

The Social Enterprise as an Alternative Work Option for Persons with Developmental
Disabilities: A Case Study of Staff Perspectives at Common Ground Co-operative

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Abstract

Traditional employment options for persons with developmental disabilities are lacking. Employment options available for persons with developmental disabilities are reflective of the medical and social model perspectives of disability; with segregated and supported employment reinforcing the idea that persons with developmental disabilities are incapable and competitive employment missing the necessary accommodations for persons to be successful. This study examined social enterprises as an alternative employment option that can balance both medical and social model perspectives by accommodating for weaknesses or limitations and recognizing the strengths and capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities in the workplace. Moreover, this study is part of a broader case study which is examining the nature and impacts of a social enterprise, known as Common Ground Co-operative (CGC), which supports five social purpose businesses that are owned and operated by persons with developmental disabilities. This study is part of the Social Business and Marginalized Social Groups Community-University Research Alliance. To date, a case study has been written describing the nature and impacts of CGC and its related businesses from the perspectives of the Partners, board members, funders and staff (Owen, Readhead, Bishop, Hope & Campbell, in press & Readhead, 2012). The current study used a descriptive case study approach to provide a detailed account of the perceptions and opinions of CGC staff members who support each of the Partners in the five related businesses. Staff members were chosen for the focus of this study because of the integral role that they play in the successful outcomes of the persons they support. This study was conducted in two phases. In the first phase five staff members were interviewed. During this stage of interviews, several themes were presented which needed to be examined in further detail, specifically staff stress and burnout and duty of care for business Partners versus the

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promotion of their autonomy. A second phase of interviews was then conducted with one individual participant and a focus group of seven. During both interview phases, Staff participants described an employment model that creates a non-judgemental environment for the business Partners that promotes their strengths, accommodates for their limitations, provides educational opportunities and places the responsibility for the businesses on the persons with developmental disabilities cultivating equality and promoting independence. Staff described the nature of their role including risk factors for stress, the protective factors that buffer stress, and the challenges associated with balancing many role demands. Issues related to the replication of this social enterprise model are described.

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Introduction

Developmental disability as a concept is ill defined, with no universally accepted global definition (Owen & MacFarland, 2002). Additionally, predominant definitions are often based on the deficiency model, suggesting that persons with disabilities are incapable or lacking. With definitions comes meaning and with meaning comes acceptance or rejection (Linton, 2010). To date, the definitions of disability are inadequate, leading to stigma and discrimination of this population within all aspects of their lives. The definitions of disability are largely based on the perceptions that are encouraged by certain hegemonic structures towards this population (Linton, 2010).

The medical model and social model perspectives have been used to account for the accompanying stigma and discrimination surrounding the definition and perceptions of disability (Rothman, 2010). These perspectives represent a stark dichotomy, with the medical model representing persons with disabilities as being broken and deficient and social model perspectives supporting the notion that disability is created by society placing disabling limitations on this population. Definitions and the meanings behind disability have been established by hegemonic structures, where perceptions of disability have been formed and reinforced through a long standing history of abuse and maltreatment.

Although recent changes have been made to policies and federal laws to support human rights and equal treatment for this population, there is still more to be done. Employment is both a human right and an integral determinant of quality of life for persons with or without disabilities (Barisin, Benjak, & Vuletić, 2011). However, regardless of the recent push towards successful employment outcomes for persons with developmental disabilities, the reality and current employment picture for this population is bleak (Timmons, Hall, Bose, Wolfe, and

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Winsor ,2011). The history of employment for persons with developmental disabilities is fairly young; however, treatment within the employment sector parallels the history of treatment for persons with developmental disabilities in general. Traditional forms of employment include segregated, integrated, and competitive employment, each of which reinforces the already predominant perceptions, creating stigma and discrimination. Moreover, a review of the primary barriers related to poor employment outcomes for persons with disabilities leads to the conclusion that many of the barriers faced by this population are reinforced by both the medical and social model perspectives, once again reinforcing stigma and discrimination towards this population.

Social enterprises are an alternative employment option, with substantial support from the economic, education, and non-profit sectors (Lambrou & Petrescu, 2012; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). With Social enterprises focused on promoting both social/environmental and financial gains, they are an alternative employment option that can assist in changing the perceptions of persons with developmental disabilities in the workplace. However, research and literature on social enterprises for persons with developmental disabilities is sparse. This study is part of a broader case study which is examining the nature and impacts of Common Ground Co-operative (CGC), a social enterprise that supports five social purpose businesses that are owned and operated by persons with developmental disabilities. To date, a case study has been written examining the nature and impacts of CGC from the perspectives of the Partners and a chapter discussing the nature and impacts of CGC from the perspectives of the Partners, board members, funders and staff (Owen, Readhead, Bishop, Hope & Campbell, in press.; Readhead, 2012). Preliminary analyses of the staff results from this study were included in that chapter. The focus of this study is to describe in detail the nature and impacts of CGC from the perspective of its

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staff members. With a recent emphasis on the influence of staff involvement in supporting successful employment outcomes, staff members have been chosen as the focus for this study.

The importance of staff involvement in supporting these enterprises and factors associated with influencing the quality of staff support are discussed.

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Literature Review

Developmental Disability Defined

There is no single, global definition that is used to describe developmental disability. Some definitions are derived for medical purposes, some from advocates, some for the purposes of policy creation and revision and others that have been developed because of advances in research (Owen & MacFarland, 2002). The American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disability (AAIDD) defines intellectual/developmental disability as being “characterized by significant limitation in both intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. The disability originates before the age of 18” (AAIDD, 2013). More specifically, AAIDD describes intellectual functioning for persons with developmental disabilities as limitations in mental capacity which may affect problem solving, learning or reasoning. Persons with developmental disabilities are found to be limited in intellectual functioning if their Intelligence Quotient (IQ) scores are below 75. Deficits in adaptive behaviour are found in conceptual (e.g., language or letter concepts), social (e.g., interpersonal) and practical (e.g., daily living) skills. Those with developmental disabilities have limitations in at least one of these areas, but may experience deficits in all three.

Developmental disability has also been defined by the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act and noted in Anctil and Degeneffe (2003) as:

A severe, chronic disability of a person which is: (a) attributable to a mental or physical impairment;(b) is manifested before age 22; (c) is likely to continue indefinitely;(d) results in substantial functional limitations in three or more of the following areas of life activity: (1) self-care, (2) receptive and expressive language, (3) learning, (4) mobility, (5) self direction, (6) capacity for independent living, (7) economic self-sufficiency, and,

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(8) reflects the person's need for a combination and sequence of special interdisciplinary or generic care, treatment or other services, which are lifelong or of extended duration and are individually planned and coordinated (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999, p.17).

Simply put, and focused more on the overall impact of disability, developmental disability has been defined by researchers and advocates Isaac, Raja, and Ramanan (2007) as “long-term impairment leading to social and economic disadvantages, denial of rights, and limited opportunities to play an equal part in the life of the community” (p. 627). Although Isaac et al. (2007) place more emphasis on the overall impact of disability, the definition itself, much like the others described above, is focused on the “impairment” of disability. This view of disability is often associated with the theoretical underpinning of disability as a medical condition, which is referred to by theorists as a medical model perspective (Rothman, 2010).

Rothman (2010) discusses the social construction of disability from the medical model perspective, emphasizing that disability is defined by impairments that are compared to “norms” which cannot be fixed through assistive devices, treatment, surgery, or others means. Furthermore, Rothman highlights that the medical model perspective of disability has the greatest impact on social services, with medical professionals acting as gatekeepers to services, ensuring the dependency of persons with disabilities on the systems that support them. Other theorists, primarily in the field of critical disability studies, have proposed that disability is socially constructed.

Proponents of the social theory suggest that disability is the product of a person's environment. As stated by Harlan and Robert (1998), a number of scholars have been involved in the development of a social theory of disability, emphasizing that disability is not an

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individual impairment, as described by the medical model, but an outcome of societal attitudes, social systems, and institutions (Rothman, 2010; Harlan & Robert, 1998; Wendell, 1996).

Rothman (2010) describes disability from a social theory perspective when she states that “disabilities are caused by the way in which society is structured—access, stereotypes, conceptions of ‘normal,’ and ideas about difference and capacity are all defined by, and grounded in, the social order” (p. 195). This theory opposes the medical model perspective on disability with the belief that an emphasis on “deficits” creates an attitude toward disability which enables hegemonic structures to further discriminate against those with disabilities (Harlan & Robert, 1998). The medical model focuses on a person’s deficits, locus of change, and effort made to “fit” into society, whereas the social model focuses on society and the changes that need to be made in social structures and perceptions.

Wendell (1996) discusses several social factors that account for and reinforce the social construction of disability. The factors that are of particular interest to this research project which will be discussed in further detail below include the following: the pace of life, the expectations of individual productivity, the physical structure and social organization of society, the split between public and private worlds, the failure to give people the level and kind of help they need to participate fully in major aspects of life, and failure and unwillingness to create ability amongst people who do not fit the physical and mental profiles of the “paradigm” citizen. First and foremost, Wendell proposes that the pace of life within a person’s society separates those with disabilities and those without, suggesting that those without disabilities take this pace of life for granted, while those with disabilities are extremely aware of how pace of life can marginalize them or threatens to marginalize them. Pace of life can have an effect on a person’s physical

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body, in terms of further damage in the form of accidents, neglect of needs and incidents of illness.

Furthermore, Wendell (1996) notes that when a society's pace of life increases, so do the expectations that society holds of a person's individual performance. With this increase in pace of life, fewer people are able to meet the expectations of a "normal" performance. As suggested by Wendell, the pace of life and expectations of performance set by a person's society can make "work, recreational, community and social activities inaccessible" (p. 38). This idea of expectations of performance relates heavily to work in the form of individual productivity. As stated by Wendell, expectations of individual productivity can contribute to disability, by creating a perception that those who are not able to meet those expectations are unemployable. Moreover, Wendell proposes that those who are not able to perform tasks on their own can further exacerbate this misconception that persons with disabilities are incapable and not able to meet individual expectations.

Wendell (1996) also discusses the physical and social structure of society as influencing the construction of disability. More specifically, she notes that physical environments and architectural flaws create obstacles that affect a person's individual productivity. Moreover, these architectural flaws and physical obstacles split persons with and without disabilities into two separate worlds, public and private, which reinforces the notion that disability is a private matter and that those with disabilities do not belong in the public world. This notion of public and private worlds is reflected in the traditional employment options that are provided to persons with developmental disabilities with both supported and competitive options providing few opportunities for persons to fully participate in society. This is further exacerbated by the failure of society to provide persons with disabilities the level and type of support that is required in

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order for them to fully participate in the public world. Wendell provides examples of these barriers including the inaccessible nature of the transit systems and rigid policies related to social assistance.

Furthermore, Wendell (1996) notes that when help is not readily provided, persons with disabilities are required to seek this help and as such are viewed by society as socially dependent, in turn leading persons to be viewed as helpless and incapable. This leads to Wendell's point about society being unwilling to provide supports that will create ability among persons with disabilities who do not fit this ideal of the paradigm citizen who is able to keep up to the pace of life and meet individual expectations. As such, Wendell notes:

Failures of social support for people with disabilities result in inadequate rehabilitation, unemployment, poverty, inadequate personal and medical care, poor communication services, inadequate training and education, poor protection from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, minimal opportunities for social learning and interaction and many other disabling situations that hurt people with disabilities and exclude them from participation in major aspects of life in their societies. (p. 41)

Interestingly and directly related to employment, Wendell (1996) suggests that this unwillingness to support a person's abilities relates to "irrational rules governing insurance benefits and social assistance" (p. 41). Wendell supports this notion with an example of social assistance benefits (Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)) as contributing to unemployment among persons with disabilities. More specifically, she notes that the belief that social assistance should be less than what a person can earn from being employed in the competitive labour market is being advertised as an incentive for those with disabilities to work. However, the rates provided by social assistance benefits are below poverty level, which further

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influences a person's ability to afford basic necessities (such as medicine, personal care, or technological devices), let alone the income that would provide access to other activities that may lead to a decent life, such as education, training, transportation, or clothing.

When examining the history of treatment for persons with developmental disabilities, and the current state of their employment, it becomes clear that both the medical model and social model perspectives are reflected in the current systems of employment, with both contributing to social attitudes that may be influencing the already predominant discrimination and marginalization seen amongst this population. A discussion of the history of persons with developmental disabilities is needed to appreciate and better understand how the definitions of disability have developed and contribute to the social construction of disability.

Recent History of Human Rights and Persons with Developmental Disabilities

Disability is socially constructed. As such, a history of the treatment of persons with disabilities is required to fully understand the perceptions and attitudes towards disabilities. As stated by Wa Munyi (2012), "while throughout the world many changes have taken place in status and treatment of persons with disabilities, the remnants of tradition and past belief influence present-day practices affecting such group [*sic*]" (p. 16). In the late 1800s "eugenic societies were established in most Western countries" (Grue, 2010, p. 34). The eugenics movement was established out of fear of "disability" and led to mass sterilization of all persons with developmental disabilities. As discussed by Grue (2010), mass sterilization was performed on both children and adults with disabilities as a means to stop the procreation of the "hereditarily unfit" (p.33). This eugenics movement continued, with sterilization being routinely conducted into the 1940s. During this time, persons with developmental disabilities were not only sterilized but were also involuntary euthanized as a means to remove all persons who were

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not “hereditarily fit” and to improve the “human stock” (Grue, 2010, p. 35). At its peak, the eugenics movement resulted in 90,000 deaths between the late 1930s to the early 1940s (Schreerenberger, 1983).

In the 1950s, persons with developmental disabilities continued to be isolated from society with limited access to both their families and to educational systems (Schreerenberger, 1983). At this time, persons with developmental disabilities were housed in large institutions where the treatment was described as cruel and persons with developmental disabilities were subjected to many forms of abuse, unequal treatment, and unusual punishment (Griffiths, Owen, Gosse, & Stoner, 2003).

The 1960s brought positive change for persons with developmental disabilities, with the implementation of the community living movement. This movement focused on integrating persons with developmental disabilities into the broader community by moving persons away from the larger institutions and placing them within the community in “nursing homes, private group homes, and smaller, institution like residential facilities” (Owen et al., 2003, p. 45).

In the 1970s, a push was made towards normalization. This movement sought to change the way in which people support persons with disabilities by providing universal guiding principles, which “enable, establish, and/or maintain valued social roles for people” (Wolfensberger & Tullman, 1982, p. 131). Normalization, as discussed by Wolfensberger and Tullman (1982), is a means to change community perceptions of persons with developmental disabilities by promoting the social roles of persons with developmental disabilities as socially valued as opposed to deviant. Normalization assumes that by changing the perception of social roles and promoting them to be socially valued, not only would the views toward this population change from being negative and deviant to positive and accepting, but the needs and wants of

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this devalued population would become respected and met. This movement generated the creation and implementation of many programs to increase “community-based education, recreation, employment, and even friendships” (Owen et al., 2003, p. 45). To date, Wolfensberger (2011) has developed the term “social role valorization” to address the misuse or misunderstanding that has accompanied the principle of normalization. Social role valorization, as a principle, was developed to honour the ideals found within the principles of normalization with an emphasis on the two main objectives of normalization. Wolfensberger (2011) notes that the main objectives of social role valorization include the “creation, support, and defense of valued social roles for people who are at risk of social devaluation” (p. 435) and an action plan to reduce the stigma associated with devalued roles and to change societal perceptions of those who are devalued. Social role valorization as a concept and principle is currently behind many of the changes undertaken within the social services systems for persons with developmental disabilities.

In 1982, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was developed and implemented across Canada. This Charter was aimed at improving and protecting the rights of all Canadian citizens, and included equal protection under the law for all Canadian citizens regardless of nationality, ethnicity, colour, sex, creed, age, race, or disability (Owen et al., 2003). Although great strides have been made in the protection and advocacy for persons with developmental disabilities, there is still much to be done. Persons with developmental disabilities still frequently experience limitations and restrictions in areas of living, such as the right to privacy, freedom, and equality (Owen et al., 2003).

Persons with developmental disabilities belong to one of the most marginalized groups in society, with a history of abuse and maltreatment that is undisputable. This statement is well

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supported when examining the history of persons with developmental disabilities. A synopsis of the history of treatment for persons with developmental disabilities is clearly and eloquently addressed by Griffiths et al. (2003):

Historically, persons with intellectual disabilities have been denied the right to live in the community, marry, procreate, work, receive an education, and, in some cases, to receive life-saving medical treatment. They have been subjected to incarceration, sterilization, overmedication, and cruel or unusual punishment. (pp. 25-26)

In conclusion, history has shown that the perceptions of persons with disabilities as being deviant or evil have prevailed, creating stigma which continues to discriminate against this population in all areas of their life. As stated by Wa Munyi (2012) “societal attitudes are significant since they largely determine the extent to which the personal, social, educational, and psychological needs of persons with disabilities will be realized” (p. 16). This is further supported by Linton (1998), who suggests that societal views of disability lead to discrimination against persons with developmental disabilities in all aspects of their lives including areas such as education and employment.

Benefits of Employment

Employment is a highly regarded activity within Western culture; it is considered to be an activity which provides workers with a number of benefits, regardless of a disability. Firstly, Western societies place a great deal of emphasis on the link between a person’s worth and his/her productivity. It has been suggested that a person’s self-worth and status within society is directly impacted by their involvement in “real work” (West, Wehman, & Wehman, 2005). Secondly, employment provides persons with wages and benefits that improve financial security and promote autonomy by affording financial opportunities for people to make choices in their lives.

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Thirdly, work provides the opportunity and experience to expand work-related skills and improve adaptive functioning (Stephens, Collins & Dodder, 2005). Fourthly, those who work are often considered to be competent and being viewed as competent can decrease the stigma attached to disability. Fifthly, work creates an opportunity for social interaction, a means to develop interpersonal relationships and time to schedule activities with others outside of the work environment (West et al., 2005). It has been suggested that the combination of face-to-face interaction and the likelihood that co-workers share experiences makes work environments a place where friendships may form. Lastly, participating in work affords the opportunity for independence, creates an environment for personal satisfaction, and leads to an overall improvement in quality of life (West et al., 2005).

It has been suggested that a person's self-worth and status within society are directly impacted by involvement in "real work" (West et al., 2005). As stated by Pavalko (cited in Stephens et al., 2005), "people in the western world derive a great deal of social identity as well as their internal perceptions of who they are from their work" (p. 484). This is further explored by Van Niekerk, Lorenzo, and Mdlokolo (2006), who discuss the implications of producing something that is concrete or abstract and the associated recognition of value, which combine to contribute to positive identity formation. McNaughton, Symons, Light, and Parsons (2006) conducted a qualitative study on the experiences of self-employment for seven individuals with cerebral palsy. During the semi-structured interviews, participants frequently discussed the impact of employment on fulfilling personal expectations. In the McNaughton et al. (2006) study, one participant made an eloquent and powerful statement: "I didn't feel a part of anything because my income never went back to help pay for the city that I live in ... Now that I am employed I feel human, I feel alive" (p. 187). McNaughton et al. (2006) concluded that

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participants found a sense of self-worth and identity in their employment endeavors, stating that participants emphasized their desire to be contributing members of society, with the knowledge that others typically do not place such expectations on them. Social identity as a primary benefit of employment was also supported in a qualitative study conducted by Milner and Kelly (2009) with 28 participants with developmental disabilities living in New Zealand. Participants discussed the importance of social identity in changing people's perceptions of disability. As one participant stated, "I help out at the 10-pin bowling...and you get recognised. Not for your disability, but for who you are" (Milner & Kelly, 2009, p. 56).

In addition to establishing identity, improving self-worth, and promoting status within society, employment also provides persons with wages and fringe benefits that improve financial security, while promoting autonomy by providing financial opportunities for people to make choices in their lives. Jahoda, Banks, Dagnan, Kemp, Kerr, and Williams (2009) conducted a study which sought to examine the socio-emotional outcomes of 35 participants with an intellectual disability over the course of 9 months after they started a new job. Findings from this study indicated that financial reward was a key theme in the promotion of socio-emotional wellness for 29 of the 35 participants. Furthermore, Jahoda et al. (2009) report that many of the participants identified financial reward as a means to accessing more choice, having their autonomy supported, providing social opportunities, and improving status. Findings from this study were supported by Timmons, Hall, Bose, Wolfe, and Winsor (2011), who also reported financial reward as the primary motivation for obtaining and maintaining employment among the persons with intellectual disabilities whom they interviewed. As stated by Timmons et al. (2011), participants reported their primary purpose for working was to earn money in order to

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“pay bills, contribute to their households, pay for hobbies or interests, and save so that in the future they could live independently” (p. 293).

