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(Dissertation, Philippine Normal University)

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**PAKIGHI-USA SA KALIKUPAN: A PROCESS FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING
ECOTHERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS**

Presented to the
Faculty of the Graduate Teacher Education
College of Graduate Studies and Teacher Education Research
Philippine Normal University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Guidance and Counseling

MA. MAY FLOR V. SENTINA

Dedication

*To God,
the Creator and Origin of life;
Mother Nature,
a generous giver who sustains life;
the people who
have the wisdom and the heart
to protect and fight for her relentlessly;
and my Mother
who has loved me unconditionally...*

Acknowledgment

Let me express my wholehearted gratitude to the following significant individuals for their contribution towards the fulfillment of this work:

Above all, our most gracious God for His Divine Providence that carried me through since the beginning;

Former President Ogena and her management who were responsible for giving us the scholarship in the Ph.D. customized program, and Former President Montealegre and her team for the immersion program in Education University of Hong Kong;

Miss Lee and Mishka for their generosity, and from whom I learned what it means to be truly human;

My adviser, Ma'am Rungduin for all her patience, guidance, support and confidence from dissertation writing to PNU TALKS;

Former GRESO Director and the chair during my colloquium, Sir David who handpicked my adviser and panelists, and gave me the push that I needed to get back to work;

My reputable panelists, Ma'am Abulon, Sir Perez, and Ma'am Gines; and Ma'am Marasigan who is the present GRESO Director and the chair during my final oral defense for all their affirmation and brilliant suggestions to further improve my paper;

My understanding and dependable classmates, Ma'am Balot, Angi who is now Dr. Austria, and Irene for their time and effort in validating my instrument;

My other validators, Ma'am Yfe Roxas, and Sir Maranon for taking the time to read and suggest on how I could refine my instrument;

PNU Library Staff headed by Ma'am Advincula for accommodating our needs in the library as faculty scholars;

Former PNUV Executive Directors and Provosts, Ma'am Geronimo, and Sir Tuga for going out of their way whenever we were in Manila to show their care and support to our studies;

My colleagues, especially Sir Normandia for giving me the direction to reach Carcar City in Cebu, Sir Gerard for helping me buy the token for my panelists during the colloquium, and Ma'am Jude for the heartfelt encouragement and affirmation;

Fellow scholars and customized Ph.D. CJN friends, especially Ma'am Rachel and Ma'am Laarni for their assistance and support during the colloquium, and Ma'am Eljie and Ma'am Lorena for facilitating our enrolment when we could not come;

My most trusted companion in the customized program, dissertation writing and beyond, Ma'am Wenna, to whom I can run and consult;

My brother, Dean who helped me translate the transcript from Bisaya to English in spite of his busy schedule;

Other members of my family – Mama, Toto, Marge, CJ and Pau for all the love, understanding and support.

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Abstract

Sustainability and mental health should be everyone's concern. Addressing these, the practice of ecotherapy was explored by interviewing practitioners in Justice German Lee Jr. Sanctuary in Cebu., observing their sessions, and gathering available documents related to their practice. From data analysis, it was discovered that (1) ecotherapy is a formal label to an old practice of interacting with nature; (2) a structured learning experience in nature; (3) engages the head, heart and hands; (4) is multimodal; (5) guided by the biopsychosocial framework; (6) observes the permaculture ethics, process and principles; and, (7) incorporates the Buddhist perspective. Moreover, the interaction between nature and the human person resembles that of the (1) ground and tree, (2) Abel and Cain, (3) temple and believer, (4) mirror of the soul, (5) sage and seeker, (6) diversion of the mind, and (7) wind and sailboat. As an output, a process framework was created to develop ecotherapeutic interventions. This framework can be used by counselors, psychologists and educators which can benefit their clients and learners as well as the natural environment.

APPROVAL SHEET

This dissertation entitled **"PAKIGHI-USA SA KALIKUPAN: A PROCESS FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING ECOTHERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS"** prepared and submitted by **MA. MAY FLOR V. SENTINA** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING**, is hereby recommended for approval and acceptance.


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Chapter 1

The Problem and Literature Review

Background of the Study

Republic Act No. 9258 defines Guidance and Counseling as a “profession that involves the use of an integrated approach to the development of a well-functioning individual primarily by helping him/her to utilize his/her potentials to the fullest and plan his/her present and future in accordance with his/her abilities, interests and needs” (Guidance and Counseling Act 2004 s. 3). There is prevalent use of family systems therapies, expressive therapies (Catipon, Dey, Garcia & Tarroja, as cited in Tuason, Fernandez, Catipon, Trivino-Dey & Arellano-Carandang, 2012) and client-centered therapy (Tuason et al., 2012). The social context influences and is integrated in counseling (Tuason et al., 2012) and the resources of the individual involve his/her spirituality (Dy-Liacco, Piedmont, Murray-Swank, Rodgerson & Sherman, 2009; Lapena, Tarroja, Tirazona & Fernando, 2009), family and friends (Lapena et al., 2009) and a need to survive, optimism and hardiness (Tuason, 2008).

Noteworthy is that the ecological context is overlooked in counseling when the environment is crucial to the development of a person as Bronfenbrenner believes. This environment, however, is not only composed of people, institutions and other entities. It includes the physical, especially the natural environment which satisfies not only the physical but also the psychological needs of a person.

In connection to psychological need, depression becomes a widespread problem on mental health (Reyes & Gonzales, 2017). In the record of World Health Organization (WHO), Philippines has the highest number of depressed people with 4.5 million in

Southeast Asia (Buan, 2013). Moreover, suicide becomes alarming when 2,558 Filipinos committed suicide in 2012 (Magtubo, 2016) with 7 of them committing suicide every day according to Philippine Daily Inquirer (Gonzales, 2017). This may be due to depression (Buan, 2013), hopelessness or meaninglessness and isolation is the result of failure by humans to acknowledge that they are part of the web of life (Greenleaf, Pollock & Bryant, 2014). Recognizing this link, counselors are challenged to reinvent themselves within the context of the system to create an impact (Tuason et al., 2012) when various researches provide evidence of the benefits of the nature to well-being.

Both an ecological concept and a social issue, sustainability affects mental health and counselors can contribute to sustainability and well-being for all (Adamson & Kress, 2011). Though psychology has long been existing, it has not brought humans home nor help them live in harmony with the natural world (Chalquist, 2009b). Hoping they could fix the problem, practitioners continue to work with their clients in isolation until they are able to learn how to bring the latter to real home (Spencer, 2013). They see the clients as individuals without considering the ecological context that surrounds them (Anderson, 2009). It is necessary for them to reflect on what they can do to thwart the environmental risks of the time (Howard, 1993). As healers in their respective communities, they have to contemplate on how they can use their skills to work on these issues with their clients (Hasbach, 2015). With their expertise on understanding and controlling human behavior, they could offer valuable assistance to environmentalists in dealing with the present environmental exploitation (Roszak, 2009).

Counselors can contribute to social responsibility and environmental sustainability (Duffey, Haberstroh & Trepal, 2009; Kazdin, 2009; Gifford, 2011; Swim et al., 2011; Dominelli, 2013) by cultivating human-nature relationship which is psychologically beneficial to the clients (Greenleaf et al., 2014) and nature, an available resource can be used (Sung, Woo, Kim, Lim & Chung, 2012) to restore this relationship. Yet, counselors miss to tap nature as their partner in their work (Greenleaf et al., 2014; Matsumura, 2016; Summers & Vivian, 2018). Hence, the integration of nature into counseling is recommended (Jordan, 2009; Sung et al., 2012; Greenleaf et al., 2014; Hanrahan, 2016).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework describes the concepts or variables in the study and how they relate to each other. It guides the direction of the study as it illustrates how the problem would be viewed (Adom, Hussein & Agyem, 2018). It includes discussion of theories and researches related to the study (Rocco & Plakhotnik, 2011).

According to Roszak (1992a), ecopsychology asserts that humans are connected to a larger ecosystem and their health is affected by their relationship with nature. He defines ecopsychology as the (1) unification of psychology and ecology, (2) utilization of ecology to psychotherapy, (3) examination of human-nature connection, (4) the pursuit of measure of mental health that is anchored on the environment, and (5) reviewing the definition of sanity considering the ecosystem. He also enumerates the principles of ecopsychology. The first principle is that ecological unconscious is a fundamental part of

the mind. Second, this unconscious embodies the evolution of cosmos starting from Big Bang. Third, ecopsychology aims to stimulate the sense of environmental reciprocity hardwired in the ecological unconscious. Fourth, this unconscious is renewed in a child's fascination of the world. Fifth, ecopsychology works to restore the child's intrinsic animism in adults. Sixth, the planetary responsibility develops from an ecological ego. Seventh, it concerns the ecopsychology to reassess the patriarchal culture that compels people to overrule nature. Eighth, the ecological ego is nurtured by any help to social forms and personal empowerment in small scale. Ninth, ecopsychology upholds that the wellbeing of the person is interconnected to that of the planet.

Ecopsychology situates psychology in ecology (Fisher, 2002) and bridges the human-nature gap (Fisher, 2002; Joseph, 2014) as it investigates the ecological problems in human psychology and various human problems in human-nature relationship (Scull, 2008). It reminds humans that they have no other home but the Earth and they need to connect to it in order to survive (Robinson, 2009). It aims to explore how they could connect in a healthy and sustainable manner (Scull, 2008).

Close to ecopsychology, Biophilia Hypothesis explains the human inherent inclination to relate to nature and other forms of life as human mind and body have evolved through contact with nature (Wilson, 1984).

Ecotherapy is an applied ecopsychology (Burls, 2007b; Pattnaik, 2017; Buzzell & Chalquist, 2009; Jordan, 2009) that forges human connection with nature in two ways. One is effortless fascination to the beauty of nature that turns into a setting for healing while the other is active participation in the therapy that incorporates the natural

elements (Jordan, 2009). It refers to different methods of treatment that encompass the bond with the natural environment for healing and growth (Buzzell & Chalquist, 2009). It is another approach to therapy that reduces human stress. It enriches both human relationship with nature (Burls, 2007b) and their mental health and wellbeing (Pattnaik, 2017; Greenleaf et al., 2014).

On the other hand, Burls (2008) relates Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Human Ecology to contemporary ecotherapy with micro and macro levels of impact. The microsystem is the setting of the therapy. The mesosystem comprises the interactions with direct and broader environment like fellow clients while the exosystem points to outer environment that has an indirect impact on development such as the public or local community. The macrosystem is the wider cultural context which includes the economy and politics. The chronosystem represents the events and changes taking place in the life of the client through ecotherapy. Being bi-directional, the encounter with the environment influences the clients in the micro level or micro-system and their interactions and reactions with it cause them to act. The input to the process may spring from client-therapist-nature which is as influential as the clients' interactions with their environment to their behavior.

Several literature and studies report the physiological and psychological benefits of encounter with nature. It lessens negative emotions such as anxiety (Sung et al., 2012; Matsumura, 2016; Hansen, Jones & Tocchini, 2017), anger and aggression (Summers & Vivian, 2018). It induces a sense of peace and comfort (Hansen et al., 2017), a happy feeling (Chalquist, 2009a; Zelenski & Nisbet, 2014; Hansen et al., 2017)

and positive thoughts (Summers & Vivian, 2018). It enhances self-esteem (Chalquist, 2009a; Pieters & Deuter, 2018; Summers & Vivian, 2018;) and self-relatedness (Chalquist, 2009a). According to Mind (2015), it encourages mindfulness and confidence. It enhances coping mechanisms (Berger, 2008a) and resilience to stress (Sung et al., 2012; Hansen et al., 2017; Summers & Vivian, 2018). Moreover, it gives a sense of purpose or meaning (Greenleaf et al., 2014). Hence, it evokes environment-helping behavior (Nisbet, Zelenski & Murphy, 2008; Summers & Vivian, 2018).

Various claims above point to the essence of nature in human lives. Prominent among them is ecopsychology which underpins the ecotherapy. Figure 1 illustrates that the subject of this study is the ecotherapy practitioners. They are the focus and major sources of data. Getting acquainted well with how they perform ecotherapy and understand how nature interacts with the human person and vice versa would lead to the creation of a process framework for developing ecotherapeutic interventions.

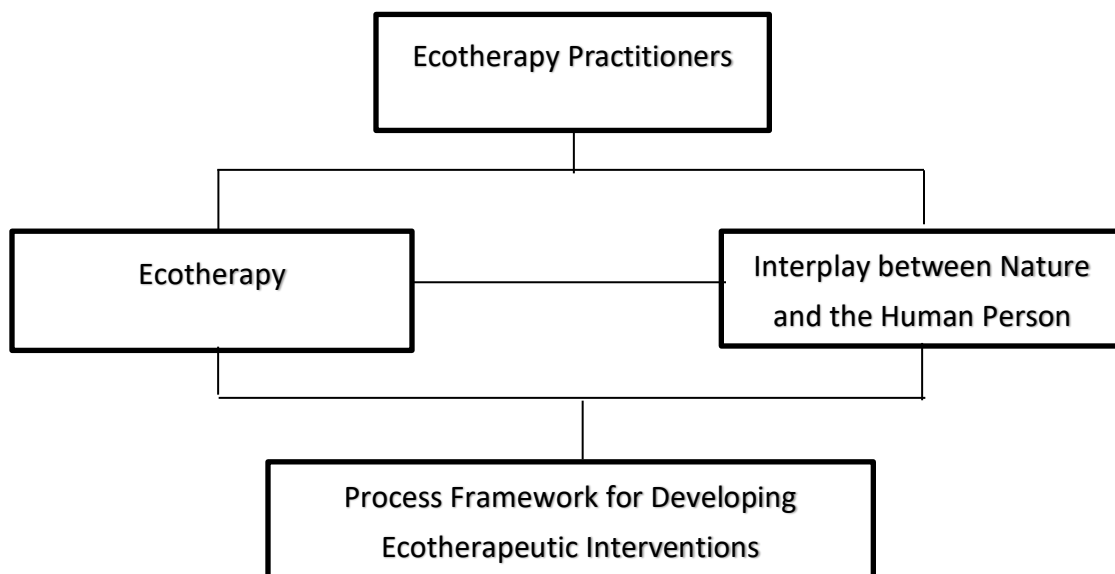


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

Various literature related to ecotherapy have been searched and reviewed. They were clustered by themes: theoretical support, definitions of ecotherapy, ethical considerations, the role of nature in the therapy, modes of ecotherapy and the effects of human-nature connection.

Theoretical Support

There are theories that support the use of ecotherapy such as Ecopsychology, Wilson's Biophilia Hypothesis, Ulrich's Stress Reduction Theory, Attention Restoration Theory by Kaplan & Kaplan and Holland's Theory of Congruence.

Ecopsychology is a new and developing field (Corbett & Milton, 2011; Spencer, 2013) that searches for ways in the present time to reawaken the ancient wisdom in therapy (Spencer, 2013). It is derived from three Greek words: eco or oikos, psyche, and logos which mean home, soul and story, respectively (Robinson, 2009). It asserts that humans are connected to a larger ecosystem and purports that their needs are knitted to the health of the earth (Roszak, 1992a). It is the key for humans to be entrenched back home to the earth where they could feel whole (Spencer, 2013). Other than family and tribe membership, humans belong to nature and the universe (Berger & McLeod, 2006).

Seeking to develop theories to support the practice of ecotherapy (Davis & Atkins, 2009; Pattnaik, 2017), ecopsychology explores therapies which can connect humans to nature (Wolsko & Lindberg, 2013). It uses psychology to respond to problems

in the environment (Doherty, 2009). Roszak (1992b) enumerates the principles of ecopsychology. First, the ecological unconscious is central to the psyche. Subjugating it with the industrialization of the society spawn insanity. Inversely, tapping it paves the way to stability. Second, it embodies the cosmic evolution history including the Big Bang. Third, ecopsychology aims to spur environment reciprocity that is integral to the ecological unconscious. It strives to cure the rupture between humans and nature. Fourth, childhood is the critical development stage because it is when ecological unconscious is revived in a child's fascination to the world. The upbringing of the child should nurture this experience. Fifth, ecopsychology works to restore this experience in adults. To develop the ecological ego, it applies practices of traditional healing, nature mysticism, wilderness experience and deep ecology. Sixth, the ecological ego develops ethical planetary responsibility. It intends to knit this responsibility to the social and political dimensions. Seventh, it is very important for ecopsychology to reassess masculinity in the use of power and dominion of nature. It draws on ecofeminism and feminist spirituality. Eighth, the ecological ego is cultivated by anything that furthers small scale social forms and personal empowerment. Contrarywise, it is weakened by any attempt to large-scale domination and to curb the personhood. Hence, ecopsychology advises humans to downsize, decelerate, reorganize and democratize. Ninth, ecopsychology claims that there is a link between human well-being and that of the planet.

Adapting the first four principles, Hasbach (2012) proposed some revisions on the remaining. The fifth principle is contact with nature has physical and psychological

advantages. Sixth is human beings have with them their evolutionary past. Their thought patterns and action as a result of this evolution with nature still exist. The seventh and the last is a deeper connection to wilderness is necessary for humans to thrive.

From Buddhist's approach to ecopsychology, Fisher (2009) believes that humans are susceptible to greed, hatred, and delusion. Yet, they are also capable of acquiring compassion, generosity and wisdom. They are capable of being caring or ruthless because of their culture (Andrews, 2009). Anthropocentrism in psychology can be remedied by ecopsychology (Fisher, 2012) which is rooted in Buddhist philosophy and ecofeminism among others (Scull, 2008) because the self cannot be detached from sustaining relationships (Macy, 2009). Humans reside in nature and vice versa (Wilson, 2011) which is more than an interconnection but an internal relationship (Fisher, 2012). In this manner, ecopsychology can dispel dualism or dichotomy between the psyche and the natural world (Fisher, 2013). It has four tasks which are psychological, philosophical, practical and critical (Fisher, 2002). Its psychological task is to consider and grasp the interaction between human and nature as a relationship whilst returning the psyche or soul to the natural world is a philosophical task. When it partakes in ecopsychological based criticism, its task becomes critical. Its practical task is creating a therapeutic and recollective praxis towards an ecological society. The practice is therapeutic when it fosters context where clients can find meaning and support to their existence whereas it is recollective when it enlivens human roots back to nature and the give and take relationship between human and nature is honored.

Further, Fisher (2002) opened the idea of ecopsychology partnering with permaculture to deliver results. As a design approach, permaculture promotes ecological literacy (Corbett & Milton, 2011). In their dialogue, Buzzell and Chalquist (2012) discussed the principles of permaculture. The first principle, observe and interact, is followed by the second principle which is catch and store energy. Third is obtain a yield, while the fourth one is apply self-regulation and accept feedback. Fifth is use and value renewable resources, and the sixth is produce no waste. The seventh principle is design from patterns to details, and integrate instead of segregate is the eighth principle. The next principle is use small and slow solutions, and then use and value diversity. The last two principles are use the edges and value the marginals, and creatively use and respond to change. Behind these principles are permaculture ethics which Buzzell and Chalquist (2012) identified as care for the land, care for the people, and fair share.

Biophilia Hypothesis also justifies the use of ecotherapy. The human mind and body have evolved through contact with nature so humans have the inherent inclination to relate to nature and other forms of life. This inclination is called biophilia (Wilson, 1984). Alternatively, the Stress Recovery Theory states that humans experience favorable psychological reaction to nature (Ulrich, 1983) because they rely on nature for their basic needs such as air, water, food and shelter (Ulrich, 1983; Brymer, Cuddihy & Sharma-Brymer, 2010) while Berger & McLeod (2006) assert that human existence depends on nature.

Additionally, humans feel mentally restored whenever they are in the natural environment. The Attention Restoration Theory (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989) illustrates that being in nature enables humans to escape from activities and situations requiring focused attention. They are able to experience the sense of being away. Likewise, being fascinated by nature does not require any effort for it is involuntary. Another is the sense of extent or feeling of belongingness it elicits. Next is compatibility of the environment to human purpose or the conduciveness of the environment to their activities. Hence, humans are relieved from mental exhaustion.

Corresponding to the idea of compatibility of Attention Restoration Theory is the Theory of Congruence by Holland. The chosen environment by the clients in the counseling process plays an important role because their behavior results from the compatibility of their personality to their environment (Robitschek & Woodson, 2006). Thus, the clients need to be asked to choose where they want to have the session and their choice will indicate what environment they find relaxing (Greenleaf et al., 2014) or they feel at home where they are willing to journey (Spencer, 2013).

Burls (2008) relates Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Human Ecology to contemporary ecotherapy. The microsystem is the setting of the therapy. The mesosystem comprises the client's interactions with direct and broader environment like fellow clients while the exosystem points to outer environment such as the public or local community that has an indirect impact on his/her development. The macrosystem is the wider cultural context which includes the economy and politics. The chronosystem represents the events and changes taking place in the life of the client through ecotherapy. Being bi-

directional, the encounter with the environment influences the clients in the micro level or micro-system and their interactions and reactions with it cause them to act. The input to the process may spring from client-therapist-nature which is as influential as the clients' interactions with their environment to their behavior.

Ecotherapy

Ecotherapy, also known as ecopsychotherapy, green therapy, green care, nature therapy, nature-informed therapy or nature-based therapy has been defined by various authorities. Basically, it covers all good traditional psychotherapy which varies among the practitioners (Hasbach, 2012). Distinctively, it is a psychotherapy that blends culture, humans and the environment which help clients find the meaning or purpose of their existence (Robinson, 2009). For Fisher (2015), it is a range of psychotherapy that is based on science and utilizes nature in the clinical practice.

Jan Edl Stein who is the Director of Holos Institute, the original ecopsychology-oriented counseling center in the United States identified four specific points that distinguish ecotherapy from other therapies (Kenney, 2012). They are (1) the consciousness of psyche which includes the environment of the client, (2) raising this consciousness of place and their relationship to it, (3) facilitating encounter with nature and (4) enlarging the sense of self as part of the natural world. Narrowly, it is a group of "practices, a process and an experiential connection with nature" that reconnects humans to themselves (Jordan, 2009, p. 28). It makes use of therapeutic benefits of the

natural environment where issues of clients are processed and counseling is experiential (King & McIntyre, 2018).

Clinebell (1996b) who coined the term ecotherapy defines it as an applied science of curing and preventing both mental and physical illnesses and reinforcing human relationship with nature. This approach to therapy is new for it encompasses relationship between human and nature (Hasbach, 2013). There are different approaches of improving health in general based on human-nature engagement (Buzzell & Chalquist, 2009). Interventions that specifically use green spaces are applied to enhance psychological functioning (Wilson, Ross, Lafferty & Jones, 2008). These nature-based techniques do not only heal the mind but also the natural environment (Chalquist, 2009a).

In the United Kingdom, a mental health charity called Mind (2015) is referring ecotherapy to various treatment programmes wherein the practitioner guides the client in different natural outdoor activities to improve their relationship with nature which enhances their wellbeing. EcoMinds (2013) simplified it to be a structured activity in a green setting.

Without any elaboration, it is all kinds of nature-related clinical and therapeutic interventions (Ambrose-Oji, 2013). These nature-based interventions can promote both behavioral change and wellbeing through a fairly structured nature-based experiences (Shanahan et al., 2019). They introduce the therapeutic process through activities using the elements and experiences in a suited natural environment (Corazon, Stigsdotter, Jensen & Nilsson, 2010).

From a doctor's perspective, Nature Therapy (NT) is a prescription given to patients or clients to use the natural environment and nature-based interventions that are supported by evidences (La Puma, 2019). Using the same term, Berger (2010) describes it as an alternative therapy performed in a natural setting that incorporates Existentialism, Person Centered, Psychodynamic, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or mindfulness practices. It may also integrate other interventions such as arts and drama therapy, gestalt, narrative approach, eco-psychology, transpersonal psychology, adventure therapy and shamanism. The exact definition of NT is not encouraged for it would curb the creativity of the practitioner in matching interventions relevant to the client and the setting (Berger, 2010).

