



Philippine Normal University
National Center for Teacher Education

**LETTING GO (PAGPAPALAYA)
AMONG SCHOOL HELPING PROFESSIONALS:
A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

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Narratives are fundamental elements to human life because these transpire the essence of every individual's unique lived experiences. Being human, we are noted to be meaning-making creature; we look at the object and see its meaning. As a helping professional, I have been privileged to hear stories of lives lived and to listen to the meaningful moments experienced. Often the term to "let go" or "letting go" has been used religiously, but the meaning of the experience remains diffuse and unexplored. The aim of this study was to understand the meaning of experience, to discover and describe the structure and essence of the phenomenon of letting go, and to contribute to knowledge in the field of guidance and counseling. Specifically, this sought to do the following: (1) document the lived experiences among school helping professionals undergoing trauma before letting go, (2) describe the process of difficulty of letting go, and (3) develop a therapeutic model of letting go among school helping professionals who have had handling difficulty.



The qualitative approach was used to understand the phenomenon of letting go among school helping professionals' letting go or **pagpapalaya**; thus, it attempted to describe and understand human experience, highlighting participants' spoken words and exploring the nature and essence of individual experiences (Patton, 2002). Specifically, the in-depth interview was used to draw the lived experiences and the ways experiences are understood to develop a worldview of **pagpapalaya**. As a researcher, I allowed myself to unlearn and free from any form of belief, followed by reviewing the transcription and field notes which were all taken from the in-depth interview from the participants. At the end of each reflective narratives presented by my participants, I acquired the thematic reflections as a result of the in-depth interview using Moustakas' (1994) Phenomenological Reduction and Imaginative Variation. A non-random sampling technique was employed, specifically the purposive sampling technique through snowball approach.

The eidetic insights brought by the twelve (12) participants during the in-depth interview led me to gain themes which were fundamental to the study of letting go or **pagpapalaya**. These comprise of Domain 1 (**Documented Trauma**): *Giving proof on the trauma* brought important insights regarding *surfacing the distress* (Theme 1) and *essential sources of their traumas* (Theme 2). Consequently, Domain 2 (**Difficulty**): *Introspecting the difficulty letting go* contained details of their difficulty letting go or **pagpapalaya** in the areas of cognitive, affective, actions, as well as of spiritual domain. All the participants tried to re-collect (Theme 3), affirm sentiments (Theme 4), show bodily impact



(Theme 5), and exclaim for spiritual assistance (Theme 6). It focused on the difficulty handling trauma which they expressed in their in-depth interview. Domain 3 **(Therapeutic)**: *Life changing lessons and hope of letting go or **pagpapalaya*** presented SPACE to all the participants' hope and total letting go. This served as the communal process of awareness (Theme 7), handling patterns (Theme 8), and its SPACE (Theme 9). All the twelve (12) participants extracted the essential core - SPACE which was vital to give way to the culturally-rooted therapeutic model of letting go or **pagpapalaya** among the Filipino school helping professionals.

The results of this study also included positive aspects of change which took place while engaging with the participants. Although, it implies that no single person can be spared with trauma, the culturally-rooted therapeutic model can help in bringing synchronicity among the four (4) dimensions of letting go process. Therefore, there is a need to develop and implement a culturally-rooted and competent program to support school helping professionals, especially those with difficulty letting go.



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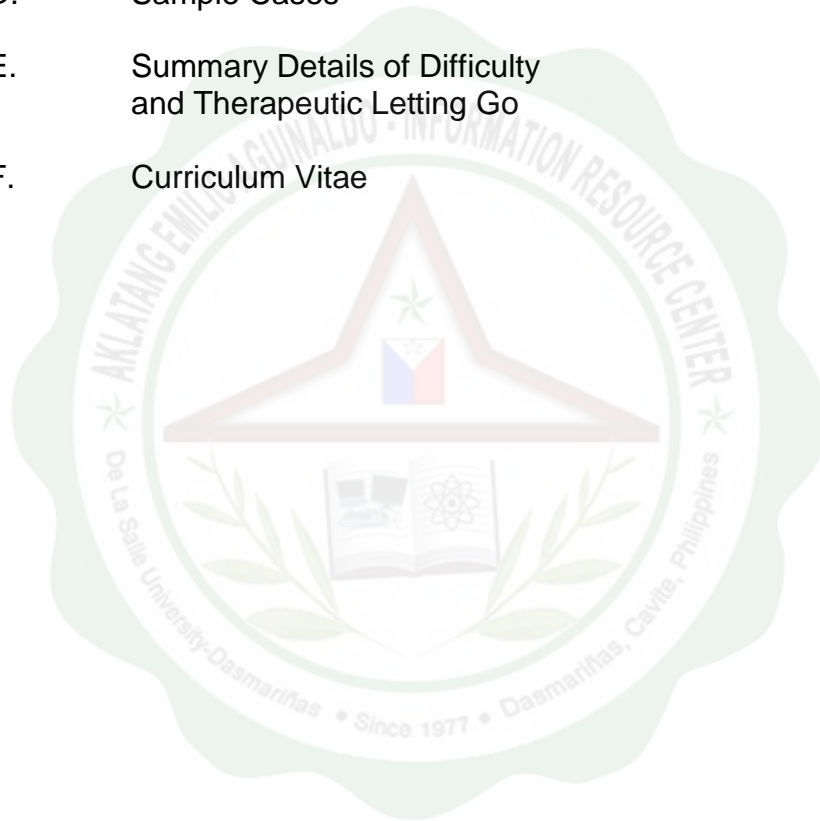


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