It has also been noted that in addition to providing financial benefits for persons with developmental disabilities, employment can also create an environment where work-related skills are acquired and adaptive skills are fostered (Stephens et al., 2005). In a large scale longitudinal study conducted by Stephens et al. (2005), researchers examined the influence of integrated, segregated and competitive employment as well as unemployment on the adaptive functioning and problem behaviours of 2,760 persons with developmental disabilities over the course of a year. Findings from this study suggested that, as persons with developmental disabilities move into employment, their adaptive functioning scores increase and as they move out of employment these scores decrease. The notion that those who are employed show improvements in adaptive functioning was also supported in a study conducted by Su, Lin, Wu, and Chen (2008). In this study, 56 participants with developmental disabilities were employed and 55 were not. Findings from this study were similar to those found in Stephens et al. (2005), with reports suggesting that those who are employed scored higher on adaptive functioning.

Other researchers have suggested that those who work are often considered to be competent and these perceived competencies can decrease the stigma attached to persons with disabilities (West et al., 2005). McNaughton et al. (2006) highlighted the impact of self-employment on the attitudes of society for seven persons with cerebral palsy who use augmentative communication devices. As one participant in this study stated:

As I continue to travel around the area and speak, I amaze people because I shatter the ‘box’ they had put me in. Now over time that opinion starts to change, and pretty soon the ‘box’ they had put me in is no longer in use. I see people in society changing their

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attitude towards us. I am committed to opening people's eyes and hearts to this reality. (p. 188)

McNaughton et al. (2006) note that for each of the seven participants changing societal perception of disability was one of the most influential impacts of being self-employed. Another participant described his impact on the greater society saying "...in my show, they see me making the very best out of what I have, and I give them strength" (p. 188).

In a study conducted by West et al. (2005), 45 semi-structured questionnaires were completed by employers to evaluate the Best Buddies Job Program which provides supported employment services for persons with developmental disabilities. Results showed that following the experience with this program 82.9% of employers reported that their attitudes towards employing persons with developmental disabilities had changed; they had a more positive perspective on the capabilities and expectations of the employees with a developmental disability.

In a study conducted by McFarlin, Song, and Sonntag (1991), 189 executive personnel from some of the top Fortune 500 companies completed surveys to assess the attitudes of employers on the integration of persons with developmental disabilities into the workplace. Results from this study confirmed the hypothesis that those who had previously employed persons with developmental disabilities had more positive attitudes towards employing persons within the workplace, while those with little exposure were hesitant to hire persons with developmental disabilities. The latter group of personnel identified first impressions, absenteeism, rate of advancement, and cost of accommodation as their major concerns (McFarlin et al., 1991). More specifically, employers who had more exposure to persons with developmental disabilities in the workplace focused less on a person's limitations and actually

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noted that they view vocational rehabilitation specialists as a source of recruitment for their corporations. This study supports employment as a means to change societal perceptions through exposure to persons with disabilities as employees who are capable individuals whose performance in the workplace is as valuable as their non-disabled peers.

In addition to changing the perceptions that employers, co-workers, and community members hold about disability, work creates an opportunity for social interaction, a means to develop interpersonal relationships, and time to schedule activities with others outside of the work environment (West et al., 2005). It has been suggested that the combination of face-to-face interaction and the likelihood that co-workers share experiences, make work environments a likely place for friendships to form (West et al., 2005). Dague (2012) conducted interviews with family members of persons with developmental disabilities moving from segregated to supported employment. During these interviews, parents discussed their fear that their family members would face stigma and marginalization once they were placed in the community. However the findings did not support those fears. In contrast, parents reported the overwhelming acceptance and smooth integration of their family members into the community. Moreover, Dague stated that employment in the community has created further opportunities for social interaction and meeting new people. When asked about family members making new friends, one parent responded with “absolutely. He’s out. He’s meeting people all the time...” (Dague, 2012, p. 7). Murphy, Rogan, Handley, Kincaid, and Royce-Davis (2002) interviewed 16 persons with developmental disabilities eight years after changing positions from sheltered workshops to supported community employment. A primary theme that emerged from these interviews was the change in social relationships. As stated by one of the participants, “If I lost it [my job], my life would be awful. . . One of the things I really like best is that I made friends since I have been

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working there. . . [My life] has changed a lot. . . It's the best" (Murphy et al., 2002, p. 35). This is further supported by Jahoda et al. (2009), who interviewed 35 persons entering supported employment. Of those 35 participants, 27 indicated that their social relationships at work were positive. In addition, 9 participants reported being afforded the opportunity to meet new people as the most important factor related to work (Jahoda et al., 2009).

In addition to creating occasions for social interaction, participating in work affords the opportunity for independence, creates an environment for personal satisfaction, and leads to an overall improvement in quality of life (West et al., 2005). Barisin, Benjak, and Vuletić (2011) described the influence of employment on the quality of life for 318 women with disabilities. Quality of life was assessed using the World Health Organization Quality of Life questionnaire and life satisfaction questionnaires developed by the researchers, for 160 female participants who were employed and 158 female participants who were unemployed. Findings from this study showed that women with disabilities who were employed scored higher on both quality of life and life satisfaction scores, with higher mean scores for the employed group in the domains of psychological health, environment, social relationships, and self-assessed health (Barisin et al., 2011). In another study conducted by Beyer, Brown, Akandi, and Rapley (2010), quality of life was assessed using the Comprehensive Quality of Life Scale and Work Environment Scale with 27 persons with intellectual disabilities in various employment options, 10 participants in day services and 17 non-disabled work colleagues of participants in supported employment. Findings suggested that participants working within supported employment had higher quality of life scores than their non-disabled colleagues. Furthermore, participants working in supported employment had higher quality of life scores than the participants working in other areas of

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employment or taking part in day services and than their non-disabled colleagues (Beyer et al., 2010).

In conclusion, there is a wealth of literature and research describing the benefits of employment for persons with developmental disabilities (West et al., 2005). Included in these benefits are improvements in individual identity, with links to greater sense of self-worth, as well as the benefits of financial reward and the increased opportunities for autonomy based on financial freedom (Jahoda et al., 2009; McNaughton et al. 2006; Milner et al., 2009; Stephens et al., 2005; Timmons et al., 2011; Van Nierkerk et al., 2006; West et al., 2005). Furthermore, studies have suggested that increased confidence is related to the development of work-related skills and improvement in adaptive functioning as well as improvements in quality of life (Barisin et al., 2011; Beyer et al., 2010; Stephens et al., 2005; Su et al., 2008). In the realm of social inclusion, work affords the opportunity for social interaction, improved community participation, and social identity (Dague, 2012; Jahoda et al., 2009). Lastly, employment is a vehicle for changing the discriminatory and devalued perception of persons with developmental disabilities through the exposure of persons with developmental disabilities within the greater community and the workplace (McFarlin et al., 1991; McNaughton et al., 2006; West et al., 2005). There is considerable evidence surrounding the benefits of employment as being similar for persons with or without a disability. Unfortunately, the history and current state of employment for persons with developmental disabilities tells a tale that parallels the history and treatment of persons with development disabilities and reflects the discrimination that is seen amongst this population within the employment sector.

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History of Employment for Persons with Developmental Disabilities

The history of employment for persons with developmental disabilities is fairly recent. Prior to World War II, persons in this population were considered to be largely unemployable; at this time those persons identified as having a developmental disability were housed in large institutions and kept away from the larger society. It was during World War II that persons with disabilities were removed from institutions in order to “serve with the armed forces and work as defense workers in factories” (Stevens & Martin, 1999, p. 20). This event was a catalyst for changing the perception of Western society, from disability as an “irreversible nature of their debilitation condition” (Stevens & Martin, 1999, p. 20) to one that considered the employment capabilities of persons within this population. Furthermore, this created a push towards deinstitutionalization, while simultaneously provoking the research community to explore the possibility of persons with developmental disabilities working in a range of settings and demonstrating work-related skills (Stevens & Martin, 1999). Included in this research were the exploration of segregated workshops and, more recently, the examination of supported and competitive employment options.

Traditional Employment Options

Sheltered/Segregated workshops. The first and most predominant type of employment focused on by researchers, post World War II, was segregated employment seen in the form of sheltered workshops. Typically, activities taking place in a sheltered workshop setting are repetitive in nature and easily learned and executed (Migliore, Mank, Grossi, & Rogan, 2007). As described by Rogan and Rinne (2011), sheltered workshops create an artificial work environment where persons are required to take part in a limited number of work tasks. Additionally, there is a clear hierarchy between persons with developmental disabilities and the staff that are there to

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support them, which further restricts the ability of persons to make choices and assert self-determination (Migliore et al, 2007; Rogan & Rinne, 2011). Lastly, employees face extended periods of time when work is unavailable and when they do perform work tasks they are paid very limited token wages (Migliore et al., 2007; Rogan & Rinne, 2011).

Sheltered workshops were developed based on the notion that those with disabilities have conditions that are not suitable for competitive work. This reflects the societal view of disability as a medical condition that is irreversible, deeming persons with developmental disabilities as “incapable” (Rothman, 2010). Some researchers and supporters of sheltered workshops promote the use of this type of employment as a transitional setting, where persons with developmental disabilities are able to acquire the skills necessary to compete in the labour market (Migliore et al., 2007). Current research has focused on and revealed that sheltered workshops, when compared to more inclusive and competitive employment options, are restrictive in nature and that transitions from sheltered workshops to more competitive employment are uncommon. As stated by Rogan and Rinne (2011), only 3.5% of persons in sheltered workshops will actually transfer to competitive employment throughout their career, further suggesting that sheltered workshops are not an effective option for preparing persons with developmental disabilities for life in the competitive workforce. Furthermore, those who do transition are placed in jobs with little meaning, little to no skill requirement and no opportunities for promotion (Migliore et al., 2007). Lastly, research has also revealed that those in sheltered workshop settings report lower quality of life, lower levels of psychological well-being and self-esteem and more incidences of depression than those working in more inclusive and competitive settings (Banks, Jahoda, Dagnan, Kemp, & Williams, 2010).

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The trend towards sheltered workshops is ending as researchers, advocates, family members and persons with developmental disabilities are pushing for more inclusive employment options. In a recent statement put out by the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL, 2010), persons with developmental disabilities who are of working age should be receiving the same rate of employment as their non-disabled peers, in inclusive workplaces, with equal representation between unionized and non-unionized positions. The most common and predominant alternative to sheltered workshops is integrated employment (Stevens & Martin, 1999).

Integrated/Supported employment. Integrated employment is one of the more popular options for persons with developmental disabilities, and it tends to receive considerable support from government sources, community agencies, families, advocates, and persons with developmental disabilities. Integrated employment is well defined by Migliore et al. (2007) as “work in the general labor market where the proportion of workers with disabilities does not exceed the natural proportions in the community and where wages are at or above the minimum wage” (p. 7). In addition to Migliore’s definition of integrated employment, Beyer, Kilsby and Shearn (1999) described it as “real work in integrated setting with ongoing support provided by an agency with expertise in finding employment for people with disabilities” (p. 138).

Integrated employment is known for having several benefits above and beyond what sheltered workshops can offer. Those in integrated employment obtain better financial outcomes, experience more personal growth, contribute to changes in community perception and have an increase in opportunities for greater social inclusion (Migliore et al., 2007). In 2009, researchers, Rogan and Rinne, collected data from vocational rehabilitation specialists and found that those working in integrated employment had an average weekly income of \$213,

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compared to those in sheltered workshops whose income for one week averaged \$25 (Rogan & Rinne, 2011). Additionally, Stevens and Martin (1999) indicate that those in integrated employment settings are provided with more opportunities to discover new tasks and develop larger skill sets. Furthermore, they found that those in integrated employment reported higher self-esteem, were better able to manage illness, found higher levels of acceptance within society, and believed that they were able to mask their disability.

Although integrated employment outcomes are more encouraging than outcomes for those working in sheltered workshops, the success of job placement and maintenance still requires further exploration. Studies have indicated that those working in integrated settings experience more personal growth than those working in integrated settings, but work in these settings is based on a “placement” type procedure, where persons seeking employment are placed based on employers’ needs as opposed to employees’/individuals’ preferences (Burge, Ouellette-Kuntz, Lysaght, 2007). As discussed by Banks et al. (2010), this approach achieves the outcome of finding jobs and developing skills; however, the level of job breakdown and employment termination for this population is still high. Lastly, wages for those in integrated work settings are higher than those within segregated settings; however, the average income is still below the “norm” and well below the poverty level (Burge et al., 2007).

Competitive employment. The primary goal of vocational rehabilitation is to establish positions and place persons with developmental disabilities in the competitive labour market, while reducing the need for external supports and replacing those supports with natural supports in the workplace (Wall & Fullmer, 1997). Although much of the literature supports the primary goal of competitive employment, it is clear that competitive employment is used interchangeably with integrated/supported employment in the disability literature. As such, there is very little

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research supporting the outcomes of persons with developmental disabilities in competitive employment without external agency supports.

In summary, the benefits of employment for persons with developmental disabilities are undeniable; however, traditional forms of employment options reflect and even reinforce discriminatory practices. To review, sheltered workshops segregate persons with developmental disabilities from the larger community while providing dismal wages, which not only represent how devalued this population is, but also restricts financial freedom. Integrated supported employment provides few opportunities for meaningful employment and wages that, although better than seen in sheltered workshops, are still below normal. Not only are traditional forms of employment doing little to reach the larger goal of employment equity but the current employment situation for persons with developmental disabilities is suggesting that these traditional forms of employment are not working. The need for alternative employment options can be substantiated when reviewing the current employment situation for persons with developmental disabilities.

Current Employment Situation

Employment is considered by policy makers as not only a human right but an integral factor in promoting acceptance and reducing discrimination and marginalization of persons with developmental disabilities. Employment is not only a means to become self-sufficient and to live independently, but it provides opportunities for social relationships, inclusion and community belonging, and improves a person's sense of self-worth and overall quality of life (Jahoda et al., 2009). Although there has been a push for change in the policy sector over the past 20 years, the unemployment rates for persons with developmental disabilities is still a pressing concern (Timmons et al., 2011). As stated by Burge et al. (2007):

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In most western economies...people with intellectual disabilities are under-represented in the labor market. Reported employment rates for the general populations of the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom range from 75%-95%, while rates for persons with ID in those countries are reported at anywhere from 9-28%. (p. 29)

Additionally, many of these employees work part-time in service industries making little to no wages and are provided with little to no opportunity for advancement (Burge et al., 2007). The current employment situation for persons with developmental disabilities has not gone unnoticed. Researchers and advocates have placed a great deal of effort into the examination of the barriers which may be contributing to such abysmal employment outcomes.

Barriers to Employment

Despite the recent laws and international covenants including the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms (1982), the Human Rights Act (1977), and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), current trends towards employment for persons with developmental disabilities and employment rates for this population still remain low (Martz & Xu 2009). Moreover, those who are employed experience a high level of job breakdown and termination (Banks et al., 2010).

Research has identified a number of barriers for persons with developmental disabilities hoping to enter the competitive labour market. These can be classified into two categories: personal factors and environmental factors. As stated by Martz et al. (2009), some of the personal factors that account for low employment rates, poor integration rates, or high job breakdown are deficient workplace skills, lack of education, and need for assistive technology or necessary accommodations. Additionally, Martz and colleagues discuss the possibility of environmental factors, such as physical barriers, found either on the worksite or in the

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environment. Included in this discussion is the influence of negative attitudes from employers and community members as a barrier to competitive employment for this population (Martz et al., 2009).

In reviewing the types of employment opportunities currently available with the current state of employment for persons with developmental disabilities and the barriers they face, it becomes clear that more needs to be done to break down negative perceptions of potential employees who have developmental disabilities and to decrease the stigma and discrimination associated with this label. With disability being socially constructed, it is apparent that the medical model perspective on disability has had a great influence on the types of employment options currently available. More specifically, segregated employment reinforces the notion that persons with disabilities are “incapable” or “deficient” and, as such, should be excluded from the larger community. Supported employment, although closer to realizing the goals of employment equity and social inclusion, is still focused on individual deficits, with placements that tend to be menial and token wages that do nothing to change the perception of persons with disabilities as socially devalued. Competitive employment can offer more meaningful employment options with equitable wages but tends to provide limited supports and accommodations.

Although current employment options do not specifically represent the extremes of the stark dichotomy between the medical model and the social model perspectives, there is a clear correspondence between the discrimination and failure of each of these employment options to reach true employment equity based on the ways in which society has socially constructed disability. With low employment rates and unsuccessful employment options being under examination, entrepreneurship and, specifically, micro-enterprises have arisen within the

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employment literature as an alternative and viable option for persons with developmental disabilities.

Alternative Employment Options

Self-employment. There has been a recent interest in the possibility and success of self-employment as an option for persons with disabilities. In a meta-analysis of the current literature, Yamamoto, Unruh, and Bullis (2012) examined the viability of self-employment for persons with disabilities. Self-employment was defined by Yamamoto et al. (2012) as:

- Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers. Self-employed in own not incorporated business workers includes people who worked for profit or fees in their own unincorporated business, professional practice, or trade or who operated a farm.
- Self-employed in own incorporated business workers. In tabulations, this category is included with private wage and salary workers because they are paid employees of their own companies (p. 122).

As stated in Yamamoto et al. (2012) and reported by the US Department of Labor, self-employment rates for persons with disabilities are almost double what they are for the general population, with 14.7% of persons with disabilities being self-employment compared to 8% of the general population.

Yamamoto et al. (2012) identified several factors which have led persons with disabilities to choose self-employment over traditional employment options. Included in these reasons was the discrimination that was faced by those in traditional employment settings, with discussions surrounding the struggles they encountered when trying to obtain employment and the loss of a previous job due to disability. Furthermore, Yamamoto et al. (2012) noted that self-employment is as an option that provides opportunities that could not be found in traditional employment

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settings. Lastly, Yamamoto et al. (2012) reported that some have chosen self-employment as a result of previous work experiences that left them unsatisfied and driven to use past work experiences when working for themselves. Self-employment has benefits that go above and beyond what are seen in the traditional forms of employment for persons with disabilities. In addition to contributing to financial independence, Yamamoto et al. (2012) highlight several intrinsic benefits, including being involved in a decision making role, having personal control and feeling competent, having a greater sense of autonomy, having a sense of self-reliance, finding more enjoyment in work and obtaining a means to reach personal expectations.

Although Yamamoto et al. (2012) discuss self-employment for persons with disabilities, their focus is not exclusively on those with developmental disabilities. Research literature on self-employment for persons with developmental disabilities is sparse. However, a recent document published by the Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) and People First of Canada (2012) entitled *Ready, Willing and Able* covers accounts of successful employment outcomes for adults with intellectual disabilities across the country. Within this document, several stories discuss the successful employment outcomes of individuals who are self-employed. Some of the stories described successful employment ventures in the areas of papermaking, baking, lawn care, and a beverage station. Additionally, one article discusses the impact of a “community entrepreneurial development agency” (CACL & People First of Canada, 2012, p. 8) known as CAPRE. CAPRE has been involved in the support of several self-employment businesses, including a laundry service, local arts and jewellery shops, used clothing store, and mail and lunch delivery system. The common themes that emerge from each of these stories are changes seen in persons’ sense of self-worth, improvements in overall quality of life, feelings of independence and autonomy, community engagement and belonging, and

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greater sense of pride and confidence. The work of CACL and Yamamoto et al. suggests that the benefits and reasons for choosing this type of employment are similar to those in the general population, and therefore should not be discarded as possible alternatives to traditional forms of employment for persons with developmental disabilities.

Self-employment through microenterprise. Although very little literature has reviewed the use of self-employment for persons with developmental disabilities, a recent study conducted by Conroy, Ferris, and Irvine (2010) examined the use of an alternative self-employment model in supported microenterprises. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) defines a microenterprise as a “very small enterprise owned and operated by poor people, usually in the informal sector” (Conroy et al., 2010, p. 269). Additionally, it describes a microenterprise as an unincorporated business involving fewer than 10 persons, with a start up cost of less than \$500. Advocates for microenterprises as an alternative employment option for persons with developmental disabilities suggest that microenterprises produce more successful outcomes in the areas of choice making, income, community integration, self-esteem, quality of life, and time spent in engaging activities. In addition, it has been suggested that microenterprises are more cost effective than traditional models of employment.

Conroy et al. (2012) examined the initiation and success of 27 microenterprises owned and operated by persons with developmental disabilities. A community agency within Kent County, located in Michigan US worked in collaboration with “income links” (<http://www.incomelinks.biz>) to train vocational specialists in supporting persons with developmental disabilities who are currently accessing vocational services and who have shown interest in initiating their own microenterprises.