Ethical Considerations

Since NT makes use of direct and experiential encounter with nature, practitioners must exercise caution on using it as it is open to many external influences which can be beyond their control and can be challenging especially with clients who have psychological difficulties (Berger, 2010). The American Counseling Association (2014) emphasized the two major ethical principles which are intentionality and nonmaleficence. The principle of intentionality requires the counselor to thoroughly explore the background of the client and assess their needs, capabilities, personalities and inclinations in the preliminary sessions (Burls, 2008; Berger, 2010; Hasbach, 2013; American Counseling Association, 2014; Hanrahan, 2016; King & McIntyre, 2018). It includes assessing their level of EcoWellness (Reese, 2016) which is their "sense of

appreciation, respect for and awareness of nature that results in feelings of connectedness with the natural event and the enhancement of holistic wellness” (Reese & Myers, 2012, p. 400) or simply their relationship with nature (Higley & Milton, 2008; Buzzell & Chalquist, 2009; Milton, 2009; Hasbach, 2013; Greenleaf et al., 2014) through nature-oriented questions (Hasbach, 2015) like family history in ecological context (Fisher, 2015) because not all clients want to spend time in nature (Gatersleben, 2008), are at ease with it (Berger, 2010; Dreamer, 2012; Fisher, 2015) or find it relevant (Wolsko & Hoyt, 2012). After a thorough examination of the client, the practitioners need to carefully consider the appropriateness, timing and setbacks of their interventions and be flexible (Berger, 2010; Hanrahan, 2016; King & McIntyre, 2018) as they can evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions in achieving the desired therapeutic outcomes through a better connection with nature (Greenleaf et al., 2014). The risks of nature integration to therapy should not discourage practitioners from using it (Hanrahan, 2016).

Another important principle, nonmaleficence emphasizes the safety of the client (American Counseling Association, 2014; Code of Ethics and Professional Standards for Psychology Practitioners, 2017). The counselor should protect the client by planning with him/her their future actions in anticipation of hazards and challenges in the outdoor therapy and strategizing to control them (Hooley, 2016). One example of the threats is an encounter with person/s outside the counseling relationship (Hasbach, 2013; Greenleaf et al., 2014; Reese, 2016; King & McIntyre, 2018). It is recommended to immediately process the impact of this encounter (Reese, 2016).

Equally important as preserving the psychological safety of the clients is their physical safety which practitioners must ensure (Hasbach, 2013; Fisher, 2015). They must consider the danger and the client's capacity and ease to work in the chosen environment. It is incumbent for the practitioner to undergo emergency medical training and bring first aid kits (Sussman, 2012).

Based on intentionality and nonmaleficence, Reese (2016) proposed six guidelines in using nature in counseling. First, counselors must practice only within their area of competence and seek further training on how to incorporate EcoWellness in counseling. In acquiring more tools, the counselors more competent in responding to the different needs of their clients (Burns, 2009). Meanwhile, the therapeutic skill cannot be discarded (Hanrahan, 2016). Practitioners must always assess their competence in relation to the environment where they will do the therapy (Hasbach, 2013; Fisher, 2015). A high standard of competence among counselors and psychologists must be maintained (Code of Ethics for Registered and Licensed Guidance Counselors, 2008; Code of Ethics and Professional Standards for Psychology Practitioners, 2017). Second, counselors must always obtain the informed consent of the client (Fisher, 2015; Reese, 2016; Code of Ethics and Professional Standards for Psychology Practitioners, 2017) before bringing them anywhere else (Reese, 2016; King & McIntyre, 2018). For this, the client and the stage of the therapy need to be considered (Hanrahan, 2016). Third, counselors should respect their client's nature worldview by being aware of their own values, biases and nature worldviews without imposing these to the client (Reese, 2016; Code of Ethics and Professional Standards for

Psychology Practitioners, 2017; King & McIntyre, 2018) though their interventions are usually influenced by their spirituality or worldview (Metzner, 2009), kinship with nature and training in ecopsychology (Wolsko & Hoyt, 2012). These individual differences have to be respected (Code of Ethics for Registered and Licensed Guidance Counselors, 2008). Fourth, counselors should inform clients that confidentiality of the professional relationship cannot be completely assured in outdoor counseling (Fisher, 2015; Reese, 2016). The American Psychological Association (2010) and the Code of Ethics and Professional Standards for Psychology Practitioners (2017) instruct practitioners to explain to the clients the limitations of confidentiality. Fifth, counselors should clarify to the client the purpose for taking other roles and interventions to avoid confusion (Code of Ethics for Registered and Licensed Guidance Counselors, 2008; Reese, 2016). Sixth, in the process of obtaining client's informed consent, counselors must explain to the client the need to protect the environment other than themselves when sessions are conducted outdoor. They need to be conscious of their behavior (Fisher, 2012) because nature has to be respected (Jordan & Marshall, 2010; Fisher, 2012; Selhub & Logan, 2012) as a sacred domain with an intrinsic value (Fisher, 2002; Buzzel & Chalquist, 2009; Koger & Winter, 2010) that connects the community of vital beings (Robinson, 2009). It should not be regarded as repository of resources (Lauren de Boer, 2009) or a commodity (Burls, 2007b; Koger & Winter, 2010; Freeman, Akhurst, Bannigan & James, 2017) that one can exploit (Jordan & Marshall, 2010; Selhub & Logan, 2012). In this way, the counselors can use the opportunity to advocate for the environment by encouraging

clients to develop positive ways of relating with nature considering that the counselor's worldview does not conflict with the goals of the client.

With these ethical guidelines, the benefits of ecotherapy can outweigh its limitations (Berger, 2008b) and the practitioner can confidently venture into ecotherapy.

Nature in Ecotherapy

Healing done in nature is not novel (Berger & McLeod, 2006; Hasbach, 2012). The healing potential of a ritual and a deep connection with nature have already been discovered by shamans, elders and guides (Hasbach, 2012) long time ago. Nature is the source of healing (Rust, 2009; Williams, 2016; Pattnaik, 2017) according to Paracelsus, a Swiss-German doctor in the 16th century (Williams, 2016). The effortless fascination to the beauty of nature becomes healing (Jordan, 2009). The therapy utilizes the elements or resources in the natural setting (Berger & McLeod, 2006; Burns, 2009; Chalquist, 2009a; Jordan, 2009; Annerstedt & Wahrborg, 2011; Corbett & Milton, 2011; Clatworthy, Hinds & Camic, 2013) as a tool provider (Hasbach, 2012).

To add, nature serves as a setting (Burls, 2008; Taylor, Segal & Harper, 2010; Hasbach, 2012). With nature as the backdrop, the practitioners can be flexible in their roles. They can shift from a dominant role of a key therapist to a peripheral role of being a mere facilitator when they allow their clients to encounter nature itself (Berger, 2010) with the appropriate tasks or tools given at the proper time and in the right circumstance (Duncan, 2011). The natural environment is nonthreatening for the client

to the extent that the practitioner is not perceived as person in authority (Becker, 2010) but a mediator between the client and nature (Robinson, 2009). The practitioner, as a facilitator (Jordan & Marshall, 2010) merely gives the overview of the activity to the clients. Then individually, clients discover and process the experience in relation to their lives while nature performs the rest of the work (Scull, 2009) as the therapist (Jordan & Marshall, 2010; Corazon, Stigsdotter, Moeller & Rasmussen, 2012). If the practitioner can reflect back to the client and clarify his/her understanding of what is heard from the latter (Hasbach, 2012), nature can mirror equally (Scull, 2009; Spencer, 2013) being a co-therapist (Dustin, Bricker, Arave, Wall, & Wendt, 2011; Mowatt & Bennett, 2011; Hasbach, 2013; Summers & Vivian, 2018), a co-facilitator (Berger & McLeod, 2006; Taylor et al., 2010) or a partner in the process (Berger & McLeod, 2006; Hasbach, 2012) going beyond being a backdrop (Taylor et al., 2010; Poulsen, Lygum, Djernis & Stigsdotter, 2020).

More than a mirror and a metaphor, nature is esteemed as a teacher (Rust, 2009; Scull, 2009; Koger & Winter, 2010; Pattnaik, 2017) that has to be listened to (Hasbach, 2012) because the clients can learn different lessons from it (Scull, 2009) such as sustainability and interrelatedness (Jordan & Marshall, 2010). Water, in particular can teach patience and flexibility (Chalquist, 2009). As co-educator, nature is a catalyst (Berger & McLeod, 2006; Burls, 2008; Poulsen et al., 2020) and draws out insights that may cause personal change (Burls, 2008) as it resonates on the clients and makes them go through an inner process (Berger & McLeod, 2006). It offers opportunity for therapy (Chalquist, 2009a; Annerstedt & Wahrborg, 2011; Clatworthy et al., 2013),

contemplation, self-disclosure and processing of metaphors (Burls, 2008). Stemming from natural environment, these metaphors are connected to the client's situation (Corazon et al., 2012). They are helpful especially when words and cognition do not suit the clients (Berger, 2008a; Mind, 2015). They are tools in the therapy (Corazon et al., 2012) that can be utilized by the practitioner to access and fathom the thoughts and experiences of the client (Hasbach, 2012). The practitioner assumes an intermediary role that aids the clients to explore effective coping mechanisms when faced with challenges and sustain the change process in their lives independently (Burls, 2008).

Modes of Ecotherapy

There are several ways of doing ecotherapy. One is outdoor therapy and Hasbach (2013) described its attributes. One, the direct exposure to nature enhances clients' sensory awareness and adaptation. Another, the slow pacing of the therapy provides opportunity for them to observe what they find fascinating. Also, it impacts their perspective and it helps them formulate their concerns in a bigger and more meaningful context. Last, the setting becomes a witness to their narratives.

If time and weather allow (Kopytin, 2017), ecotherapy can certainly be conducted outdoor like in a garden, public park, forest or beach (Hasbach, 2013; Summers & Vivian, 2018). It may vary from solitary contact with nature (Horka & Hromadka, 2010; Hasbach, 2015) like going to the countryside to gardening or tending plants and animals, painting, taking pictures (Horka & Hromadka, 2010), prolonged

immersion in nature, camping, reflecting (Duncan, 2011) and walking in green space (Scull, 2009; Duncan, 2011).

According to Scull (2009), to be able to connect with nature, it takes three steps: preparation, experience and debriefing. The practitioner prepares the clients by providing a brief introduction and necessary instructions on the activity. Mindful of the instructions in the first phase, the clients experience nature by spending twenty to thirty minutes alone in nature silently. They observe what catches their attention in nature. The final phase requires them to reflect on their sensory experience in nature and what they learn from it. These can be concluded by group sharing or journal writing. These three phases of nature-connecting are also observed in creating green mandala, an eco-art therapeutic activity which enables the clients to see themselves holistically and hold their experiences (Kopytin, 2017).

For some, observing the natural environment and one's breathing entails mindfulness techniques and these are from the non-Western and traditional healing practices that are applied to counseling (Davis and Atkins, 2009). Mindfulness practice originates from contemplative traditions like Buddhism (Shaver, Lavy, Saron & Mikulincer, 2007; Ambrose-Oji, 2013) and maybe incorporated in forest bathing (Ambrose-Oji, 2013). Forest bathing, also called Shinrin-Yoku in Japan which means taking in the forest atmosphere (Fisher, 2015) is an old practice of immersing in the forest that maximizes all senses (Hansen et al., 2017).

In Korea, Forest Therapy (FT) uses Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), particularly meditation and relaxation techniques (Sung et al., 2012). Similarly, FT in

Sweden uses mindfulness practice (Nordh, Grahn & Wahrborg, 2009; Sonntag-Öström et al., 2011). Mindfulness is also embedded in the ecotherapy within the forest in the program called Branching Out of Forestry Commission Scotland (Wilson et al., 2011). It is inclusive of mindful forest walking and mindfulness meditation focused on breathing, forest wind and sounds and combined with CBT-based psychotherapy (Kim, Lim, Chung & Woo, 2009). Being mindful of the sounds in the forest and one's breathing can pacify the mind from worrying, planning or regretting and establish human-nature connection (Koger & Winter, 2010). Mindfulness can be practiced to manage one's emotions, reactions or behavior (Leary & Tate, 2007).

Meanwhile, in Nacadia therapy forest garden where gardening is anchored on permaculture principles, mindfulness is combined with acceptance-based therapy (Corazon et al., 2012). Another permaculture garden, the Forest Farm Peace Garden is a social and horticultural therapy project which fosters mental and physical health of the clients and environmental sustainability (Permaculture Association, 2017). Permaculture can be a therapy because nature relaxes the mind as it is in meditation according to one proponent of environmental psychology, Clare Cooper Marcus (Permaculture Association, 2017). Among the ecotherapists who are into permaculture and shared their practice, Buzzell (2009) brought her client in her backyard permaculture-inspired food forest where they walked through the garden at the start of their therapy. Likewise, Good (2014) of Holos Institute led her clients to urban oasis whereas La Puma (2019), a permaculture-trained doctor who spends his time on the farm for therapeutic and

preventive purposes, prescribes an immersion in a natural setting and sensory exercises to his clients.

Another form of ecotherapy, the horticultural therapy is a process of helping clients achieve clinical goals (Fisher, 2015; Khatib & Krasny, 2015) or well-being through activities like gardening or cultivating plants because plants can help them acquire a positive philosophy in life which gives them spiritual stability and sense of meaning (Relf, 1998). It enriches the different aspects of the client's life such as the mind, body and spirit (Messer Diehl, 2009). The three important elements in this therapy are the vulnerable clients, plants and measurable goals. It is integrated in the greening programs that prepare inmates for life outside jail. One is Insight Garden Program in which the inner gardener in the participants is cultivated through activities such as meditation, emotional process work and ecotherapy (Khatib & Krasny, 2015).

Aside from horticultural therapy (Messer Diehl, 2009) or environmental restoration (Watkins, 2009), other popular and effective methods of eco-therapy identified by Lopukhova (2018) are wilderness therapy (Grady, 2009; Greenway, 2009; Schneider, 2009; Hoag, Massey & Roberts, 2014); animal assisted therapy (Garcia, 2010; Hauge, Kvalem, Enders-Slegers, Berget & Braastad, 2015; Kern-Godal, Brenna, Arnevik, & Ravndal, 2016; Ho, Zhou, Sheng Fung & Kua, 2017; Lopukhova, 2017); creative ecotherapy (Van der Riet, Jitsacorn, Junlapeeya, Dedkhard & Thursby, 2014; Montgomery & Courtney, 2015; Peterson, 2015; Kopytin & Rugh, 2017).

However, ecotherapy is not only exclusive for outdoor. Due to inclement weather, it can also be done indoor by integrating other approaches, for example, giving

clients nature-based assignments (Gonzalez, Hartig, Patil, Martinsen & Kirkevold, 2009; Van den Berg & Custers, 2011; Greenleaf et al., 2014; Hasbach, 2015; Kamitsis & Simmonds, 2017), processing their experiential encounter with nature, using nature-guided mindfulness exercise (Kamitsis & Simmonds, 2017) or imagery (Rust, 2009; King & McIntyre, 2018) and nature metaphors (Rust, 2009; Hasbach, 2013; Kamitsis & Simmonds, 2017; King & McIntyre, 2018).

Practitioners can encourage clients to spend time with nature as an assignment (Harris, 2009; Hasbach, 2015). Others can enhance their offices with views or images of nature (Berman, Jonides & Kaplan, 2008; Kamitsis & Simmonds, 2017), plants (Park & Mattson, 2009) or animals (Abou - Azama, n.d.). Others can opt for green counseling or an innovative method of counseling that employs recycled household materials as creative interventions (Adamson & Kress, 2011). They can also use time diary and wheel of life as tools as suggested by Fisher (2015). Through time diary, the clients can compare how they spend time in man-made and natural settings. This enables them to become aware of the pacing of their life and may be given assistance in making the necessary change in their lifestyle whereas to create a wheel of life, rocks are placed to symbolize the north, south, east and west of the earth. These rocks stand for different aspects of human development of the client.

Ecotherapy can also be used through an image that connects the individual to the natural world (Sablatura, 2009; Hasbach, 2013). When this imaginal work can be performed individually, Sablatura (2009) suggests that the practitioner in the traditional setting of counseling use questions to summon an image from the client. S/he can be

asked of her/his favorite animal, outdoor activity, place or weather. Then, s/he is led to converse with it as if it can talk (Sablatura, 2009; Chalquist, 2012). When s/he feels awkward, the practitioner responds and offers her/him an option to talk about the image instead of directly talking to it. Sablatura (2009) added that imaginal work can also be performed in a group of 8-12 persons in which a volunteer presents his/her dream as the rest listen and take note of their own experiences. This is called dreamtending. To protect the volunteer from series of questions and interpretation from the group, the practitioner from time to time encourages and allows others to also share with the consent of the volunteer. The volunteer is guided to initiate a conversation with nature or nature being (Sablatura, 2009; Abella, 2012). The participants share a collective experience of intimacy which also encompasses their personal lives.

Furthermore, the integration of rewilding and Nature Language in the ecotherapy were introduced by Hasbach (2013) because the primeval, the wild is present in human nature (Hasbach, 2012). Ecopsychology is envisioned to rewild the psyche to free it from destructive effects of extreme civilization (Good, 2014). Rewilding is the restoration of the connection of the clients with their wild selves and wild natural environment through conscious experience that enables them to develop ecological identity. Ecological identity is their awareness of their role in the ecosystem (Conn & Conn, 2009). It is a perception of one's self which involves one's connection and responsibility towards nature (Kopytin, 2017). This is part of human identity which emerges from their belongingness to the natural world (Lauren de Boer, 2009). On the

other side, Nature Language is to speak about human experience or interaction patterns with nature (Hasbach, 2015). Examples are sitting by fire, sitting under the night sky, caring for another being, etc. Clients in the ecotherapy are encouraged to fully experience their negative emotions arising from the destruction of their environment which invigorate and motivate them to act (Plotkin, 2014).

In the past, human interaction with nature is evident in cultures. Buddhism and Hinduism particularly value human-nature connection (Pattnaik, 2017). Native people left their villages for visions and rites of passage (Greenway, 2009). Vision quest is introduced to clients who go through a significant transition in life (Metzner, 2009). It is an archaic practice wherein a client fast for four or a certain number of days in the wilderness to connect alone with nature for guidance (Fisher, 2002; Metzner, 2009) because the wild can help him/her clarify his/her choices (Hasbach, 2012) and experience being complete (Taylor et al., 2010). Then, their stories with the things they learn from nature are being listened to (Harris, 2009; Spencer, 2013).

Aside from vision quest, other primal techniques of ecotherapy include lying on the ground covered with ashes, sandpainting (Spencer, 2013) and sweat lodge (Metzner, 2009; Spencer, 2013). In sandpainting, the Navaho symbolically depict their land. They ask the client to sit within this sand work and chant to bring them back home in balance with the land and themselves. On the other hand, a sweat lodge is comparable to a traditional sauna. As one prepares the lodge with saplings, volcanic stones, fire and blankets, s/he is prompted to imagine creating a womb of the earth. S/he enters it when it is set and gets purified from negativities as s/he sweats out. Afterwards, s/he comes

out reborn and hopeful. The essence of these rituals lies in their capacity to provide a sense of security and control over life's uncertainties (Berger and McLeod, 2006). These shamanic rituals of healing are restored to resurrect the archaic wisdom of the interrelatedness of human and nature (Metzner, 2009).

Related to the shamanistic and traditional healing rituals in a sacred space is "building a home-in-nature" developed by Berger and McLeod (2006). Berger (2008c) conducted sessions of therapy in a natural setting just within or near the school when he was working with children who have learning and behavioral problems. The therapy is done outdoor in the chosen spot of the client. The session can be moved indoor if the season or weather does not permit the outdoor. Indoor session includes storymaking and drawing are applied.

Alternatively, Mind (2015) suggested various ways to do "informal" ecotherapy. One is to make nature accessible to one's home by using natural materials or images as home decorations, bring in indoor plants, finding a place where one can sit near the window and view the sky or tree or play a natural background music. These cannot only be applied at home but also in the counseling room especially for those practicing indoor ecotherapy. Attention should be given to the impact of the natural environment in the planning and maintaining a counseling room and the ways clients describe their environment (Gatersleben, 2008).

Another option given by the Mind (2015) is doing outdoor activities such as jogging or walking in the local park or going to a shoreline to view natural scenery or

pick litters, sitting under a tree, making a garden or volunteering in projects to conserve the environment. These too can be given as nature-based homeworks to clients.

Conversely, Weaver (2015) proposed a service-oriented ecotherapy, a nature-based therapeutic service (NBTS) which is concerned of personal wellness, healing for the nature and the community. She identified its two guiding principles: (1) Nature benefits as clients are enlightened and involved in efforts to save nature, and; (2) Clients' well-being and global sustainability are mutually dependent on each other.

NBTS is one probable example of contemporary ecotherapy with micro and macro levels of impact. According to Burls (2008), the micro level comprises the client, the therapy and the setting while the macro level covers the complex involvement of clients with their bigger environment. The affinity with the immediate environment needing care develops in the micro level as well as the ecological niche which evolves in the macro level. This fosters nature-relatedness (Nisbet et al., 2009), ecological self (Koger & Winter, 2010) that perceives its kinship to nature (Clayton & Myers, 2009). Clients' cognition, emotion and motivation change which are manifested in their increased understanding of data concerning the welfare of the living forms increases, development of empathy, concern and familiarity with the ecosystem as well as the disposition to take action (Bragg, 1996). The responsibility for positive results is attributed to the skilled practitioner as a channel of self and group development in micro and macro levels (Burls, 2008). Clients develop empathy through contact with nature and grow in the group through dialogue and acquisition of skills (Burls, 2008; Mind, 2015). The care for nature emerges from caring for oneself and others (Andrews,

2009). Not only nature but the neighborhood is also considered as active collaborators in the ecotherapeutic community where learning is transferrable outside the therapy. Essentially, the input to this process may spring from client-therapist-nature (Burls, 2008). This triadic relationship in ecotherapy is created (Hasbach, 2012; Hawkins, Townsend & Garts, 2016) which supports the symbiotic healing of the client and the natural environment (Burls, 2007b). Like the clients' interactions with their environment, this essential relationship influences their behavior. Ecotherapy should be tailored based on three dynamics in the setting, namely, client's social interaction, reaction to the environment and action of nurturing nature (Relf, 1998).

Analogous to NBTS, another approach called Nature-centered Approaches to Peace-building (NAP) uses outdoor education, art therapy, sand-play therapy and many more to address the needs of the individual and the community according to Greene (2009). It uses model of 4Ps: Peace, Play, Process and Place. The Place acknowledges the meaning of the space and the responses it draws out while Play values enjoyment as therapeutic and motivational. The other P which is Peace corresponds to experience of harmony with oneself, the community and the world whereas Process involves essential steps for successful implementation. This 3IDC process is composed of Imagining; Dreaming; Creating; Integrating; Designing; Constructing; Incorporating; Demonstrating; Ceremony.

As therapeutic and educative model, ecotherapy uses the four steps of experiential learning (Burls, 2007a). First is experiencing the challenges. Second is

reflecting on the activities done. Third is processing the thoughts and reflections after being shared. Last is applying what is learned to personal life.

In addition, Burls, (2007a) identified the major elements of this model which are reflection and reciprocity. Through reflection, the clients can ponder on their emotions, values and behavior. They are able to discern its effects and assume responsibility. As they protect the ecosystem, in return they are saving themselves and the future of their loved ones. This is called reciprocity. They are able to answer their needs in the process (Robinson, 2009). In this model according to Clinebell (1996a), the self improves through three experiential dimensions. One, the self opens up towards a caring and respectful encounter with nature. Two, it becomes more conscious of their role in the natural world and goes beyond this experience. Three, the self is disposed to take action to conserve the biosphere including changing destructive behaviors to sustainable lifestyle.

In eco-education conducted by Duffy, Springer, Delaney & Luke (2019), nature is integrated in counselor education through structured outdoor learning experiences. The first activity was in a water setting where students reflected on Louv's work, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder* with guide questions after reading. In the second activity, students sketched a plant they found in the wooded area and wrote the words that came to their mind as they closely observed the plant. Then, they researched about the plant which they also discussed to the class and compared it to humans. The last activity was spending some time in a natural setting of choice where they recorded or expressed their thoughts and feelings which are also shared to the class. The class always begin with mindfulness exercise for them to

connect to nature. At the end of this outdoor experience, students suggested indoor nature-based activities when weather is not favorable and nature integration to counseling.

In another instance, ecotherapy was taught and modeled by Davis and Atkins (2009) through a facilitated outdoor experience with their students in the forest. They took the students to the river where they spent time and gathered rocks that symbolized their burdens or challenges. Then, reflections were processed in the group. Their second activity was a mountain hiking to the cemetery of Cherokee ancestors to honor the latter. The students hiked ten minutes apart and were guided only by the drumbeat. The next activities were conceived and facilitated by the students. They lay on their back to pay attention to the clouds for its message so they can forecast the weather. Another activity was building their shelter in the forest using only natural elements which made them grateful to nature and increased their self-esteem for what they achieved. Then, in the riverbed, they also piled and balanced stones as cairns which taught them the value of patience. Their other activity was listening to the drum while being blindfolded as they searched for their place and gathered in the fire circle. Because of this, they learned to remain calm amidst uncertainty. The last activity was creating their mandala out of their chosen natural elements in the forest. The mandala represented their individual place in the group and the place of the group in the community.

