response leads to a reward or benefit from the new action. This reward begins to form a craving and makes the individual want to repeat the habit loop continually. This knowledge would be helpful for Dare to Lead participants to think through when developing new skills. Awareness of these phases helps with the monitoring of new habits and correction when habits begin to break down.

It is important to identify that time is a factor for forming solid habits during the eight-week workshop. Intentionally planning for skill and strategy development will support this effort; however, more time will likely be needed to continue concretizing the habits. Due to this

observation, recommendation five will outline how this work may continue beyond the eight-week Dare to Lead workshop.

**Recommendation 4**

Infuse choice, feedback, and collaboration into small group breakouts and homework reflection.

Participant responses on surveys and interviews clearly identified a desire for adjustments to small group breakouts and homework reflection. From the research and data collection, three areas for improvement, choice, feedback, and collaboration, were desired by Dare to Lead participants. Our first finding under social connection (S1) emphasized participants' overwhelming desire to have more small group breakout sessions. The implementation of more breakouts during the winter 2021 cohort proved that this recommendation was well received. Since the quantity of the breakout groups was perceived as a success on surveys and interviews from the winter 2021 cohort, the next recommendation is to increase the quality of these breakout groups by instilling structures that will provide choice, feedback opportunities, and collaborative problem solving.

The homework activities were a challenge for participants in both cohorts, and although the concern was raised with Earnest Journey after the fall 2020 cohort, no clear guidance was given at that time about how to make improvements. After referring back to the literature and spending additional time with interview responses, choice, feedback, and collaboration were identified as factors to support motivation for the homework reflection. This was outlined in our first reflection finding (R1) and reinforced as an area for focus since 42% of participants felt that they completed the homework out of obligation, and one-third of participants felt that the homework was not meaningful.



To incorporate choice, feedback, and collaboration into both small groups and homework, we recommend approaching the planning process for small groups and homework during each week of the workshop by considering the following questions:

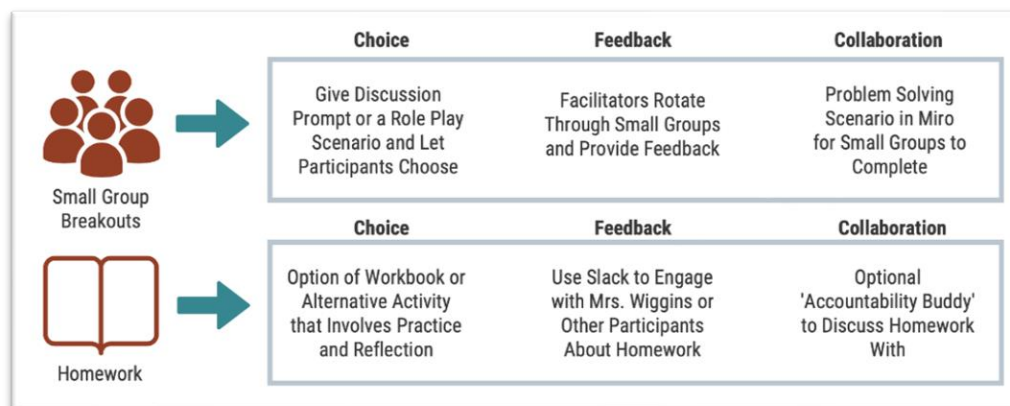
1. Is there an opportunity to give participants more autonomy or choice in the activity for the small group or homework?
2. How can I establish a structure for participants to give feedback to one another or get feedback from a facilitator while in small groups or during the homework?
3. Is there a way to engage the participants in collaborative problem solving or cooperative learning in the small group breakouts or during the homework?

Through considering these questions in the planning of each activity for small groups or homework, Mrs. Wiggins can more likely meet the needs of her clients. It is essential to state that sometimes adding choice, feedback, or collaboration may not be possible or may detract from the activity, so it is necessary to use professional judgment to ensure the activity is meaningful.

Figure 18 identifies examples of how choice, feedback, and collaboration could be incorporated into a small group breakout and homework:

**Figure 18**

*Examples of How Activities Can Contain Choice, Feedback, and Collaboration*



**Recommendation 5**

Provide a safe space for ongoing opportunities to reinforce motivation to apply workshop skills, to maintain social connection, and to encourage continued reflection.