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The primary focus of this study, conducted by Conroy et al. (2012), was to examine the change in quality of work life for both the persons with developmental disabilities and their staff. Questionnaires derived from the Robert Wood Johnson Self-Determination Initiative for Persons with Developmental Disabilities were provided to both the business owners and their support staff. The first of three research phases examined 17 areas of quality of work life for the business owners. Questionnaires covered several areas of quality of work life, including boredom, happiness within the workplace, being proud of what they do, making enough money and relationships with friends. Questionnaires for the business owners were administered before and after the microenterprises were implemented.

The second phase of this study, conducted by Conroy et al. (2012), involved a modified questionnaire for support workers, which was used to examine 14 areas of quality of work life. Questions for staff covered several areas related to the quality of working life, including pride in work, liking their job, number of responsibilities, resources to do their job, and relationship with people they support. Again, this was completed in a pre/post fashion, with questionnaires being distributed prior to and after the establishment of the microenterprises.

In addition to reviewing some of the key aspects of quality of work life, Conroy and colleagues were interested in examining how participants spent their time and the money they earned. In the third and final stage of this study, Conroy et al. (2012) provided business owners with a questionnaire that depicted the number of hours spent in several types of day activities. Some of these activities included self-employment, segregated employment, integrated employment, community experience, and non-vocational day programmes. Participants were asked to add the number of hours spent in each of the areas listed. The same questionnaire was provided before and after the implementation of the micro-enterprise. The hours for pre/post

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microenterprise were compared to provide a picture of how persons were allocating their time.

In addition, business owners were asked to provide their weekly income pre- and post-microenterprise establishment. Again these incomes were compared to determine whether businesses owners were making financial gains from owning their own microenterprise.

Findings from this study, conducted by Conroy et al. (2012), reported that each participant experienced positive changes in all 17 areas of quality of work life after the start of their own business. Of those 17 areas, 11 were reported as statistically significant, with the largest changes seen in the following areas: boredom reduction, happiness about work, being proud of what they do, and they like what they do during the day.

Conroy et al. (2012) suggested that in order for this type of system to work, support workers also need to feel that their own quality of work life has improved. Findings from this study suggest statistically significant changes in 4 of the 14 areas of quality of work life for support workers. These improvements included liking their job, ability to help people succeed in earning money, ability to deal with bad rules and regulations, and improvement in their relationships with the people receiving services.

To conclude, the increase in quality of work life for both persons with developmental disabilities and their support workers was positive, suggesting that microenterprises for persons with developmental disabilities are a viable option. In addition, this study is one of the first of its kind, reviewing the impacts of microenterprises for both staff and individuals with developmental disabilities. However, there are some limitations that need to be addressed. Researchers Conroy et al. (2012) did not report the timing involved in distributing the pre/post measures, limiting the ability of the researchers to report on the length of time it took for the businesses to be established and for the changes in quality of work life to be seen. Furthermore,

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Conroy et al. (2012) report that proponents of microenterprise suggest better outcomes in a number of areas; the researchers, however, only report on the changes in quality of work life. Moreover, changes in quality of work life cannot be viewed as a more positive option than traditional forms of employment, with participants being previously engaged in a number of activities during the day, some of which are not work-related. Therefore, this research cannot support the use of microenterprises as a better option than traditional forms of employment, because positive changes in quality of working life were not directly linked to past experiences with other types of employment.

In addition, researchers, Conroy et al. (2012) provided little information about the structures in place to support the microenterprises. Although researchers indicated that support staff were provided by vocational services, the researchers failed to report on how many hours the staff were involved with the business owners, what role the staff played in implementing and maintaining the businesses and what role the vocational services played after the microenterprises were established. Therefore, the suggested benefits of microenterprise, such as choice making and community integration, cannot be confirmed through the findings in this study. Further evaluation of the benefits of microenterprises needs to be completed to provide additional support surrounding the use of microenterprises as an alternative employment option.

Social enterprise has some similarity to entrepreneurship and microenterprises with one distinct and very important difference. Social enterprise has two equally weighted goals: to support both social and financial goals. Social enterprise has not been a central focus of the employment literature for persons with developmental disabilities; however, this model offers an alternative employment option that mimics the benefits of entrepreneurship while addressing the typical barriers seen for this population, such as discrimination and the need for accommodations

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and supports. In addition to being a viable employment option for this population, social enterprises can also be a means to change perception about the abilities of persons with developmental disabilities within the employment sector by creating socially valued roles within our society. Social enterprises, with both social and financial goals being the driving force behind decisions and organizational structure, look very different from their traditional vocational service counterparts. Social enterprises have the ability to provide support and accommodations for persons with disabilities by recognizing that, even with limitations, they are capable of successful employment outcomes.

Social Enterprise: An Alternative Employment Option

Social enterprise, as an alternative employment option, has received much attention over the past decade in the entrepreneurship, non-profit and economic sectors (Lambru & Petrescu, 2012; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). The increase in attention to social enterprises has occurred alongside changes in federal policies in the United States, such as the welfare reform of 1996 and the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which were put in place to change the way in which persons in low income brackets, who were collecting welfare, received financial support. Social purpose businesses are a unique subsector of entrepreneurship, where the emphasis on business revenue and social gains is equal (Cooney, 2011). As stated by Alter (2006), “social purpose businesses involve a particularly embedded form of social enterprise where the business activities and the social interventions are synonymous in that the work performed by clients is both rehabilitative and revenue generating” (p. 212). A part of the non-profit sector, social enterprises varies from traditional business organizations with differences seen in the strategies used, the structure of the organization, and the values and goals of the businesses (Dart, 2004).

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Typically, social enterprises are supported in three ways: through nongovernmental organizations, co-operatives, or mutual organizations (Lambru & Petrescu, 2012).

Currently, in the United States, social enterprises are responsible for creating a range of jobs that encompass a broad spectrum of employment opportunities within the labour force sector. These jobs require varied skills sets and represent the mainstream employment options found within competitive employment (Cooney, 2011). Often used for populations who are under-represented in the labour market, social enterprises have been used to support “incarcerated adults, homeless people, at-risk youth, developmentally disabled individuals, folks in recovery from substance abuse, welfare recipients, and the general underemployed” (Cooney, 2011, p. 186). Studies on the use of social enterprises for persons who are typically under-employed have found that those working in social purpose businesses have better outcomes with the longevity of job tenure than has been seen for this population in the regular job market (Lanctôt, Durand, & Cobrière, 2012). Additionally, studies have indicated that those who are supported in social purpose businesses are more likely to experience necessary accommodations, receive greater support from supervisors, experience a reduced incidence of mental health concerns and express a notable increase in others’ tolerance towards different learning rates (Lanctôt et al., 2012). Furthermore, the primary aim for social purpose businesses is to improve the overall quality of life for persons who are typically marginalized and under-valued. This is in contrast to traditional employment, with goals that may be narrow in their concentration, such as occupying one’s time, in the case of segregated employment, or community inclusion, in the case of supported employment (Lanctôt et al., 2012).

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Common Ground Co-operative: A Social Enterprise in Action

Common Ground Co-operative (CGC) is a non-profit organization that was formed in 2000 to support the social purpose businesses of persons with developmental disabilities in five locations across Toronto, Ontario. These businesses include a catering business, three coffee shops and a toy sanitization business. The main focus and goal is to provide business Partners who have a developmental disability with the support required to develop the skills necessary to operate successful business enterprises and to earn an income while doing so (Common Ground Cooperative Inc., 2010). These goals are eloquently captured in the CGC mission statement:

Our societal aim at CGC is to bring together talent and expertise found in existing institutions, agencies, businesses and other community groups to support the creation and maintenance of business enterprises for people with developmental disabilities. We view this model as an integral component of community economic development. (CGC mission statement, retrieved from <http://commongroundco-op.ca/home/our-mission/>, February 17th, 2013)

As stated by Lemon and Lemon (2003), in reference to CGC, “the aim has been to provide this model of self-employment to an increasing number of people with intellectual disabilities and to work toward greater self-sufficiency in business” (p. 424). The role of CGC is to support the businesses by raising and administering funds, providing job coaches for each location and assisting in financial and legal services for the businesses. CGC is primarily funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, with additional supports received from fundraising. The membership of CGC is comprised of over 150 people from a variety of disciplines. A number of committees have been formed and include areas such as “finance,

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fundraising, events, membership, and program/business development, plus task groups as needed” (Retrieved from http://commongroundco-op.ca/home/our_organization/).

Currently, CGC supports approximately 60 individuals with developmental disabilities in their business ventures and has sustained funding for 12 staff to support Partners on the front-line of their businesses (Common Ground Cooperative Inc., 2010).

This study is part of a broader case study that is examining the nature and impacts of CGC and its related businesses from the perspectives of the Partners (persons with a developmental disability and owners of the businesses), the board members, the funders and the staff. To date a case study examining the nature and impacts of CGC and its related businesses has been written from the perspectives of the Partners (Readhead, 2012) and a chapter has been written detailing the perspectives from the Partners, board members, funders and staff (Owen, Readhead, Bishop, Hope & Campbell, in press.). A preliminary analysis was conducted on the staff responses from this study to include information on the staff perspectives for the aforementioned chapter.

The focus of this study is to provide a detailed description of the nature and impacts of CGC and its related businesses from the perspectives of staff members. Staff members play an integral role in the successful outcomes of persons with developmental disabilities within employment options. As stated by Hatton (1999), “staffing issues should be central to anyone interested in developing high quality services for people with [developmental disabilities]” (p. 427).

The Role of Staff in Supporting Employment Outcomes

Many persons with developmental disabilities require some type of support in their lives, and the support that is received can greatly impact their overall quality of life (Gray-Stanley &

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Muramatsu, 2011). According to Windley and Chapman (2010), the primary role of community organizations is to support persons in obtaining an “ordinary life.” In discussing the main objectives from the Department of Health (UK), Windley and Chapman (2010) assert that “increasingly this role is defined as enabling people with learning/intellectual disabilities to have choice and control over their own lives” (p. 311). The role of the support worker is to promote the development of daily living skills while facilitating inclusion in a wide range of community activities and daily living (Windley & Chapman, 2010). For staff working in vocational services, the roles and goals are similar. As stated by Gray-Stanley and Muramatsu (2011), direct support staff working within vocational services have supported “their clients’ professional and social development through vocational training and by facilitating their inclusion in the community-at-large” (p. 1066).

The role of staff in supporting persons with developmental disabilities within their business ventures is as critical as the foundation of the social purpose business itself. Although there is currently very little research on the importance and influence of staff support in social purpose businesses with this population, these details on staff influence are well described within the supported employment and direct support literature. Typically, organizations that offer persons with developmental disabilities supported employment, provide a job coach or vocational specialist to conduct a job analysis to determine suitable placement and provide on- and off-site job training and ongoing support (Mank, Cioffi, & Yovanoff, 2000). This may appear to be a clear cut overview of the role of a job coach, but in actuality research has shown that support workers in vocational services may take on a number of roles (Windley & Chapman, 2010). As stated by Windley and Chapman (2010), these roles may include “direct interaction

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with the people they support, food preparation and service, domestic tasks, administration, training and attending meetings” (p. 311).

Service philosophies suggest that support workers’ perception of their role can greatly impact the nature of their support and interactions with the people they support (Windley & Chapman, 2010). This is an important concept when considering the influence support workers may have on the success or failure of a person’s employment outcome. More specifically, support workers can foster a person’s autonomy, encourage independence and facilitate community participation. Support workers within vocational services, much like those within traditional residential support roles, are entrusted with realizing the goals and values of the community organization (Hatton, 1999).

In knowing that support workers play an integral role in the facilitation and maintenance of employment outcomes, it is important to acknowledge the concerns and influences that may impact the quality of supports they provide. Recent literature focused on direct support workers within the field of disabilities has focused on a number of concerns and influences, including high burnout rates among direct support workers (Devereux, Hastings, & Noone, 2009; Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu 2011; Kowalski et al., 2010; Skirrow & Hatton, 2007; Vassos & Nankervis, 2012) and the conflict between the workers’ duty of care versus promotion of the autonomy of the persons they support (Hawkins, Redley, & Holland, 2011).

High burnout rates. Burnout is one of the most significant problems faced by direct support workers working with individuals with developmental disabilities (Skirrow & Hatton, 2007). Burnout is defined by Skirrow and Hatton (2007) “a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that occurs when workers feel overburdened by the demands of long-term involvement in emotionally demanding situations” (p. 132). Furthermore, burnout has been

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described by Kowalski et al. (2010) as emotional exhaustion which leads to depersonalization and decreased personal performance. Research examining the prevalence of staff burnout has found that up to 32.5% of staff supporting persons with developmental disabilities experience high levels of stress (Devereux et al., 2009). Further reports have suggested that the high levels of stress exhibited by this population are indicative of the presence of mental health concerns (Skirrow & Hatton, 2007). High levels of stress and burnout can cause a number of problems for staff members, the persons they support, and the organizations for which they work. More specifically, it has been found that high levels of staff stress impact the overall health of both the staff member and the persons they support, result in higher turnover rates and absenteeism, and are associated with employees' intention to leave their job (Kowalski et al., 2010). Additionally, burnout has been associated with lower client satisfaction, poorer quality of care and increased economic strain for agencies that need to provide training and increased supervision for new employees (Kowalski et al., 2010). High levels of burnout amongst direct support workers combined with the implications that staff burnout can have for the quality of supports they provide, has led many researchers to examine the factors involved in staff stress.

A number of work stress theories and factors have been used to describe and explain the high burnout rates among direct support staff working with individuals with developmental disabilities. Some of these theories have included the person-environment fit, demand-control-support, emotional overload, and equity theories. Person-environment fit, as described by Devereux et al. (2009), suggests that it is neither the person nor the environment that is directly related to high stress levels but, instead, the degree to which a person positively fits into their environment that accounts for how well a person is able to cope with the stress within that environment. The theory of environment-fit has similar characteristics to the individual

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approach discussed by Vassos and Nankervis (2012) and is used to explain the development of burnout. This theory proposes that burnout occurs when there is a discrepancy between a staff member's perceived expectations, their psychological characteristics, and the reality of their working environment. Devereux et al. (2009) distinguishes among three factors which compromise a proper person-environment fit. These include the basic distinction that a person is able to make between themselves and their environment, the subjective fit between a person's perception of themselves and their environment and the match between needs and resources, and demands and abilities.

With a poor environment-fit, staff members are more likely to experience difficulties with work overload, uncertainty around their roles, and conflict between required or perceived roles and the demands of the environment (Devereux et al., 2009). Furthermore, Vassos and Nankervis (2012) propose that a poor fit can exacerbate work stress and lead to burnout when an individual develops poor coping strategies or when a staff member or an organization is lacking resources.

Devereux et al. (2009) discusses the use of demand-control-support to explain higher stress levels among direct support workers. The demand-control-support model suggests that increased work stress is related to the interaction between a person's perception of work demands, the control they have over work activities, and the degree of socioemotional and instrumental support they perceive they have from their employers. It has been suggested that jobs where staff members experience high demands, have little control and limited socioemotional and instrumental support, place staff at a higher risk for staff stress and burnout. These findings are supported by Kowalski et al. (2010) who suggest that large workload is associated with poorer health outcomes and that latitude over decision making can either

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promote better health (if supported) or contribute to further work stress and burnout (if not supported). In addition, workload has been most often linked to emotional exhaustion, which has been deemed as a contributing factor to staff burnout (Kowalski et al., 2010). Devereux et al. (2009) further explored the role of emotional exhaustion in the discussion of emotional overload as a common work stress theory used to explain staff burnout.

Emotional overload has had substantial review in the burnout literature, compromising three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and decreased personal achievement (Devereux et al., 2009; Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu, 2011; Kowalski et al., 2010; Skirrow & Hatton, 2007; Vassos & Nankervis, 2012). Emotional exhaustion occurs when an individual feels that he/she has overextended and depleted his/her emotional and physical resources (Vassos & Nankervis, 2012). Depersonalization has been described by Gray-Stanley and Muramatsu (2011) as a detachment between a staff member and their work life which leads to negative interactions between an individual and the people with which they work. A diminished sense of personal accomplishment has been described as a person feeling that he/she is not productive or is incompetent (Vassos & Nankervis, 2012). A major aspect of this theory and the primary reason why this theory has been the focus of research surrounding burnout amongst direct support workers is that it emphasizes the relationship between the direct support worker and the client as a source of stress (Devereux et al., 2009). This theory, developed by Maslach, is similar to the theory proposed by Vassos and Nankervis (2012), who use an interpersonal approach which suggests that staff burnout is linked to “emotionally charged or demanding relationships between caregivers and care recipients” (p. 178).

Equity theory proposes that persons within any type of relationship are likely to evaluate that relationship and seek equity within that relationship (Devereux et al., 2009). More

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specifically, proponents of equity theory suggest that individuals within a relationship will only feel that the relationship is equitable if the ratio between their outcomes and inputs are the same as the other party's ratio of outcomes to inputs (Devereux et al., 2009). Furthermore, it has been suggested that equity theory encompasses both issues between staff and the persons they support as well as staff and the organizations for which they work. Disley, Hatton, and Dagnan (2009) used an extensive literature review to explore the issue of stress and burnout as it pertains to equity theory and staff supporting individuals with intellectual disability. Findings from their literature review show that staff working within the field of disabilities report feeling under-benefitted with associations being made among equity and absenteeism, burnout, and the intention to leave.

Disley et al. (2009) explored the staff and organizational characteristics which may either exacerbate or provide coping mechanisms against feelings of inequity and, in turn, stress, burnout, absenteeism and intention to leave. Among the staff characteristics noted were rate of pay (more for men than women) and perceptions of inequity related to differences in length of tenure and education. More specifically, Disley et al. (2009) indicated that those who hold shorter job tenure are more likely to view their job as effortful in comparison to those who hold longer job tenure who tend to perceive their job as less difficult. Similarly, those with more education are more likely to perceive inequity due to comparisons with others who hold a similar degree of education.

In addition to staff characteristics, Disley et al. (2009) reported that perceptions about inputs and outputs are directly related to the characteristics of the organization with which staff members are employed. More specifically, they discuss the organizational characteristics which may contribute to, or prevent feelings of inequity amongst staff, including wages, sick pay,

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work-load, role ambiguity, role conflict, emotional, practical, and social support, as well as organizational control.

The organizational approach discussed by Vassos and Nenkeris (2012) encompasses many of the other theories that were previously described, stating that burnout can be associated with a number of organizational factors, including demands, locus of control, few rewards, incongruent values, and conflict management.

Duty of Care vs. Autonomy

Direct support workers are faced with the unique challenge of managing two conflicting duties: duty of care, which involves the protection of persons they support from potential risks, and the duty to acknowledge, respect, and promote the autonomy of persons they support (Hawkins et al., 2011). Risk has been defined by Hawkins et al. (2011) as the “systematic way of dealing with hazards, insecurities induced and introduced by modernization itself” (p. 874). Furthermore, the concept of risk is influenced by both social and cultural values and assessed and interpreted by an individual’s experience, his/her knowledge of a situation and his/her own personal values (Hawkins et al., 2011). Autonomy has been described by Meininger (2001) as “emancipation that is aimed at freedom of choice and self determination” (p. 240).

The difficulty faced by staff occurs because acknowledging and promoting a person’s autonomy involves allowing the persons they support to take risks (Hawkins et al., 2011). As discussed by Meininger (2001), “policy documents issued by governments and health care organizations explicitly mention respect for personal autonomy as a central moral value and as a pre-requisite for any treatment and guidance” (p. 240). This, in addition to changes in the way that persons with disabilities are viewed and the ways in which they are supported, has led to concern over the risks that are involved in supporting autonomy (Meininger, 2001). More

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specifically, Meininger discusses the possible risk of supporting the autonomy of someone who may not completely understand the consequences or potential dangers that may ensue for themselves or for others. This conflict is further exacerbated by a long historical and ingrained view of persons with intellectual disabilities as being immoral, incapable, child-like or even evil, which promotes paternalistic views. These paternalistic views suggest that restriction of autonomy is done for the “good” of the persons who are supported (Meininger, 2001). Although it is clear that many staff members and organizations supporting persons with developmental disabilities in many aspects of their lives are faced with this conflict, little is known about how support workers and organizations negotiate this complex relationship between promoting a person’s autonomy and managing risks (Hawkins et al., 2011).

Methodology

Purpose of the Study

The present study is part of a broader case study which examines the nature of CGC and its related businesses as part of the Social Business and Marginalized Social Groups Community-University Research Alliance. To date, a case study has been conducted and a chapter written describing the nature and impact of CGC and its related businesses from the perspectives of the Partners, board members, funders and staff (Owen, Readhead, Bishop, Hope & Campbell, in press.; Readhead, 2012-). The current study is a more detailed description of the perceptions and opinions of CGC staff members who support each of the Partners in the five related businesses. The following research questions are related specifically to the perception of CGC staff members:

1. How does CGC impact the lives of the Partners it supports?
2. What are the social and economic impacts of CGC on the businesses it supports?