With various interventions, ecotherapy intends to bring healing to the body-mind-spirit that are mutually dependent on one another (Burls, 2007a). When bush

adventure therapy and outdoor education are merged, they provide a fairly holistic approach to health covering the biological, mental, emotional, social and ecological aspects (Pryor, Carpenter & Townsend, 2005). To use nature-based therapy (NBT) for post-traumatic stress disorder, Poulsen (2017) looks for a biopsychosocial approach. NBT uses biopsychosocial model (Poulsen et al., 2020) to understand and promote health which is influenced by the dynamic interaction among physical, psychological and social factors (Engel, 1989). It has four elements which are (1) individual conversation therapy with mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, (2) exercises for physical and mental awareness, (3) garden activities, and (4) own time in the garden (Poulsen et al., 2020).

Ecotherapy is associated with experiential learning, environmental literacy, creativity and skills development (Burls, 2007b). It is an application of ecopsychology (Burls, 2008; Ambrose-Oji, 2013; Pattnaik, 2017) and ecopsychology is linked to psychotherapy with nature, environmental education, shamanic healing and contemplative practice (Fisher, 2002). Ecopsychology as a soul work does not prescribe any specific method (Robinson, 2009) and there is not much ecopsychological work to define it (Fisher, 2002). It aims to develop methods of ecotherapy (Davis & Atkins, 2009). Hence, the practitioner can try out other approaches or techniques (Corbett & Milton, 2011) as long as s/he is guided by ethics (Jordan & Marshall, 2010). There can be numerous ways of doing ecotherapy depending on the need of the client, the creativity and flexibility of the practitioner. Applying ecopsychology can be diverse (Wolsko and Hoyt, 2012) as Davis and Atkins (2009) are willing to learn and apply the alternative healing practices from the non-West.

Indigenous Practices

In the Philippines, rituals to treat mental problems are already observed among early Filipinos through the Babaylan who can read the answer of the gods to the petitions by examining the internal organs of the animal that was offered as a sacrifice (Ramos, 2015). Indigenous healing includes herbal plants (Shakman, 1969; Torres, 2012; Ramos, 2015; Labastida et al., 2016), Bulo-bulo or a sleight of hand, putative or psychic surgery by divine intervention (Shakman, 1969; Krippner & Taubold, 2004), massage (Shakman, 1969; Labastida et al., 2016) and trance (Shakman, 1969). Other techniques are magnetic healing or the laying of hands, banishing of evil spirits from the client and blessing the water or oil for consumption of the clients (Krippner & Taubold, 2004).

In other parts of the country, particularly Cebu, Pananambal or methods of healing in Cebu consist of checking the pulse of the client or himolso, prayer or palakaw, identifying the cause of and the possible cure for illness or pasubay, search for herbal plants for fumigation or pangalap and palina, blowing gently or tayhop, blowing saliva or tutho, boiling or tuob, praying or orasyon, massage or hilot and black magic or barang (Berdon, Ragosta, Inocian, Manalag & Lozano, 2016). In Iligan City, the mananambal or folk healers diagnose the illness of the clients by inspecting the pulse, eyes and throat with the guidance of the spirits and treat the illness through folk medicine, orasyon and hilot (Crisol & Oledan, 2017).

Indigenous healers seemed effective in treating psychosomatic illness (Shakman, 1969). Others do not only heal the body but also the psychological and spiritual aspects (Krippner & Taubold, 2004; Torres, 2012) because they believe that everything is

connected so they honor each other and nature (Torres, 2012). The healing practices keep the people, the community and the gods in harmony (Ramos, 2015; Crisol & Oledan, 2017).

In 1991 when Mt. Pinatubo erupted, people near the area experienced trauma. To help them cope and develop a positive point of view, they were encouraged to make souvenir out of lahar. This therapy is called Meken-Likha Therapy (Gines, 1999).

These are just some of the recorded indigenous practices of healing that make use of natural elements in the Philippines.

Effects of Human-Nature Connection

Human-nature interaction is essential for survival (Reese, 2016; Softas-Nall & Woody, 2017), physical and mental health (Berger, 2008a; Hartig, 2008; Maas, Verheij, Spreeuwenberg & Groenewegen, 2008; Mitchell & Popham, 2008; Barton & Pretty, 2010; Van den Berg, Maas, Verheij & Groenewegen, 2010; Annerstedt & Wahrborg, 2011; Berger & Tiry, 2012; Mind, 2015; Weaver, 2015; McGuire, 2016; Sifferlin, 2016) and quality of life (Maas, van Dillen, Verheij & Groenewegen, 2009; Sung et al., 2012; Song, Ikei & Miyazaki, 2016). It has both positive and restorative benefits (Kreitzer, 2015; Hansen et al., 2017). It can reduce depression (Gonzalez et al., 2009; Maas et al., 2009), anxiety (Gonzalez et al., 2009; Maas et al., 2009; Sung et al., 2012; Mind, 2015; Matsumura, 2016; Hansen et al., 2017), anger (Mind, 2015; Summers & Vivian, 2018) and aggression. It can encourage positive thoughts (Summers & Vivian, 2018), positive emotions (Mayer, Franz, Bruehlman-Senacal & Dolliver, 2009; Van den Berg & Custers,

2011) and good mood (Berman et al., 2012; Mind, 2015; King & McIntyre, 2018; Pieters & Deuter, 2018; Summers & Vivian, 2018). People feel happier when they are able to connect with nature (Chalquist, 2009a; Zelenski & Nisbet, 2014; Williams, 2016; Hansen et al., 2017). It helps them relax (Buzzell, 2009; Mind, 2015) through sensorial experience (Adevi & Martensson, 2013). It also improves their attentional capacity (Berman et al., 2008; Mayer et al., 2009; Taylor & Kuo, 2009; Bowler, Buyung-Ali, Knight & Pullin, 2010) and memory span (Berman et al., 2012).

Increasing their mindfulness (Mind, 2015) or self-awareness through self-introspection (Milton, 2008), it widens their perspective on life (Mayer et al., 2009; Mind 2015) and develops their confidence (Mind, 2015). It enhances their self-concept (Barton, Griffin & Pretty, 2012), self-worth (Brymer et al., 2010; Reese & Myers, 2012; Shiue, 2016), self-esteem (Chalquist, 2009a; Mind, 2015; Pieters & Deuter, 2018; Summers & Vivian, 2018), self-relatedness (Chalquist, 2009a), coping mechanisms (Berger, 2008a) and resilience to stress (Kahn et al., 2008; Milton, 2008; Van den Berg & Custers, 2011; Sung et al., 2012; Mind, 2015; Hansen et al., 2017; Lopukhova, 2018; Summers & Vivian, 2018). Moreover, it deepens their sense of purpose or meaning (Roscoe, 2009; Greenleaf et al., 2014; Sifferlin, 2016; Softas-Nall & Woody, 2017). So they are likely to improve their behavior (Nisbet et al., 2008; Amoly et al., 2014; Summers & Vivian, 2018) or change their lifestyle (Abella, 2012). It enhances their sense of well-being (Berger, 2008a; Chalquist, 2009a; Davis & Atkins, 2009; Maas et al., 2009; Morrow-Howell, Song-lee & Fengyan, 2009; Stevens, 2010; Watson, 2010; Nisbet & Zelenski, 2011; Bratman, Hamilton & Daily, 2012; Adevi & Martensson, 2013; Bratman,

Daily, Levy, & Gross, 2015; Mind, 2015; Williams, 2016; Hansen et al., 2017; Lopukhova, 2018) and social connection (Chalquist, 2009a; Morrow-Howell et al., 2009; Brymer et al., 2010; Reese & Myers, 2012; Adevi & Martensson, 2013; Mind, 2015; Summers & Vivian, 2018). Humans will experience wholeness (Watson, 2010; Hansen et al., 2017). Other than balance in life, it cultivates a sense of peace and comfort (Watson, 2010; Hansen et al., 2017).

On the other hand, a lack of connection to nature is associated with stress, loneliness, lack of social connection (Berger, 2008a; Maas et al., 2009), confusion (Rease, 2012) and low self-esteem (Berger, 2008a). It produces feeling of emptiness (Buzzell, 2009; Robinson, 2009; Weaver, 2015), feelings of isolation, despair and a diminished sense of meaning and purpose (Greenleaf et al., 2014). People satisfy the need for meaning by searching for it in different activities which can be destructive or distracting (Buzzell, 2009) like consumption or consumerism (Horka & Hromadka, 2010).

Loss of natural contact can also trigger psychological symptoms (Robinson, 2009) that include anxiety (Chalquist, 2009a; Maas et al., 2009), frustration, depression (Chalquist, 2009a; Hansen et al., 2017) and physical health risks (Greenleaf et al., 2014). This estrangement is an illness of the present time (Gesell, 2013). The result is cultural distress, injustice, violence, family and societal dysfunction (Robinson, 2009).

Promoting mental health should concentrate on preventing ill-health and improving well-being instead of treating mental illness (Pryor et al., 2005). Hence, ecotherapy could be the answer (Pattnaik, 2017) as nature can be both used as intervention and prevention (Keniger, Gaston, Irvine & Fuller, 2013; Hartig, Mitchell, de

Vries & Frumkin, 2014; Shanahan et al., 2015; Dadvand et al., 2016; Gascon et al., 2016; Pacella, Hruska & Delahanty, 2013; Shanahan et al., 2016; Freeman et al., 2017).

Synthesis

The different theories rationalize the integration of nature in counseling as various studies identify the effects of human-nature connection. Several definitions of ecotherapy indicate the elements of this therapy such as purpose, intervention and setting whereas the ethical considerations guide the practitioners to protect the client especially when ecotherapy is conducted outdoor. This is when nature can be a therapist or a co-therapist since the practice of ecotherapy is extensive. Specific intervention depends on the needs of the client and the creativity of the practitioner.

Worth noting is that literature related to ecotherapy are all foreign and there seems to be paucity in the local literature which implies that the practice of ecotherapy in the Philippines is yet to be explored, documented and popularized.

Research Objectives

To support the Philippine Normal University Visayas (PNUV), the Hub for Environment and Green Technology Education by virtue of the Board of Regents Resolution No. U-1865, s. 2012 in promoting sustainability that benefits both humans and the environment, the researcher specializing in Guidance and Counseling contemplated on the contribution of the field in the achievement of this overarching

goal. Thus, the study intended to describe the practice of ecotherapy with the following specific objectives:

1. Describe ecotherapy according to the practice of the participants.
2. Analyze the interplay between nature and the human person in ecotherapy.
3. Create a process framework for developing ecotherapeutic interventions.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of the study sets its domains and parameters (Simon & Goes, 2013). Ecotherapy in this study covered the process and techniques of outdoor ecotherapy for a group as conducted by its practitioners. The study also explored the role of nature in their practice. Interventions for physical wellness are beyond the scope of this study.

Due to financial constraint, observation was restricted to two sessions only and the search of participants was confined in the Visayas only. Another limitation of the study is the researcher's limited understanding of Bisaya language as the participants sometimes speak in their native tongue. Because of this, help was sought to translate Bisaya transcription to English for accurate interpretation.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were operationally defined for clear understanding.

Ecotherapeutic interventions refer to the strategies or techniques of integrating nature in the therapy.

Process framework points to the organization of procedures for conducting the ecotherapeutic interventions.

Chapter 2

Methodology

This chapter describes how this study was conducted. It stipulates the research design and methodology, the site of research, who and how the participants were selected, the process of gathering data, how the data were analyzed, the role of the researcher, how the data were validated and how potential ethical issues were addressed.

Research Design

Describing the role of nature, the human person and practice of ecotherapy are essential in formulating a process for ecotherapeutic interventions for psychological well-being. It requires rich data from practitioners which makes the study qualitative. From a humanistic and interpretive standpoint, a qualitative research is focused on understanding human experiences wherein participants are free to describe their experiences in-depth (Jackson, Drummond & Camara, 2007). It examines their beliefs, attitudes, values and experiences (Hossain, 2011; Kumar, 2011). It also investigates the “why” and “how” (Hossain, 2011). It is flexible and evolving (Kumar, 2011).

The methodology should match the research objectives and case study suits. It is usually employed in social sciences (Crowe et al., 2011; Heale & Twycross, 2017) to explain, describe or explore events in real-life context (Yin, 2009). It is defined as an in-depth study of one specific case (Green and Thorogood, 2009). A case study of a single case is permissible for a thorough understanding of a particular phenomenon (Heale & Twycross, 2017), process or complex issue (Mohd Noor, 2008). It can be an option if

there are no other cases available (Zainal, 2007) and it can negate or generate a hypothesis (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2007; McLeod, 2010). According to VanWynsberghe and Khan (2007), translating case studies can “describe the values of our society, explore contradictions in our lives, offer new insights on what has been and should be done, and present new perspectives and interpretations on events” (p. 6).

Commonly, case studies limit its subjects of interest (Khan, 2008) because analyzing data from a big number of participants can downgrade its detailed description (VanWynsberghe & Khan, 2007). It enables the researcher to investigate at the micro level where data that cannot be caught by quantitative methods (Zainal, 2007; Widdowson, 2011). Because it explores data in natural context, it is also called a naturalistic design (Crowe et al., 2011) Many underrate case study for its poor generalizability and scientific rigor but using various techniques to draw out data could substantiate results (Mohd noor, 2008). Further, triangulation of data from multiple sources (Iwakabe & Gazzola, 2009) or triangulation with other methods can validate the process (Zainal, 2007).

Research Site

The study is conducted in The Justice German Lee Jr. Nature Sanctuary. It is located in Bacsije, Ocana, Carcar City with GPS 10.062208, 123.632132 where the Museum of Naïve Art (MONA) can also be found. Carcar is one of the coastal cities in the southern part of Cebu. Also known as Sugbu, Cebu is the Queen City of the South, the neighboring island of Negros and is part of Central Visayas, Region VII.

Selection Criteria and Participants

Critical case sampling was employed in selecting the participants since ecotherapy is a critical case. It is rarely practiced in the Philippines. A few number of cases is acceptable on a condition that they provide essential information that would significantly contribute to knowledge development (Patton, 2001).

The target participants of this study are self-identified nature-based practitioners who have a background in counseling and consciously integrate nature in their practice of helping clients. Psychiatrists, shamans, faith or traditional healers are not counted as participants. Moreover, a license in counseling and psychology and a master's degree in the said or related fields are not required for the participants to become sources of data in the study.

In search of participants in the study, the researcher inquired from friends and acquaintances in the province and nearby province who are in the field of guidance and counseling, psychology or related field. Some of them are members of the Negros Occidental Guidance and Counseling Association (NOGCA), Inc. Aside from this, the researcher accessed the internet to look for participants. The researcher keyed in Ecopsychology and Environmental Psychology one after the other in the search box of Google. A website on Conservation Psychology by Psychology students of the University of the Philippines (UP) Cebu in 2014 appeared. In this website, <https://conservationpsych.wordpress.com/the-conservation-psychologist-guide/>, the profile of Lee who was their course professor can be found and was contacted through Facebook. This former Senior Lecturer in Personality, Clinical, Environmental and Health

Psychology was once a part of Regional Center for Expertise for Sustainability Education when she was with UP. With a bachelor's degree in Psychology in the said university and master's degrees in Applied and Clinical Psychology in Fairfield and Spalding Universities respectively, she went into private practice for some time. Aside from stewarding or managing three (3) permaculture-inspired hotels owned by their family which were awarded by ANAHAW as environmentally sustainable hotels in Cebu, she is also the Program Director of the Justice German Lee, Jr. Nature Sanctuary where she has been conducting most of her sessions to different groups. She is usually co-facilitated by Mishka who was once her student in Abnormal and Health Psychology in UP. Mishka also helps Lee in the green marketing and eco-awareness in the hotel as well as in the green education in the sanctuary. Besides teaching Understanding Culture, Society and Politics and social sciences in St. Theresa's College, she is pursuing a master's degree in Anthropology in University of San Carlos. She is also a member of Ugnayang Agham Pantao or the Anthropological Association of the Philippines.

Both Lee and Mishka have relevant trainings in permaculture design and mangrove and beach forest rehabilitation which enable them to train others. They founded the Psychology Volunteers (Psych Vols) in Bikes that advocate for environmental and cultural conservation. This advocacy made Lee a recipient of Tatak UP Award and Mishka a Region 7 Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines. They were sought to speak about their work with Psych Vols and the hotels by different non-government and government organizations. Their participants to their monthly program which the researcher got to observe is a group that comes to the sanctuary

regularly with whom they already worked for five (5) long years. This group of adolescent girls homeschooled in a shelter is constantly accompanied by their guardian.

Data Collection

To meet the objectives of the study, data were extracted through interview, observation and documents. A semi-structured group interview was conducted to both research participants. Semi-structured interview is a combination of unstructured and structured interviews that allow certain extent of uniformity and freedom. Based on the interview tool used by Bonnie King (2015), an instrument was created and used as guide for the interview (Appendix A). It was scrutinized by five (5) practitioners in the field of guidance and counseling to ensure that it suited the research objectives, was applicable to Philippine culture, free from bias and ethically safe to conduct. The first part of the interview established the profile of the practitioners as the second part intends to describe their practice. Follow up questions were raised when necessary.

In addition, sessions were observed with the consent of the clients and the practitioners. Each session lasted for more than a half day and was observed from the start until the end of the session. It was conducted on the fourth Saturday of every month. Two consecutive sessions held on August 24 and September 28, 2019 were observed. The focus of the observation was on the activities conducted by the practitioners. The observation progressed from a nonparticipant to a participant stance. An overview and debriefing were provided in the second session.

Both interview and observation were audio-recorded for transcription. Permission from the participants were sought similar to taking pictures of the activities, site and materials used in the practice.

Another source of data was the documents. These documents included electronic ones such as Facebook page of the Justice German Lee, Jr. Nature Sanctuary where the flyer about the sanctuary is posted and can be downloaded, and the website of Psych Vols, <https://volunteersonbikes.wordpress.com/about/>. Other photographed documents with the consent of the participants were their artworks and written outputs.

Prior to the whole process of gathering data through interview and observation, the main research participant who is the practitioner had already an understanding of what the study is all about, what is it for and how it would be done through a letter sent to her. In reply, she sent an email indicating her consent to engage in the study. The practitioner in front of her client participants introduced the researcher and the purpose of her presence so that it would be clear to them. With the help of the practitioner who verbally asked them before the session started, the researcher was able to get their verbal permission to observe. Not only the consent of the practitioner was given to the researcher but also the consent of the guardian of her client participants as supported by the evidence in Appendix C.

Data Analysis

After the data collection, the next step was data analysis. For the thematic analysis, Boyatzis (1998) suggested the following steps: (1) getting acquainted with the data, (2) assigning temporary codes, (3) looking for themes that emerge from the codes, (4) revisiting the themes, (5) describing and labeling the themes, and (6) presenting the final report. When transcribing the data from the audio-recorder was done, the researcher read the printed copy to have a full grasp of the data. The data accessed through the Facebook page and website were also printed. While reading these copies, initial codes were written on the sides of the paper to easily classify all the data which were transferred in the sheets of Microsoft Excel. The classified data were read again in order to identify patterns and generate themes. These themes were reviewed to ensure that the themes are labeled accordingly and that labels accurately captured the description of the different themes. Afterwards, they are placed in the final research report.

Role of Researcher

In a qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument in collecting data (Creswell, 2014). The researcher asked questions in the guide to the interviewees as a group and made the follow up questions. She audio-recorded both the interview and the sessions. She also took pictures of the activities, the site, materials and other pertinent documents. Then, she transcribed the audio-recorded interview and observation.

The role of the researcher was not only limited to gathering and transcribing data. She performed multiple roles. She became one of the participants in some activities in the first session. At some point, she also provided assistance in the distribution of the needed materials to the practitioner's participants in the sessions.

Methods of Validation

Creswell (2013) advises researchers to use at least two strategies of validating the gathered data. Triangulation was used to ascertain the coherence or consistency of the data. Data were triangulated from different sources. The gathered data from the interview were verified through observation of the practice of the research participants in the two sessions they conducted. These were also counterchecked through the leaflet freely given by the participants and their handwritten plan which they also shared during the interview. Facebook page of the sanctuary and the website of Psych Vols were also searched and viewed online.

Another method used for data accuracy was member checking which came after triangulation. The themes from the analyzed data from interview, observation and gathered documents were sent to the participants for comments. It was accomplished through email for convenience and ease of access. After the participants confirmed, the researcher proceeded to the presentation of data.

Ethical Considerations

There are ethical considerations in conducting research. First, the research participants were informed of the purpose and methods of the study. A letter about the objectives of the study and the methods of collecting data was sent prior to giving their consent on their involvement. Their consent to participate in the study is obtained with their signature on the conforme of the agreement to manifest their willingness. They are never forced neither paid for their participation.

In addition, at the beginning of the first session that was observed, the main research participants who were the practitioners introduced the researcher and explained the purpose of the study to their clients. The consent of their guardian or house parent who was also present to supervise them was also obtained as evident in the Appendix C. The practitioners also gave the researcher the opportunity to tell more about herself and the purpose of her presence.

Important as the informed consent is the confidentiality of sensitive information coming from all participants. The practitioners who were the main participants chose to be identified by their real names in the study when they were given the options. The identity of their clients, however, were not revealed in the recording and presentation of results for their protection and privacy.

Further, the integrity of the research must be preserved. The researcher cannot manipulate or withhold contradicting results to impress her participants and readers. Honesty should not only be observed in data presentation but also in the research procedures.

Chapter 3

Results and Discussion

The findings from interview, observation and relevant documents are put together. They are presented and discussed in accordance to the objectives set by this study which can be found on the first chapter. They are supported by related literature.

ECOTHERAPY

Various themes floated to describe the ecotherapy. The seven themes identified are (1) ecotherapy is a formal label to an old practice of interacting with nature, (2) it is a structured learning experience in nature, (3) it involves the head, heart and hands, (4) it is multimodal, (5) it is guided by the biopsychosocial framework, (6) it observes the permaculture ethics, process and principles, and (7) it incorporates the Buddhist perspective.

Ecotherapy is a formal label to an old practice of interacting with nature.

The practice of interacting with nature is not new. This has been existing long before and was only forgotten as Lee illustrated it in the interview.

“Kana mga ecotherapist karon nagbalik lang man na sila sa practices sa una di ba. Sa una ma-gather man to sila kagabii sa fire. Magsayaw sayaw sila. Magkanta. They told stories. Lahi pa na ang storytelling. So there are so many therapeutic ways that have been present for many many centuries and in different cultures. Ang ato ara is how do we integrate all of these?... katong mga nalimtan na ba. So it’s simply renaming an experience, a modality that has been done for hundreds of years.”

“The ecotherapists actually went back to the old practices. Before, they would gather around the fire at night. They would dance. They would sing. They told stories. Their storytelling was different. There are so many

therapeutic ways that have been present for many many centuries and in different cultures. Our point is how do we integrate all of these?... those that have been forgotten. So it's simply renaming an experience, a modality that has been done for hundreds of years."

"Let them experience life as it should have been experienced the way people in the olden times experienced it, di ba. Pangutana ka sa imo mga lolo, lola. They played with the crabs and the tambasakan, di ba. Wala naman na ron. You asked your students, "what did you do this weekend. Mall? Nag-text?" Sa unang panahon, kami ug Sunday magtan aw mi sa among baboy nga nanganak. Kay ang among balay naay babuyan, naay manok kay farmer man to akon lolo. So ina na sa amoa. We still had the privilege of being in nature and playing with nature. Maka-play pa gud mi sa kanal. Manakop mi fish kanang guppy. Wala naman ron kay ang kanal ron patay naman. Wala namay guppy ron..."

"Let them experience life as it should have been experienced the way people in the olden times experienced it. You ask your grandfather, grandmother how they played with the crabs and mudskipper. It is not done anymore. You asked your students, "what did you do this weekend. Mall? Texting?" In our time, on Sunday, we would watch our pig give birth. We have pigs and chicken in our house because my grandfather is a farmer. That's how it was in our time. We still had the privilege of being in nature and playing with nature. We can still play in the canal. We would catch guppy fish. Now, it's not possible because the drainages are already filthy. No more guppy fish..."

In the advent of ecopsychology, ecotherapy was born and formally given a name.