Survey and interview data revealed a desire by most participants for ongoing collaboration with their peers after the workshop concluded (S2). To help support the desire for more concrete, systematic skill development and practice (M2), the enforcement of learned material and assistance with forming new habits (M3), and to support the connection of goals with future actions and decisions (R2), we developed a fifth recommendation. Our final recommendation is that Earnest Journey provide opportunities for participants to continue engaging with one another and the material once the eight-week workshop has concluded.

The recommendation to provide a safe space for ongoing opportunities to reinforce motivation, social connection, and reflection can be made through a formal post-workshop program. One model we have developed is a subscription plan for clients to receive virtual or live group sessions and electronic materials. For \$20 per month, clients would engage in virtual or live sessions with Mrs. Wiggins and their fellow Dare to Lead colleagues. Live sessions would be available to Nashville, TN clients only, but virtual sessions would be open to participants worldwide. The structured one and a half hour sessions would provide a safe and collaborative space for clients to further discuss their goals, gain new learning and practical skill building techniques, engage in role playing activities to practice their newly acquired learning, and receive feedback on homework or activities they engaged in between the monthly sessions. The sessions would continue to build on the social connection findings we uncovered through this study: they would impact small group collaboration and increase the emotional connection participants have with one another and the material discussed (S1), and these sessions would build upon the safe space that facilitators created for vulnerable sharing (S3). In addition to the

sessions, participants would also receive resource materials via email. These resources could be in the form of newsletters, articles, or videos that either Mrs. Wiggins creates or finds relevant to the theme of the month. These resources were mentioned as a suggestion by several interviewed participants as a way for continued growth and connection to the principles covered in the workshop.

This recommendation creates the opportunity for participants to deepen their social connection with one another after the formal Dare to Lead workshop and also allows for a continuation of motivation and reflection for clients. In addition to benefitting clients, the recommendation has two benefits for Earnest Journey. First, it can help Mrs. Wiggins form additional individual leadership coaching opportunities that she can provide to former Dare to Lead participants. Secondly, this recommendation deepens the connections between participants and Earnest Journey, which may lead to future in-tact team workshops. Both of these benefits are additional income sources for Earnest Journey.

### **Conclusion**

Earnest Journey has provided individual coaching and leadership development workshops to its clients since 2016. After expressing a desire to better help clients apply what they learn in offered workshops, we partnered with Earnest Journey's founder and lead facilitator, Angela Wiggins, to study two workshops: the Dare to Lead fall 2020 workshop and the Dare to Lead winter 2021 workshop. Conversations with Mrs. Wiggins regarding her desires to help make the learning "sticky" for her clients were rooted in the three core concepts: motivation, social connection, and reflection. Thus, leading to our exploration of how motivation, social connection, and reflection could be utilized to support the application of new learning in the short term and long term following a Dare to Lead workshop.

Our initial literature review led us to find motivation, social connection, and reflection to be significant in better aiding adults to learn and apply skills. With an overall goal of ensuring that the trainings offered by Earnest Journey provide value for clients, the analysis for this study included an extended literature review, observations of its upcoming Dare to Lead workshops, surveys, and interviews. Attending the fall 2020 and winter 2021 workshops helped us develop a clearer understanding of the preprogrammed workshop and how Mrs. Wiggins facilitates the workshop. Surveys were distributed to participants two weeks after each workshop ended to assess the application of learning in the short term. The opportunity to schedule an interview was sent to participants six weeks after the workshop ended. Interviews were designed to assess the long-term application of learning to understand the baseline knowledge participants had related to Brené Brown's work.

The data analysis led to eight findings that were grouped into three themes, three under motivation, three under social connection, and two under reflection. The exploration of these findings, coupled with our understanding of the content and adult learning as a result of the literature review, allowed for the development of five recommendations for Earnest Journey. These recommendations included one for helping Mrs. Wiggins better understand her clients prior to the start of the next Dare to Lead workshop, three for her to implement during the workshop, and one after the eight-week workshop has concluded.