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3. What are the community barriers to employing persons with DD in other business models?
4. What is the nature of the activities in which CGC engages, and the businesses it finances and governs?
5. What recommendations would staff make to groups considering the replication of the CGC partnership model?

In addition to describing the nature and impacts of CGC and the related businesses, this study examines the role of staff in supporting successful employment outcomes and changing community perceptions of the role of persons with developmental disabilities. Furthermore, this study provides theoretical insight into the social construction of disability, with emphasis on social enterprise as a means of changing the perception of persons with disabilities from incapable and unemployable to capable, employable, valued, and successful.

Research Design

A descriptive case study approach was used to provide the reader with a detailed description of the nature and impacts of CGC and its related businesses. Richards and Morse (2013) support the use of a case study when seeking to understand how a particular social unit or system works. Yin (2009) suggests that case studies be used when research is seeking to gain answers into “how” and “why” a social phenomenon works, when the research does not require the control of behavioural events and when it is focused on a contemporary event. Additionally, a descriptive approach was chosen as the goal of this research project is to provide a detailed picture of the nature of CGC. As stated by Richards and Morse (2013), “descriptive methods are those whose primary goal is to describe a situation or phenomenon vividly and in detail, to give a clear picture of what’s going on” (p. 50). This is in contrast to an interpretive method, in that we

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do not seek to use the descriptions found in this research to develop theories about the processes or the experiences described by the staff. As described by Willis (2007), the descriptive case study method is used when the researcher aims to provide the reader with a “rich, detailed description of the case” (p. 243); there is no attempt in this method to begin or develop a theory as the case develops. Although the focus of this study is to provide the reader with a detailed description of the nature and impacts of CGC and its related businesses, results from this study will be discussed in the context of the medical and social model perspectives and linked to previous research provided in the areas of traditional employment, social enterprise and the role of staff in supporting successful employment outcomes for persons with a developmental disability.

In reviewing different research methods, a descriptive case study method was chosen based on the research questions seeking to answer the “how” and “why” of CGC and its related businesses, with CGC being a new and innovative approach to employment for persons with a developmental disability. A rich description of the nature and impacts of this organization is at the heart of the research focus and questions.

Staff members were chosen as participants, not only because their perspectives of their role and influence on employment are an important addition to an under-researched area, but also in order to triangulate the information that was previously collected from the Partners, board members, and funders, creating a complete overview of the workings and impacts of CGC from all perspectives. Additionally, data source triangulation was achieved within this study by using different qualitative methods in the first and second phases (Patton, 1990). More specifically, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted in the first phase and a focus group was conducted in the second phase. The focus group was conducted in order to facilitate a group

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discussion among participants, with the goal of capturing the unique dynamic that only a group can offer. As stated by Ritchie and Lewis (2003), “data emerges through interactions within the group” (p. 111). This is of particular interest when considering the nature of staff in a group context, where each person is working collaboratively towards a common goal. Additionally, Richards and Morse (2013) suggested that focus groups are advantageous when seeking to uncover the issues and perceptions from a group perspective.

Participants

Staff members who are employees of CGC and support the Partners in their business ventures were selected for this study, as integral players in facilitating the successful employment outcomes of the business Partners, and as a necessary group to provide insightful information regarding the nature of CGC and its related impacts. All twelve staff members employed through CGC were invited to participate in the study. Five staff members volunteered to participate and were interviewed in the first phase of this case study. The first phase of interviews was based on the initial semi-structured interviews developed with the assistance of the Executive Director of Common Ground Co-operative and the Principal Investigator of the CGC case study project, and were based on the primary goal of illuminating the nature of CGC, the businesses it supports, and the impacts of both CGC and the businesses on the Partners, staff, and community members. The staff members who were interviewed in the first phase of this study represented 42% of all the staff members employed by CGC.

During the second phase, a focus group was conducted to investigate questions developed based on the issues and themes which emerged from the first set of staff interviews. A single semi-structured interview was conducted in this phase with one of the staff members who was involved in the first phase of interviews but was unable to attend the larger focus group. Seven

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staff members were present for the focus group. There was re-representation of staff members from the first phase in the second phase of interviews. Interview questions differed within the second phase, and therefore all participants were invited to participate in both phases. The focus group phase represented participation by 67% of the staff body of CGC.

Recruitment and Consent Process

Individual staff participants. Recruitment was initiated by a letter of invitation (see Appendix A) sent by the Executive Director of CGC through email to all twelve staff supporting the CGC related businesses. Staff participants informed the Principal Investigator of their interest in participating in the study via email. The CGC case study Principal Investigator then passed the information on to the Graduate Student Researcher, who contacted the staff to schedule a time for the interview. This approach was chosen in order to avoid staff feeling obligated to participate. It was noted in the staff information letter and the consent letter that no one other than the case study Principal Investigator, the Graduate Student Researcher, and the Research Assistants involved in the project would be aware of their participation in the study. Interviews were scheduled between the Graduate Student Researcher and the participant and were organized based on staff availability and conducted in a place of their choice. All interviews were conducted in person; no interviews were conducted by telephone. Interviews began with a reading of the information and consent forms (see Appendix B). It was also emphasized at this time that participation was voluntary, and that no repercussions would result from the discontinuation of participation with the study. Staff were reminded about confidentiality, and asked to exclude the use of any names (people or organizations). Staff were asked to verbally consent (as well as to provide written consent) to the use of an audio-recorder, for the purpose of transcribing the interviews once they were complete. Lastly, staff members

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were provided with a \$5.00 Tim Horton's gift card to thank them for their participation in the study.

Consent forms were signed at the beginning of each interview, in the presence of the Graduate Student Researcher and one research assistant. Two copies of the consent form were signed, with one consent form being retained for project records and the other being provided to the participant for their records. Staff members were also asked to fill in a demographic questionnaire, with the explanation that this information would be used to describe the sample of staff being interviewed. The research assistant did have prior exposure to CGC and the staff during previous research with the Partners of the CGC businesses. However, the research assistant and researcher did not have a personal relationship with either CGC or any of the staff prior to this research taking place.

Focus group participants. Recruitment for the focus group was initiated by a letter of invitation (see Appendix C) sent by the Executive Director of CGC via email to all twelve staff supporting CGC related businesses. Staff members who were interested in participating in the focus group contacted the Graduate Student Researcher via email. Staff who contacted the Graduate Student Researcher were provided with a consent form and a demographic form via email (Appendix D and Appendix E). Staff were asked to read the consent and sign both copies (one for project records and one for theirs), to fill in the demographic form and to return all forms to the Graduate Student Researcher at the beginning of the focus group. Staff who did not choose to contact the Graduate Student Researcher, but showed interest on the day of the focus group, were provided with two copies of the consent form which were then read and signed by that staff member, and a demographic form, which was also filled in and provided to the Graduate Student Researcher at this time.

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The focus group itself was conducted during a time that was convenient to all the staff and the organization itself. The Executive Director established a time for the focus group, which corresponded with an upcoming staff meeting. It was made very clear to each of the staff members through the letter of invitation and by the Executive Director herself that participation in the focus group was voluntary and that no repercussions would ensue if staff did not wish to participate. The CGC case study Principal Investigator and the Graduate Student Researcher were there to facilitate the focus group. The Principal Investigator took the lead role as facilitator during the focus group because of her extensive experience in facilitating group discussion

Prior to starting the focus group it was emphasized that participation was voluntary and that participants could withdraw from this study at anytime without any repercussions. Staff members were also asked to keep all information confidential, with an emphasis placed on the importance of excluding the use of names (people or organizations). Staff members were asked to be respectful of all those within the focus group, and reminded that in order to facilitate a coherent focus group only one person should speak at a time. Staff members were asked for verbal consent (in addition to written consent) for the use of the audio-recorder, which allowed for later transcription of the focus group discussion following its conclusion. Lastly, staff members were provided with a \$5.00 Tim Horton's gift card to thank them for their participation in the study.

Sample Selection

Support staff and specifically job coaches play a number of roles in the lives of the individuals supported by CGC, such as teaching social skills and interactions with customers and other employees, food preparation, and money handling as well as other skills training specific to

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each individual business. It is because they are responsible for so many roles that their “care and support can both disempower and encourage dependency, or enable and encourage independence and participation” (Swanson, as cited in Windley & Chapman, 2010, p. 311). Their views and opinions about the nature and impacts of CGC, including the benefits and limitations of such a diverse model, as well as the influences that impact their ability to support persons with developmental disabilities in their business ventures, are imperative to obtaining a true picture of the function of not only CGC itself but also of each of the five businesses it supports.

Inclusion criteria. Those staff members who are employed and paid through CGC were asked to participate. Initially, only staff members who supported the Partners on the job site, in a job coach position were considered for the participant sample. However, discussions with the Executive Director led to larger inclusionary criteria, with the explanation that many of the staff in other positions (such as managerial, supervisory, or facilitative) had previously worked as job coaches and were still in contact with Partners. A decision was made between the Executive Director, the case study Principal Investigator, and the Graduate Student Researcher to include all paid staff, regardless of their position, because of their extensive experience with CGC, the businesses themselves, and the Partners.

Final Participant Sample

First phase of interviews. During the first phase of interviews, five interviews with staff members from varying locations, expertise, and positions were conducted. All interviewees had responsibilities that involved direct support of Partners in various enterprises and organizational functions. For reasons of confidentiality, given the limited number of people in each job category, no further description can be provided. Length of employment with CGC ranged from less than 1 year to over 10 years. At this time, staff members’ previous experience was not

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collected through the demographic questionnaires but details on each of their past experiences were discussed in the first phase of interviews, which prompted the inclusion of this information in the second phase demographic forms.

Second phase of interviews. During the second phase of interviews, one interview was conducted with a staff member who was also present in the first phase of interviews. The focus group was conducted with seven staff members. There was re-representation of participants from the first phase of interviews included in this second phase. All staff members were invited to participate in the second phase of interviews because the focus of the research questions for the second phase differed from the first. Each staff member described their length of employment through CGC, their past work experiences and the number of hours currently worked. Length of employment with CGC ranged from under 1 year to over 10 years. All staff members worked full time (35 hours a week or more) or close to that level. Past work experiences for each of the staff members represented a variety of backgrounds. Within this sample, participants had experience in a wide range of different types of competitive employment, non-profit organizations or social services.

Data Collection

The primary goal of this research, addressed through the first phase of interviews, was to gather descriptions from the staff of the nature and impacts of CGC and its related businesses. The second phase aimed to further illuminate the nature and impacts of CGC from a group perspective, while addressing some of the areas that are unique to staff supporting persons with developmental disabilities within a social enterprise. Questions from the first and second phases differed. Second phase questions reflected the inductive themes that were presented during the first phase of interviews.

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Two methods were used to collect data in order to succeed in meeting our goals: semi-structured interviews and a focus group using a semi-structured format. Both methods of data collection were used in order to triangulate the data and provide the reader with a number of perspectives (Patton, 1990). As stated by Baxter and Jack (2008), triangulation of data is a design strategy that supports the case study methodology by providing the reader with multiple views and perspectives on the phenomenon under study. Additionally, Baxter and Jack (2008) support the use of triangulation as a means to improve the quality of the data by converging ideas and confirming results.

Semi-structured interviews. Questions for the interview phase were developed in collaboration with the Executive Director of Common Ground Co-operative and the case study Principal Investigator. Semi-structured interviews are unique in that they merge the advantages of both structured and unstructured interviews. As suggested by Richards and Morse (2013), a semi-structured interview is most useful when the researcher is knowledgeable in the area, but cannot anticipate the answers from the participants. With the larger goal of this Community-University Research Alliance being to contribute to a series of case studies focused on social enterprise for marginalized social groups, the participation of the Executive Director was necessary and welcomed. The researchers did not have prior knowledge about CGC; however, the Executive Director was a partner in this applied research model and had extensive knowledge of social enterprises and CGC in particular (Richards & Morse, 2013). The Executive Director changed as the study was being designed, so, in fact, two Executive Directors were involved as study partners.

The interviews questions were open-ended and followed a logical order. Each participant was asked all of the questions that were provided in the interview. At times, the Graduate

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Student Researcher would change the order of the questions or start the question with the probe rather than the written question, in order to maintain an appropriate flow in the interviews. All interviews were recorded and transcribed in order to analyze the results. (See Appendix F for the semi-structured interview questions from the first phase of interviews and Appendix G for the semi-structured interview questions for the second phase of interviews.)

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to identify, analyze, and report themes within the data. A rich thematic description has been developed through within case and across case analyses. As suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), the use of this form of analysis is particularly beneficial when “investigating an under-researched area...working with participants whose views on the topic are not known” (p. 83). This research method was chosen to provide the reader, and specifically CGC, with an accurate reflection of the most predominant themes derived from the interviews and the focus group. Patterns and themes were identified using both deductive and inductive approaches to coding. This was a blended process, in which deductive and inductive coding was done simultaneously, in a hermeneutic circle, in which the deductive themes informed the inductive analysis and the inductive themes were related to the deductive analysis. Due to the nature of the research questions and interview questions being open-ended and general in nature, the deductive and inductive coding could not be done in isolation. More specifically, participant responses may lose their meaning outside of the cultural and historical context of the entire interview. Patterns and themes were organized with the assistance of NVIVO 10 and the process involved in the analysis will be described in further detail below.

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As suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) it is imperative that a qualitative researcher make his/her epistemological assumptions and theoretical frameworks known. As stated by Braun and Clarke,

If we do not know how people went about analysing their data, or what assumptions informed their analysis, it is difficult to evaluate their research, and to compare and/or synthesize it with other studies on that topic, and it can impede other researchers carrying out related projects in the future. (p. 80)

Furthermore, it is suggested that the theoretical frameworks and epistemological assumptions be made transparent in order for the reader to see that they match the researcher's methods and the questions he/she is trying to answer.

Literature on social enterprises, human rights for persons with intellectual disabilities, vocational rehabilitation, and social role valorization informed the development of the research and subsequent interview questions. Research and interview questions were driven by the theoretical frameworks discussed in the literature described above, in addition to the needs of the Executive Director to answer specific questions related to the nature of CGC. In addition, the experiences of the Graduate Student Researcher are important to address, as they produce a specific lens and, as such, inform the analysis. The Graduate Student Researcher's work experience in the field of disability have included human rights training for adults with intellectual disabilities, front line work supporting persons with intellectual disabilities in residential settings, and education in applied behaviour analysis and disability studies. These epistemological assumptions formed through past experiences influenced the interview process and informed the analysis.

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During all stages of the analysis, patterns and themes were identified deductively and/or inductively. Deductive themes were driven by the research and interview questions and were informed by the theoretical frameworks mentioned above. Inductive themes were identified through the data and were not necessarily related to the specific research questions. It is important to note, however, that inductive themes, although driven by the data and not the research questions, are linked to the theoretical frameworks underpinning the research questions, as well as the epistemological assumptions of the Graduate Student Researcher. Therefore, and as stated by Braun and Clarke in reference to inductive analysis, “researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitments, and data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum” (p. 84). This is an important distinction to make. Not all of the epistemological assumptions of the Graduate Student Researcher were transparent, and as such a conscious effort was made by the Graduate Student Researcher to continually and thoughtfully reflect on biases that may influence both the interview process and the subsequent analysis.

Steps taken during the analysis were chosen in accordance with guidelines provided by Braun and Clarke (2006). More specifically, and as suggested by Braun and Clarke, each interview was read in full, without taking notes or seeking for any specific themes. This was done to provide the Graduate Student Researcher with an overall sense of the interview. Some preliminary notes on predominant themes or areas of interest were taken at this time. Once the interviews had been read, another full read of each of the interviews was conducted. At this time, patterns and themes were identified both deductively and inductively within each case. An illustration of how each of the interviews was coded deductively and/or inductively within cases is shown below.

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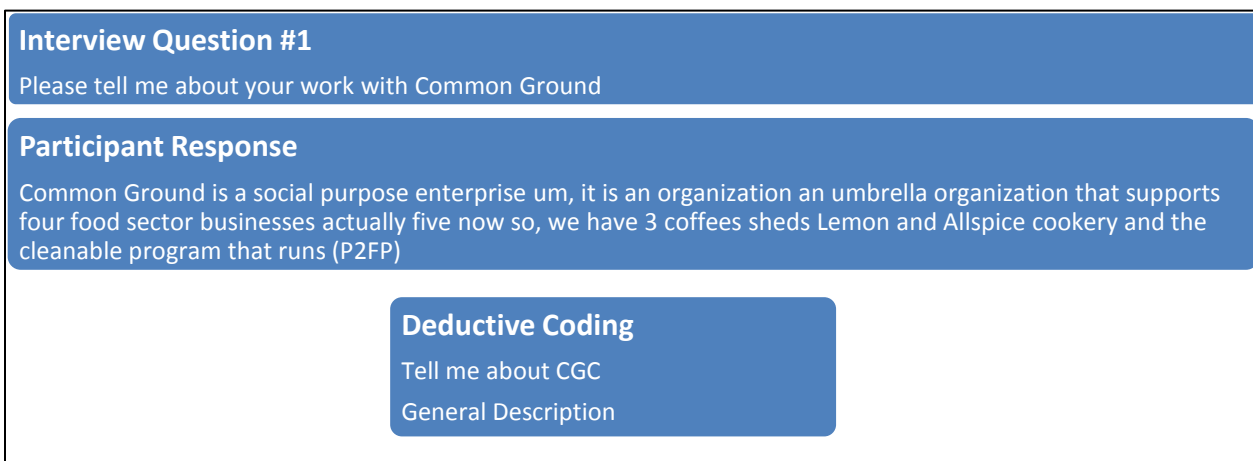


Figure 1.0 Example of Deductive Coding within Case

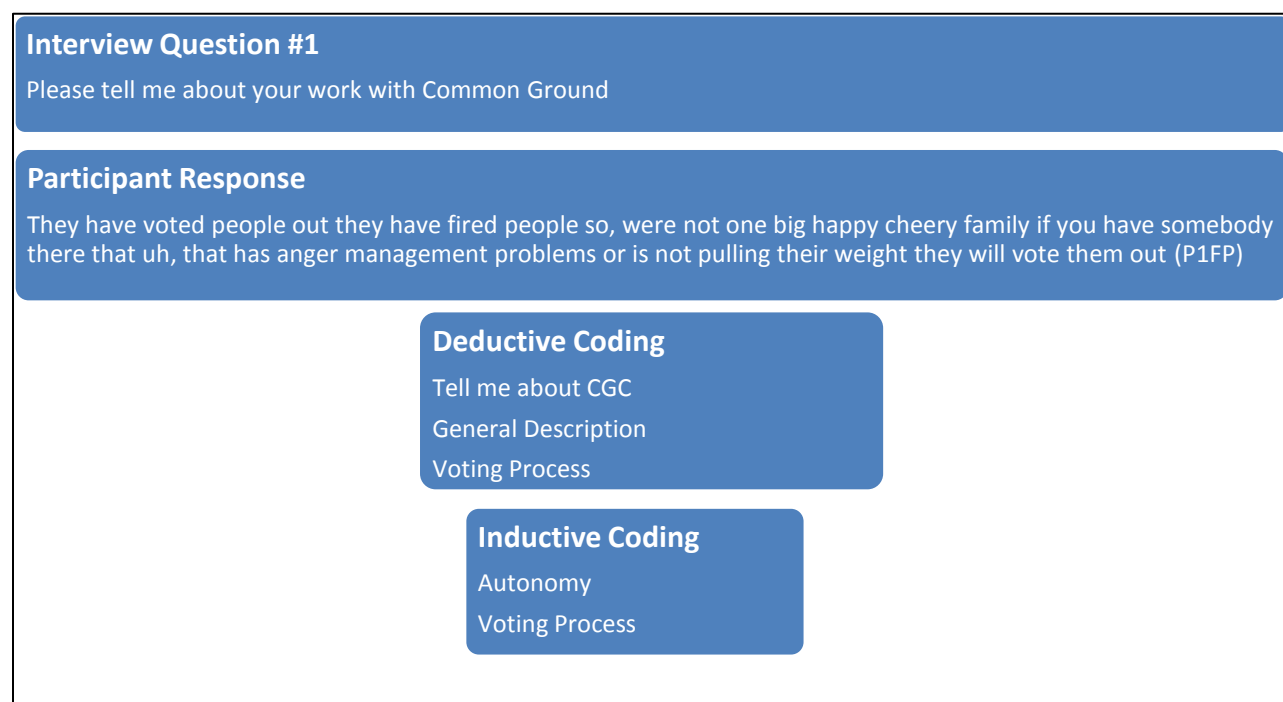


Figure 1.1 Example of Deductive and Inductive Coding within Case

After each of the interviews (cases) had been coded individually, the Graduate Student Researcher read each of the interview questions across the cases and once again coded for themes deductively and inductively. An illustration of across case analysis, where themes were coded both deductively and/or inductively, is provided below.