Ecopsychology is an emerging field of psychology (Corbett & Milton, 2011; Spencer, 2013) that supports ecotherapy (Davis & Atkins, 2009; Pattnaik, 2017) which can save humans from the harmful effects of civilization (Good, 2014). The economic and technological development, if not created, widened the gap between humans and nature.

Human beings evolved with nature (Hasbach, 2012) and their ecological unconscious is inherent in their psyche based on one of the ecopsychology tenets (Roszak, 1992). Because of the human-nature gap, there is a need to rewild the psyche

(Good, 2014) which means to be in touch with the wild self and environment through experience (Hasbach, 2013). This gives room for the ecological identity, one's perception of his/her connection to nature (Kopytin, 2017). This is the overlooked aspect of human identity which arises from one's belongingness to the natural world (Lauren de Boer, 2009).

Ecotherapy is a structured learning experience in nature.

A structured learning experience (SLE) is among the programs offered in the Justice German Lee Jr. Nature Sanctuary, formerly known as the Katunggan Permaculture Adventure Farm as indicated in their brochure. Lee, whose family owns the sanctuary, described her practice of ecotherapy.

“Nature is there and our role is to provide them with the structured learning experiences. So they can have a direct experience that is guided by the concept that we actually want them to learn. Our job is to structure the experience so what do we want to accomplish? What parts of nature are we going to access? How are we going to access it? What modality are we gonna do, noh? How are we going to close the activity? How will you process the activity? So we are just the facilitators. Again, we are just mediators. We are not the stars. That's why you see they go off on their own. They go and look at nature.”

To be more concrete, she showed what she and Mishka planned together as she explained the details in the interview.

“So you see there na ang venue unsa... introductions. Then kinsa ang magsulti. Then, next one is we go to the deck. We do the breathing exercises. Mishka will do it. Then, we were supposed to do a trail walk, walking, sensory walk with binoculars. We were supposed to. Ikaw (referring to Mishka) ang leader. Then, we go back to the deck for movement and sound therapy. Ako ang ma-lead. And we list down the sounds and we list down the movements. So we just brainstorm it kasi naa naman mi diri. We have seen all of these animals. So mao na sya. Then after ana, ang lessons

from the animals. Mishka will do it. There is land, water and air. We always think of how we will divide the groups. So then, we group them into smaller groups and different topic per person as much as possible. And then, we're supposed to have a leader in each group. So then, we do the process: observe, draw and what's the lessons. Then, we do the drawing challenge. Ako and then we put the kuwan there. Then, the lesson from trees. They were supposed to select a tree - fruit tree, mangrove, bamboo and the interrelationship between their animals and the fruit trees sa role play. So then, we have the closing - one word or one action. Ah, one word na lang. And then the biking."

"So you see, there is the venue... introductions. Then, who will talk. Then, next one is we go to the deck. We do the breathing exercises. Mishka will do it. Then, we were supposed to do a trail walk, walking, sensory walk with binoculars. We were supposed to. You (referring to Mishka) are the leader. Then, we go back to the deck for movement and sound therapy. I'll lead. And we list down the sounds and we list down the movements. So we just brainstorm it because we have it here already. We have seen all of these animals. So that's how it is. Then, after that, the lessons from the animals. Mishka will do it. There is land, water and air. We always think of how we will divide the groups. So then, we group them into smaller groups and different topic per person as much as possible. And then, we're supposed to have a leader in each group. So then, we do the process: observe, draw and what's the lessons. Then, we do the drawing challenge. It's I and then we put something there. Then, the lesson from trees. They were supposed to select a tree - fruit tree, mangrove, bamboo and the interrelationship between their animals and the fruit trees in the role play. So then, we have the closing - one word or one action. Ah, one word instead. And then the biking."

Mishka narrated in the interview her experience with Lee when she was still the latter's student.

"She did not handle all of the whole thing. She provided the place and you were able to maybe look at one activity, noh na ikaw ang nag-facilitate. But the rest was we facilitated ourselves. So some of us we did the walking in the morning and in the afternoon. We did some bonfire. We cooked for each other. We had art therapy as well. So, it was a peer-facilitated na activity."

"She did not handle all of the whole thing. She provided the place and you were able to maybe look at one activity which you facilitated. But the rest was we facilitated ourselves. So some of us we did the walking in the morning and in the afternoon. We did some bonfire. We cooked for each other. We had art therapy as well. So, it was a peer-facilitated activity."

There are many ways of doing ecotherapy. But for the practitioners, they perform it in the sanctuary through SLE as Ecominds (2013) defined it as a structured activity in a green setting. Shanahan's group (2019) offered NBI through a fairly structured nature-based experiences. Similarly, Duffy's group (2019) and Davis and Atkins' (2009) conducted SLE to their students in Human Development and Ecotherapy, respectively. Scull (2009) even introduced the process of connecting with nature in three steps: (1) preparation wherein instructions are given, (2) experience which is the encounter with nature, and (3) debriefing wherein reflections about the experience may be shared. On the other hand, Burls (2007) who is following Clinebell observes the four steps of experiential learning in ecotherapy. These are (1) experience of challenges, (2) reflection, (3) processing and (4) application of learnings to one's life. Scull's and Burl's process are observable in the way Lee and Mishka did their ecotherapy with their participants. Preparation came first followed by the experience. After the experience is reflection, then debriefing or processing in the group. As observed, their participants were asked to relate or integrate their learnings to their respective lives.

Ecotherapy involves the head, heart and hands.

The head, heart and hands (3Hs) are integrated to effect change. This was elucidated by Lee in the interview and overview.

“Ang concept natin ng therapy is talk therapy but the word “therapy” simply means being able to change, create change and you don't create change simply by talking...”

“Our concept of therapy is talk therapy but the word “therapy” simply means being able to change, create change and you don’t create change simply by talking...”

“Naa syay process. So we follow a process. So it’s observing. To discover, imagine, and then create. Mao na sya ang head. Observe ka ni. Ok. Kani sya makaimagine na ka. So that’s related to the heart and passion. And then, creating is really using your hands, noh. So this is the process that we go through everytime we do an intervention...”

“There is a process. So we follow a process, i.e., observing. To discover, imagine, and then create. That’s the head. You observe. Then, you can imagine. So that’s related to the heart and passion. And then creating is really using your hands. So this is the process that we go through everytime we do an intervention...”

“So ang atong pwedeng buhaton na activity so first akon silang pa nature walk but sa nature walk... ato silang ipa-identify as many many many plants and unsang living creatures na ilang ma-identify. Mas mayo pa kung naay gamit. Unsay gamit, noh: uses... daghan ba ya kaayo. Naay shrub, palms, trees, bamboo, fruit trees, etc. So diha ni mo from that activity, you will see how deficient we are na gyud. So mao to sya ang lost wisdom. Mao man na ang nawala over the years noh. So mao na. So first is kinanglan knowledge. Mabalik tong lost wisdom. Mao na ang atong activity is knowledge-based first. Regain the lost wisdom ang atong goal. Sunod ang kwan na pud ang heart. So how do we address the heart issue? So ang next activity nato will be out sa daghan nilang plants na-identify, magkwa sila usa didto naay sila story ma-tell. Sa activity na to naay sila story, a personal experience that they had whether positive or negative about nature. So kinanglan mabalikan to nila. Ang sunod natong activity kay hands. Atong silang pabalikon ug tanum. So maghimo sila ilang own garden. Plan their own garden. So ang naa sa garden... ang sa therapy na part kay di ba when you’re planning your garden, what do you envision? Unsa imong possible elements?... Ila ng eplan. Ana na ta mag-processing pagkahuman na ma-integrate nato ang head, heart kag hands.”

“So the activity that we can do first is they do nature walk but in the walk, we will ask them to identify as many plants and what living creatures they can recognize. It’s better if they can also identify the uses. There are lots of uses. There are shrubs, palms, trees, bamboo, fruit trees, etc. So there from that activity, you will see how deficient we really are. That’s the lost wisdom. That’s what has gotten lost over the years. So that’s it. So first, we need knowledge. We recover the lost wisdom. Our activity is knowledge-based first. To regain the lost wisdom is our goal. Next is the heart. How do we

address the heart issue? So our next activity will be, out of the plants that they identified, they should choose one which they have a story to tell. In our activity, they will share a story, a personal experience that they had whether positive or negative about nature. They have to recall. Our next activity are the hands. We will ask them to plant again. So they will make their own garden. Plan their own garden. So in the garden... lies the therapy part because when you're planning your garden, what do you envision? What are the possible elements?... They will plan. We will do the processing after we integrate the head, heart and hands."

It was observed that the 3Hs were addressed in the sessions that practitioners had with their participants. The approach must be holistic in order to effect change. According to Clinebell (1996a), the self improves in three ways. First, it welcomes a caring and respectful encounter with nature. Second, the awareness of its role in the natural world broadens. Third, it also tends to take action to conserve the biosphere. These self-improvements are equivalent to changes in cognition, emotion and motivation identified by Bragg (1996). These changes have parallelism to 3Hs. The only difference is that Clinebell and Bragg considered them as results which can only be hoped for as opposed to how the major research participants who set them as targets. The possibility of achieving them would be minimal if they are not intended as such.

Ecotherapy is multimodal.

It was observed that the practitioners use not just one but varying modes of therapy as the practitioners explicated in the interview.

"So ang among approach is always multimodal. Multiple intelligence ang approach in exploring the concept in its many aspects without being so kanang classroom style ba. So makat on sila." - Lee

“Our approach is always multimodal. The approach is multiple intelligence in exploring the concept in its many aspects without being so classroom style so they can learn.” - Lee

“If you diversify your modalities for each concept, then you’re able to hit the many different people with the same concept in different ways.” - Mishka

“Kay ug puro man pud pananglitan, only art... only few people in that group can actually appreciate the art side. Eventually when you just keep on doing art, they will not like it anymore. So you also have to appeal with the different kinds of people. So as you saw earlier, there are those who were able to, who know how to draw. And then, si K (not the real name) for example di ba, reklamo sya kay di sya, reklamo sya kay hindi nya alam mag-draw. But then eventually when we did the role play part, she shined ‘cause that’s what she’s good at.” - Mishka

“For instance. If it’s all art, only art... only few people in that group can actually appreciate the art side. Eventually when you just keep on doing art, they will not like it anymore. So you also have to appeal with the different kinds of people. So as you saw earlier, there are those who were able to, who know how to draw. And then, K (not the real name), for example, complained because she doesn’t know how to draw. But then eventually, when we did the role play part, she shined ‘cause that’s what she’s good at.” - Mishka

“They just needed that stepping stone to be able to find out that they actually like it. It’s more like providing them the opportunity to see what they like also apart from what you can share. The more opportunities also for your clients or your groups to be able to find out what they’re comfortable with...” - Mishka

Aside from watsu, drum circles and meditations facilitated by Mishka, it was revealed in the interview that she mostly does, “expressive therapies. Sensory therapy, sensory play, art therapy, a bit of music therapy but mostly on expressive... expressive arts... experiential expressive.”

From the interview and observation, the modalities the practitioners employed in the first session are the following:

“So we do art therapy. Don’t do all drawing. There must be art. There must be sound and movement. There must be role playing. Kinanglan walay duplication.”

“So we do art therapy. Don’t do all drawing. There must be art. There must be sound and movement. There must be role playing. There should be no duplication.”

Their activities with other groups were also mentioned by Lee in the interview:

“So before ang first na moa group gin-facilitate were the students in the Cebu Youth Orchestra. That was long long time ago in 2008. So murag to ang among ginbuhat music-nature therapy pud to. We had the orchestra here. That’s why we have all the instruments. Naay mi daghang drums. Naay mi daghang ukulele. So it’s a combination. Ang modality lain-lain. Naay sa arts na pud daghan.”

“So the first group that we facilitated before were the students in the Cebu Youth Orchestra. That was a long long time ago in 2008. What we did was music-nature therapy. We had the orchestra here. That’s why we have all the instruments. We have several drums. We have a lot of ukuleles. So it’s a combination. The modality varies. There are arts and many others.”

“With the nuns, we started with you know the Kendama toy, the Japanese toy. It’s about balancing. That’s how we started off. And nag-kayaking pa sila. Nag-aquabiking.”

“With the nuns, we started with you know the Kendama toy, the Japanese toy. It’s about balancing. That’s how we started off. They also did kayaking and aqua biking.”

“So what we made them do, we let them fish. And then we have videos. Gabii man. Sa taas mag-filmshowing, mag-sharing. Lain lain...”

“So what we made them do, we let them fish. And then we have videos. It was night time. We have film showing upstairs and sharing. It varies.”

“And then in between that para ma-body aware din sila, we do the breathing exercises. We do movement therapy. We do laughter yoga. We do drum circle. So kana sya mainstay na sya kay mao ang amohang competency. So we put that in between...”

“And then in between so they would also be aware of their body, we do the breathing exercises. We do movement therapy. We do laughter yoga. We do

drum circle. That is our mainstay since it's our competency. So we put that in between..."

The data presented are evident in the literature. Integration of mindfulness practices, arts and drama therapy may be done (Berger, 2010). Other creative therapies can also be merged with ecotherapy (Van der Riet et al., 2014; Montgomery & Courtney, 2015; Peterson, 2015; Kopytin & Rugh, 2017) which entails creativity (Burls, 2007). Specific activities such as gardening, painting (Horka & Hromadka, 2010), immersion in nature, reflecting and walking in green space may also be included (Duncan, 2011). With the many tools known and developed by the practitioner, the more s/he is able to address the varying needs of different clients (Burns, 2009). There is no limit to the creativity of the practitioner in doing the ecotherapy (Berger, 2010) as long as ethics is not sacrificed (Jordan & Marshall, 2010).

Ecotherapy is guided by the biopsychosocial framework.

In the website related to the practitioners, the biopsychosocial framework of George Engel (1989) can be found. It is applied by the practitioners to ecotherapy similar to NBT conducted by Poulsen's team (2020). The interrelation of three dimensions - biological, psychological and social is given importance as this is vital to one's health (Engel, 1989). This holistic approach is what Poulsen (2017) is looking for in treating PTSD.

With this framework, activities are planned in such a way that participants would gain a positive experience. This experience would have a positive effect on the

biological, psychological and social aspects of the person as Lee expounded in the interview.

“Sa una di ba psychosocial model man ato. I have been taught in our clinical work that there is always the biological foundation for every psychological experience which when married together will predict or create the social interactions that we have. So from that, it will have a biological correlate as well. Example when we talk about change, so magkwan ka, mag activity ta. We do laughter yoga. When you’re doing laughter yoga, everytime you’re laughing, your brain changes coz you are oxygenating your brain. You’re increasing circulation. So every action has a biological correlate and every consequence will have a biological effect. So dili na sya pwedeng magbulag. Because of that, it will have an impact on your psychological experience and will change the way you relate with people.”

“It was psychosocial model before. I have been taught in our clinical work that there is always the biological foundation for every psychological experience which when married together will predict or create the social interactions that we have. So from that, it will have a biological correlate as well. Example when we talk about change, so we would do an activity. We do laughter yoga. When you’re doing laughter yoga, everytime you’re laughing, your brain changes coz you are oxygenating your brain. You’re increasing circulation. So every action has a biological correlate and every consequence will have a biological effect. So it should not be separated. Because of that, it will have an impact on your psychological experience and will change the way you relate with people.”

“Like depression is so hard to work with kay puro negative negative but the flip side of that is positive. So if you have more and more and more positive experiences, at some point malupitan gyud to. Ma-replace adto because your brain will make new neural connections and then you’re creating new neural pathways...”

“Like depression is so hard to work with because it’s full of negative but the flip side of that is positive. So if you have more and more and more positive experiences, at some point it will be forgotten. It will be replaced because your brain will make new neural connections and then you’re creating new neural pathways...”

“Like today, the kids were happy. It will create a biological impact on the brain di ba kay happy man imo brain, so then, happy experiences. Then, makausab sadto ni mo. So if you build it over the years, over the months that you have more experiences, then ma-change pod ang imohang mindset.”

“Like today, the kids were happy. It will create a biological impact on the brain because your brain is happy, so then, happy experiences. Then, it can change you. So if you build it over the years, over the months that you have more experiences, then it will change your mindset.”

To bring about change in the mind is neither easy nor sudden as she declared in the interview.

“It doesn’t mean na positive kaayo ang experience. It doesn’t mean na kanang success gid, na 100% success. So it’s a moment to moment thing. And it’s the accumulation of all these moments na ma-build nato didto ang positive things sa ilang mind, di ba.”

“It doesn’t mean that the experience is very positive. It doesn’t mean it’s really a success, a 100% success. So it’s a moment to moment thing. And it’s the accumulation of all these moments that we can build positive things in their mind.”

Alternately, Mishka spoke how the drawing challenge was observed to be enjoyed by their participants.

“You know that you imparted certain positive experiences that pretty sure in the next few days they’ll be holding onto. They’ll be making fun of the sunbathing tambasakan for awhile... the roach cooking spaghetti...”

“You know that you imparted certain positive experiences that pretty sure in the next few days they’ll be holding onto. They’ll be making fun of the sunbathing mudskipper for awhile... the roach cooking spaghetti...”

In the debriefing, Lee showed how the biopsychosocial framework is applied in gardening.

“Sa psychology, naa man ta biopsychosocial, di ba. So it’s a kuwan kanang interaction effect between all three. Like we’ve put in ta sa biological part, noh, so sa sweating, removes toxins... So mao to. Nag-breathing exercises to oxygenate the brain...”

“In psychology, we have biopsychosocial framework. So it’s an interaction effect between all three. Like we’ve put in the biological part, sweating

removes toxins... So that is why. We did breathing exercises to oxygenate the brain..."

Experiencing gardening, the participants relayed,

"Dili gyud ko ganahan magtanom-tanom. Siya hilig ug tanum sa tong balay. Natabang ako niya. Ganahan ko magkat-on. Didto ra pod ako nagkat-on. Mao to gintanom ako ganina kay murag... Naexpress kanang kwan through sa pagpananum kanang negative feeling."

"I don't really like planting. He's fond of planting in our house. I helped him. I want to learn. It's only then that I learned. That's why I planted... I was able to express the negative feeling through planting."

"I enjoyed doing it with my partner. Number 1 nag-sweat out. Then, very light ang mood."

"I enjoyed doing it with my partner. Number 1, I sweat out. Then, the mood becomes very light."

"Nindot gyud kaayo ba na makakwan ka imohang makahimo ka imohang kanang plant. Unya kwan sad uy makahimo ka imohang garden ba. Kanang proud gyud ko sa akohang kaugalingon kay kanang nagamit gyud sa akong pagkatawo ba. Daghan gyud nakat-onan, te. Kanang di ra ka kaon... kabalo ko mag-plant..."

"It is really nice to grow your own plant, to make your own garden. I'm so proud of myself because I was able to make myself useful. I learned a lot. Not only to eat... but I also know how to plant."

Why gardening was observed to be the last activity in the sequence of activities,

Lee revealed in the debriefing,

"Mag-abot diri, manga-on na sila. Busog na. Then, magsharing ta. Positive na ang feeling. Kay magsugod ka gardening, kapoy na kaayo sila. Negative na daan ang experience. Climax siya (referring to gardening) rather than imo pasugdon tanom. Tapos reward dayon. Imo sila pakan-on."

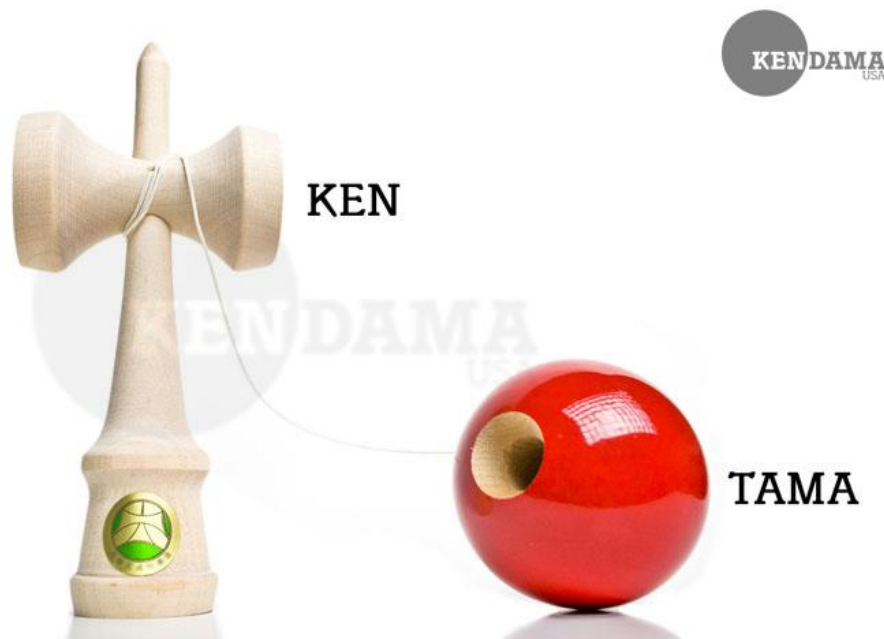
"When they arrive here, they will immediately eat. After which, they would feel satiated. Then, we'll have the sharing. The feeling is already positive. If you start with gardening, they will get tired. That experience would be negative. Gardening is the climax rather than the starting point. After that, reward follows. You feed them."

For the participants to be excited of next month, Lee closed the session with this tone.

“Ig balik ninyo by next month, madako na na inyong tanom or the next month pa gyud. Then, we can do a farm to table. Katong unsay na mao atong luto-on. (hands clapping) O di ba? Kinanglan naay ta sud-an. So manakop ta diha sa isda ni Sir. So maoy na atong plano sa coming activity nato next month.”

“When you return next month or the month after, your plants have already grown. Then, we can do a farm to table scheme. We’ll cook what’s available. (hands clapping). We need to have a viand so we’ll catch the fish from Sir’s pond. That is our plan for the coming activity next month.”

With gardening as the last activity, the session started with a breathing exercise. As observed, it is followed by playing Kendama which Lee introduced to depict the relationship between humans and nature. Kendama is a wooden Japanese toy with two main parts. These are the ball and the handle. A string connects the ball to the handle as it can be seen in the following image.



Source: <https://kendamausa.com/about/>

The participants were tossing the ball. They had to catch the ball with the big cup first and then the small cup on the handle for ten times. As the level of difficulty heightened, it was observed that the number of times was reduced to five when they had to catch the ball using the bottom cup of the handle. The last part is spearing the tossed ball with the pointed end of the handle.

Lee recalled in the debriefing the reaction of the participants that were observed when they played the kendama and did the role playing.

“Nindot sya sa kwan when you’re doing therapy. Murag pagmasayop, adtong nag-iyap-iyap ta sayop, mangatawa ra pod sila, noh. So you have to make it something playful sa ba.”

“It is good when you’re doing the therapy. Like when they make mistakes, they would just laugh. So you have to make it something playful.”

Not counting the ones already mentioned, the humor of Lee adds to the memorable experience of the participants. She said,

“Sometimes when I joke with the kid but I’m doing therapeutic work with that person...”

When things get too serious, she has a natural way of using her wit to lighten the mood. Given are the observed instances:

“Ako ang prinsesa ha. Maabot ang prinsesa. Ako si Prinsesang Kalikupan. Ug ako ang maabot. Maagi ko sa inyong tungod. Ako si Prinsesang Kalikupan. Maagi si Prinsesa. (walking with swaying hips)”

“I am the princess. The princess will come. I am Princess Nature. And I will come. I will pass in front of you. I am Princess Nature. The princess will pass by. (walking with swaying hips)”

“Kay ang atong naila na animal ang ato naman lang na silingan. (laughs) Animal ka! So na-disconnect na gid ta sa world, noh.”

"The animal that we know only is our neighbors. (laughs) You're an animal! We have really been disconnected from the world."

"Nawagtang ang atong karapatan. Ang nahitabo ang human rights abuses nato tied to the land, noh. Mao na gindaug-daog ta tungod sa atong yuta. So inyong huna-huna ganahan pa ang mga tawo magtrabho sa yuta adto? Di na kay associated kaayo with oppression, noh. So diha nagsugod na ulbo ang paspas sang mga Pinoy. Pila katuig gindaug-daog? So kon gindaug-daog ka 330 years kag ginpugos ug uma, kinsa may gikaon sige uma? Kinsa na sila? Mga Spanish sardines. Ang mga Spanish people..."