We believe that the recommendations provided to Earnest Journey will aid in the motivation, social connection, and reflection of clients, thus helping to ensure that new learning is "sticky" and that clients possess the skills needed to apply what they have learned. Ensuring that clients feel training sessions are worth their time and money was a goal Mrs. Wiggins expressed at the start of this study. Helping clients develop new habits and apply what they learn

will ensure that they feel the workshops and services provided by Earnest Journey are of value. Although recommendations for this study were formulated from the findings of both examined cohorts, based upon the literature, we believe that Mrs. Wiggins can incorporate elements of the recommendations and implement them into her other trainings to better help clients apply their learning. These five recommendations support Earnest Journey by leveraging motivation, social connection, and reflection to make learning “sticky” and provide value for clients.

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**Appendix A: Participant Survey**

**Dare to Lead Workshop Participant  
Application of Learning Survey**

*Email to participants of Earnest Journey’s Dare to Lead workshops:*

Congratulations on completing your eight-week Dare to Lead workshop with Earnest Journey. In collaboration with Earnest Journey, we are seeking your feedback to better understand how motivation, social connections, and reflection support your application of new learning and skills from the workshop. Your completion of this survey will help us to provide quality feedback to Earnest Journey so that they may better support clients in future Dare to Lead workshops. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Frank Patranella and Laura Nevins  
Vanderbilt University Ed.D. Program

**Section A: Application of Dare to Lead Principles**

Directions: In this section, you will be presented with four statements about application of the Dare to Lead principles and learning since completion of the course. Please indicate how true each statement is for you, using the following scale:

		N o t A t A l l T r u e		S o m e w h a t T r u e		V e r y T r u e
#	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
A1	New learning from Dare to Lead has been used in my personal life since the training.					
A2	I am forming new habits based on the principles I learned in the Dare to Lead workshop.					
A3	I reflect regularly on how Dare to Lead principles show up in my leadership practices.					

A4	I found the Dare to Lead workshop to be highly impactful and life-changing for me as an individual.					
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**Section B: Value Scale**

Directions: Motivation, social connections, and reflection can be utilized to apply and maintain the skills from the Dare to Lead workshop. In this section, you will be presented with 12 statements. Please indicate how true each statement is for you, using the following scale:

		N o t A t A l l T r u e		S o m e w h a t T r u e		V e r y T r u e
#	Questions	1	2	3	4	5
B1	I apply the learning from Dare to Lead purely because I love to learn and grow.					
B2	The Dare to Lead co-participants helped me to be accountable for new learning.					
B3	Reflection on my practices through the pre-work videos and workbook impacted my application of content into my daily life.					
B4	A driving factor for me to apply the Dare to Lead content is to increase my skills and job performance.					
B5	Discussing my perspectives on the content in the live session was meaningful at helping me apply the new learning.					
B6	I felt pressured to complete activities and pre-work during the Dare to Lead course.					
B7	Trust was a factor that allowed me to be vulnerable during the Dare to Lead workshop.					
B8	Listening to the reflections of other participants helped me to gain greater insight into my own leadership.					

B9	The Dare to Lead content has been applied in my life because I personally value and endorse the ideas from the workshop.					
B10	I will continue to collaborate with my fellow Dare to Lead participants following the workshop.					
B11	Feedback from peers and from facilitators was instrumental in supporting my application of new learning from Dare to Lead.					
B12	A deep desire to do good in my community or in the world motivates me to apply the Dare to Lead learning.					

### Section C: Short Response Questions

Directions: Please respond with a few sentences to the questions below:

C1: What experiences, conversations, activities, or lessons from the Dare to Lead workshop did you find to be most influential and applicable in your real life?

C2: Your basic needs and emotional safety are important for creating a baseline for learning. In what ways did the learning environment support or hinder your basic needs and emotional safety?

C3: How were your needs of belonging and self-esteem supported during the workshop, and are there ways this could have been better achieved?

C4: In what ways did you feel a sense of autonomy and self-directedness during the workshop? Do you have suggestions for improving this area?

## Appendix B: Interview Protocol

### *Email to participants of Earnest Journey's Dare to Lead workshops:*

Dear Dare to Lead Leaders,

Your participation in the post Dare to Lead workshop survey provided insight into how motivation, social connections, and reflection have supported your application of new learning. To assess how you have continued to apply all that you have learned, as well as your needs since the workshop ended, we ask you to consider scheduling a 20-30 minute Zoom interview with us.

Interviews will be a critical component in our work with Earnest Journey, as we aim to help the organization leverage training practice to support the learning needs of its clients. Interviews will be recorded and deleted after the study is completed, as to retain the confidentiality of all Earnest Journey clients.