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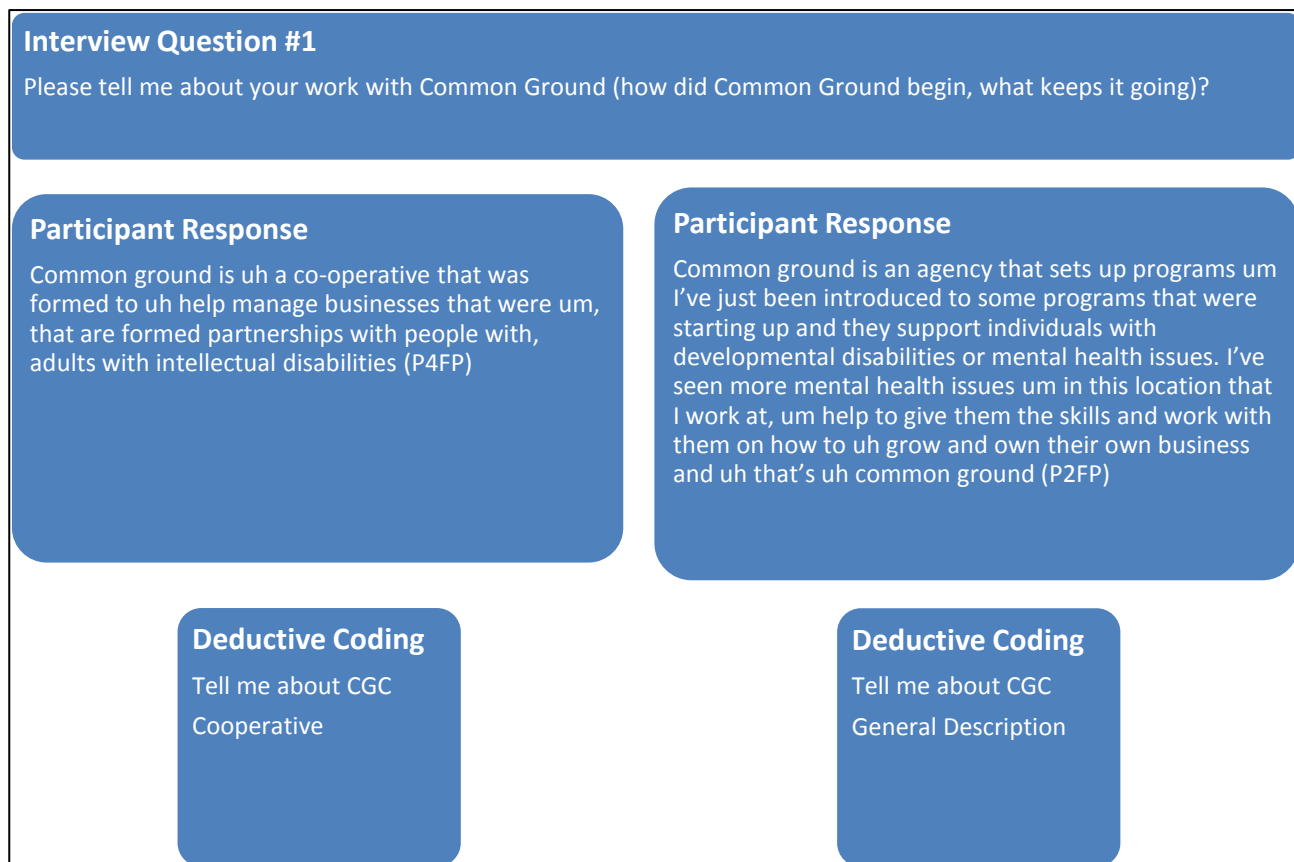


Figure 1.2 Example of Deductive Coding across Case

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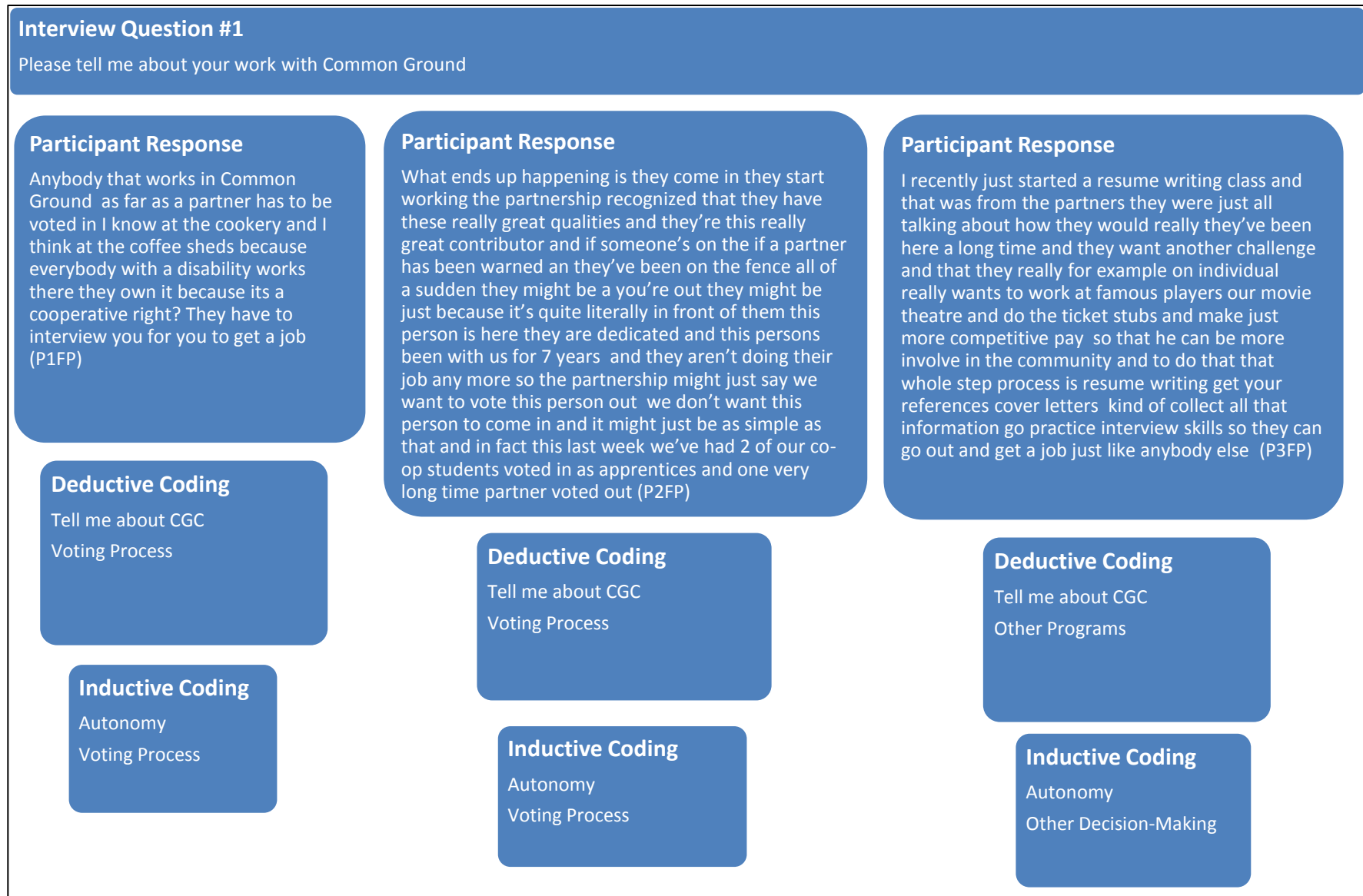


Figure 1.3 Example of Deductive and Inductive Coding across Case

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Analysis of the focus group and individual interview conducted in the second phase were carried out in the same manner, using both deductive and inductive approaches to coding within case and then across case. Again, this method was applied to identify, analyze, and report on similar patterns and themes from the individual interview and the focus group. It is important to note that the inductive analysis that was conducted during the first phase of interviews and through a preliminary analysis of these interviews informed the interview and focus group questions used during this second phase. During the analysis of the data from this stage, many of the inductive themes identified during the first stage of interviews became deductive themes.

During the coding process, it became evident that relationships between themes were present. More specifically, passages of text were not coded in the isolation of just one deductive and/or inductive theme, but were sometimes coded under a number of themes. In the example below the participant is describing a program that he/she developed based on a need to bring in more revenue to the businesses.

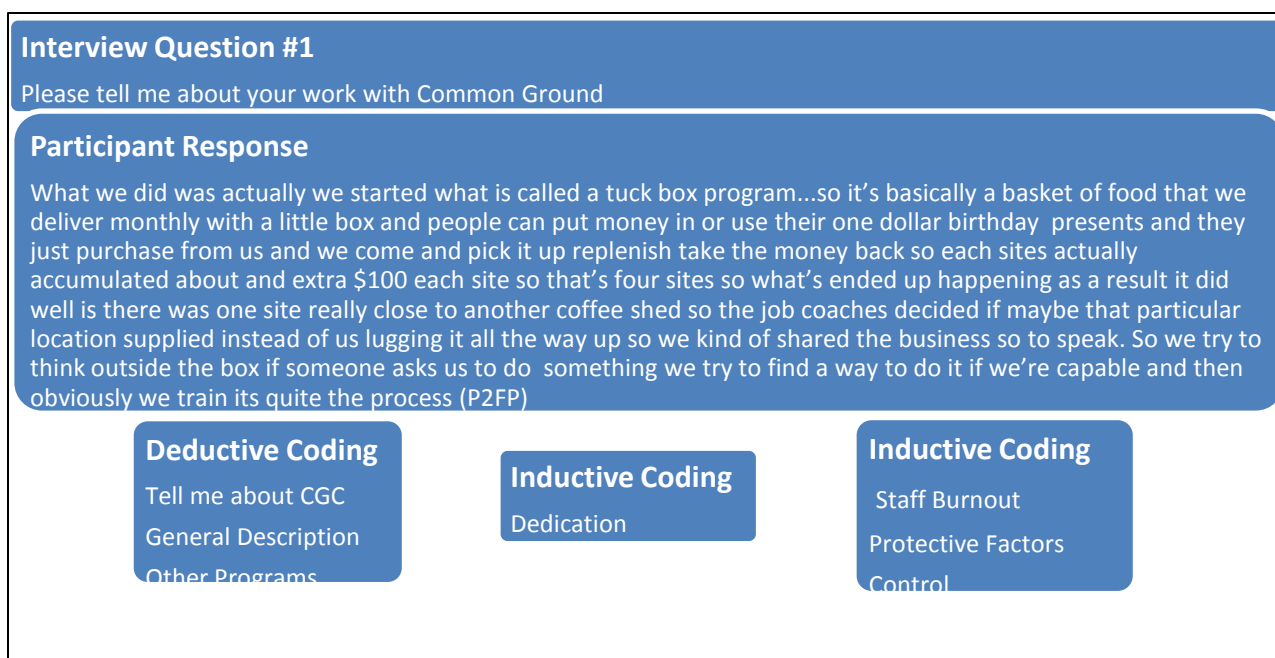


Figure 1.4 Example of Participant Response coded in Multiple Location

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In the example above, the nature of CGC and the dedication of staff being elements in the continued success of the program were related to the sense of control that staff felt over their position within the businesses. This relationship was identified a number of times across interviews. As such, the relationships between themes when identified were also coded and organized separately in order to analyze and report on these relationships. This provided the Graduate Student Researcher with the opportunity to reflect on any theoretical insights that may be drawn from identifying the relationships among themes

Lastly, the Graduate Student Researcher read through each of the themes that were identified and merged themes that were related to each other and created new themes for patterns or themes that needed to be highlighted. For instance, participants frequently discussed the support from agency and staff as a protective factor against the stresses of their current position. In reviewing each of these themes separately, it became clear that separate themes of agency support and staff support could be merged into one theme addressing support. A final illustration of the themes that were identified within the first and second phase of interviews and coded as inductive, deductive, or both inductive and deductive, can be found in Appendix H.

Results

Deductive and inductive approaches were used to code the data from each of the six individual interviews and the focus group. Deductive themes originating from the research questions and inductive themes which arose through the interviews are reported in the following results section. The major deductive themes from the interviews include the following: a general description of CGC and its history; staff perceptions of the purpose and benefits of social enterprises; the role of the co-operative; description of the programs offered through CGC; what keeps CGC going; the nature of the activities of CGC as work for Partners; how CGC is

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financed; barriers for persons with developmental disabilities in traditional employment models; job and staff roles in supporting the businesses; the impacts of CGC on the Partners, staff and the community; and recommendations for replicating the CGC business model. The following are some of the inductive themes derived from the interviews: promoting autonomy and the influence of staff; equality within CGC; a balanced employment model that provides unique opportunities, recognizes strengths, places the responsibility of work on the Partners and accommodates for weaknesses; traditional factors related to staff burnout and the protective factors that are present among this staff group; and dedication of staff. During the second phase of interviews, the emphasis was on addressing directly some of the inductive themes that arose during the individual interviews. These included the following: defining social enterprise; examining staff members' focus on the promotion of autonomy versus their duty of care toward Partners; exploring multiple staff roles and how staff members protect themselves from burnout; and describing the nature of professional boundaries between staff and the Partners. Results for the second phase will be incorporated throughout both the deductive and inductive results section. Quotations that are provided throughout the results section have been coded for confidentiality. Each participant has received a number, with the exception of the individual interview that was conducted during the second phase; this participant is coded as I. These numbers are presented in the first half of the code. The second half of the code refers to the phase from which the participants quotation is taken, with first phase being represented with an FP and second phase represented with a SP. The rationale for how the identifiers were determined for each of the participants is not included to protect the confidentiality of the participants. Participant responses are quantified in cases where responses are unique.

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Results from the Deductive Analysis

Tell Me About CGC

General description of the nature of CGC. Each of the staff members began by describing the nature of CGC. In this description, staff members described CGC as a co-operative that supports persons with developmental disabilities in owning and operating their own businesses. There were some variances in how each of the staff members described CGC. More specifically, various descriptions of the population they support were provided with some staff identifying Partners as having intellectual disabilities while others used the term developmental disabilities. One participant member reported that, as staff members they “support individuals with developmental disabilities or mental health issues” (P3FP). All of the staff members focused their description on the assistance provided by CGC in supporting adults in running their own businesses. In describing CGC, staff participants provided details about the history and formation of the organization.

History of CGC. Many of the participants provided a detailed account of the history and formation of CGC and its five related businesses. Each of these descriptions mentioned the grassroots nature of CGC, which was formed out of a “need ... for someone to feel empowered in running their own business” (P5FP). Each of the participants mentioned that CGC was founded by a mother and her daughter and that it began to grow as a result of interest from other families and the smaller community in which it had begun. They discussed how the co-operative was formed out of a need for assistance in areas that required more specific training, such as finance and human resources; as noted by one participant, “ [the] cooperative was formed to help manage businesses” (P4FP).

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Lastly, one participant paid special tribute to the family whose dedication and perseverance resulted in the establishment of Lemon and Allspice Cookery and CGC in getting both the co-operative and the businesses formed: “It really only took the dedication of one parent ...who was determined to have ... one of their children... to have a purpose in life and have an opportunity to do whatever they want to do”. (P2FP)

During discussions about the history and general description of CGC, staff participants discussed details about the co-operative that supports the five social enterprises and the social enterprise model itself.

CGC as a co-operative. Two of the participants from the first phase of interviews, emphasized the co-operative aspects of CGC. Participants discussed the details about the size, skill set, and characteristics of personnel within the membership. More specifically, it was noted by these participants that the co-operative aspect of CGC as a social enterprise is what is unique to their employment model. Each made mention of the co-operative as being a way to promote leadership, to find like-minded people and to flatten the organizational hierarchy that is traditionally seen in vocational settings. As one participant stated:

Co-operatives are a great flattening arena for, ...different forms of leadership...I think that’s true for the partnership too that everybody kind of strives to be a leader in some way in their life, and this is...a great opportunity for that, with the partnership and with... Common Ground, with the co-operative. (P4FP)

Furthermore, staff participants discussed the role of the co-operative in assisting the businesses with specific skills, such as developing legal agreements, assisting in finding funding, administration, and accounting. In addition, staff participants discussed CGC’s board of directors making special mention of the presence of a Partner on the board. They discussed the

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decision-making process involved with the co-operative and one participant noted that although there are times when decisions are brought to the board and the larger co-operative, no decision is made unless the Partners understand and agree with the final decision.

Overall, the staff participants described the co-operative as an umbrella organization that consists of a large membership of like-minded people with varied skill sets. Participants emphasized that persons within the co-operative are all working towards obtaining a common goal of providing persons with intellectual disabilities the support necessary to become successful in owning and operating their own businesses.

The focus of the first phase of interviews was more on the co-operative aspects of CGC and less on the social enterprise model; however, one participant did identify CGC as a social enterprise and provided details on the goals and missions that are consistent with a social enterprise. In order to explore this issue in more depth, staff participants during the second phase were asked specifically about the social enterprise aspects of the employment model used by CGC.

Social enterprise. Most of the staff participants from the first phase of interviews did not refer to or label CGC as a social enterprise; however, they did highlight many of the characteristics of a social enterprise when discussing the nature of CGC. Only one participant from this phase explicitly discussed these characteristics as being related to a social enterprise model. This participant placed an emphasis on CGC as a social enterprise that supports both a social and economic need. They discussed the unique aspects of a social enterprise and how those characteristics are a good fit for persons with developmental disabilities. More specifically, this staff member discussed the balance of social and businesses needs and described this model as a way to support a person's strengths and accommodate his/her

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weaknesses. As this participant stated, “we’re all along this continuum of...intellect and ability....we all have strengths in one area” (P4FP). Furthermore, this participant discussed how the Partners are challenged to improve their skills and strengthen their weakness, while providing tasks and opportunities that support their strengths. Moreover, this participant emphasized that by promoting the Partners’ strengths and providing persons with opportunities to strengthen their skills and to work on their weaknesses, many of the Partners choose to move on from CGC, accessing opportunities that they would not have considered otherwise. In addition, this staff participant discussed the accommodations that are made, noting that there is “always accommodation in business, you have to accommodate certain things” (P4FP).

During this interview, this participant provided an example of a Partner whose medication makes them groggy in the morning, and how the business accommodates by scheduling this Partner to work in the afternoons. This theme of providing accommodation, recognizing strengths, providing opportunities to strengthen skills and placing the responsibility of the Partners was one that was discussed many times throughout the interviews. Most of the staff, however, did not discuss the connection between these characteristics and the social enterprise model. These themes emerged inductively throughout the analysis and will be discussed in greater detail below.

It was noted during the individual interviews conducted during the first phase that many of the staff did not address the specifics of a social enterprise. Therefore, during the second phase involving the focus group and a follow-up interview, staff participants were asked directly “What is a social enterprise? Describe it to someone who does not know anything about it.” Responses to this question were similar to those provided during the individual interviews in the first phase, with one participant from the second phase stating, “it provides a service and at the

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same time generates revenue” (P6SP). Overall, staff participants from both phases described the unique characteristics of CGC, as a social enterprise and as having the flexibility to provide the Partners with accommodations. They emphasized the need to recognize people’s strengths, provide opportunities to strengthen their work and social skills, and they placed the responsibility for the partnership on the Partners. In addition to describing the nature of a social enterprise, staff participants described each of the programs and businesses that are associated with CGC and that reflect the social enterprise model.

Overview of the businesses and programs supported through CGC. Staff members described the businesses and educational programs supported through CGC, including an overview of the Foundation’s training program for new prospective Partners, Lemon and Allspice Cookery, the Coffee Sheds, CLEANable toy sanitization service and newer innovations such as the Verma Compost fertilizer project and the Tuck Box. Each of these programs will be described in further detail below. Additionally, staff described the ongoing programs that are offered to the Partners, once they are involved in the running of their businesses, including programs to improve life skills, such as a sexual awareness program, or work-related skills such as a résumé writing course.

Foundations Program. Staff described the Foundations Program as the first step in becoming a partner in one of the businesses supported by CGC. More specifically, staff participants discussed the Foundations Program as a required training program for new prospective Partners where they learn life and work-related skills necessary to work in a co-operative setting and to run their own businesses. Included in these discussions were the development of life skills such as communication and cooperation and learning the tasks associated with each of the businesses, such as money handling and customer service. In

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discussing the Foundations Program and the associated apprenticeship placement, one participant remarked:

Well they start off at the Foundations Program...cause that's going to teach you all the skills you need to know about the business, what you are going to be expected to do ... there's even life skills in there ... relations with other people and communication and then once you have that down pat you'll do placement in one of the Coffee Sheds. (P3FP)

Interestingly, the theme of social enterprise and the balance between social support and business responsibilities is reflected in the discussions surrounding the purpose and mission of the Foundations Program.