"We lose our rights. What happened is human rights abuses that Filipinos experienced are connected to the land. We're being maltreated because of our land. So try to think if people would still want to work on land. They don't want to work anymore because of oppression. This is where the uprising of Filipinos started. How many years were they maltreated? If they were treated as slaves for 330 years and forced to work on the farm, who benefitted from it? Who were they? The Spanish sardines. The Spaniards."

"Gikaon na presko na isda... Mao na pagkaon sa una. Isda, gulay. Naabot ang Katsila. Ang Katsila ganahan ug karne. Mao na tigpista mao na ginakaon sa Katsila. Lechon. Unsa man? Manok, baka. Katong unang panahon kay ang Filipino mga slave ra man to so di ta makakaon sa ilang gikaon. Mao na karon tigpista hala kaon gid ta, noh. Mangita ta sa atong karne. Mao na mag-LBM kay makalitan ang tiyan ug kaon sa katong mao na samot sa kahangol."

"They ate fresh fish... That was their food before. Fresh fish and vegetables. Then, the Spaniards arrived. Spaniards like to eat meat. They would eat it whenever there is fiesta. Roasted pig. What else? Chicken, beef. Before Filipinos were just slaves so they were not able to eat what the Spaniards eat. That's why whenever there is fiesta, we really eat a lot. We look for meat. We, especially those who are greedy would experience LBM because our stomach would get upset from the food we eat."

"Ok ra na. Nindot sya na maka-realize. Madaot imong maskara kuno. (laughs)"

"It's okay. It's nice that she is able to realize. Your mascara will be smudged. (laughs)"

The activities are tasks designed by their practitioners for their participants to perform. Since they only meet once a month, the positive experience or memories of their participants is very important so the latter could retain it on their minds until they all meet again in the following month. Ecotherapy does not only bring healing to the body and mind but the spirit as well as they are interdependent (Burls, 2007a). The approach of outdoor education and bush adventure therapy to health is holistic in a sense that it covers not only biological, mental and social but also the emotional and ecological aspects (Pryor et al., 2005).

Ecotherapy observes the permaculture ethics, process and principles.

The practitioners applied the ethics, process and principles of permaculture in ecotherapy. The ethics of permaculture is well reflected in their practice as supported by the interview and their documents.

Nature is the core of the therapy as Earth care comes first in permaculture ethics. Earth care is followed by care for the people and fair share. Fair share is also care for the future. These were illustrated by Lee in the interview.

“Sa permaculture kay nature-based man, di ba. So naay ethics. So everything we do must be based on care. So care for the Earth. Una gid ang Earth kay kon care for the people ang mag-una, we become selfish. It’s care for the Earth first. Then, we understand our role in relation to everything else in the Earth. Then, care for each other and then we care for the future. Kug ngayon lang, we don’t care what will happen tomorrow. So ka na sya. It’s from the kuwan, from the perspective of care.”

“Permaculture is nature-based. So there is ethics. Everything we do must be based on care. So care for the Earth. First is the Earth because if care for the people would come first, we become selfish. It’s care for the Earth first. Then, we understand our role in relation to everything else in the Earth.

Then, care for each other and then we care for the future. If we focus only in the present, we don't care what will happen tomorrow. So that's it. It's from the perspective of care."

This contradicts the idea that care for nature only develops when people start caring for themselves and others (Andrews, 2009). Through an encounter with nature, empathy develops (Burls, 2008; Mind, 2015). Learning to take care of the natural world which is the provider for human basic needs (Brymer et al., 2010) and on which human existence depends (Berger & McLeod, 2006) is, in action, caring for oneself and others. This is mutual caring or reciprocity between human beings and nature (Burls, 2007a). This reciprocity resonates in the principles of NBTS which are (1) nature benefits as clients are enlightened and participate in natural conservation efforts, and (2) human and planetary well-being are interdependent (Weaver, 2015).

Likewise, the process of permaculture is apparent. It is composed of observing, discovering, imagining and creating. The participants were instructed to observe the different animals in the sanctuary. While observing, they had to discover the lessons they can learn from these animals. Then, there was a drawing challenge wherein they sketched the image of what they imagined. In the activity, they were encouraged to draw a mudskipper that bathes under the sun, a fiddler crab that beats the drums, a dog in a kayak, a butterfly that plays a violin or a guitar, and a cockroach that is cooking spaghetti. Afterwards, a role play is created by different groups to portray how humans, trees and animals are interconnected.

How the permaculture process is used in their work is disclosed by the practitioners in the interview.

“So earlier, we made them observe the rabbits. And then what they learned, what they discovered from the rabbits.” - Mishka

“And then we had the design challenge, di ba? And we let them create a role play. So kinanglan ila na mabuhat. Thinking how you can do it differently and creating it, noh.” - Lee

“And then we had the design challenge, right? And we let them create a role play. They should be able to do that. Thinking how you can do it differently and creating it.” - Lee

Aside from ethics and process, permaculture has twelve (12) principles. These principles are (1) observe and interact with nature, (2) catch and store energy, (3) always obtain a yield, (4) self-regulate and accept feedback, (5) use and value resources, (6) produce no waste, (7) design from patterns to details, (8) integrate rather than segregate, (9) use small and slow solutions, (10) use and value diversity, (11) use, adjust and value the marginals, and (12) creatively use and respond to change. These principles were spontaneously specified by Lee in the interview.

“So these are the principles that we follow. So observe and interact with nature. Catch and store energy. Meaning have more and more positive experiences. Always obtain a yield means kinanglan there is a result. You have to gain something out of it. Then, self-regulation and accepting feedback. It’s about consciousness and awareness, di ba. Kani sya noh important ni sya for us therapists ‘cause you have to check what is. All the time we’re always checking. Is this working? Is this not working? Is this acceptable to this group or the intelligence level? Then use and value resources. So it can be relationships. They have to understand like ingon sila we have to value the animals. We have to value each other. Produce no waste means every opportunity you have so they can learn. You can use that. Wala gyud dull moment kay you can pick up from what they. That’s the art of therapy. Right? Picking up from where they are bringing you. So you go in their direction. Never waste that opportunity to make it a learning opportunity. Then design from patterns to details. What are the prevailing themes you saw based on the sharing? What were the prevailing themes? Klaro man kayo, di ba, fear, confidence, strangers... Then integrate rather than segregate. So always kinanglan makasabot sila that everything they experience, all are connected and are meaningful. Use small and slow

solutions. When you're doing therapy, don't expect grand changes. It's little by little just like the snail. Slowly and you know that. There's the theory of Prochaska. Change is like different levels. Magbalik-balik until you create that change. And then use and value diversity. You can see how different the kids were. How do you integrate all of that? Kita gid ni mo ang differences sang ila intelligence. You can see the difference in their role playing, in their creativity. So how do you use that na dili sila malain ba? Then kani syang use, adjust and value the marginals. What are the stuff that can be included in the workshop that are being said that you can actually raise in the discussion? Kay kinanglan alert man kita kay pila man gud na ka mga bata lain-lain ila ginsulti. So either they integrate or you integrate it. If they didn't catch it, you have to catch it para imo tong ma-highlight. So you have to be really quick and creatively use and respond to change. Mao ni sya ang principles they need to follow."

"So these are the principles that we follow. So observe and interact with nature. Catch and store energy. This means have more and more positive experiences. Always obtain a yield means it's necessary that there is a result. You have to gain something out of it. Then, there's self-regulation and accepting feedback. It's about consciousness and awareness. This one is important for us therapists because you have to check what is. All the time we're always checking. Is this working? Is this not working? Is this acceptable to this group or the intelligence level? Then use and value resources. So it can be relationships. They have to understand like they say we have to value the animals. We have to value each other. Produce no waste means every opportunity you have so they can learn. You can use that. There is no dull moment because you can pick up from what they. That's the art of therapy. Right? Picking up from where they are bringing you. So you go in their direction. Never waste that opportunity to make it a learning opportunity. Then design from patterns to details. What are the prevailing themes you saw based on the sharing? What were the prevailing themes? It's very clear, right? Fear, confidence, strangers... Then integrate rather than segregate. So it's always important that they would be able to understand that everything they experience, all are connected and are meaningful. Use small and slow solutions. When you're doing therapy, don't expect grand changes. It's little by little just like the snail. Slowly and you know that. There's the theory of Prochaska. Change is like different levels. It keeps repeating until you create that change. And then use and value diversity. You can see how different the kids were. How do you integrate all of that? You can really see the differences in their intelligence. You can see the difference in their role playing, in their creativity. So how do you use that in a way that they will not feel bad? Then, use, adjust and value the marginals. What are the stuff that can be included in the workshop that are being said that you can actually raise in the discussion? We need to be alert because there are a lot of kids

who say different things. So either they integrate or you integrate it. If they didn't catch it, you have to catch it so you can highlight it. So you have to be really quick and creatively use and respond to change. These are the principles they need to follow."

Permaculture is a design approach which promotes ecological literacy (Corbett & Milton, 2011) because its ethics is founded on care and has principles which are friendly to nature. It observes and respects patterns and relationships in nature. Based on the literature, it is applied in gardening (Buzzell, 2009; Corazon et al., 2012; Permaculture Association, 2012) or farming (La Puma, 2019). However, the practitioners extended the application of permaculture beyond agriculture. It was observed that permaculture is also applicable to ecotherapy.

Three related permaculture principles namely: obtaining a yield, producing no waste, and self-regulating and accepting feedback are used by the practitioners to determine whether they are successful or not in their work. They looked at the changes in the reaction of their participants.

"If you look at change, you can see from the reaction of your participants that there is something happening there. You can see it visibly. You can see the insights that are being drawn." - Lee

"The feedback does not happen in the end where you can see what's the result here. The feedback is there from the moment you actually open the program and even before you open the program. You can see if they were excited or not. And then you can work from there. That's the result that you in a way are trying to measure. If there was change from that excitement to no more excitement or if they were very uninspired when they arrived and how smiling they were before they left." – Mishka

"We know in a way how they actually thought about nature when they first arrived versus now na they're so at home kay before they used to not want man. They don't like man. They don't wanna get dirty. And then now, they know that they might get dirty. So they brought extra clothes. So now they have a more positive approach in a way to the therapy 'cause they know

somehow what to expect. Then, they like what they are expecting. So, I think one of the girls even said, “nagdawa ba ya mi extra shirts.” So, they were trying to imply something that we should probably let them do something.” - Mishka

“We know in a way how they actually thought about nature when they first arrived versus now that they are so at home because before they didn’t want to. They don’t like it. They don’t wanna get dirty. And then now, they know that they might get dirty. So they brought extra clothes. So now they have a more positive approach in a way to the therapy ‘cause they know somehow what to expect. Then, they like what they are expecting. So, I think one of the girls even said, “we brought extra shirts.” So, they were trying to imply something that we should probably let them do something.” - Mishka

A concrete example of feedback in the form of change in one of their participants was cited in the interview by Mishka.

“She came at around when she was 11 or 10 years old. She’s I think 16 now. And you can really see she was so frail, so timid, so shy when she first came. And then you look at her now. All we can feel is wow! She’s a peer facilitator now in their group. It’s really nice to see. So that’s one thing. So since we’ve been working with them for a long time, we can see that there are results, right? And they’re good results so far even when we only meet once a month. And they always look forward to come here, doing the activity. And they really don’t know what to expect ‘cause we never tell them beforehand what to expect unless we need them to prepare shoes or something. So they’re always happy to be here. And I think they know the farm so much.” – Mishka

The reactions and change that the practitioners can see in their participants are feedbacks. Through these feedbacks, they can tell whether their interventions are effective or not in meeting the desired outcomes (Greenleaf et al., 2014). Data prove that their interventions did not go to waste but obtain results.

Ecotherapy incorporates the Buddhist perspective.

The spirituality or worldview of practitioners have bearing on their interventions. The influence of Buddhism on them is visible in their mindfulness practice which they call breathing exercise. They always do this exercise to start their sessions which is similar to Duffy's group (2019) in eco-education. It was observed that this exercise to calm the participants and set the atmosphere of the session is assigned to Mishka.

"Atong buhaton karon is atong e-relax gamay ang atong body kay nagpabusog ta. Dako ta tiyan. Atong murag e-feel ang atong kabusog, noh in relation sa fact na nagbarog ta diha ron. So for now, legs apart. Be comfortable. Barog lang and close your eyes. Close your eyes...breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... breathe out... Padayon... Close your eyes gihapon and listen... Paminawa unsa ang inyong madungog... breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... Shout "ha!" Breathe in... Shout "ha!" Breathe in... Isigaw gyud ha! Open your eyes."

"What we will do now is to relax our body a bit because we're still full. Our stomach is big. Let us feel our fullness while we are standing. So for now, legs apart. Be comfortable. Just stand and close your eyes. Close your eyes... breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... breathe out...Continue... Keep your eyes closed and listen... Listen to what you can hear... breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... breathe out... breathe in... Shout "ha!" Breathe in... Shout "ha!" Breathe in... Shout loudly "ha!" Open your eyes."

Drawing attention to one's breathing and to the different sounds in the natural environment (Kim et al., 2009; Koger & Winter, 2010) such as chirping of the birds, rustling of leaves and plopping of stone on the water is one of the many ways of being mindful. It can foster human-nature connection (Koger & Winter, 2010) as Lee illuminated in the session with the participants.

"Ang atong trabaho is tig-abli sa mata para ang atong pag-sabot sa kalibutan mag-amog ka dako. Kay ang matabo kung di na to sabton ang kalikupan, abi

na to kita raay sa kalibutan. Ang atong problema gamay ra kaayong issue, dako na kaayo na butang, noh...”

“Our job is to open the eyes so that our appreciation of the world will expand. Because if we don’t understand nature, we would think that we are the only ones in this world. Our problem which is just a small issue becomes a big deal for us...”

Aside from encouraging human-nature connection, mindfulness practice can relax the mind’s business in worrying or planning (Koger & Winter, 2010). It is also helpful in regulating one’s emotions (Leary & Tate, 2007).

Furthermore, Lee explained in the interview why she likes Buddhism and its implication.

“Sa Buddhism, that’s why I really like it. It is because of the freedom ba that you make the decision on how you see things, di ba. We always have the freedom to choose, to decide how we will act so mao na sya. Iminyo na sya. Ka na gani thinking nga unsa gani kay Freudian thinking nga of course it’s true, that your mother did these things that screwed you up and all that but then, that’s such a long time ago. Your brain has developed over the years and you have the freedom to create that change for yourself. The goal in Buddhism is to become conscious of what is going on around you and what is your part in that. Why are we behaving in such a manner? Ang atong consciousness ma-expand. Unya makasabot ta sang atong role sa nature. So there you have it. Then, you will be more attuned to what is happening, di ba.”

“That’s why I really like Buddhism. It is because of the freedom to make the decision on how to see things. We always have the freedom to choose, to decide how we will act, so that’s it. It has to be integrated. There’s the Freudian thinking that your mother did these things that screwed you up and all but then, that’s such a long time ago. Your brain has developed over the years and you have the freedom to create that change for yourself. The goal in Buddhism is to become conscious of what is going on around you and what is your part in that. Why are we behaving in such a manner? Our consciousness will expand. Then, we will understand our role in nature. So there you have it. Then, you will be more attuned to what is happening.”

According to Buddhism, the causes of human suffering are greed, hatred and delusion (Fisher, 2009). To end this suffering, people are free to choose and make a change in spite of what happened in their past. They are capable of showing compassion, generosity and wisdom (Fisher, 2009). They can free themselves from suffering.

The practitioners associated their role to a farmer who is planting a seed. The choice to water the seed that was planted was dependent on the participants and was highlighted in the interview.

“Plant the seed and it’s their prerogative to water it or not. But we try to inspire them to really water that seed. But then again, it’s their decision.” – Mishka

“The goal is to plant the seeds. The result is for them to reap. It’s not for me because from the Buddhist perspective, if I were always so self-conscious about what the result will be, it’s beyond my control. It’s up to them with what they want to do with the knowledge and the inspiration. So you cannot, as a therapist, you know we do not. If you go back to Psychology, our goal is not to heal the client. The client will heal himself or herself. So when we do ecotherapy, we are providing the opportunity. We are planting the seed. So it’s up to them if they want to water that seed or they want it to wither. Otherwise, kailangan Buddhist perspective ta. Kay otherwise, we’re gonna be so self-conscious and anxious. Our job is just to plant the seed. It’s their job to take care of it, to turn it into garden.” - Lee

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Working with the participants once a month has limitations implying that the practitioners are not all the time effective. On their own for the rest of the days, the participants have to struggle and make their own choice constantly. This is acknowledged in the interview by Lee.

"It doesn't mean it will work for everybody. Just like therapy is only good for people who want actually the change who are willing to open their mind. So you saw how some kids were laum na kaayo ginpanulti, di ba. Like from the onset pa lang they're already very insightful."

"It doesn't mean it will work for everybody. Just like therapy is only good for people who want actually the change who are willing to open their mind. So you saw how some kids showed depth in the words they say, right? Like from the onset, they're already very insightful."

"...because they went through so much naman gud pod. So mao na. But you know... it doesn't mean na kay abi ni go through sila ug therapy di na sila magbalik balik sa ilahang ginbuhat, noh. Kay dili baya na bitaw mga success studies, mga phenomenal success na gud kaayo pareho na nila sa center over the pila na mi ka years, 5 years kapin na we work with them. Daghan didtong maayong kaayong mga bata nagbalik man sila sa ila old lives pod. Yes, because struggle baya gud na just like a plant will always struggle with the weeds and with all the kanang vines tuk-on siya. Every day gid na ang struggle nila. Kinanglan e nurture gid. Ibton ang mga weeds. Ana gid ang struggle every time."

"...because they went through so much already. That is why. But you know... it doesn't mean that just because they went through therapy, they would not go back to their old habits. It's not really success studies, phenomenal success like them in the center whom we have been working with over how many years, 5 years. There are many smart kids who went back to their old lives. Yes, because it is really a struggle just like a plant which will always struggle with the weeds and with all the vines that will choke it. Every day they really struggle. They need to be nurtured. Weeds have to be pulled out. That's the struggle every time."

In one session, it was observed that Lee posed a challenge to the participants.

"Unya ang millennial dili dautan, noh? Na ang millennial kamo is actually kamo ang hope sa future. Mao nay miski pila ra ka tawo gamay, it takes only a few committed people to change the world, noh. Kay nano? Ang seed

maoy gitano sa inyo karon. Hunahunaon ninyo mabungahon ba mo or dili?"

"So millennials are not bad, right? That you, millennials are actually the hope of the future. That is why even if there is only a small number of people, it takes only a few committed people to change the world. Do you know why? The seed is planted in you today. You reflect whether you will be fruitful or not."

The participants cannot always rely on the practitioners. The practitioner being the channel of the self and group development in micro and macro levels holds the key to positive results but the neighborhood is also playing a collaborative role in the ecotherapeutic community where learning can be transferred (Burls, 2008). Probably, the people that surround the fallen participants of the practitioners were not supportive or nurturing enough to the change process that these participants went through since the practitioners have only an intermediary role. This role is to help the clients develop mechanisms to effectively cope with the challenges and sustain independently the change process in their respective lives (Burls, 2008). As practitioners, it is therefore important to be clear of delusions especially when it comes to results.

INTERPLAY BETWEEN NATURE AND THE HUMAN PERSON

To analyze the relationship between nature and the human person in ecotherapy, the major theme that surfaced from the gathered data from interview, observation and documents are (1) ground and tree, (2) Abel and Cain, (3) temple and believer, (4) mirror of the soul, (5) sage and seeker, (6) diversion of the mind, and (7) wind and sailboat.

Ground and Tree

According to Stress Recovery Theory, humans have positive psychological experience towards nature because it satisfies their needs (Ulrich, 1983). What human needs can be found in nature. It provides their basic needs such as air, food, water and shelter among others in order to survive (Brymer et al., 2010). Hence, human existence is dependent on nature (Berger & McLeod, 2006) as illustrated by Lee in the interview and session with the participants.

“Use of nature for us like I always say nature is the backbone of all human existence. Without nature, we cannot survive but nature can survive without us. So we cannot be so swellheaded to think that we will conserve nature. Actually, it’s just us trying to... conserve ourselves... kay nature will take care of itself. It will evolve by itself. So for us kung walang nature, wala. Patay tayo...”

“Use of nature for us like I always say nature is the backbone of all human existence. Without nature, we cannot survive but nature can survive without us. So we cannot be so swellheaded to think that we will conserve nature. Actually, it’s just us trying to... conserve ourselves because nature will take care of itself. It will evolve by itself. So for us, without nature, there is nothing. We’re dead...”

“So atong role diri as the next generation is to really go back to nature and see that like you (referring to the participants) said sa positive experiences ninyo sa nature. Gipakaon mo. Gitagaan mo ug tambal. Pagwapahon mo. Tigaan mo chance ma-enjoy. Tigaan mo ug chance maheal, to be refreshed, noh. So daghan kaayong gamit ang kalikupan na naa ra gud sya diha.”

“So our role here as the next generation is to really go back to nature and see that like you (referring to the participants) said about your positive experiences with nature. It feeds you. It gives you medicine. It can make you beautiful. It gives you a chance to enjoy. It gives you a chance to heal and to be refreshed. So nature is just there and it has really a lot of uses.”

After hearing in the session all the benefits that humans can get from nature, one participant made her conclusion.

“Walay life ang human kung wala ang nature.”

“Humans can’t live without nature.”

Humans need to bind themselves with nature like a tree anchored on the ground from where it gets its nourishment for it to live, grow and stand tall. The human and nature relationship is vital to human survival (Reese, 2016; Softas-Nall & Woody, 2017), physical and mental health (Berger, 2008b; Hartig, 2008; Maas et al., 2008; Mitchell & Popham, 2008; Barton & Pretty, 2010; Van den Berg et al., 2010; Annerstedt & Wahrborg, 2011; Berger, 2012; Mind, 2015; Weaver, 2015; McGuire, 2016; Sifferlin, 2016) and the quality of human life (Maas et al., 2009; Sung et al., 2012; Song et al., 2016).

According to the practitioners, the root of the human problems is the disconnection of the human person from nature. Thus, reconnection is their prescribed solution. The activities they prepared for the participants, as observed, gave the latter the opportunity to immerse in nature and be restored by it. This synchronizes with various literature (Davis & Atkins, 2009; Jordan, 2009; Scull, 2009; Duffy et al., 2019; La Puma, 2019) for the key to sanity based on the principle of ecopsychology is the awakened ecological unconscious (Roszak, 1992b).

In the interview, the practitioners shed light on different problems people experience.

“I think primarily the problem with people now in this day and age is because they are so disconnected with nature so all the problems that they have can actually be traced back all the way to the absence of nature in their lives. So by bringing the eco back and then having the clinical skills to be able to translate that nature game to the people is a good place to be in because people’s problems, the lifestyle diseases, the mental problems, depression...

they all are manifestations of a disconnect with nature and ultimately the solution to this worldwide epidemic really is just bringing it back to home..." - Mishka

"The way it should be. Magsige na na change ang DSM. Ma 5, ma 6, ma 7, ma 8. They're just making new names for... a self that has been discordant with its natural environment. It's like uprooting. You uproot a tree and it will die. You uproot a person from nature... it will become alcoholic. It will get depressed. It will become suicidal, homicidal, antisocial, borderline. All of these things." - Lee

"The way it should be. The DSM keeps on changing. It becomes 5, 6, 7, 8. They're just making new names for... a self that has been discordant with its natural environment. It's like uprooting. You uproot a tree and it will die. You uproot a person from nature... it will become alcoholic. It will get depressed. It will become suicidal, homicidal, antisocial, borderline. All of these things." – Lee

"Mao na iya (referring to one participant) gi-ingon ang millennial nanihanglan tabang. Unsa may tabang atong mahatag na kinanglan? Mabalik ta sa atong unity sa nature noh... Murag napakita na mao na ang ilang tabang kay naputol na ang connection. So pinaagi sa pagreconnect nato sa yuta, sa kalikupan, mabalik na... Na miski ka ig-uproot, gibalhin sa kalikupan ug tagaan sa right conditions maulian gid." - Lee

"This what she (referring to one participant) said that millennials need help. What help can we give that they need? Let's go back to having unity with nature... It shows that it's the kind of help they need because the connection was lost. By reconnecting with the earth, with nature, we can bring it back... Even if you were uprooted, transferred to the natural surrounding and given the right conditions, you will recover." - Lee

"I think people who are wanting to prevent mental illness or who want to have wellness I think benefit the most from ecotherapy." - Lee

This standpoint is supported by an ecopsychology tenet which states that the insanity in the modern society originates from a subdued ecological unconscious (Roszak, 1992b). This alienation from nature is the contemporary human illness (Gesell, 2013). Psychological symptoms like depression (Chalquist, 2009a; Hansen et al., 2017),

anxiety (Chalquist, 2009a; Maas et al., 2009) and physical health risks (Greenleaf et al., 2014) can manifest the absence of nature in human life. Confusion (Reese, 2012), stress, loneliness, lack of social connection (Berger, 2008a; Maas et al., 2009), low self-esteem (Berger, 2008a), emptiness (Weaver, 2015), feelings of isolation and despair (Greenleaf et al., 2014) are linked to discordance between human and nature. Consequently, people tend to search for sense of meaning in different human activities which sometimes are destructive such alcoholism, addiction, consumerism and many more (Horka & Hromadka, 2010).