Please click [HERE](#) to schedule your interview.

Thank you,

Frank Patranella and Laura Nevins  
Vanderbilt University Ed.D. Program

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### **Earnest Journey Dare to Lead Interview Questions**

1. How did you hear about this workshop offered by Earnest Journey? (Background)
  - What made you decide to sign up for the workshop?
  - Did you register as a solo participant or with colleagues?
  - In what capacity did you know the facilitator(s) prior to the workshop?
2. What familiarity did you have with the work of Brené Brown prior to registering for the workshop? (Background)
  - How did your prior knowledge about the work of Brené Brown contribute to seeking out this experience?
  - Describe any practices or habits aligned with the work of Brené Brown that you had begun to implement in your life prior to attending Dare to Lead.
3. How motivated and excited were you about the potential of applying new learning and practices prior to the start of the workshop? (Motivation)
  - Describe your motivation for applying new learning and practices during the eight-week workshop?
  - Following the workshop, how would you describe your motivation to continue with the application of new learning and practices?
4. What new learning from the Dare to Lead workshop stuck with you the most and seemed most relevant? (Reflection)

- In what way was this new learning implemented in your daily life- immediately following the workshop?
  - Why was that learning so important to you that you chose to focus on adding it to your toolkit?
  - Have you maintained the application of this new learning since the Dare to Lead workshop ended?
5. It takes motivation to form new habits. What steps have you taken since Dare to Lead that have helped you to form new habits? (Motivation)
    - What barriers have you faced in the formation of these habits?
    - Were there aspects of the Dare to Lead training that helped or could have better prepared you for building these habits?
  6. Describe the relationships formed with other learners in the workshop and how they contributed to your learning? (Social Connection)
  7. What practices and learning opportunities were created by your facilitator(s) which contributed to your learning and why were these meaningful? (Social Connection)
  8. How was reflection utilized as a way to reinforce new learning and build practices during the workshop? (Reflection)
    - How did reflection on past experiences through the lens of the Dare to Lead principles help in the formation of new learning and practices?
    - It can be powerful to reflect in-the-moment that a situation is occurring during your personal or work life. How has in-the-moment reflection using principals from Dare to Lead impacted your leadership practices?
    - What other opportunities could be made available for deep reflection in the Dare to Lead workshop?
  9. What changes and improvements would you make to the structure or content of the Dare to Lead Workshop? (Needs) (Motivation)
    - Would you recommend any adjustments to the workshop that could increase your motivation to apply the learning into your life following the eight-week course?
    - Which settings were most beneficial for your learning: whole group, small group breakout, the online learning community, or the chat feature?
  10. What changes would you make to the ways that relationships and social connections were made during the workshop? (Needs) (Social Connection)
    - How was trust built, and does trust contribute to the formation of relationships with co-participants and the facilitator(s)?
    - Would you recommend any adjustments to the workshop which would foster more meaningful, potentially life-long, social connections with co-participants?



### Appendix C: Onboarding Dare to Lead Participant Survey

Dear Daring Leader,

Congratulations on registering for Earnest Journey's upcoming Dare to Lead workshop. In an effort to better learn about you, your motivation for registering for the workshop, and your aspirations, please complete the survey below prior to our first Dare to Lead workshop session.

Thank you,

Earnest Journey

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1) To share your familiarity with Brené Brown's work, please circle one response selection for each of the questions listed in the table below.

Question	Response Selection		
How many books written by Brené Brown have you read?	0	1-2	3+
How many of Brené Brown's TED Talks have you viewed?	0	1	2
Which best represents your familiarity with Brené Brown's Podcasts	I have never listened to a Brené Brown podcast	I have listened to one or more episodes	I have listened to most or all of the episodes

2) Please share any additional resources you have used to familiarize yourself with Brené Brown's work, if applicable.

3) How did you learn about the Dare to Lead workshop offered by Earnest Journey?

4) What is your motivation for signing up for the Dare to Lead workshop?

5) List two specific skills you would like to work on during the span of the eight-week workshop?

6) In an effort to get to know you better, please share a little about yourself. Include where you are from, what you currently do for work, hobbies, and any additional information you think would be important for Earnest Journey to learn about you before beginning the workshop.