When second phase participants were asked about their roles, one was able to elaborate on the Foundations Program intake process explaining that the Program recruits individuals who are interested in becoming Partners through Developmental Services Ontario. Lead agencies in this group provide the Foundations coordinator with the profiles of the individuals who are interested in the Program. Individual interviews and assessments are conducted with each of the interested persons during which the coordinator is assessing if an individual will be a “good fit” for the businesses. As this person stated, in reference to the personal characteristics of a future Partner:

The person has a good attitude, good outlook, you know. The skills, the hard skills part actually doesn't really matter much to me. You can teach those things, whereas you can't teach someone to be a team player and... their past experiences, experiences in co-op, and if they've had other jobs and, you know, how those worked out and ... usually people are pretty honest, you know...“do you enjoy working with others, do you prefer work on

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your own?” Not that working on your own is a bad thing, but if someone is very insistent on that, that’s a red flag, so those are the kind of things I look for. (P6SP)

In summary, staff participants emphasized that the Foundations Program is a training program that provides potential Partners with important life and work-related skills, and described the requirements and the acceptance process related to potential Partners being accepted into CGC. As one participant stated “you need a foundation to build a house, you need a foundation to get a job and understand how to work” (P2FP). In addition to the Foundations Program, staff participants described the Apprenticeship Program as the final training stage before potential Partners are accepted into the businesses.

Apprenticeship Program. The technical skills required to operate the businesses were not emphasized by staff when discussing the Foundations Program; rather, staff referred to Partners learning aspects of the business operations during their apprenticeship. One participant discussed the process involved in moving from the Foundations Program to the Apprenticeship Program and the emphasis that is placed on the responsibilities related to owning a business during this time. More specifically, this participant described how the apprentices are required to sign a partnership agreement with both their work site and CGC that reflects “workplace commitments” (P2FP) prior to being accepted into the partnership.

Another participant described the important role of the Apprenticeship Program in providing an environment in which these skills can be learned:

When they are through their apprenticeship it’s ... communicating with customers, more on customer service so a lot of times I notice that they are very shy when they come in and they don’t want to talk to the customers. So it’s helping them or supporting them to engage in customer service and talking to individual that they don’t know ... just as a

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business perspective like “Hi, how are you today? Have a good day.” Just little things like that really boost their confidence and you really can tell like when they first come in, in April and then by the end of April it starts to ease off and their confidence has built and they’re good like by the end of June they have it down pat. (P3FP)

During the second phase, one participant discussed the role of the Partners in training and supporting the new businesses Partners during their apprenticeship: “[I] have the Partners teach new Partners so that it’s everybody’s responsibility in teaching, it’s not just one, and then I’m there as an extra support” (ISP). Furthermore, this participant noted that the Apprenticeship Program is not only a time for new Partners to develop their businesses skills, but also a time for the staff members to emphasize independence, reinforce team work and have discussions about equality within the workplace. More specifically, this participant noted that during the apprenticeship, a major challenge is reinforcing that staff members are not the boss or the supervisor, but a teammate just like everyone else.

The Apprenticeship Program was noted by each of the staff members when discussing how potential Partners are accepted into the businesses. More specifically, staff participants outlined the voting process that takes place among the Partners, where all of the Partners from the apprentice’s location vote to accept apprentices as Partners or reject them from becoming co-owners of the businesses.

In summary, staff participants who discussed the Apprenticeship Program emphasized this stage as the time for potential Partners to actively practice the skills that were taught during the Foundations Program, a time for pre-existing Partners to take on the responsibility for teaching and supporting new Partners and a time for new Partners to make a commitment to their worksite, to the Partners and to CGC.

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The Foundations Program and the Apprenticeship Program were described by staff as providing Partners with the business and life-related skills that are necessary for the potential Partners to be successful within their businesses. In addition to describing the nature and purposes of both these programs, staff participants provided details about each of the businesses and programs that are owned and operated by the Partners.

Lemon and Allspice Cookery. Many of the staff mentioned that Lemon and Allspice Cookery was the first business to be developed and is currently the largest with over 20 Partners, 2 full-time and one part-time staff members. Participants described the Cookery as a catering business with a restaurant grade kitchen where Partners bake and cook food items for each of the individual Coffee Sheds and out-sourced catering. When discussing the work completed by Lemon and Allspice Cookery, one staff member asserted with pride:

We provide all of the stuff to the Coffee Shed so we do all of their catering and...we're in a couple of law firms, we do cookies for them...we just finished a whole wack of cookies for a women's wedding...they looked pretty cool! (P1FP)

In addition, this staff member discussed the role of Lemon and Allspice Cookery as providing goods to other co-operatives and the relationship that has formed between the Cookery and other co-operatives:

We have a couple of co-ops that we do like, Alternative Grounds, they're a coffee shop and they also do organic free trade coffee and we sell their coffee and they buy our goods [and sell them] in there cafés and ... [name of another organization] that's another co-op that they sell our baked stuff and we have another one ...and we sell to them too. (P1SP)

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A participant from the second phase of interviews discussed how Partners within the Cookery are not only responsible for baking and cooking food items, but also for the development and testing of new recipes:

We're always researching for new recipes and baked goods and new things that we could do and we're always creating new projects...all the Partners from all the businesses are involved in that also, ... very creative because we have to do different bakings every week. (P4SP)

Another participant discussed the role of the Partners and of Lemon and Allspice Cookery in not only developing, baking, and testing the food items but also ensuring that those products are delivered to all businesses that are part of the CGC network as well as to those customers in the broader community.

Overall, staff participants who discussed Lemon and Allspice Cookery emphasized the size of the location, discussed the role of the Cookery within the larger system of CGC, emphasized the dual relationships that have formed between Lemon and Allspice Cookery and other social enterprises or co-operatives and described the involvement of the Partners in developing, baking, testing, and delivering the products created through Lemon and Allspice Cookery. In addition to describing details that were related to Lemon and Allspice Cookery, staff participants provided details about the Coffee Sheds that are also supported by CGC and owned and operated by the Partners.

Coffee Sheds. Staff participants did not describe the Coffee Sheds in detail. They did provide general information such as the history of the Coffee Sheds, their locations and the number of Partners involved in each of the locations. Rather than discussing the specifics of the Coffee Sheds, staff described the characteristics of each working environment and the impacts

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that the businesses have had on the Partners. These themes will be discussed in further detail below. There are three Coffee Sheds located in very different locations: one in an agency that serves persons with developmental disabilities, one on the University of Toronto campus, and one that is located within a Vocational Service. Partnerships range between 10 and 17 Partners at each location. It was reported by staff participants that the Partners who are involved with the Coffee Sheds require a different skill set than those who are interested in working with Lemon and Allspice Cookery or CLEANable. More specifically, although the specifics of the Coffee Sheds were not detailed, staff participants did note that those working there require good customer service and money handling skills. This information was provided by staff participants when discussing the need for a business that did not require regular social interaction, customer service, or money handling skills for Partners for whom this would be a better match. From this discussion, staff participants described the newest business venture supported by CGC, CLEANable, which was created to address this need.

CLEANable. CLEANable is the most recent of the CGC related business ventures. As described by one staff member, CLEANable is a toy sanitization business that runs out of the same developmental service location as the first Coffee Shed. The business itself was created for persons who are not as comfortable in settings where they need to take part in customer service or interact with others on a regular basis. One participant described the symbiotic nature of the CLEANable business:

CLEANable runs out of (location) so it's a toy sanitation program for ..., the staff here who do assessments clinical assessments and also for the _____ (inaudible) which is for kids with autism. Like they are five and under that are here on a daily basis so we

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go through and clean and sanitize all their toys ‘cause it’s something that the staff is overwhelmed with because they just don’t have the resources or the time to do it. (P2FP)

Further to this participant’s discussion, it was highlighted that CLEANable was created to address the strengths of potential Partners who were not comfortable or did not wish to work in an environment that required regular social interaction, customer service, cooking, or money handling skills. CLEANable is one facet of CGC that reflects the social enterprise model with the mission of creating both social and financial gains. Staff participants also described a number of additional programs that were created to promote both financial and personal growth for the Partners.

Other programs. In addition to the five businesses that are supported by CGC, staff members described two other programs that have been initiated to assist in producing further revenue for the Partners. The first of these programs is the Verma Compost project that uses organic waste from one of the locations to create compost that is then sold for revenue and then split among all the Partners involved in the running of this enterprise.

The second program that was described by two participants was the Tuck Box, which was created to bring in extra revenue for the Partners of all the businesses. This Tuck Box is brought to locations throughout the community and left with goods from the Cookery, such as cookies, date squares or brownies. This business is based on an honour system, where persons who are interested in purchasing these goods leave the required amount of money for the goods in the Tuck Box. As one participant described:

We have two locations...we set up a box their called the Coffee Shed Tuck Box and we have all of the products that we sell [at the Coffee Sheds] with a money box and then

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every 2 to 3 weeks one of the Partners will go and collect the money and restock the items. (P3FP)

In addition to creating programs that produce revenue, other programs are developed on a regular basis to assist in creating social gains for the Partners. Although staff participants did not discuss these programs as explicitly providing opportunities for the Partners to create social gain, the focus of a social enterprise is reflected in the additional programs described. The programs described below are involved in promoting both financial and further social gains. These programs focus on skill development for both business-related and social-related skills. In one interview, a participant described some of the workshops that both staff and Partners were involved in developing and facilitating: “we’ve started a new résumé writing workshop...I’ve noticed food preparation and health and safety workshops...also a sexual awareness and personal relationships program...there’s a financial literacy program” (P3FP).

Participants from the second phase of interviews also placed an emphasis on additional programs that are offered through CGC. More specifically, participants discussed the involvement of both the Partners and themselves in creating programs out of interest and need, and the role that staff members play in teaching and running the workshops that are created. The programs that were addressed during the second phase of interviews were also discussed in the first phase of interviews.

Overall, staff participants discussed a number of programs that have been developed to address the specific needs of the Partners. All of these programs are run outside of the Foundations Program, and many of the programs that were discussed involve the participation of the Partners; either by initiating program development or assisting with program facilitation.

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When participants were asked to “tell us about CGC,” they began by focusing their responses on a general description of the mission of CGC. They provided a detailed description of the history and formation of CGC, emphasizing its grassroots nature having been initiated by one family. CGC was formed out of a need for persons to feel empowered in their lives and in running their own businesses, and was expanded out of interest from other families and their local community. Interestingly, only one participant, in his/her discussion about CGC, during the first phase of interviews, specifically stated that the primary goal of a social enterprise and of CGC is to support the Partners in experiencing both social and financial gains. This was revisited during the second phase of interviews, where participants were able to describe the social enterprise and discuss the processes and specifics that related to this model. Furthermore, two participants placed an emphasis on the co-operative aspect of CGC, noting that the co-operative is what makes CGC unique, with support from people with a variety of skill sets who assist in areas such as partnership agreements, accounting, and human resources. Staff participants discussed the training programs and businesses that are supported through CGC, including the Foundations Program, the Apprenticeship Program, Lemon and Allspice Cookery, each of the Coffee Sheds, and CLEANable. Lastly, participants described the array of additional programs that are provided to the Partners to assist them in obtaining both social and financial goals.

What Keeps CGC Going? Filling a Need, Community Support, Marketing and Dedication

In examining the organizational and community factors that support the continued work of CGC and its related enterprises, some staff respondents described CGC’s role in meeting the need for adults with developmental disabilities to feel empowered in their work, to have a purpose and to be provided with meaningful employment. Others emphasized the support that

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CGC has received from the community, with many of the participants discussing the impact that the exposure of persons with developmental disabilities through this employment model has had on community members and how this exposure has assisted in expanding and maintaining the businesses. Some participants described the specific locations as sympathetic organizations that are integral to CGC's growth and development. Finally, one participant discussed the dedication of staff and board members in creating and expanding the businesses.

Although staff participants from the second phase of interviews were not asked to address factors related to the ongoing success of CGC, many of them indirectly identified the same factors that were addressed in the first phase of interviews. More specifically, participants from the second phase of interviews addressed the need for communities to have more programs such as CGC in place so that more persons with intellectual disabilities can have access to this type of employment model. They described the need for ongoing programming to continue the professional and personal success of the Partners. They also described the role of marketing in bringing in revenue for the businesses and in exposing community members to CGC and, through it, to the capabilities of the Partners. Second phase participants also described the role that staff dedication plays in the ongoing success of CGC and of the Partners. Each of these will be discussed in further detail throughout this section. However, the theme of dedication is addressed in further detail during the inductive section as, once again, this theme was not directly stated by most participants, but implied.

Filling a gap within the current employment sector. Many of the staff participants described the need for persons with developmental disabilities to have access to meaningful employment, to feel empowered, and to be provided with a purpose. As one participant stated:

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Everybody needs a purpose, everybody needs work. Freud said you need love and work, they're the only two important things in life, right?...they needed to feel that they could contribute in that way. It's not just money, in fact, there's a huge part of our Partners are living at home or are taken care of, they have condos, and then there's this other part of Partners who really struggle to survive, so you've got, you know, both ends, but what's common is coming in and feeling useful, and contributing to the world, to their life.

(P4FP)

One participant was very specific about the need for persons with developmental disabilities to be afforded the opportunity to work in an environment that is specific to the CGC employment model where Partners receive support from colleagues with similar life experiences and extra support to develop work-related skills:

Prepare for the world of work so and use this as a model for people to work 'cause the most ideal situation for a person with a developmental disability is to learn about the world of work but also to work with their peers and get that feedback about work with extra support. In my opinion that's the most successful model in terms of having them understand what they're expectations are rather than me or someone from Tim Horton's or whatever, right it's more impacting. (P2FP)

In addition to supporting work skills training for persons with disabilities, another participant also focused on the need for persons without disabilities to be educated about the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities within the employment sector. More specifically, this participant described the need for the provision of accommodations and also the importance of recognizing the strengths of persons who have disabilities. This participant referred to the idea that "limitations" are universal and do not exist only for persons who have

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been identified as having a specific disability: “what keeps it going is knowing that you need to educate people in the general public about the types of people we’re working with and their capabilities, what they can do and what they can’t do, because not everybody can do the same thing” (P5FP).

Participants from the second phase of interviews were not specifically asked to discuss “what keeps CGC going?” However, the staff participants from this phase, without being asked to describe “what keeps CGC going?” discussed the need for communities to have this type of employment model and the need for programs that can develop both life and work-related skills so that Partners can be more successful in their businesses and in their lives.

In summary, when participants were asked about “what keeps CGC going?” many emphasized an overall need for persons with developmental disabilities to have access to meaningful employment, to feel empowered and find a sense of purpose in their lives. Furthermore, staff participants described the need for persons with developmental disabilities to have access to an employment model that offers them the opportunity to work with other colleagues who have similar life experiences and to be provided with employment options that can provide necessary accommodations while recognizing strengths. In addition to participants discussing the need for an employment model that can provide a sense of purpose, create a safe place where persons can learn from others with similar life experiences and receive accommodations for limitations, staff participants also discussed the support from community members and sympathetic organizations in the continued success and expansion of CGC and its related businesses.

Community support. Staff members discussed the community support that is received from local agencies and organizations in maintaining the businesses by ordering food through the

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Lemon and Allspice Cookery. One participant discussed a large agency that has become a loyal customer: “any catering they have to do, the CEO of (location) loves us and his thing was when we came in if you were having any meetings or anything going on, the catering had to go through us” (P1FP).

Staff also described how the community supports the expansion of the businesses through volunteering and providing resources and donations for the businesses to expand.

We got the wood supplies for free from [name of hardware store]. The woman who supplied us the worms and was working with me, she had a contact so she ended up getting that supplied. The custodian built the bin for us for free so [it] just kind of all came together and we had a big launch party and the staff were pretty excited because the staff here are pretty green, they want to be green they want to do all that stuff and they were really engaged in it. (P2FP)

A participant noted the support from agencies in providing positive feedback about the products produced through Lemon and Allspice Cookery and how that feedback has assisted in creating better products.

So in that time that we were [customer organization], we developed some of our products because they were so picky they helped develop some of the products... some of the baked goods much better. I don't come from a baking [background], I'm not a chef or anything, so I mean it was important along the line to get some help with that...to get some good feedback and change and, so we had a really good ... relationship with the organizer and she helped us a lot with that. (P4FP)

Other participants describe the support they received from like-minded organizations and businesses, with one participant noting that the businesses only thrive in such supportive

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environments. This is true not only of customer relations but also of the organizations where the retail Coffee Sheds are located. When asked about the Coffee Sheds being located in another place, such as the Eaton Centre, this participant stated:

I think it would be a culture shock, I think it would be a big shock... like working in a hospital Coffee Shed would probably be awesome. I think there'd be a lot of support through a hospital system. It just depends which systems you go through. (P3FP)

Overall, staff participants emphasized that the financial and material support from community members, that the creative feedback from customers, and that the support from the sympathetic organizations have all contributed to the continued growth and success of CGC and its related businesses. In addition to CGC filling a need within the current employment sector and the community support that is provided to maintain and expand CGC and its related businesses, staff participants also discussed the role that marketing has on the continued success for Partners, CGC, and the related businesses

Marketing. All of the participants noted that exposure plays an integral role in the maintenance and expansion of CGC and its related businesses. During the second phase of interviews, one participant discussed the efforts that are made to advertise and market the businesses:

Updating the website and maintaining it, generating press releases or reach[ing] out to media to try to garner support and publications, the newsletter that gets sent out, ... social media, so we're new to Youtube, Facebook and Twitter, so we do reach out for ... support to increase volunteer opportunities and support .. financial support hopefully, but mostly to spread knowledge and awareness. (P7SP)

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While formal advertising strategies are important, word of mouth also plays an important role in keeping CGC and its related businesses viable:

Usually it's word of mouth because people like what we do. We have a lot of people that email and say "omg I was at blah blah blah" and I had your date squares, they're to die for and could you do a catering for us? (P1FP)

Two participants made special note of how they work collaboratively with the Partners to actively seek out and gain increased exposure for CGC and the related businesses. One participant provided an example of how the Partners from one of the Coffee Sheds made the decision to create and deliver a presentation to a classroom of students who were being taught out of the building where their Coffee Shed was located. This staff participant described the relationship that was fostered between the Partners and the project coordinator who was responsible for running the courses. This relationship provided the Partners with access to all of the classes offered at this location. As this participant stated:

Partners at the Coffee Shed get up every class or program that they [location] run(s) so these guys can come and do a presentation on who they are and what their business is about, who they're supporting because not a lot of people understand that they are supporting the guys or the Partners. They just think it goes to me for money like it's really weird. So they [Partners] go out and explain it and with that it's helped immensely and it's doubled the sales. (P3FP)

In summary, staff participants stressed the importance of formal marketing in acquiring financial support and support from volunteers. They highlighted the role of formal marketing in creating awareness and knowledge about CGC, its related businesses, and the Partners.

Furthermore, staff participants asserted that the primary type of marketing for CGC is by word of

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mouth; staff members and Partners are involved in disseminating information about CGC and the businesses through formal and informal presentations. In addition to discussing the role of marketing in the maintenance and growth of CGC and the related businesses, participants also described the dedication of all those who are involved with CGC and its related businesses as being a driving force for continued success.

Dedication. Dedication was a strong underlying theme related to the discussion of factors that have contributed to the development and success of CGC, its related businesses and the business Partners. However, it was rarely discussed directly with the exception of one participant who described the dedication of the staff in supporting the vision of CGC and the role that the Partners play in promoting this dedication. When asked about what keeps CGC going, this participant responded with “the dedication from the job coaches, the women that I’ve met so far are so dedicated to the business and making sure this is successful...and the guys is why we’re dedicated to it because we have relationships with them” (P3FP). Interestingly, this theme of dedication is woven throughout the interviews in the multiple roles that are required of the staff, the programs that are developed and offered out of staff members’ sensitivity to the needs of Foundations trainees and Partners, and in the description of the efforts that are made by staff members, to create a non-judgemental environment. Dedication was also evident through the discussions that staff presented about the difficulties they face in teaching and supporting persons with different needs and strengths. The theme of dedication was heavily present throughout the interviews and will be discussed in greater detail in the inductive results section of this paper.

Staff participants highlighted a number of factors related to the continued growth and success of CGC, the businesses and the Partners. More specifically, staff participants discussed

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the broader need for persons to be involved in an employment model that can provide meaningful work that affords accommodations and recognizes strengths. They discussed the role of community support in providing financial and material support to the businesses, in providing locations where persons can work with like-minded individuals and with colleagues who have similar life experiences. Furthermore, staff participants described the role of formal and informal marketing in gaining financial, community, and volunteer support, and the role of marketing in creating awareness and knowledge about the work of CGC and the Partners. Lastly, one participant noted the dedication of all those involved in the maintenance and growth of CGC and the related businesses. In addition to describing the factors related to maintaining and expanding CGC and the related businesses, staff participants also discussed the nature of the activities in which CGC is engaged.