Lee gave examples of how humans are distant from nature.

“Sa unang panahon kon mangutana ka sa tagtungod sa lugar, the way to prove na ikaw tag-iya sa lugar is ma-name nimo ang tanang plants ug animals na naa didto... So dako kaayo ta kat-unon noh coz... ang atong nahibaw-an is so small of the natural world...”

“In olden times, when you ask from a local, the way to prove that you own the place is you can identify all plants and animals in the area... So there’s a lot for us to learn because... what we know is only a very small part of the natural world...”

“Ang atong mga older people mao na sila magtudlo nato how to work with the natural environment. Daghan na to nakalimot naman na asa pagpanit sa nangka. Lahi sa bi ug style. Inig ana nimo, naa di ay tanan. Ato ron hiwaon nato. Murag lisod kaayo magkaon nangka karon, noh.”

“Our elders are the ones who will teach us how to work with the natural environment. A lot of people have already forgotten how to peel a jackfruit. The style is different. When you do that, everything is already there. Now we just slice it. It’s hard to eat jackfruit nowadays, right?”

“Human nila ug dakop (referring to cichlid fish) ilahang luto-on. Naay pa bay makabuhat ana ron nga panahon na? Palit sa palengke ug sa grocery... So kamo na.”

“After catching them (referring to cichlid fish), they’ll cook it. Are there still people who can do those things at this time? We’d rather buy in the wet market or in the grocery.”

“So again noh kanang lumboy gamay na lang sad makakaon ana kay sa unang panahon maninda baya na ta sa school. Karon wa na gid kay ang kompetensya sa naninda kay kanang mamisod gani kanang candy, mga junks. So sa una mao man gud to sila ang mga snacks sa mga tawo.”

“So again that blackberry, only a few can eat them. Before we would sell them at school because people prefer them for snacks. Now they’re not being sold anymore because their competition are candies and junk.”

“Mga bata wala sila kaila. Sa slums man ilang mga bata. Wala na gud sense of kwan nature. Miskin sa food, di magkaon gulay ana bitaw. Wa paki na.”

“Children do not know. Their children live in the slums. They don’t have sense of nature. Even in food, they don’t eat vegetables. They don’t care anymore.”

“Nanong inana man ta ron? Naong di man ganahan gud maggunit ug soil?”

“Why are we like that now? Why don’t we like to tend the soil?”

To rewire people back to nature, this is how Lee described their practice in the interview.

“Work with nature rather than... kay sa atoang concept ang therapy is working with the client but like I said, we work with nature and as a result, the client also heals with nature.”

“Work with nature rather than... because our concept of therapy is working with the client but like I said, we work with nature and as a result, the client also heals with nature.”

A human person, in other words, needs to be anchored on nature so they won’t wander or fall into illness. This is how ecopsychology is applied (Fisher, 2002). There is a need for people to be grounded on nature because it is where home is (Chalquist, 2009b; Spencer, 2013) as the ground is to a tree. Only when they are home would they

feel whole (Taylor et al., 2010; Watson, 2010; Hansen et al., 2017) based on ecopsychology (Spencer, 2013). Ecopsychology contends that human beings belong to nature and their needs are interwoven to that of the earth (Roszak, 1992a). They reside in nature (Wilson, 2011) and it is their home (Spencer, 2013). When there is nature deficit, the ecological self is not nourished. As a result, the human person feels incomplete.

Abel and Cain

As read from the book of Genesis in the Holy Scriptures, Abel and Cain are brothers. They are the offsprings of Adam and Eve. The human person and nature belong to one family of creation. They are part of the web of life (Greenleaf et al., 2014) as Lee reiterated in the interview.

“Because we are part of nature. We are not above it nor below it. We are with it.”

Since the primal is inherent in human nature (Hasbach, 2012), rewilding can reconnect the human beings with the natural world and their ecological identity (Hasbach, 2013).

“So relationships are not only for humans to humans but we have relationships with nature because we are part of nature. Sa una, ang atong pagtagod walay ta labot. Murag kita naa sa babaw but actually we are part of this, noh. So ang imong amigo ang iro, ang iring. Sunod inyo na na amigohon ang manok. So then we build relationship outside. First with other. Then with the rest of the link sa nature. With nature, we can always have a relationship, noh. So kanang pagmahal dili lang sa tawo ug sa tawo. Naa pod sa nature, di ba. Inyong iro pinangga ninyo miskin hambaton mo...”

“So relationships are not only for humans to humans but we have relationships with nature because we are part of nature. Before, we don’t

care about anything. As if we're on top but we are actually part of this. So your friends are the dogs and cats. Next, you would befriend the chicken. So then we build relationship outside. First with the other. Then with the rest of the link in nature. With nature we can always have a relationship. So love is not only between humans but also with nature. You still love your dog even if it bites you..."

Ecotherapy aims to restore this human-nature relationship (Clinebell, 1996; Buzzell & Chalquist, 2009; Hasbach, 2013). The human-nature relationship is not just interconnection but also within (Fisher, 2012). There is no separate "I" from the natural environment (Fisher, 2013) as the ecological identity is the consciousness of one's place in the ecosystem (Conn & Conn, 2009). It includes perception of oneself in relation to nature (Kopytin, 2017). This identity stems from one's belongingness to nature (Lauren de Boer, 2009). This is similar to how people acknowledge themselves as members of their respective families. Family members are deemed as extension of oneself. The battle, loss and pain of one family member is the battle, loss and pain of the whole family. Thus, there is a need for human beings and nature to support and protect each other.

One member of the group who did the role playing explained what their group was trying to portray.

"Unya mao to ginkwan namo didto na ginpasabot ba na ang mga tawo di ay naay sa responsibilidad sila sa mga kuwan sa mga animals naa sa dagat ba. Unya mao na. Katong sya nagpakita na samtang bata pa kay kinanglan sya magkat-on unsahon ang pagvalue nato nila."

"That's why we try to make people realize that they have a responsibility to sea creatures. That shows that even as a kid, s/he has to learn how to value them."

Some participants, after gardening, expressed their thoughts and feelings to the group.

“Kung dili ba sya kwanon kay mamatay gyud sya pareho sa katong gin-ingon ni Ate Edna dira. Kay nag-ana sya atoang bubuan uy kay sayang kaayo. Basi mabuhi pa ni. Ana man si Ate Edna. Ana sya bubuan na ni nato kay kwan mamatay unya ining ana gani.”

“If you don’t do something on it, it would die just like what Ate Edna said. She said that we should water it because it’d be such a loss. It might still survive as what Ate Edna said. She said we should water it or else it will die.”

“So sa tanom dili ug mabuhi kon dili sila bubuan... Magtanum ka dapat naay ka mood. Elove ba...”

“Plants will not survive if you don’t water them... You should be in the mood when planting. You should love them...”

“Excited na kaayo ko makakita kanang magtubo na bitaw...”

“I’m very excited to see it grow.”

It can be gleaned how the human person is the guardian of nature as Cain is his brother’s keeper. Unfortunately, cohesive membership is limited to a small group only, the immediate family in particular. This sense of membership, unity or identity with any group weaken when the circle widens. This probably explains the loss of connection between the human person and nature as one participant attempted to recap the whole session.

“Kwan Te pagbuntag kay katong kwan man to Te noh sa kendama kwan gyud sa te ba naconnect connect ra gud tanan Te ba. Unsahon ni mo paghimong unite ba... maunite ang country sa ilahang kaugalingon na nature kay dili na gid na makita karon ba. Kay mismo gani kita diri sa Pilipinas kay di sa gyud mabakakan ba. Isa sad ta ka destroyer ba kay ato man gipasagdaan ba ang like ana karon example na lang gyud ang mining. Kita man mismo nagdawat nila na buhaton na sa atong kaugalingon na

nature na unya kinanglan gyud na... kinanglan na gani ta Te kita mismo... naay ta buhaton ba kay grabe naman gud siya."

"In the morning, there was a kendama which shows everything is connected. What do you do to unite? Unite the country with their nature which you can hardly see nowadays. Even us here in the Philippines, we can't deny that we're also a destroyer because we've neglected, for example, we've not paid attention to mining. We just accepted what they are doing to our nature that needs... It's important that we should do something about it because it's getting worse."

When ecopsychology can fuse together the human psyche and the natural world (Fisher, 2013), an intimate human and nature encounter can foster behavior helpful to the environment (Nisbet et al., 2008; Summers & Vivian, 2018). According to Buddhism, the human person does not only have the tendency to be blinded by greed and delusion but on the positive side, they can act with compassion and generosity (Fisher, 2009). The responsibility towards the Earth emanates from one's ecological ego (Roszak, 1992a).

Temple and Believer

Nature cannot be reduced to a backdrop as opposed to what most people may think. It is not a background for human activities (Taylor et al., 2010; Poulsen et al., 2020). Nature has its own value independent of its use. Any human person should pay proper respect to it (Jordan & Marshall, 2010; Fisher, 2012; Selhub & Logan, 2012) like a believer would bow or kneel down in a temple. Unfortunately, some people consider nature only as a commodity (Burls, 2007b; Koger & Winter, 2010; Freeman et al., 2017) because they probably think they are superior. They use it to satisfy their needs even to

the point of exploiting it (Jordan & Marshall, 2010; Selhub & Logan, 2012). The value of nature in ecotherapy is clarified by Lee in the interview.

“If we look at ecotherapy and... we’re just using nature as the backdrop for doing therapy, that’s not how I understand it. The way I understand it is that nature is there and we have not been paying attention to it.”

“We don’t use nature as a backdrop because pareho na sya ecotourism bitaw. They use the place just for enjoyment. Right? Mag-adto ka Oslob. Gamiton ni mo ang whale shark para malingaw ka. You just go there to swim and enjoy. But they don’t actually tell you anything about the whalesharks, about its marine systems that it affects or how it moves around, how it affects you.”

“We don’t use nature as a backdrop because it’s similar to ecotourism. They use the place just for enjoyment. Right? You would go to Oslob. You will use the whole shark for you to have fun. You just go there to swim and enjoy. But they don’t actually tell you anything about the whalesharks, about its marine systems that it affects or how it moves around, how it affects you.”

“Naa man gud misconception ang mga tawo. Nature is for fun lang gani, di ba? Ang atong notion sa kwan maligo ta dagat. Magkwan ta. Magligo-ligo, ki-at-ki-at. Saka ta bukid. Ki-at-ki-at ta. Backdrop. Everything in nature is a backdrop, is a venue, is a playground. Di man na. We are trying to reawaken that sense na sa una it was the presence of God. Mao na I always repeat it. Mao na bitaw ang animism. The presence of God. Unsa kasabot sa mga bata ana karon? Kay ang ilang concept sa God tungod sa Spanish naa sa simbahan. Even the priests and the nuns cannot understand that. Na ang presence sang God kani. This is my church noh.”

“People have misconception. Nature is for fun only. Our notion is to swim in the beach. We’ll swim and have fun. We’ll climb the mountain. We’ll have fun. Backdrop. Everything in nature is a backdrop, is a venue, is a playground. That is not how it should be. We are trying to reawaken the sense that before that nature was the presence of God. That’s why I always repeat it. That is what animism is. The presence of God. How do children understand it now? Their concept of God, because of the Spanish, is in the church. Even the priests and nuns cannot understand that. That the presence of God is here. This is my church.”

Nature cannot be simply used as a backdrop because of its sacredness (Fisher, 2002; Buzzel & Chalquist, 2009; Koger & Winter, 2010). It must be revered for it is where

the presence of God is revealed and felt as pointed out by Lee. It is a creation and a reflection of God. Even the participants were able to understand it.

“Kinanglan sila respeto-an kay naa man gyud sila kinabuhi kay ginhimo pod sila sang Gino-o.”

“They need to be respected because they also have a life because they were created by God.”

“Kwan sad katong mga bata karon sa ato-a kay kasagaran man gyud or kanang murag atong mabantayan ba kay ang mga bata kay manakop ug mga isda ba kay para nila ang mga isda kay kanang duwaan ba. Wala sila na correctionan na dili gyud di ay.”

“Kids nowadays, most of the kids or those kids I’ve observed, they would catch fish. For them, fish are toys. No one corrects them about it.”

On this note, Lee affirmed the participant.

“Nindot man ang imo ginstorya noh na kita murag ato gitan-aw na maghuhukom bitaw ta. Murag ta huwes who gets to live and who gets to die, noh. So actually... walay ta katungod na magkuha ug kinabuhi sa hayop, noh.”

“What you shared is beautiful. We see ourselves as judge. We are like a judge who decides on who gets to live and who gets to die. So actually... we don’t have the right to take the lives of animals.”

In the brochure of the sanctuary, the following rules can be found in order to guide the individuals who are interested of seeing the place:

- Bring home your trash.
- Stay on the trails.
- Do not feed the animals.
- No smoking.
- Watch your children at all times.
- No picking of plant life.
- No unsupervised activities like swimming, kayaking and wall climbing.

It shows how people should exercise caution when they visit the sanctuary as it is preserved and protected. Nature cannot be used nor abused for human selfish interests (Burls, 2007b; Jordan & Marshall, 2010; Koger & Winter, 2010; Selhub & Logan, 2012; Freeman et al., 2017). Even the guidelines for counseling require respect for and protection of nature (Selhub & Logan, 2012; Reese, 2016).

Mirror of the Soul

Based on interview and observation, nature is equated by the practitioners to a Rorschach inkblot test, a projective technique used by counselors and psychologists to get through the unconscious of the clients. What the participants saw in nature mirrored their reality. Nature becomes the co-therapist (Dustin et al., 2011; Mowatt & Bennett, 2011; Hasbach, 2013; Summers & Vivian, 2018) who has the capacity to reflect back to the clients their issues or concerns (Scull, 2009; Spencer, 2013). The clients project their unconscious thoughts or inner world to nature which makes it easy for them to see themselves without defense. This capacity of nature as a mirror that reveals the soul surfaced from the interview with the practitioners.

“Kabalo naman ka sang prevailing themes. Kon Rorschach pa na, what do they see in the image, they will have a shared experience.”

“You already know the prevailing themes. If that is Rorschach, what they see in the image, they will have a shared experience.”

“You can see by the themes of what they have learned noh. Kung projective technique pa na, makita ni mo. What are the prevailing themes of the closing kuwan integration?”

“You can see by the themes of what they have learned, right? If that is projective technique, you will see. What are the prevailing themes of the closing or integration?”

After giving the participants an overview of what to expect in the first session, it was observed that Lee started the session by asking the participants to introduce themselves and identify what they like most about nature. Even in the interview, she exemplified the use of nature-oriented question with the clients (Hasbach, 2015) as the participants responded during the session.

One of the participants answered,

“Akong ganahan sa nature kay beach kay kuwan. Kay ganahan ko magtan-aw sa kanang dagat every time siya magbawod kay ma-relate sya sa akong kinabuhi na usahay kuwan. Madala gid ta kung unsa ang plano sang Ginoo.”

“What I like in nature is the beach. I like watching the beach every time there are waves. I can relate it to my life. We are really swayed by the plans of God.”

The other participant identified herself with guinea pigs.

“Kwan sad sa guinea kay nakita na ko ba ang akong kaugalingon na dili sila sa stranger. Dili sila permanente na maka-encounter mga stranger na bitaw. Murag na makig-storya gyud ba.”

“I saw myself in guinea pigs. They don’t like strangers. They don’t encounter strangers often. They don’t feel like talking.”

One participant outrightly confessed,

“Pareho sa agokoy ako-a.”

“I am like a fiddler crab.”

This was attested by another participant who has observed her behavior.

“Di ba ingon man ka basta ang agokoy ug makakita tawo magtago? Ikaw bitaw magtago man ka miskin wala tawo labi na gyud saputon ka noh. Magtago ka diretso...”

“You said that a fiddler crab hides when it sees human beings, right? You also hide even if there are no people especially if you’re sad. You will immediately confine yourself.”

As observed in the session, Lee wrapped up their insights from different animals.

“Ang time na mag-emote emote ta after sa emote-emote ta self-care na pod. Katong inyong kahadlukan, self-care to sa guinea na di sya ma-expose to danger noh. Daghan ug characteristics ang animals na actually we also possess...”

“The things you are afraid of is the counterpart of self-care in guinea pig so it won’t be exposed to danger. There are a lot of characteristics animals have that actually we also possess...”

Like guinea pigs and fiddler crabs, some of the participants fear strangers while the other participant was able to relate her life to the beach as it is moved by God’s plan.

From the interview, observation and accessed documents, the practitioners perform ecotherapy outdoor. As outdoor therapy, it enables the participants to observe and appreciate nature, and meaningfully view their issues (Hasbach, 2013).

In the next session, it was observed that the participants had the chance to do gardening. After gardening, they shared the following reflections:

“Akon kinabuhi... kay dili ko makat-on kon waay gatudlo sa akua. Dili sad ko mabuhi kung walay nag-atiman na ko. So sa tanom dili ug mabuhi kon dili sila bubuan.”

“In my life... I won’t be able to learn if nobody teaches me. I won’t be able to survive if nobody takes care of me. Just like a plant, it won’t survive if no one waters them.”

“Pareho na gyud sya sa kanang tanom. Kung makuwan siya kung dili ba sya kwanon kay mamatay gyud sya pareho sa katong gin-ingon ni Ate Edna dira. Kay nag-ana sya, “Atoang bubuan uy kay sayang kaayo. Basi mabuhi pa ni.” Ana man si Ate Edna. Ana sya, “Bubuan na nato kay kwan mamatay unya ining ana gani.” Kay ang gi-ingon man didto sa mga youth kanang ang

kinahanglan lang gyud namo ang paggiya. Ana sya, “What I asked is a leader.” Ana siya. Ang mga kamot sa mga kanang youth ba kay ang nakit-an na lang kay ang mga kamot na lang sa youth na nag-ana gani na gakinahanglan ug tabang sa mga leaders. Ana siya. Pareho siya sa tanum.”

“Just like plants, if it’s taken for granted, it will die similar to what Ate Edna said. She said that we will water it because it might still survive. Ate Edna said that we should water it or else it will die. What is said about the youth is we just need guidance. The youth said, “what I asked is a leader.” That’s it. The hands of the youth are seen as hands needing help from the leaders. That’s it. Just like a plant.”

“Akong ma-share about sa life sa plant kay kwan sa life kay ako ang plant. Meaning ako ang plants na kanang gina-cultivate kay kwan bati akong past. Didto gi-cultivate ko nila. Wala ko gi-cultivate, dira lang ko kutob... Wala na ko gibilin ra didto kundi gibalhin ba... Ang shelter man nag-amoma sa ako karon, Te.”

“What I can share about the life of a plant is I am the plant. It means I am the plant that is being cultivated because I have an ugly past. They cultivated me there (referring to their shelter). If I was not cultivated, I won’t reach this point... I was not left there; I was transferred... It’s the shelter that takes care of me now.”

To condense their sharing, other participants compared themselves to plants needing care and guidance. Nature in this aspect has taken the role of a co-therapist (Dustin et al., 2011; Mowatt & Bennett, 2011; Hasbach, 2013; Summers & Vivian, 2018) who successfully got through them and enabled them to look at their respective realities.

Lee, as observed, had also her share of analogy of how the human person is mirrored by nature when she synthesized the sharing of the participants.

“Unya ang kwan sad naa ang inyong center dili lang as plants ang atong pasagdan/pasabton na kita ang mga tanum na gi-alima para madako, mahimo mabungahon na mga kahoy.”

“Also there’s your center where it’s not just plants which should not be neglected. We’re also the plants that are being taken care of in order to grow and become fruitful trees.”

“Sama ra na sa tawo na kinanglan ta e-cultivate. Paluagon ta, noh.”

“It’s just the same with people who needs to be cultivated. You have to give it space.”

“Miskin unsay imong itanum ug dili ni mo eprotect siya, daghan ang elements. Madie to siya. So sama ra dyapon na sa atoang kinabuhi.”

“Whatever you plant, if you don’t protect it from different elements, it will die. This is the same situation with our lives.”

As a whole, gardening and observing the animals offered clients the opportunities to ponder and learn metaphors (Burls, 2008). The plants and animals become a metaphor of oneself as metaphors represent the client’s situation (Corazon et al., 2012). The participants, as observed, started their sharing by identifying themselves with the animals or plants and they further explained this comparison. Indeed, metaphor is helpful when words don’t come easily (Berger, 2008a; Mind, 2015). They are tools that can be used in the therapy (Corazon et al., 2012) that makes the client’s thoughts accessible (Hasbach, 2012) to the counselor or psychologist.

Sage and Seeker

Nature is the sage to whom a human person can turn to for enlightenment. It has a lot of wisdom from which human beings can learn if they only find time to listen to it. They become the seekers. This theme, sage and seeker, is supported by the interview with the practitioners.

“In the olden times, nature was the only source of wisdom. Everything has always been the teacher. So my goal in ecotherapy, if you want to call it ecotherapy, is to gain that wisdom again. Learn. Learn from the kagang. Learn from the rabbit. Learn because they’re giving us lessons. Nauso man na sa Pinterest. Lessons from a horse. Lessons from the beach but actually, sa unang panahon when people wanted to explain a phenomenon, they always said, “Ah, sa nature ana ani.” When they wanted to explain an experience in life, “Oh, life is like the tide. It goes up and down. Up and down.” That’s how they explain one.” - Lee

“In the olden times, nature was the only source of wisdom. Everything has always been the teacher. So my goal in ecotherapy, if you want to call it ecotherapy, is to gain that wisdom again. Learn. Learn from the crab. Learn from the rabbit. Learn because they’re giving us lessons. It’s trending in Pinterest. Lessons from a horse. Lessons from the beach but actually, in earlier times, when people wanted to explain a phenomenon, they always said, “Ah, this is how it is in nature.” When they wanted to explain an experience in life, “Oh, life is like the tide. It goes up and down. Up and down.” That’s how they explain one.” - Lee

“Our bottom line really is that nature actually here is the teacher and we’re just creating the program but the lessons are always there. And nature has always made it available. So we’re just also utilitarian in the sense that we are using what nature is capable and has always been capable of sharing.” - Mishka

Nature who has the wisdom to give is also echoed both in the overview and synthesis given by Lee as observed during the session with her participants.

“Karon we want to learn from the plant and the animals noh. So ato silang ila-ilahon unsa ila ikatudlo sa atoa kay ang kalikupan mao man na sya maestra gid nato noh. Ato man ni teacher. So naa ikabuhat para nato kaning mangroves, rabbit, manok, tanan. Ato silang ila-ilahon.”

“Now we want to learn from the plant and the animals. So let’s get to know them and find out what they can teach us because nature is really our teacher. It’s our teacher. So there is something these mangroves, rabbit, chicken, all of them can do for us. Let us get to know them.”

“Kay ang kalikupan daghang kaayong ug leksyon ta makita kasama sa ingon nya (referring to one participant), noh. Mao maguide sa atoa actually coz ang atong number 1 teacher gid sa kalibutan ang kalikupan kay ginama man

sa sa Ginoo. Naa diha ang perfection. Kon matuo mo Creator, naa diha. All the lessons we need to learn makita ni mo sa kalikupan noh.”

“Nature has a lot of lessons that we can find similar to what she (referring to one participant) said. It will guide us actually because our number 1 teacher in the world is nature because it is created by God. In nature, there is perfection. If you believe in the Creator, it is there. All the lessons we need to learn can be found in nature.”

Nature as the source of wisdom can also be found in the literature (Rust, 2009; Scull; 2009; Koger & Winter, 2010; Pattnaik, 2017). People are unaware of that because they have been detached from nature and are preoccupied of their day-to-day concerns as Lee shared this observation in the interview.

“Wala naman kabalo ug tawo because they don’t watch the tides anymore. They don’t look at the moon anymore. So if we can gain that lost wisdom, then we regain ourselves as well kay part man ta adto nga lost wisdom. It can be resolved by bringing back your true self, your true nature...”