The Nature of the Activity in Which CGC Engages - Work, Partial Employment, or Volunteer?

When staff participants were asked about the nature of the Partners' activities in the enterprises, the response from each of them was, unequivocally, that it was work. As one participant put it, "they're doing a job, period" (P5FP). When asked to expand on this, staff members noted that it was a job; it was work because they get paid, and they have workplace commitments and responsibilities that do not come with volunteer or partial employment. Staff emphasized that this is not only work or a job for the Partners, but that they own and operate their own businesses placing further emphasis on the importance of creating a quality product, and that the quality of their products affects their bottom line and, as such, their wages. As one participant noted in reference to Partners' past experience, "they've...volunteered themselves [before], and they know that they don't have to commit to anything...they get paid...they have to

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be there on time, they have to adhere to workplace commitments” (P5FP). In discussing the impact that job performance has on the quality of products, one participant discussed the example of the Partners’ role and responsibility in designing a protocol for when Partners owning Lemon and Allspice Cookery make a mistake with the products they are producing. This highlights the responsibility of the Partners and how staff members view the activity in which they engage as not only a job or work but as persons who are involved in owning their own business:

We do throw out a fair bit well, we don’t throw out a fair bit but lately it has been higher so, they decide[d] in the last partnership meeting that you get two chances of screwing up and then you pay for it so, if you screw up three batches of 3 dozen cookies guess what’s coming off your pay but that wasn’t our decision that was the decision of the Partners because that affects their bottom line. (P1FP)

Lastly every staff member who was asked about whether this was a job or a volunteer experience explained the primary reason why they and the Partners view this as work was the presence of a paycheque and the value that comes along with that paycheque: “their paycheque is incredibly important, they get a Partners’ draw twice a month, so that legitimizes it for them. Unpaid [is] unvalued here” (P4FP).

Staff participants from the second phase of interviews were not asked directly to address the nature of the activities in which the Partners within CGC engage. As such, no details on this theme were collected from the second phase of interviews.

To conclude, staff members overwhelmingly confirmed that the Partners are working, not volunteering, because of the commitments they have made to themselves, their fellow Partners and to CGC, because of the responsibility they accept in owning and operating their businesses

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and because of the paycheque that validates the activities in which they are engaged through CGC. In addition to describing the nature of the activities in which Partners engage, the staff participants were asked to describe how CGC is financed and governed.

How is CGC Financed?

Three participants discussed how CGC was financed. When asked, one participant reported that the majority of the financing came from fundraising; one participant noted that it was financed through government funding while the third participant was able to provide a more thorough breakdown:

MCSS [Ministry of Community and Social Services] ..., 65% [of] the rest is fundraised by us but that funding goes into the job coaches sort of keeping the business running.

The partnerships have an agreement with Common Ground and they pay a 5% fee towards administrative costs and that was introduced several years ago because ... we recognize that [an] accountant has to do all the paycheques for all the businesses at the end of the month and there's a lot of administrative costs and Common Ground was basically supplementing that cost but really the businesses should be doing [that]. (P3FP)

Staff members were not asked directly to discuss the impact that financing has on the expansion of CGC into other locations or to provide further programming; however, many of the staff members placed an emphasis on funding as a barrier to expanding. Simply put, one participant noted, "I think it could be much bigger than it actually is, I think we're... bound by the confines of funding" (P4FP). In discussing the impact that financing has on expanding the businesses, a participant stated "it's just money it comes down to, I mean we have the participants involved and we have the Partners who are interested, it's just getting the space and the money".(P3FP)

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Staff participants from the second phase of interviews did not provide any details on how CGC is financed since this was not the focus of this phase. When participants were asked about how CGC is financed, responses varied between government funding and fundraising, with one participant providing a detailed breakdown of how CGC is financed and where the money goes. When participants were asked to discuss “what keeps CGC going?” four participants emphasized that they would like to see CGC expand but that funding is the largest barrier.

Perceived Barriers for Persons with Developmental Disabilities in Traditional Employment Settings

Staff members described a multitude of barriers facing persons with developmental disabilities within the competitive employment sector, included in these discussions were: community perceptions of the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities and their employability; traditional segregated or supported employment options being meaningless, disempowering, and not challenging; and the impact that past experiences have had on a person’s sense of self-worth and self-esteem. In addition, staff participants noted some of the barriers that are present for Partners within CGC, specifically related to physical accessibility, community perceptions, transit systems, and the influence of ODSP on the Partners’ motivation to work and on the hours in which they can be involved in work. Barriers to traditional employment and barriers within CGC were not discussed during the second phase of interviews.

Community perceptions. When discussing community perceptions, three staff members emphasized a general community misconception about persons with developmental disabilities: “people are really underrated and underestimated and undervalued” (P4FP). These participants noted that there is a lack of education, knowledge, and exposure to persons with developmental disabilities. Moreover, it was noted by participants that this misconception is a major barrier for

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persons with developmental disabilities within the employment sector. In describing the barriers seen in traditional employment and in discussing what needs to happen to make employment successful for these individuals, one participant from the second phase of interviews noted that “people in the community [need] to get rid of their judgements, and their stereotypes and educate them[selves]” (ISP). In addition, when describing some of the lived experiences of the Partners, two staff members noted that the community perceptions of persons with developmental disabilities leads to an overall sense of judgement and disrespect for these persons within traditional forms of employment. One participant described the danger and humiliation that some people have experienced in competitive employment settings:

There’s the whole thing of safety, you know, that you are with people that are watching out for you and are treating you as an equal. But when you’re out in [large stores] or whatever and you don’t have a one-on-one staff a lot of times the whole dynamics change so somebody in your department might be very nice to you and treat you like everybody else but that security guard is calling you names calling you a [disability epithet] and a lot of customers will say things about you and a lot of people have been spit on. (P1FP)

Additionally, a third participant noted that traditional forms of employment, and specifically segregated employment, are a reflection of how the community perceives persons with developmental disabilities: “I think people see the institutional sheltered workshop as that’s the typical or that’s their capabilities” (P2FP). As one participant noted, it is community perceptions, such as the attitudes of employers that prevent persons with developmental disabilities from accessing more meaningful employment.

Overall, staff participants placed a large emphasis on the perspectives of community members, employers, and employees as a primary barrier for persons with developmental

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disabilities to access and maintain positions in mainstream employment, that these perceptions lead to stigmatization and discrimination in the workplace and that current employment options reflect the discriminatory perspectives of the larger community. In addition to describing community perceptions as a barrier to mainstream employment, staff participants also discussed the characteristics of the traditional employment options that are provided for adults with intellectual disabilities.

Characteristics of traditional employment. In discussing the options that are traditionally provided to persons with developmental disabilities, four staff participants emphasized traditional forms of employment, such as segregated/supported employment, as providing persons with what they indicated as being meaningless activity, noting that these environments are disempowering and not challenging. As one participant stated, in reference to the difference between CGC and segregated/sheltered workshops:

[In comparison] to CGC I don't know if sheltered workshops are empowered, not from what I've seen anyways... personally, I feel like sheltered workshops, some of them, ...strike me as a lot of people sitting around waiting to die...yeah, doing nothing, not being engaged. (P5FP)

Two staff members discussed a lack of meaningful options for persons with developmental disabilities, emphasizing that the traditional day program choices provided to this population are not challenging, noting that these environments create a sense of comfort but do not provide a sense of pride or happiness. As one participant states:

They would get involved in these day programs and they would not challenge themselves. Like there was nothing pushing them forward, they would just staple papers

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together, they would put things in boxes or make boxes... those were the only options they had and they just did it. (P3FP)

Staff participants felt that traditional forms of employment for persons with developmental disabilities were disempowering, not challenging, and lacked engagement. In addition to discussing the disempowering nature of traditional employment options, staff participants discussed the impact some of these experiences within traditional employment have had on many of the Partners' sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Past experiences and self-esteem. In discussing supported employment, two participants emphasized the lack of support provided for Partners in their past experiences. They noted particularly the impact that limited support has on a person's sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

They just want to work and need a little bit more help, right? And there's got to be patience with that and usually in a, in [coffee shop] it's really busy and you keep telling the same person to go mop because you don't have time to teach them to do something else but...this person's been moping all day and they don't, haven't really done anything. This is what they tell me and they don't understand what it's about... I understand what it's about and what that does for their self-esteem. (P2FP)

A third participant noted the role that past experiences have had on the Partners working within CGC, and the impact that has had on the self-esteem of many of these individuals when they start work with CGC. This participant explained that staff at CGC try to compensate for a lack of support that Partners may have experienced in previous jobs: "you know people generally don't feel great about themselves...so if they're told, if they're being told continually those negative voices, if I'm not good enough I can't do this, so we try to reverse that" (P4FP).

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Staff participants stated that a lack of support in traditional employment, coupled with negative community perspectives, has impacted the Partners' self-esteem, sense of self-worth and confidence and that this has typically contributed to unsuccessful outcomes for persons with developmental disabilities in mainstream employment. Furthermore, staff participants discussed difficulties with lack of self-esteem when discussing past experiences; as such, it was not directly stated but implied by the staff participants that this lack of self-esteem is a result of the experiences that Partners have had in traditional employment options. In addition to describing the barriers that the Partners have faced in traditional and competitive employment, staff participants also described a number of barriers that are present within CGC.

Barriers within CGC. In discussing the barriers seen within traditional employment options, staff participants noted that Partners within CGC also face a number of barriers including: accessibility within their physical spaces, issues regarding transportation, and the impact of ODSP on the Partners' motivation and ability to work longer shifts.

Physical barriers. Staff participants described two primary issues concerning the accessibility of the physical spaces used by the CGC- related businesses. These include the accessibility of the spaces themselves and the location of the businesses. More specifically, one participant discussed the inaccessible nature of the Coffee Sheds and specifically Lemon and Allspice Cookery, stating that each of these locations cannot support persons with physical disabilities. Participants noted that the Coffee Sheds and Lemon and Allspice Cookery are not large enough to accommodate persons with wheelchairs. One participant attributed the Cookery barriers in particular to external sources, stating that the requirement of an industrial kitchen creates barriers to persons who need to use a wheelchair or who are short in stature.

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An approved work surface for a kitchen, has to be stainless steel. They only make it a certain height; to have them shorter is a custom make and it's like...\$15[00] or \$2000 dollars more to get the legs chopped off...we can't afford to do it. (P1FP)

Staff participants also noted that the Coffee Sheds are not large enough to accommodate for physical disabilities.

Three participants placed an emphasis on the physical location of the businesses as a barrier, in that they are not able to expand and bring more Partners into the businesses and that those who are situated in certain locations face a barrier in terms of the allocation of profits. More specifically, the Partners' profits are based on the amount of sales and the number of Partners that need to share the profits for each location. Participants noted that due to the large variation in the size and specific locations of the Coffee Sheds and the number of Partners in each location, some of the Partners are not provided with the same opportunities to bring in the same amount of revenue and profit as Partners from other locations.

Overall, participants discussed the physical barriers of the businesses as creating difficulties and inaccessibility for persons with physical disabilities or mobility issues. Moreover, participants noted that the physical locations of the businesses themselves are barriers, first because they are not able to take on more Partners into the businesses and second because the locations of the businesses and the number of Partners within each of the businesses influences the allocation of profits for each of the Partners. In addition to discussing the physical barriers within CGC, many of the staff participants noted problems with access to, and discrimination while using, transit to and from CGC.

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Transit. In discussing the locations of the businesses, two participants described the barriers that have been faced by the Partners when using transit to access these locations. More specifically, these participants noted that the transit system is a very vulnerable place for the Partners, noting that Partners have been generally mistreated, harassed and subjected to physical and sexual abuse when using public transit.

(name of transit system) is a very vulnerable place for these guys to, this is where problems occur, this is where they get picked off or where they decided to bring home a boyfriend or ..., or something happens. (P2FP)

Two participants provided examples of situations that have left Partners in a vulnerable position while using transit. One participant described a time when a Partner who usually uses transit to get to CGC did not make it to work because they closed the stop where he usually transfers. During this experience, the Partner waited at this stop for an hour before his mother realized that something had happened and found him after re-tracing his usual route. During that time, numerous buses and people had passed him by without offering their assistance. In addition to describing the barriers faced by the Partners while using transit, many of the participants discussed the influence of ODSP as a primary barrier for Partners and for persons with developmental disabilities in general.

ODSP. Although staff members did not explicitly identify ODSP as a barrier within CGC, many of the staff did mention the influence of ODSP on the Partners' motivation to work and the impact that it has on the number of hours that each Partner is able to work, resulting in only part-time work for the Partners. As one participant remarks:

They [referring to the Partners] only work four hour shifts...that way you can fit everybody in and you can only make a certain amount of money a month before it affects

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your ... ODSP ...you know you're damned if you do and damned if you don't because sometimes it's not worth your while working. (P1FP)

More specifically, staff participants discussed the influence that ODSP has on the motivation for some Partners to work. When discussing this issue, one participant provided the example of a Partner who was not able to work a lot of hours because of physical limitations. This participant noted that upon leaving CGC, this Partner had stated that there was no reason for him to stay at CGC and work because at the end of the month he was not making any more money than he was able to make on ODSP alone.

Staff participants described a multitude of barriers in both traditional and competitive employment while providing some detail about the barriers that are faced within CGC. Staff participants noted that the community perceives persons with developmental disabilities as unemployable, stating that this population is undervalued and underestimated. Furthermore, staff asserted that these perceptions are a result of a lack of education, knowledge, and exposure to persons with developmental disabilities. Traditional employment options that are available were described as meaningless, disempowering, disengaging, and not challenging; and that they have been developed based on the misconception that persons with developmental disabilities are unemployable. Additionally, staff participants discussed the experiences that some Partners have had with traditional employment and how these experiences have resulted in a lack of self-esteem and self-confidence that is seen among apprentices and new Partners when starting work with CGC. Staff participants described the barriers that are faced by the Partners within CGC, noting that the physical spaces of the Coffee Sheds and Lemon and Allspice Cookery are inaccessible for persons with physical disabilities and that the locations of the businesses create an unequal distribution of profits. Lastly, staff participants emphasized the issues related to

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Partners accessing and being treated poorly while using transit as a significant barrier, as well as the effect that ODSP has on the motivation and the ability of the Partners to work longer shifts.

Why Did You Choose to Work Here?

Previous experiences. When staff participants were asked about their choice to work with CGC, each of them discussed their previous experiences as being the driving force for their choice of employment. Interestingly, there was a range of experiences and expertise that the staff described when discussing their choice of employment. More specifically, three of the staff members discussed having previous experience working in some capacity with adults who have a developmental disability. Of those three participants, two noted that this position was a perfect fit between their previous work experiences with persons with developmental disabilities and work experiences in business. In describing past experiences, one person stated “I worked in a group home and then I went into owning my own business for [number] years...I just wanted ... a challenge ...this position brought the two of them together”(P3FP).

Two participants discussed their previous technical experience as the reason for choosing their job at CGC. More specifically, one participant described having been in the food industry while another participant discussed having a background in business. Of these participants, one noted having had previous involvement with persons with developmental disabilities, but did not work with them in this capacity. Each of the staff participants with a technical background noted that they wanted to work in an area that was more meaningful than what they felt they could gain from a typical business position.

It wasn't very fulfilling... most of my friends work in social services...you know. A lot of my friends work with sex workers, street active folks...personal support workers, nurses, doctors, they all have, all these friends who like make differences in people's

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lives, and all I was doing was making like fabulous pasta, so I wanted a change. (P5FP)

Discussions surrounding choice of employment were addressed during the second phase of interviews and reflected the differences and combination of experiences described by participants in the first phase of interviews. Staff participants noted that they either had previous experience working with adults with developmental disabilities, in a specific technical field or came from a background that reflected both of those experiences.

Staff Roles

General description. Each of the staff participants provided a general description of their role within CGC. These descriptions focused on assisting or supporting the Partners in operating their businesses. As one participant from the second phase of interviews remarked, “My job is supposed to be to be behind them and for them to be at the forefront...basically my job is to ensure that their business is viable and they continue to have income at the end of the month” (P2SP). When asked to describe in more detail what each of their jobs entailed, it became evident that staff participants are responsible for a multitude of different roles, including supporting the Partners’ businesses and also supporting the Partners’ emotional well-being. Multiple roles will be discussed in further detail during the inductive results sections.

Impact of CGC on the Partners

Staff participants described CGC as meaningful employment that provides Partners with both purpose and dignity. In describing the nature of CGC and the related businesses, staff described an environment that provides Partners with opportunities to gain life and work-related skills, a place that challenges persons to advocate for their needs/wants and to work independently, where Partners take responsibility for their businesses, a place that recognizes persons’ strengths, accommodates for weaknesses and cultivates equality between those involved

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with CGC and its associated businesses and community members. Within that environment, staff described the impacts that CGC has had on the Partners' self-esteem and changes in their beliefs about their own capabilities. They described CGC as a place where Partners have options and find a sense of belonging with their peers and within the workforce. Participants from both interview phases provided examples that showcased improvements in the Partners' overall quality of life and well-being, with one participant expressing the opinion that there is health benefits associated with being employed:

I think the impact is huge. We're just starting to write a funding proposal and we're using the benefits of health, ... I can't possibly imagine what it must be like to be ... a functioning person with skills and a developmental disability and you can't get a job and you can't pay for this and you can't pay for that and people have told you, you can't do it and you're going nowhere, and it's just in your head. So to see people actually doing stuff all the time is actually really, really huge and important. So that also impacts your health, you're healthier, you feel better, you're contributing more, there's so many benefits. (P1SP)

In addition to describing an improvement in Partners' overall well-being, staff participants emphasized improvements in the Partners' self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-worth.

Self-esteem. Each of the staff participants described, with some variation, improvements in the Partners' self-esteem. For example, one participant described the sense of pride that a Partner felt when she succeeded in an aspect of the business, noting that this reaction was due to a lack of self-esteem that developed from past experiences:

She started crying and I knew she would be fine and yet there's this sense of self-esteem,

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some of them had a lack of it, others had an excess, a lot of them through just external employment ... they all of them have stories of not being successful so they've made it through this part so it's really, really great. That's what you're here for, those are the moments where it's, this is why I do this job. (P2FP)

A participant from the second phase of interviews described similar changes in people's self-esteem when they are challenged to complete work-related tasks independently: "it's kind of like 'yeah, I can do this on my own, I don't need that' and they sort of grow, they build this self-confidence and the independence that they...actually glow, like they just take off with it". (ISP)

Other participants focused their remarks on the specific changes they had witnessed in the way the Partners carry themselves, specifically in their personal appearance, their mannerisms and their ability to verbalize their wants/needs while advocating for themselves. As one participant stated, "they've changed the way in which they treat themselves, they treat themselves better, they dress better, ... they're ... more alive in many ways" (P4FP). Another participant emphasized watching a person's confidence grow, including the ability to advocate on one's own behalf when a customer is treating them poorly.

This has happened many times, I will stand beside them and...I'll stop the...customer from talking that way and I will say "oh just hang on, I think this person has something to say" and I'll look at the Partner and the Partner will say it and once it's out there the customer realizes like ok, you can't do this here and it gives them more, it increases their self-esteem and they don't let it happen again (P3FP).

A participant described witnessing changes in the Partners' life perspectives, stating that you can see a sense of self-confidence that they did not have when they started with CGC. As this participant explained, "if you had asked them years ago they would have said 'oh no, no this

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is great I love this job' [at CGC -related business] but now they feel better and better about themselves they think 'oh, maybe I could tackle that thing [outside CGC support] that I want to do" (P1FP). A participant from the second phase of interviews described the self-confidence that resonates among the Partners in their businesses: "it builds a lot more communication, self-confidence with the Partners and staff, it creates a better outlook" (ISP).

When participants were asked to describe the impacts of CGC on the Partners, the theme of self-esteem was extremely prevalent among responses. It was highlighted by staff participants that self-esteem and self-confidence are fostered by being challenged and by completing tasks independently. They discussed witnessing this impact in changes in the Partners' personal appearance, mannerisms, and in their ability to advocate for their needs and wants. Lastly, staff participants emphasized that Partners have broadened their perspective about their capabilities and have a better outlook on their life. In addition to discussing improvements in self-esteem, participants highlighted the range of options provided to Partners and the impact that it has on Partners' work and personal skills.