“People don’t know because they don’t watch the tides anymore. They don’t look at the moon anymore. So if we can gain that lost wisdom, then we regain ourselves as well because we are part of that lost wisdom. It can be resolved by bringing back your true self, your true nature...”

“Did you know that the birds spend so much time playing in the sand? They do sand-bathing and it’s a ritual for them. They play. They’re all there. The chickens do it. Same thing for us. We should spend time playing and we have different ways of playing...”

The practitioners planned and facilitated the activities in such a way that their participants could spend time with nature, observe and learn from it because it is capable of drawing out insights (Burls, 2008) and can widen the outlook of the human person (Mayer et al., 2009; Mind, 2015; Hasbach, 2013)

In the interview, the concept that nature is just a setting is corrected by the practitioners because being the sage, it is the central component of the therapy.

“Sa Tagaytay, funny kaayo. Naa ka sa in the midst of nature but ... the weirdest part, all these greening projects and seminars, they’re always done in the most ungreen place. Naa sila sa dagat pero ang workshop naa sa suwod, sa aircon. Naka-Americana sila tanan. I always say this everytime I do the presentation. Let’s go out. Let’s be out in nature. Why are we here in this closed room? Mao na sya. You cannot do ecotherapy without the eco. There has to be a milieu. And the teacher has to be there. Nature has to be there.”
- Lee

“It was funny in Tagaytay. You were in the midst of nature but ... the weirdest part, all these greening projects and seminars, they’re always done in the most ungreen place. They are in the beach but the workshop is indoor, in an airconditioned room. They are all in suit. I always say this everytime I do the presentation. Let’s go out. Let’s be out in nature. Why are we here in this closed room? That’s how it is. You cannot do ecotherapy without the eco. There has to be a milieu. And the teacher has to be there. Nature has to be there.” - Lee

“My insight really is there is no ecotherapy without the eco part so we really have to double time on creating and ensuring that that conducive environment is there. So whatever it is that you’re doing whether it is a recreation type of therapy or an expressive therapy or an art therapy, if it has nature, then for me it can be considered in a way an ecotherapy but then, it won’t be considered an eco also if there is no nature to learn from.” - Mishka

After being instructed to observe the land animals in the sanctuary, one group of participants learned the following:

“Kay sa guinea kay dapat sad nato protektahan atong kaugalingon sa mga stranger ba kay wa baya ta kahibalo unsay katuyo-an nila. Kabalo ka sa imo kaugalingon.”

“Like guinea pigs, we should protect ourselves from strangers because we don’t know what their intentions are. You should know yourself.”

“Kuwan macommunicate sila (referring to rabbits) sa kanang stranger. Bisan first time pa kanang kakita ba kay maduol dayon sila. Di sila mauwaw.”

“They (referring to rabbits) can communicate with strangers. Even if it’s their first time to meet you, they would approach you. They are not timid.”

“Sa rabbit kay makatudlo ug confidence pero makita man gyud asa atong pwede mabuhat ug confidence bitaw.”

“The rabbits can teach us confidence. We can see what we are capable of if we have the confidence.”

“Akon naobservaran nila (referring to chickens) kay kuwan kabalo gud sila mangita pamaagi. Dira ang tawo makita magpamaagi like pagpangita pagkaon...”

“What I have observed is they (referring to chickens) know how to find a way. Humans can also find ways like looking for food.”

Members of the other group were able to discern the following from fiddler crabs.

“Duha ka buok. Duha ka butang, Te ba. Usa kay kato pag-adjust. Mag-adjust ka sa para ilahang tawo ba. Maggive way ka niya. Ikaduha kay kuwan pagprotect sa imong kaugalingon kay sa lain na creatures sad kay daghan man sad mahog man sya. Pwede sya kuwan sya predator. Pwede sya mapredator. Unya prey sya sad sa iyahang sad. Makaon sya ug laing animals. Sya kan-on sa laing animals.”

“There were two things. First is regarding adjustment. You have to adjust to other people. You have to give way to them. Second is regarding protecting one’s self because other creatures, they can be predators. They can also be preys. They eat other animals, but they can also be eaten by other animals.”

“The crab remind me how to follow the right direction... and if they fear, they hide their house so I learn to follow the right path.”

“Akon nakat-onan kay kanang kuwan bisan unsa man kanang kahadlok imong makuwan ba masugat-an kay imo gihapon na e-face kay para mahimo sad ka maisugon para ra man sa imong kaugalingon. Ikaw ra sad makakuwan gani makuwan sad ma-follow sad ka sa kuwan sa right na direction sa right pod na decision. Naay man uban na agokoy kana wala nagpakita. Ilaha ra sad to decision...”

“What I learned is no matter how frightening the situation you will encounter, you need to face it to become courageous for your own good. You can follow the right direction and make the right decision. There are other crabs that did not show up. It is their decision...”

“Akon nakat-unan ato te kay kuwan sa akong kinabuhi lang kay kuwan kinahanglan gyud paspas ba. Kay kung dili gyud ka magpaspas sa imong future kay ingon ang future naa ra man pero kuwan ang tawo man gyud magtrabaho para na sa future ba. Dili man lain na tawo magtrabaho gyud ana. Sa kwan sad sa animals sad akong na observe kay kwan sila medyo kwan sila medyo hina sila pero naningkamot man sad sila...”

“What I learned is, in life, I need to work hard. If you won’t work hard for your future, it will just be there but it’s the person who would work for his/her future. It’s not the other person who would do it for you. What I observed in animals is they’re quite weak but they also work hard...”

Another group had the following realizations when they were observing the flying animals:

“I learn nga murag rapud ug kita ang buyog nga dapat tang mangita para makakaon ta. Dili magtinapulan.”

“I learned that we are akin to bees that we should look for our food. We should not be lazy.”

“Ang akong na relate sa ilang (referring to the birds) life kay murag pud ug tawo kay they have to communicate others. Kung dili ka magtingog, dili man ka matabangan. Ang birds kay mangita or mangaun ug naay mga liso. Ilang mabutang sa laing lugar so like human, we need to get something to give others, help each other.”

“What I can relate from them (referring to the birds) is they are similar to humans because they need to communicate with each other. If you won’t talk, you won’t be able to get help. The birds would look for or eat seeds. They would drop seeds in other places. In the same manner as human beings, we need to get something to give to others, to help each other.”

In summary, the participants discover that they have to work hard and resourceful so they can provide food for themselves and their respective families in the future. They grasped that confidence in one’s abilities and courage to face tomorrow’s uncertainties are important as well as the assertiveness in asking for help whenever they need one.

Self-preservation or exercising caution in trusting other people is also a must as their intentions are unknown.

In response to their fears, Lee affirmed them with a lesson from the birds and bees.

“Di sya (referring to animals) kinanglan pakan-on. So mao baya na. Mabuhi man gani ang langgam. Makakaon. Ang tawo makaha. So di ta maguol sa kaugmaon kay ang nature kon ato alimahon will take care of us kon kita pod magtake care sa iyaha kay kasagaran sa ato mahadlok man ta sa kaugmaon di ba. Unsaon na lang nako mag-atiman sa akong kaugalingon? So di ay ginpakita na nag-eskwela man dayon ang buyog? But ang nature gyud is mag-take care sa atong kaugalingon.”

“They (referring to animals) need not be fed. That’s it. The birds can even survive. They can eat. How much more for the human beings? So let us not worry about the future because if we take care of nature, it will take care of us. Most of us are afraid of the future. How would I take care of myself? Did it show that the bees went to school? But nature would take care of our needs.”

While gardening, the participants were able to ponder on the following:

“So sa pagtuon na to... kinanglan naay ta mood. Sa akua kay basically ako kay mag-study ko, saputon man gyud ko. Saputon ko ba. So naningkamot ko. Naay ko example sa Math. Kinanglan ko e-love nako ang Math...”

“So when we study... we should be in the mood. My experience is I get pissed off when I study. I get angry. So I try hard. I have an example, Math. I need to love Math...”

“Di ba sa kana pagpananum naay man gyud kanta. Unsa may kanta. Ang tanim ay di biro. So naa didto. First pa lang na kwan first pa lang na words didto magtanim ay di biro. So means ana kay kita karon mga batan-on naa pa gyud ta sa stage na gaskwela ta. Sa kwan pa lang kay atong pag-eskwela dili gyud sa binu-ang. Girls, gets? Dili na sya binuang. Dapat ato gid na sya ikwan kanang unsa na uy ampingan gyud nato. Nagpasalamat gyud ko kay... I don’t know kon asa ang akong kinabuhi karon. So mao na atong pagtanum didto kay ok man kaayo gyud ta didto...” Mao na ug sad atong pagtuon mao sad dyapon ok unsa ta ka ok didto...”

“There is a song about planting, right? What is that song? Planting is not a joke. It is stated there. The first few words already say that planting is not easy. That means that we, the youth, are still at the stage of studying. Our studies is not a joke. Do you get it, girls? It is not a joke. We should value it. I’m really grateful because... I don’t know where my life would be right now. That’s how we should plant there (referring to their shelter) because we are doing well there. That’s why we should study well because we are okay there...”

“Dako kaayo na unsa na uy rason ba na ang shelter maoy nag-amoma kailangan man amomahon.”

“The big reason is that the shelter which took care of me needs to be taken care of also.”

For some, the act of planting is parallel to studying. They came to realize that they have to value their studies through which they can show their appreciation to the shelter. Relf (1998) stressed that plants in horticultural therapy help clients develop a positive philosophy in life and a sense of meaning. It can be summarized that nature offers not only a conducive setting for contemplation (Burls, 2008) but itself is the sage from which a human person can gain insights (Scull, 2009; Hasbach, 2012) if s/he is attentive enough.

Diversion of the Mind

The participants were able to verbalize their experience of the calming effects of nature in the following exchange during the session:

“Unya usa pod sila makahatag pod ug healing gani sa mga tawo kay mao man gyud na akong murag nakat-unan gyud ba. Kon guol ko, mao gyud na makapakwan sa kon. Ang chirping sang bird...”

“They are one of those that can provide healing for the people because that is what I really learned. If I’m worried, the chirping of the bird can provide relief...”

“Ang akong na feel samtang nagtan-aw ko sa buyog kay nindot siya kay malingaw ka sige tan-aw niya nga naglupad-lupad while nagsimhot-simhot sa bulak.”

“I feel good while I’m observing a bee because you get amused as you look at it while it is hovering over a flower.”

“Akong ganahan na nature kay ang flower kay kwan nindot flower ba. Bisan sa akua kay malingaw sa pod. Sya nagtabang na ko makapa-heal sa imohang emotion.”

“The nature that I like is the flower because the flower is beautiful. I get amused. It helps me heal my emotion.”

“Kita sad maka-benefit gud ta nila. Stress reliever ini ana...”

“We can really benefit from them. They are stress reliever...”

“Ang akon partner... ang nature nya para sa iya is sapa kay dira man sya kag ang iya mga friends gapaligo noh and her source of joy...”

“For my partner, nature for her is the stream because it is where she and her friends bathe and her source of joy.”

The participants are fascinated with the birds, the flowers, the bees and the stream. These relieve their stress, pacify their emotions and elicit positive feelings like joy. Various literatures affirm these experiences. Indeed, nature has the potential to ease anger (Mind, 2015; Summers & Vivian, 2018), aggression (Summers & Vivian, 2018), anxiety (Gonzalez et al., 2009; Maas et al., 2009; Sung et al., 2012; Mind, 2015; Matsumura, 2016; Hansen et al., 2017) and depression (Gonzalez et al., 2009; Maas et al., 2009). It can boost positive thoughts (Summers & Vivian, 2018), positive emotions (Mayer et al., 2009; Van den Berg & Custers, 2011) and good mood (Berman et al., 2012; Mind, 2015; King & McIntyre, 2018; Pieters & Deuter, 2018; Summers & Vivian, 2018) because an encounter with nature delights people (Chalquist, 2009a; Zelenski & Nisbet,

2014; Williams, 2016; Hansen et al., 2017). They become relaxed (Buzzell, 2009; Mind, 2015) and are relieved from stress (Kahn et al., 2008; Milton, 2008; Van den Berg & Custers, 2011; Sung et al., 2012; Mind, 2015; Hansen et al., 2017; Lopukhova, 2018; Summers & Vivian, 2018).

During the session, Lee was able to elaborate on the inclination of people to go to bodies of water like the stream and the positive feeling they experience being there.

“Gikalibangan di ay sang imo kauban, noh. Nindot kaayo ang sapa, noh... So around water it really provides kanang joy. Di mo madefine ang kalipay na mahatag sa bodies of water, noh. Kay di ba, our whole existence around bodies of water kita kay di ba nabuhi kita sa tiyan, sa bodies of water. So imagina unsa ta ka one with the bodies of water. Inigbuwag na to, birahon ta gikan sa atong mga inahan. Unya ilabay ta sa kalibutan. Murag wala na atong relationship with water.”

“Your friend had fun with it. The stream is beautiful... Being surrounded by water really provides joy. You can’t put into words the happiness brought by bodies of water. Our existence revolved around bodies of water. We lived in the womb surrounded by water. Just imagine how connected we are with bodies of water. We get separated when our mothers pushed us out of their wombs. We’re thrown out into this world. Our connection with water is lost.”

Attention Restoration Theory by Kaplan & Kaplan (1989) posits that humans are easily attracted to nature and felt they belong to nature. Because of the power of nature to easily captivate humans with its beauty, it can provide relief to a human person (Jordan, 2009). It is a diversion to a tired, stressed or worried mind. Attention of the human person can be channeled to the soothing beauty of nature. Ecotherapy can be used to enhance well-being and prevent ill-health (Pattnaik, 2017) because of the relaxing effects of nature (Keniger et al., 2013; Pacella et al., 2013; Hartig et al., 2014;

Shanahan et al., 2015; Dadvand et al., 2016; Gascon et al., 2016; Shanahan et al., 2016; Freeman et al., 2017). Sadly, this did not gain the attention of many counselors, psychologists and others who are in the helping profession.

Wind and Sailboat

As the practitioners carried out their plan of activities, there were changes that they had to suddenly make as they attuned themselves to nature. They planned their activities according to what nature offers them. As the wind directs the sailboat, nature guides them to certain activities. There were instances when they had to cancel or defer their activity because nature objects it. It is either too hot or raining like how the wind blows against the direction where the sailboat is heading. So the activities should be aligned with nature. Nature dictates the practitioners where to perform the ecotherapy which could either be outdoor or indoor (Berger, 2006).

The “wind and sailboat” theme emerged from the observation and interview with the practitioners as they recalled the instances when they had to cancel or defer some of their activities.

“They were supposed to look at the birds... with binoculars. We decided against it because it was nearing 12 o’ clock and they were hungry and it was very hot. So wala na.”

“They were supposed to look at the birds... with binoculars. We decided against it because it was nearing 12 o’ clock and they were hungry and it was very hot. It was cancelled.”

“Like in the previous times, it suddenly rained so we had to. The idea was for them to go around. So we cannot do that for it was raining. So we had to improvise with something here above and that still makes use of their observation skills. So you have to be creative enough and be flexible.”

From the interview and observation, the practitioners had to ensure the safety of their participants. Activities should not be harmful to the clients as the ethics emphasize the principle of nonmaleficence (Hasbach, 2013; American Counseling Association, 2014; Fisher, 2015; Code of Ethics and Professional Standards for Psychology Practitioners, 2017). The practitioners should not expose their clients to danger because safety is of utmost importance. They need to review the aptness of the tasks or tools they will use considering the time and circumstance (Duncan, 2011). They should heed the advice of nature.

The practitioners disclosed in the interview how they planned their activities.

"Last time there was so many kulo seedlings. Was it kamansi? Kamansi seedlings. So we decided let's teach them how to do the bagging of seedlings, how to dig them." - Mishka

"Last time there was so many breadfruit seedlings. Was it breadnut? Breadnut seedlings. So we decided let's teach them how to do the bagging of seedlings, how to dig them." - Mishka

"It's a good chance for them to learn about planting. So then we do the activity based on what the farm needs, what the farm is experiencing di ba. Like daghan kaayong birds kay nag-bloom man. Nag-fruiting man." - Lee

"It's a good chance for them to learn about planting. So then we do the activity based on what the farm needs, what the farm is experiencing. Like there are a lot of birds because the trees are blooming. It's fruiting season." - Lee

Lee compared this to the practices of people in the past.

"Ining tig-ulan, then magtanum. Ining tig-uga, matulog. So mao na sya."

"During rainy season, you plant. During dry and hot season, you sleep. That's how it is."

The abovementioned accounts prove that nature has a great influence to the activities thought by the practitioners who should be perceptive of the natural environment. Nature should be one of the considerations in the planning of interventions (Gatersleben, 2008) because it has the resources that can really be useful for the therapy (Berger & McLeod, 2006; Burns, 2009; Chalquist, 2009a; Jordan, 2009; Annerstedt & Wahrborg, 2011; Corbett & Milton, 2011; Clatworthy et al., 2013) which a keen practitioner could access and avail. It provides the tools (Hasbach, 2012) as the lahar of Mt. Pinatubo was integrated in Mekenik-Likha Therapy to help people cope with the trauma caused by the eruption of the volcano in 1991 (Gines, 1999). It is necessary, therefore, for the practitioners to assess the suitability and timing of their interventions as well as its challenges and be flexible whenever necessary (Hanrahan, 2016; King & McIntyre, 2018).

A PROCESS FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING ECOTHERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS

With the rising problems in mental health and environment which the world is facing nowadays, ecotherapy offers an alternative solution. Foremost, it recognizes the interconnectedness of human beings and nature and both can benefit from this when reciprocity is developed. In ecotherapy, the client or student is not seen as a separate entity but an integral part of the ecosystem. In order to facilitate the encounter between the two, the tools must be ready which include the user and the setting.

To prepare for the necessary tools as well as planning, implementing and evaluating group activities, the potential users are guided by this framework. Like a

manual, it instructs them step by step on how to proceed with ecotherapy. Unlike others that focus only on the implementation process, the framework clearly guides the interested user from the beginning up to the end of the process. Furthermore, it illustrates how evaluation takes place during the implementation. In this framework, evaluation need not be separate from the implementation.

Through instruction and support services to students, the framework can be applied to school setting. The teachers can utilize it in lesson planning and actual teaching while the guidance counselors can do so in preparing and facilitating activities for group guidance and counseling.

Based on interview and observation, the process framework was developed. It can be used by helping professionals whether psychologists, counselors or teachers who acknowledge the importance of working with nature to assist clients or learners as a group. Nature has always been there and yet many have missed to tap it as a partner either in teaching, counseling or therapy. Before it gets extinct, it is time to bring back the human person close to nature.

This process framework in Figure 2 is very simple. It is composed of three phases: (1) preliminary, (2) planning, and (3) implementation and evaluation phases. This can be used to plan the ecotherapeutic interventions or lessons.

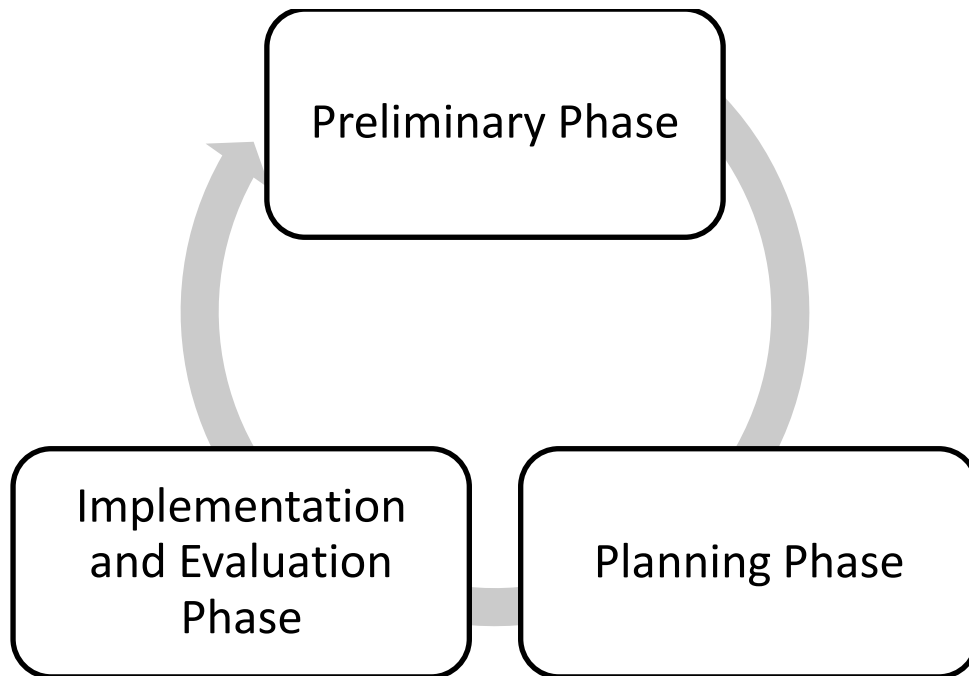


Figure 2. Process Framework for Developing Ecotherapeutic Interventions

Pasi-una na Hugna (Preliminary Phase)

The first phase is the preliminary with three basic steps.

1. **Suhiron ug sinati-on ang kalikupan.** (Explore and experience nature.)

Work on yourself so you can be authentic with your clients and true to your interventions. This means that you need to immerse yourself in nature of your own choice. Embrace and savor its benefits. Appreciate the beauty or positive feeling it gives. In this way, your heart and mind for nature are developed. It enables you to go back to your core and encounter yourself.

2. **Ila-ilahon nimo ang imohang kaugalingon ug padayon sa pagkat-on.** (Know oneself and keep on learning.)

Self-awareness is important. It is a continuous or even an endless journey. Know your beliefs, values and attitudes. Make an inventory of your skills and interests. Never stop learning as you are also your instrument. The more skills or competencies you have, the more creative your interventions will be. The more interesting your interventions will be and the more they will benefit from them.

3. **Paghimo ug pag-amuma sa makatabang na kalikupan.** (Create and nurture a conducive natural environment.)

When you create this kind of environment, a part of it is knowing what is in there and knowing how it can help you in your interventions. Interventions can be planned based on what you can find in that environment. After creating this environment, do not forget to continue to nurture it. However, if creating is not possible, find and get to know one. Evaluate the risks in that place. If it is safe, identify what it can offer.

Pagplano na Hugna (Planning Phase)

The next phase is the planning. It is composed of 2-3 steps depending on whether the ecotherapeutic intervention will be conducted by a single or group of facilitators.

1. **Ila-ilaha ang imohang kliyente ug hibaw-a ang problema.** (Know your clients and identify the problem.)

As the teachers gets to know their learners in the first meeting and the doctor listens to their patients before prescribing the medicine, it is important

that you know your clients. When you plan your interventions, bear them in mind. Know how old they are and if they are able. What do they need? Know what is the problem or issue so you will know what to do to address it. This will direct you to the goal and your interventions.

2. **Planohi ang inyong buhatonon apil ang materyales ug limitasyon sa oras.** (Plan your activities including the materials and time limit.)

The next is to think of the method, strategies or techniques. It is a question of how will you do it. Will it address the needs of your participants? Will it help you achieve your goal? Can your participants do it? Will they enjoy the activities? Are the activities within the interest of your participants? Will they not cause harm to the natural environment? What would be the possible risks to the participants? Consider these questions as you plan your activities. Consider also the weather. You might also need to prepare for alternative activities in anticipation of a change in weather.

Once the activities are planned, prepare the materials needed. Are the materials available? Can they be found in the area? Are they environment friendly? Are they safe? If the answer to any of these questions is no, you might need to think of replacement for these materials or review your activities and revise your plan.

Included in this second step of planning phase is to allot ample time for the different activities. Make sure that the allotted time for each activity is neither too short nor too long to sustain the momentum. In the implementation,

try to start and end on time. If this cannot be done due to inevitable circumstances, be flexible. Make the necessary adjustments with the time.

3. **Igahin ang buhatunon kung na-ay pagpangilabot na buhatonon sa grupo.**

(Assign the activities if the interventions will be conducted by a team instead of a single person.)

If the interventions will be conducted by a team instead of a single person, the planning can be done together and the last step is to assign the different activities to the members of the team based on their competencies or strengths. The participants will have the opportunity to experience different activities under different personalities. This makes the ecotherapy more appealing.

Pagpatuman ug Pagbana-bana na Hugna (Implementation and Evaluation Phase)

This phase consists of implementation and evaluation. For the implementation, there are three steps. As each step of implementation is taken, evaluation takes place through observing the participants. Pay attention to their reactions.

1. **Ipaila-ila ang buhatonon.** (Introduce the activity.)

This is the first step of the third phase. It prepares the clients by giving them an overview of the activity and instructions necessary to carry out the said activity so the clients would be properly guided and know what to expect. The evaluation comes in through questions raised by the clients for clarification or

they can be encouraged to ask if they have any confusion. Their questions reflect whether the instructions are thoroughly explained or not.

2. **Ipasinati sa kliyente ang kalihokan.** (Let your clients experience the activity.)

In this step, the clients are on their own. As they perform the activity, go around and check if they are doing it properly which can be a source of feedback about the appropriateness of the activity. Some of them may need assistance, encouragement or reminders.

3. **Iproseso ang ilahang nasinati.** (Process their experience.)

The last step includes the sharing of the experiences of the clients, their feelings and reflections. Draw out their insights and synthesize their sharing. What they share indicates how effective the activity is in terms of what they have learned.

After the implementation and evaluation phase comes the preliminary phase so the practitioner can be truly authentic and effective.

Chapter 4

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

The whole study including its findings are summarized in this chapter which also contains the limitations, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

Summary of the Study

Based on the premise of interdependence and reciprocity between human beings and nature, and the status of the natural environment, a qualitative study explores the practice of ecotherapy which is anchored on ecopsychology and other theories. Part of this exploration is to describe ecotherapy based on the practice of the research participants and analyze the interplay between nature and the human person in the therapy. To come up with a process framework for developing ecotherapeutic interventions, a semi-structured group interview was conducted with two self-identified nature-based practitioners in the Justice German Lee Jr. Sanctuary in Carcar City, Cebu. They were found through Google search and contacted through Facebook. Some materials and documents related to their practice were accessed through website and Facebook while others were provided by them. Not only did they provide related materials and documents but they allowed the researcher to observe twice how they practice the ecotherapy. In the two sessions, the researcher became a participant along the way and provided manual assistance especially in the distribution and collection of the needed materials for the session. Both sessions were observed and interview were audio-recorded for transcription with the consent from the participants. Data then were

analyzed to extract themes which were sent to the practitioner for validation through email.

Summary of Findings

This study has only three objectives but for the first objective which is to describe ecotherapy based on the practice of the research participants, the following seven themes turned up:

- Ecotherapy is a formal label to an old practice of interacting with nature.
- Ecotherapy is a structured learning experience in nature.
- Ecotherapy involves the head, heart and hands.
- Ecotherapy is multimodal.
- Ecotherapy is guided by the biopsychosocial framework.
- Ecotherapy observes the permaculture ethics, process and principles.
- Ecotherapy incorporates the Buddhist perspective.

The following themes came out to analyze the interplay between nature and the human person in the ecotherapy which is the second objective of the study:

- ground and tree
- Abel and Cain
- temple and believer
- mirror of the soul
- sage and seeker
- diversion of the mind

- wind and sailboat

Finally, an output of this study which is a process framework is created to develop ecotherapeutic interventions. This framework illustrates the following phases which are composed of different steps:

1. Pasi-una na Hugna (Preliminary Phase)
 - a. Suhiron ug sinati-on ang kalikupan. (Explore and experience nature.)
 - b. Ila-ilahon nimo ang imohang kaugalingon ug padayon sa pagkat-on. (Know oneself and keep on learning.)
 - c. Paghimo ug pag-amuma sa makatabang na kalikupan. (Create and nurture a conducive natural environment.)
2. Pagplano na Hugna (Planning Phase)
 - a. Ila-ilaha ang imohang kliyente ug hibaw-a ang problema. (Know your clients and identify the problem.)
 - b. Planohi ang inyong buhatonon apil ang materyales ug limitasyon sa oras. (Plan your activities including the materials and time limit.)
 - c. Igahin ang buhatunon kung na-ay pagpangilabot na buhatonon sa grupo. (Assign the activities if the interventions will be conducted by a team instead of a single person.)
3. Pagpatuman ug Pagbana-bana na Hugna (Implementation and Evaluation Phase)
 - a. Ipaila-ila ang buhatonon. (Introduce the activity.)
 - b. Ipasinati sa kliyente ang kalihokan. (Let your clients experience the activity.)
 - c. Iproseso ang ilahang nasinati. (Process their experience.)

The preliminary phase proceeds after the implementation and evaluation phase as it is the foundation of the entire process.

Limitations

No research is perfect. Each study has its own limitations. One of the limitations of this study is the small number of its research participants which is only two as ecotherapy is a critical case in the country. Another is the search for participants for this study is within Visayas only. Then, only two sessions of ecotherapy were observed due to financial constraints. The other limitation is the researcher's inadequate understanding of Bisaya language spoken by the participants which was remedied by seeking external assistance for appropriate English translation of the transcription. One more possible limitation that may have affected the process and results of the study is the multiple roles played by the researcher when she became one of the participants and somehow provided manual assistance to the practitioners instead of sticking to her role as plain observer.

Implications to Sikolohiyang Pilipino

Although ecotherapy was formally baptized in the West, it is not contradictory to Sikolohiyang Pilipino (SP) which advocates for the indigenization of psychology or the contextualization of foreign psychological theories and concepts (Yacat, 2013; Paredes-Canilao & Babaran-Diaz, 2016). In fact, it is very much relatable because of “kapwa”, “pakikipagkapwa”, and “pakikiisa”. According to Enriquez (as cited in Pe-Pua & Protacio-

Marcelino, 2000), the founder of SP (Paredes-Canilao & Babaran-Diaz, 2016), kapwa is a shared identity with others, and pakikipagkapwa is to treat and respect the other person equally as a human being with dignity whereas pakikiisa is the highest level of interaction with others which means to be one with them.

Ecotherapy implies that the concept, kapwa can be extended to kalikupan (Bisaya term for nature) or kalikasan (Tagalog term for kalikupan) which insinuates that pakikipagkapwa can be applicable in the way Filipinos would relate to kalikasan or kalikupan which has its own value and right. When ako (self) is identified with kalikupan, pakighi-usa (Bisaya term for being one with) or pakikiisa sa kalikasan (Tagalog phrase referring to oneness with nature) is achieved. To see oneself as an individual who is separate from others is not native to Filipinos who are family-oriented or group-oriented (Marcelino, 1990) but largely, an influence of the West (Enriquez, as cited in Yacat, 2013).

As an SLE conducted in and for a group, ecotherapy may be effective with Filipinos because they are more inclined to express and be themselves within a supportive group (Bulatao, as cited in Marcelino, 1990). It denotes that working in and with a group who can be a support system may work best for them.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that nature has triple roles in ecotherapy. Primarily, it is a conducive *setting* for reflection and healing. Besides, it has *resources* that can be applied by the practitioner in the ecotherapy. These first two roles

are passive. However, it can also play an active and more significant role as a *partner* in the process when clients themselves are able to draw insights from their experience or encounter with nature. The implication of these first two roles of nature is that the practitioner is the authority as s/he does the thinking or planning process and intelligently integrate whatever nature freely offers. However, this authority subsides when nature takes over the central role to meet and speak to the clients in ways that neither need nor use words which they alone understand. After which the role of the practitioner resumes to process their experience, reflection, thoughts or feelings. The moment the practitioners collaborate with nature, they acknowledge the fact that nature has equal authority with them or even much greater than theirs.

Since time immemorial, humans interact with nature. Development in economic and technological aspects of society may have caused the separation of the two and ecotherapy is reconnecting the human person back to nature. This connection is integrated in the process of helping the client. The long-forgotten wisdom of healing inherent in this relationship is being revived. The possibilities are unlimited which means there could be many forms of ecotherapy and SLE could just be one. Ecotherapy is a creative work of practitioners that utilizes their competencies or incorporates their interests and reflects their beliefs or worldviews. Whatever way the ecotherapy may be performed, as long as therapeutic outcomes are served and ethics are exercised, is permissible.

However, for the practitioners to develop ecotherapeutic interventions, they primarily need to do their personal work. This internal work includes connecting with

nature, knowing and continuously developing oneself as the self is also instrumental. The external work involves creating and nurturing a conducive natural setting, knowing the clients, and planning the interventions. It takes to work both on the inside and outside, the self and the other to complete the process.

Recommendations

The study recommends that inquiries may be made on other related areas of interest such as formation or transformation of ecotherapy practitioners, lived experience of the recipients of ecotherapy and practitioners, and practices of other ecotherapists.

The process framework may be used by counselors in doing group guidance and counseling. It may not only benefit them, their clients but also the natural environment. This may encourage both practitioners and clients to protect and conserve nature after learning and experiencing its benefits.

Educators may also use the framework wherein learning can be both therapeutic and fun. Learners would have the opportunity to develop self-awareness as well as experience and appreciate nature. Eventually, they would become conscious of their natural environment and their actions in relation to the said environment.

In terms of the limitations of the research procedures, it is recommended that researchers look for more participants as sources of data and conduct more observations. The data may have been varied, richer or thicker than what is gathered and analyzed if there are more participants and more observations. In relation to

observation as method of data collection, the role of the observer should be clear from the start. Lastly, keeping a reflexive journal throughout the research process would be beneficial especially for the researchers as it gives them the opportunity to verbalize what they go through in the process from a subjective perspective. For the readers, it would help them understand the inner world of the researchers and how this could influence the process especially the findings.

Chapter 5

The Experience

The Encounter with the Person

Knowing Lee has been a turning point in my life. She is so enlightening who lives true to what she believes in. She has so much passion in what she does that she doesn't care if she gets the attention or recognition for what she does. She truly understands the essence of life and is living a meaningful life. Her mission is to share to others what she is capable of, what she is blessed with. I am completely moved by her gesture when she accommodated me in the sanctuary and gave me a room to stay for free. Including the food I ate was free. She was even the one preparing our food. Aside from those, she advised me to bring home her books which were very helpful. She also drove me from and to Carcar. Her generosity inspired me to do the same in a way I could. Paying forward is the best way I could thank her for everything. She is creating an impact to the world by inspiring others including me with her example. I feel it is now my responsibility to join her to continue and spread the ripples as we all have a role to play to make this world humane. She made me realize that before we physically get united with the earth, it is important that we are able to live a life with purpose.

Truly her life has been inspired by nature who abundantly gives. In the sanctuary, they observe how the ecosystem works where organisms mutually benefit from each other. They don't accept monetary exchange. Instead, one can donate something that the sanctuary needs or anything they can also share with others who are in need. It never goes to them as they also have hotel business that can support their needs.

It is not only Lee who is kindhearted but also her brother and her mother. It was her brother who volunteered to drive me back to Carcar in the second time. Her mother who was in her old age, on the other hand, was the one who brought the veggies in the morning to be planted by the client participants in the garden later in the afternoon. Her mother even got out of her room to bid me goodbye and give me a copy of prayers to say every day as she is a pious woman. Their family is very supportive of each other.

Aside from being generous, Lee is humble without a slightest tinge of arrogance when she can even boast the two master's degrees she earned abroad. She even cared to listen to me. She modestly asked me for my experience as participant, my thoughts and suggestions on how she could further improve which struck me. Additionally, she just considers herself a mere weaver who finds opportunities for others to share and learn at the same time. She does not give the credit to herself. In fact, she refuses it. What she finds rewarding is to see that others are learning from the experience of sharing their time, knowledge, skills and whatever they could.

She can also be described as a free-spirited person. She is not confined to teaching and when she travels abroad, she goes to places to learn more about the place and the culture, not simply for leisure. She loves to do different things and learn new things which enhances her creativity. She is a great reminder of how important it is to be oneself instead of being so conscious or fearful of critics. One needs to affirm the self to have the courage to create, do his/her own ecotherapeutic work and continue with passion. It is our own unique person that defines our work and our work becomes our fingerprint. The fingerprint is much more important than what the fingers can hold. The

materialistic world tells us that in order to survive and become successful we need to compete with each other and constantly be better than others for success has been defined by achievements, power, money and fame. This pressure has removed our heart and soul that we forget to treat and appreciate each other as a person. Instead, we begin to see each other as a competitor that we envy and destroy if we could not exceed the other. Our capacity to contribute as a person no matter how small has been undermined because one has to perform according to the standards of his/her profession and make money which boosts the self-esteem when as human beings, we already have an inherent worth like the rest of nature created by God.

Meeting Lee, the enlightened person that she is, seems surreal. For a reason, God led me to the right person. I met the person I need to become, one who is not preoccupied with herself but sees others. To make sense of life that is only passing, the constant challenge for me is to rise above myself because one's existence is not for oneself but for others. It is a calling to be somebody that the world needs in the real sense.

Learning from the Veteran

Not only for research, Lee is gradually introducing me to her practice. She is offering me the opportunity to learn by involving me in their activities. Unfortunately, it did not come full-blown as I wasn't able to experience planning, facilitating the activities and processing the experience of the client participants. For anyone interested of doing it, the primary and major work is the self which takes time. I had the experience of

getting close to a big dog in the sanctuary. That dog is Sunny, a Golden Retriever. His size is so threatening that I needed to compose myself every time he came near me especially when he can see and smell the food I was holding. His size may be scary but he's harmless. When I got home, I took an effort to connect with the dogs of my brother who is a dog lover.

Other than getting close to a dog, I had the chance to do gardening which I was doing long time ago when I was in elementary. Gardening for an hour made me perspire. It was like an exercise. I felt cleansed, refreshed and lighter. I enjoyed it though I didn't appreciate the activity at first.

Finding Lee confirmed that I am not alone and I am pursuing the right path. However, comparing myself to her, I am still too far behind for I still need to prepare and green my primary tool, myself. It is about time to heed the call of nature and counseling to bridge the gap between the person and his/her home which is called nature.

The Lens of the Observer

To conduct the ecotherapy alone is very possible. However, it is tiring since one has to do everything. With the assistance of the co-facilitator, it is much easier. The hours spent in the sanctuary never seemed to get wasted as Saturday is always fully packed with activities which the participants got used to. There was a time when they even wanted to do more.

Listening to the sharing of the participants, I was amazed by their reflections and insights though not all. I did not anticipate to hear some of those considering the young age of the participants. As an observer, I was in awe for some were remarkably deep.

Regarding the place, the sanctuary is a perfect home where one can experience peace and solace as s/he is surrounded with green and gets comforted by the sounds of the birds and crickets. It is the best place for healing and reflection far from the noise, hustle and bustle of an urban life. It is a place anyone can easily get attached to and look forward going to.

The Concerns of the Researcher

The first thing that a researcher needs is to establish rapport with the participants. Building rapport with Lee and Mishka was not difficult since they are very friendly and accommodating but my struggle was within as I constantly needed to conquer my introversion every meeting.

Moreover, there were moments when I was not prepared to take in everything as too many things took place. I got overwhelmed that sometimes I felt disoriented as if my mind was drifting apart from my body. I had to constantly changed my gear from being a researcher to being a participant and vice versa and that was one source of my discomfort. Other reasons could possibly be the long exhausting hours of travel from my home province to Cebu and the time pressure to catch up a ferry back to my home. Yet it is worth all the sacrifices that were made.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Guide

Code Name: _____ Date: _____ Location: _____

Demographic Questions
1. What is your educational qualification? 1.1. Bachelor's 1.2. Masters 1.3. Doctoral 1.4. Other relevant training you attended relevant to counseling/therapy
2. What license do you have in relation to the practice of counseling/therapy?
3. How many years are you in this practice?
4. What professional organizations relevant to your practice are you affiliated with?
5. In counseling/psychology, what is your specific specialization?
6. How about specific theoretical orientation?
7. What is your advocacy? What group are you associated with that shares your advocacy?
8. What is your job? Where do you work?
Questions Related to Experience/Practice with Nature
1. Based on your experience, how will you describe the use of nature in your practice?
2. How did you get to know this practice? What made you shift? What adjustments have you made as practitioner? Since when have you been practicing it?
3. What do you call this practice? If you were to personally label this practice, what would that be?

4. What are the essential elements or ingredients of this practice?
5. What principles are observed in this practice?
6. What are the procedures/steps do you follow?
7. Where do you usually do it? If it is outdoor, how do you exactly do it? How about if it is indoor?
8. What do you call each technique/strategy you use?
9. What is your indicator that your practice, technique or strategy is effective?
10. What role do you play in dealing with clients using nature?
11. How many of your clients can you remember received this kind of treatment? What is your basis for using it with them?
12. What makes your practice or technique unique from other practitioners who are also using nature? What technique or strategy have you personally developed? Please describe.
13. What do you like most about this practice? What insights do you want to share to other practitioners who have not yet explored the use and role of nature in their practice?
14. What other things would you like to add or share with me which I miss to ask and which you think is also important?

Appendix B

Letter of Invitation

February 18, 2019

Miss Maria Edna Carolina Lee
Co-Founder
Psychology Volunteers on Bikes

Dear Miss Lee,

Greetings!

I am a graduate student at Philippine Normal University, Manila and currently writing my paper entitled, "Ecotherapeutic Interventions for Psychological Wellbeing" with the following objectives:

1. Describe the participant's/participants' understanding of the use of nature in the therapy.
2. Describe the practices of ecotherapy.
3. Develop a model for ecotherapeutic interventions for psychological wellbeing.

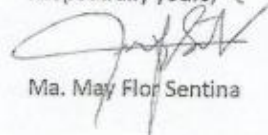
With permission from practitioners of ecotherapy, I plan to interview and observe them and analyze documents/materials relevant to this practice. The anonymity of the identity of the participants will be observed and the data that will be gathered will be returned to them to check its accuracy.

Among the different campuses of Philippine Normal University, the one in Cadiz City, Negros Occidental where I am employed is tagged as the Environment and Green Technology Education Hub. There are people in charge of developing a green curriculum. On my part, I wish to contribute by promoting ecotherapy so people would appreciate the role of nature to their wellbeing and learn to identify with it. Hopefully, they would also learn to be conscious of their behavior towards the environment. Through this paper, I hope we can popularize the practice of ecotherapy with the end view of restoring the environment and making the world better.

It is my prayer that you and the rest of the group will accept my sincere invitation to participate in my study as the practice of ecotherapy in our country is uncommon. Please let me know how you want me to contribute to the advocacy.

Thank you so much and God bless!

Respectfully yours,



Ma. May Flor Sentina

Noted:



Dr. Teresita T. Rungduin
Adviser

Appendix C

Letter of Consent/Conforme

Letter of Interest and Consent (for Practitioner)

Dear Participant,

The undersigned is currently enrolled in dissertation writing leading to a doctorate degree in Philosophy major in Guidance and Counseling at Philippine Normal University. In this connection, I am respectfully inviting you as participant in my study entitled, "Ecotherapeutic Interventions for Psychological Well-being" which I hope to finish before the end of the year. The following are the specific objectives:

1. Describe the participants'/participant's understanding of how nature is used.
2. Describe their practice of ecotherapy.
3. Develop a model for ecotherapeutic interventions for psychological wellbeing.

In giving your consent to participate, please be aware of the following:

1. The interview will be conducted at your convenient time, audio-recorded and should not exceed two hours if possible. Follow-up interviews will be conducted when necessary.
2. If given the opportunity to observe your practice with clients, their consent or their parents, if they are minor, will be obtained. Audio-recording and notetaking will be used.
3. Photos of the location and materials used will be taken.
4. All notes or files will be transferred to a computer with password and completely deleted or safely disposed when research is completed.
5. After collecting the data, you will be given the results of the interview and analysis. Feel free to make the necessary comments.
6. The challenges that you may encounter in this study is to share your personal experience. You may also get tired during the interview for which you can ask for a break.
7. In the presentation or publication of the results, you have the option to be identified by your real or code name while the name of your client/s will be coded.

8. Though no monetary incentive will be given, your participation in this study would be contributory to the enrichment of the field and sustainability of the environment of both present and next generation.

I hope to gain your consent and have an interview with you. Further assistance you can provide to this study is most welcome. You can reach me via email, sentina.mmv@pnu.edu.ph.

Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully,


MA. MAY FLOR V. SENTINA
Researcher

Conforme

This is to signify that I have understood the purpose of the study and the role of the researcher. I am freely expressing my consent and willingness to participate in this study provided that my role and right as participant are respected.




Signature over Printed Name

9/28/19
Date

Letter of Interest and Consent
(for Parent/s or Guardian/s of Minor Clients)

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The undersigned is currently enrolled in dissertation writing leading to a doctorate degree in Philosophy major in Guidance and Counseling at Philippine Normal University. The title of my study is Ecotherapeutic Interventions for Psychological Well-being. I will be doing interviews with the practitioner, observation of their practice and analysis of available and relevant documents in order to answer the following specific objectives:

1. Describe the participants'/participant's understanding of how nature is used.
2. Describe their practice of ecotherapy.
3. Develop a model for ecotherapeutic interventions for psychological wellbeing.

In giving your consent as parent/s or guardian/s for the child to be observed with his/her psychologist/counselor, please be aware of the following:

1. His/her session with his/her psychologist/counselor will be audio-recorded. The researcher may be writing notes in the periphery and will not interfere with his/her session.
2. In the process of recording and presentation of the results, a code name for your child will be used to protect his/her identity.
3. All notes or files will be transferred to a computer with password and completely deleted or safely disposed when research is completed.
4. Giving your consent as parent/s or guardian/s for your child to be observed with his/her psychologist/counselor does not entail any monetary incentive. However, with your consent, you can contribute to the enrichment of the field of counseling and psychology as well as to the sustainability of your environment and the child's.

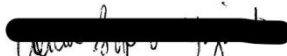
Thank you for your attention. I hope to have gained your consent as parent/s or guardian/s. Further assistance you can provide to this study is most welcome. You can reach me via email, sentina.mmv@pnu.edu.ph.

Respectfully,

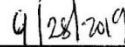
MA. MAY FLOR V. SENTINA
Researcher

Conforme

This is to signify that I/we have understood the purpose of the study and the role of the researcher. I am/we are freely expressing our consent and willingness to involve my child in this study provided that my/our role and right as parent/s and that of my child are respected.




Signature over Printed Name



Date

 PHILIPPINE NORMAL UNIVERSITY The National Center for Teacher Education Taft Ave. Cor. Ayala Blvd., Ermita, Manila 1000 Philippines Trunkline: +63-2-317-1768 local: 539 ▲ gradres.cgster@pnu.edu.ph ▲ www.pnu.edu.ph		Reference No.	PNU-MN-2017-GRO-FM-012
		Issue No.	00
		Rev. No.	03
		Date:	09/23/2020
		Page	1 / 2
GRO	Revision Oral Defense Summary of Comments	DC. No.	CC09232020-1165

Student: SENTINA, MA. MAY FLOR
Program: Ph. D. Guidance and Counseling
Date of Final Oral Defense: August 18, 2020

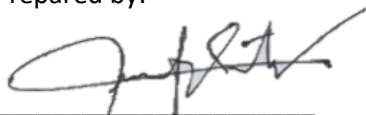
Comments/Suggestions/ Recommendations	Action Taken	Page no. reflecting the changes done	Panelists who Suggested
Identify the criteria for selecting the participants.	/	pp. 42 - 44	Dr. Abulon
Documentary analysis and observation should be reflected on results.	/	pp. 49 - 103	Dr. Abulon
Identify the implications to Sikolohiyang Pilipino and place it before conclusion.	/	pp. 113 - 114	Dr. Abulon
Replace model in the title with process framework.	/	Title Page	Dr. Abulon Dr. Perez
Describe the profile of research participants and their participants.	/	pp. 42 - 44	Dr. Gines
Discuss how data analysis and validation were done.	/	p. 46, p. 47	Dr. Gines
Discuss case study.	/	pp. 40 - 41	Dr. Gines
Use APA 6 th edition of citation.	/	pp. 1 - 37	Dr. Gines
Rearrange the problems in this order. 1. Ecotherapy 2. Interplay between nature and the human person 3. Process framework of ecotherapeutic interventions	/	p. 38	Dr. Gines
Include reflexivity or personal insights.	/	pp. 118 - 122	Dr. Perez
Divide the process into phases and merge some steps.	/	pp. 103 - 109	Dr. Perez
Include in the problem the interplay between nature and the human person.	/	p. 38	Dr. Perez Dr. Marasigan



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		Date:	09/23/2020
		Page	2 / 2
GRO	Revision Oral Defense Summary of Comments	DC. No.	CC09232020-1165

Prepared by:



Signature of the Student

Certified Correct by:

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Adviser

ADELAIDA C. GINES, Ph.D.

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Panelist

HECTOR M. PEREZ, Ph.D.

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Panelist

EDNA LUZ R. ABULON, Ph.D.

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Panelist

ARLYNE C. MARASIGAN, Ph.D.

Director/Chairperson



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