Options. Throughout the interviews, staff members frequently described the range of options and choices that are available to Partners through CGC and they described the lack of such options within the traditional employment sector. Participants described the programs that are offered through CGC as a place for Partners to acquire work-related skills and to improve life skills, such as communication and cooperation. In doing this, many of the staff referred to CGC as a stepping stone. Four of the participants described incidents where Partners have come and gone from CGC in pursuit of something that they were passionate about and that carried more meaning for them. One participant described this success and the impact that CGC has had on one of the Partners:

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One of the success stories we have...one of the girls wanted to work with flowers and she didn't really want to work that much anymore, so the job coaches basically called the worker and said this is what this person wants to do. The next thing we know she's in a flower class, she does her own [arrangements], she created a portfolio and then we did her résumé. So it's the whole full circle, so you can actually see that that's an opportunity...we don't all want to do the same thing our entire life or we don't want to be limited to one. (P2FP)

Overall, participants emphasized that Partners are provided with a multitude of opportunities to gain both life and work-related skills. Furthermore, staff participants discussed the connection between Partners being given the opportunity to grow and the resulting changes in their perception of their own capabilities. Staff participants noted that with these changes in their perspective, many of the Partners do not stay with CGC but move on to different forms of employment that may hold more meaning for them. When staff were asked about what impacts CGC has had on the Partners they emphasized a sense of belonging that Partners experience being involved with CGC and related this to the Partners' past experiences within traditional forms of employment.

Sense of belonging. Staff participants discussed the sense of belonging that the Partners gain by being part of a cohesive group of people who are all working towards a common goal. Two participants noted the sense of belonging that is created among their peers, and specifically when working with other individuals who have developmental disabilities. Staff explained that Partners within their worksites are able to find a safe place where there is no fear of judgement, where they can come together as a group and support one another. The participants described a sense of belonging and strength in Partners that comes from being involved in this group. As

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stated by one participant:

I think it's given them the confidence and the opportunity to work in a community and with other Partners who have similar disabilities or more or less and they kind of come together as a team which makes them stronger. (P3FP)

Three participants emphasized the sense of belonging that Partners have established through forming social groups and friendships with their other business Partners. As described by one participant:

They start here and they may not have been involved in anything. All of a sudden they're exposed to a lot of social programs and a lot of social circles. These guys are involved in things they're like oh, come and join us and all of a sudden their schedule gets rammed and they're saying oh, I can't work this day, this day or this day because I'm doing this and this and this so we see their whole life change, not just work. (P2FP)

Lastly, a participant from the second phase of interviews described how being a part of CGC provides Partners with a sense of belonging not only within their own businesses but also within the community and the larger workforce:

We deal ... with a primarily marginalized population, so by participating in meaningful work, they're getting included in their environment that each one of the host sites is situated in, as well as the community at large through caterings or ... meeting and greeting and talking about the business that they do. (P7SP)

In summary, throughout the interviews, staff participants described an environment that provides dignity and purpose, where Partners are provided with opportunities to gain both life and work -related skills and are challenged to work independently and advocate for themselves. Furthermore, staff participants discussed how Partners are expected to take responsibility for

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their businesses while staff members and CGC accommodate for limitations and recognize strengths. Within this environment, staff participants highlighted changes in the Partners' self-esteem and beliefs about their capabilities. They noted that changes in self-esteem and capabilities coupled with life and work-related skill development result in Partners viewing their lives as having options, and that many of the Partners begin to see CGC as a stepping stone. Lastly, staff participants described the impact that working with other persons with developmental disabilities has had on creating a sense of belonging that results in a safe place to learn and grow, and develops friendships. In addition to being asked about the impacts that CGC has had on the Partners, staff participants were also asked about the impacts that working for CGC has had on their own lives.

Impact of CGC on Staff Participants

When asked about the impact that CGC has had on their life, every staff member who participated in this study responded with a description of how their perception of the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities within the workforce had changed. Each of the participants placed an emphasis on realizing that this population is just like anyone else; they are capable of success when they are challenged and provided with the proper supports that recognize strengths and accommodate for limitations. As one participant emphasized:

It's totally opened my mind as to what these guys are capable of doing and that they can succeed in whatever they want. They just need the opportunity to do it and the chance to do it and they have goals just like anybody else and they thrive to accomplish them.

(P3FP)

A participant from the second phase of interviews also emphasized this point:

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I look at it as these individuals can do and strive for whatever they ...want to do, and they can reach their goals just like anybody else. There's no such thing as "normal" in quotations, ... which I find that's, I've learned a lot from them, more than what I could ever learn in school. (ISP)

Three participants emphasized that their work with CGC leaves them feeling fulfilled and that they have found a purpose in this job. When one participant was asked how CGC has changed his/her life, he/she responded with "significantly, personally, and professionally... I feel a lot more fulfilled... I feel like my job is a cause and not a job" (P5FP).

Two participants emphasized that in addition to changing their perceptions about the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities, it has also taught them to keep an open mind, to be patient, to teach to a person's strengths, to be creative when addressing limitations, and to utilize different styles and methods of communication. As one participant remarked:

Anybody working with the Partners will definitely learn more ... about themselves, about how to interact with different people, how to have an open mind, patience... I find that I would learn more here with this job than I have ever learned in the social service field and it's coming from them, it's not coming from what I'm supposed to learn from the job but it's coming from them. (P3FP)

Staff responses to this question reflect the themes that were discussed when asked about the impacts that CGC has had on the Partners, with staff participants emphasizing CGC as a place to learn both life and work-related skills and a place to change perceptions about the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities within the employment sector.

Interestingly, this theme continued when staff participants were asked about the impact that CGC has on the larger community.

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Impact of CGC on the Community

When staff were asked to discuss the impact that CGC has on the broader community, all five participants from the first phase of interviews emphasized the ability of CGC's employment model to change the way in which people perceive the employability and capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities. As one participant explained: "people need to be able to see that these people are functioning, employed, empowered citizens who work, who go to work every day, and make a wage" (P5FP). One participant associated a general lack of community exposure with the fear that some people feel when they encounter persons with disabilities. For this reason, this participant explained that getting more people into the community through this type of employment model would break down that fear, noting that "people who were maybe like me as a kid and felt afraid would see that there's nothing to fear..." (P4FP).

In addition to staff participants discussing the impact that CGC could have on the community's perception of persons with developmental disabilities, staff members also highlighted that access to communities would create more exposure and that more exposure would result in the expansion of the businesses, which would result in more people changing their perceptions about persons with developmental disabilities as being capable, valued members of society.

As one participant explained, if CGC could expand into the broader community, the knowledge of CGC's employment model and the organizational structure would also expand. As stated by this participant,

I think everyone could learn from the organization...because of its ... democracy, and the way that individuals are respected and treated, moving out into the larger community and people seeing ok, maybe we could model our organization after that, that would be really

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good. (P4FP)

Overall when staff members were asked about the impacts that CGC has had on the Partners, themselves and the larger community, every staff member emphasized the ability of this type of employment model to change the perception of the capabilities of adults with developmental disabilities within the employment sector. In addition, when discussing the impacts that CGC has had on the Partners and themselves, staff participants highlighted that it provides an opportunity for personal and work-related growth. Lastly, staff participants noted the intrinsic benefits that the Partners gain from finding a sense of belonging and improved self-esteem and self-confidence. In addition to being asked about the impacts of CGC, staff participants were asked to provide recommendations for the replication of the CGC model.

Recommendations

When staff members from both phases of the interviews were asked about the recommendations they would make to people who are starting work in this field of supporting adults with developmental disabilities in employment, they emphasized two primary themes: recommendations related to replicating a social enterprise and recommendations surrounding staff characteristics.

Replication of the CGC social enterprise model. Staff participants discussed the mechanisms and ideas that need to be in place in order for a social enterprise to be successful. More specifically, two participants noted the importance of having an idea that was viable, a business idea that was easily produced, that could sustain the business and that could create revenue. Furthermore, one participant emphasized the need to recognize the population that the social enterprise aims to support and, in doing that, finding a location that is suitable for the persons being supported and for the businesses. A second participant also placed an emphasis on

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the location. More specifically, this participant reported the importance of the business location being affordable so that profits coming in from the business are not being spent on rent.

Five participants emphasized the need for support from a number of sources. As one of these participants explained, support is needed from various sources including “administrative support, ministry support, board support, staff, families, and Partners, and community” (PISP).

In discussing this support, one participant emphasized having support for the staff members, noting that staff members within this field experience a high burnout rate and that affects turnover rates, which, in turn, influences the business and the Partners. A second participant emphasized recognizing the commitments that are made by all those who invest their time and money into the enterprise, including Partners, board members, persons from the co-operative, investors, and community members. This participant suggested that a plan needs to be in place to consider all aspects of the business that are required to make the enterprise work, and how to support these persons and their commitments if the enterprises are not successful. In a clearly stated response, this participant summarized the recommendations made by most of the participants:

What’s your social purpose doing, who are you supporting? Where, where’s your support coming from? How are you going to get that, what plans do you have to make this grow? If it starts to take off, and become[s] very popular and important... are you capable of bringing more people in? How are you going to do that, what’s the criteria going to be, is there criteria? ... Where are you going to be located? Is it accessible? Are you serving people with physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, is it marginalized folks, is it new immigrants? Like what supports do you have set up for that... are you committed to this for a long period of time, and if it’s a short period of time, how are you going to save

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people if you can't continue, what are you going to do to make sure that they're supported? (P5FP)

In addition to describing all the mechanisms and ideas that need to be in place in order for a social enterprise to be successful, staff participants discussed a number of staff characteristics that are important to the success of the Partners and the businesses.

Staff characteristics. Staff participants from both phases of interviews described a number of personal characteristics that are important for staff members to possess: empathy, passion, desire, tolerance, patience, a heart of gold, an ability to advocate for themselves and others, the ability to take on several different roles and an ability to communicate in a number of different ways. In addition to having the ability to communicate, participants emphasized that staff members need to recognize the importance of communication at all levels of the organization, to recognize people's strengths and to find creative ways to teach to those strengths. The primary focus of each of the participants was, as one participant asserted, the ability of staff to "keep in mind that the people we are working with are just like anybody else" (P5FP). Lastly, participants discussed the importance of an organizational fit between staff members and the values and mission of the organization. As one participant explained: "I think people who have been chosen, or who have worked... have the same vision basically, you have to have the same vision" (P4FP).

During the deductive stage of analysis, staff participants provided a general description of CGC, with many participants noting that CGC supports persons with intellectual disabilities in owning and operating their own businesses. Staff provided a detailed history of CGC emphasizing the grassroots nature, with CGC starting out of a need for persons to feel empowered in their work, and expanding through interest from other families and the larger

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community. Staff discussed CGC as a social enterprise, highlighting that the organization is structured to support both the financial and social gains of the Partners, while others focused their responses on the role of the co-operative as a means to flatten the hierarchy traditionally seen in vocational settings and a place where like-minded people work together to support a common goal. Furthermore, staff participants detailed each of the programs that are supported through CGC, including the Foundations Program, the Apprenticeship Program, Lemon and Allspice Cookery, three Coffee Sheds, CLEANable, and multiple additional programs to support both the social and financial goals of the Partners. Staff participants noted that CGC continues to be successful and to expand because it fills a gap within the current employment picture for persons with developmental disabilities; they noted that community support assists in this endeavour and that marketing and the dedication of staff members keep CGC going. Staff participants were asked about the nature of the activities in which Partners engage and the response from staff was unequivocally, they are working. Staff did not identify the activity in which Partners engage in, as volunteer or partial employment.

Furthermore, staff provided descriptions of the barriers that are seen within traditional employment models, with a primary theme related to the perception of persons with developmental disabilities being undervalued, incapable, and not employable. Staff participants provided details about why they chose to work in CGC, with mixed results between staff who had past experiences related to supporting persons with developmental disabilities in the social services field, some coming into CGC to work with a technical skill related to operating a business and others discussing CGC as a perfect place to use both experiences in supporting persons with developmental disabilities and past technical skills. Lastly, staff participants discussed the impacts that CGC has had on the Partners, staff members, and the community at

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large and gave recommendations for the replication of the CGC model and the staff characteristics that are required for persons working in this type of employment model.

Results of the Inductive Analysis

Autonomy

During the first phase of interviews, staff participants indirectly discussed the role of CGC and specifically their role in promoting the Partners' autonomy. This theme was noted throughout the interviews and arose when participants were discussing the nature of CGC, the impact of CGC and its related enterprises on the Partners and when describing what keeps CGC going. More specifically, staff discussed how Partners choose who works in their businesses, how Partners are involved in advertising, fundraising, product development, and in decision making regarding how monies are spent. It was emphasized by many participants that Partners are able to initiate and self-direct their own learning by their involvement in developing extra training programs (i.e., résumé writing, money handling, sexual awareness).

Furthermore, staff participants discussed the involvement of Partners in developing creative ways to assist their peers with accommodations and in dealing with conflict that arises within the businesses. Lastly, two staff members emphasized the financial freedom that being involved in work has on the Partners' ability to make money-related decisions in their own lives. These themes were addressed in further detail and directly with staff participants from the second phase of interviews. Themes that were presented deductively during the second phase reflect the themes that were identified inductively during the first phase of interviews. Each subsection below will end with a discussion about the responses from participants involved in the second phase of interviews.

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The voting process. When staff participants were asked about the nature of CGC, they all emphasized the voting process as a key characteristic in making the employment model of CGC unique. The voting process is engrained within the organizational system and is the key process in bringing new Partners and staff into the business. One staff participant detailed the process of voting new members into the businesses once their Apprenticeship Program is complete and terminating other Partners whose quality of work or work ethic are not up to the Partners' businesses standards. During this person's account of the voting process, it was noted that when potential new Partners are contributing to the businesses in an effective way, the members of the partnership may be promoted to revisit the poor work of an existing Partner who has not been contributing well. They may decide to accept the new person as a Partner and to remove the existing Partners who have not been contributing.

In addition to highlighting the voting process that is used to hire potential Partners, staff participants also described the voting process that is used to hire staff. Two staff participants noted that they were hired through a process which involved a Partner interviewing them. As one participant explained "I applied and ... [a Partner] interviewed me with another Partner... then the job coach interviewed me and I was just blown away" (P2FP).

Responses from participants during the second phase of interviews supported the use of the voting process as a means to promote autonomy. As one participant from the second phase described the role of the Partners in selecting potential job coaches:

You get an interview with a staff member at Common Ground and a Partner from the business you're going to be working at, ... and most of the time...it's the Partner interviewing me, asking me...what my qualifications are, and they'll put me through scenarios and I have to answer, answer them, and then they decide solely if they want me

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to be their job coach, or be part of their team...the Partner will go back and discuss that with the rest of the Partners, and then I had to go into ... the business itself and introduce myself to all the Partners, and then the rest of the Partners can either ask me questions, check me out, see if I'm, you know, if they want me to be part of the team. (ISP)

Many of the staff members noted that the voting process which is used to hire both potential Partners and staff members is not just a process, but provides Partners with control over their environment and their businesses. The voting process affords Partners the control to decide who they think they will work well with and who is going to contribute and benefit their business. The voting process described by staff was a predominant characteristic that was noted by all the participants as a means for persons to have control over their environments. In addition, staff participants described a number of other situations that promote the Partners' autonomy, including decisions regarding the operation of the businesses.

Other decision making involved in running the businesses. In addition to the voting process, staff participants also emphasized that Partners are heavily involved in many of the decisions related to operating the businesses. More specifically, one participant noted that Partners initiate and are involved in new product development. As one participant described this process, "we'll all be sitting around, 'let's make something' and somebody will grab one of the cookbooks and 'let's make these chocolate things, double chocolate and chocolate chip cookies'" (P1FP). One participant noted that Partners are involved in the advertising of CGC, and a second participant described instances where Partners have been involved in presenting information about CGC at conferences. A third participant noted that Partners are involved in developing and implementing ideas for fundraising to bring in more revenue, while another participant placed an emphasis on the Partners' participation in creating entirely new businesses,

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such as the Tuck Box. One participant detailed the Partners' involvement in developing advertising for catering sales, the creation of a penny drive and the Partners' involvement in creating gift baskets to bring in donations. This participant asserted:

That money went towards buying a new coffee urn that's something we do on a continual basis and the money we get from there supports... goes towards buying a new tea urn, forks, knives, table clothes, new sugar bowls, anything that will sort of spice up the Coffee Shed to make it look better. So they came up with that all on their own (P3FP).

Furthermore, several participants described the Partners' initiation and involvement in creating and implementing self-directed programs, such as sexual awareness training or résumé writing workshops. Lastly, one participant discussed the Partners' involvement in decisions regarding how their monies are spent. This participant described the process of bringing the need for new equipment to the Partners' attention and the process involved in obtaining the Partners' approval of the staff member spending money on their behalf:

I think we need this for this...what do you guys think. [and the Partners say] "oh yeah that makes sense" "yeah but what about this, what about that?" Well ... you know... I'm going to have to spend \$4000.00 of your money, so if you guys feel like you would like me to do that, then I will, if you decide that you don't want me to spend that much, I won't spend that much. If there's anything on this list you feel we really don't need, then speak up...so yeah it's their money it's not my money. (P5FP)

Second phase participants focused their responses on the involvement of the Partners in initiating, developing, and implementing additional life and work-related programs to promote skill development. One participant described how Partners identify training topics in which they have an interest and how they are also involved in teaching these programs that are offered every

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two to four months. In these training sessions, Partners co-teach with staff members.

In addition to staff participants describing the voting process and involvement in the operation of the businesses, they also highlighted the promotion of autonomy of Partners when involved in managing aspects of the functioning of their work groups.

Involvement in managing the group. Staff participants noted that the Partners are involved in developing creative ways to accommodate for their co-owners and in developing methods to address conflict within the businesses. One participant emphasized the Partners' involvement in managing conflict by creating Partner agreements amongst their peers. These agreements specify the expectations of the persons involved and the consequences for the Partners if they do not meet the specified expectations. Furthermore, a second participant detailed several accounts of Partners developing accommodations for their co-worker, emphasizing the teamwork that was involved in decisions on how to best support this individual. In one account, this participant stated "The guys stuck together, they worked together, they partnered up with him and helped him, helped him through it" (ISP).

For the most part, staff participants focused discussions about autonomy around the decision making that is involved within CGC; however two participants emphasized the decision making and autonomy that are afforded to Partners in making financial decisions on issues ranging from the wages that are earned through owning their own businesses.

Providing autonomy with financial independence. Two participants emphasized the financial independence created by the Partners receiving a paycheck. They associated this paycheck with the Partners' autonomy in purchasing items of interest to them. One participant described the impact that earning a paycheck has had on the Partners: "When they see a \$40 cheque to a \$100 cheque it is a party! When they see the numbers building they can understand

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that ‘ok, I’m doing something and I am succeeding” (P3FP).

Although the staff participants from the second phase of interviews did not address the autonomy that Partners gain from a wage or involvement in managing conflict, many provided general descriptions of how they view the autonomy of the Partners and the role of CGC in its promotion. As one participant explained:

Partners, they’re involved [in] every decision that’s made, like from hiring new staff to voting in new Partners, or if there’s a major issue, voting out Partners. So ... at every turn, like any decision that’s being made, they’re part of the process and there’s at least one but I mean there’s two designated seats on the board for Partners, so it’s, I mean they’re involved ... and a lot of the groups that (get) started, the social groups that started, there’s an art group that started, they, that was a partner-driven group, so they, the Partners started it...with support from staff, but really it’s the Partner that’s going to be at the helm, so I think that, that’s a big factor .(P6SP)

In addition to describing the promotion of autonomy for Partners, staff participants provided details about their influence on promoting autonomy and examples of situations in which someone’s autonomy may be restricted.

Staff influence. Participants discussed incidents where staff members were involved in promoting a person’s autonomy. During these discussions, a sense of the staff participants’ influence on the overall decision making began to emerge. Staff members frequently noted that the businesses are not theirs, that they are not the boss and they do not make the final decisions regarding the businesses. As one participant noted, “anything that we’ve done, anything that we want to do, we don’t do it unless the Partners are there, understand it and [are] on board” (P2FP). Staff members did emphasize that their role is to engage the Partners in discussions about

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decisions, with an effort to stay neutral and to support the Partners in their final decisions. One staff participant provided an example of the roles that both the Partners and staff members, from all of the businesses, play during a voting procedure:

There's a set guideline there, which says ... "I feel like you aren't doing a great job, or you're being aggressive, or you need to go", then ... you need to come to me or whatever, and say "I think ... I want to vote _____ (name of Partner) out," and then I would say "ok, what, well why?" "Well because... you know, she beats me up in the back all the time, and nobody does anything about it and I've seen it," or whatever, I'll just use that as an example. (P5FP)

This participant explained that a concern is brought to the "accused" and then discussed separately with the group, and a meeting is called that all Partners attend. At this time, the accused is provided with the opportunity to find an advocate to speak on their behalf or may choose to advocate on their own. At the beginning of the meeting, the complainant may choose to self identify or may choose to remain anonymous. The concern is put out on the table, and the "accused" is provided the opportunity to plead his/her case, the Partners then vote on the fate of their "accused" colleague.

A second participant provided a clear account of the specifics involved in supporting someone's decision making. This quotation was chosen as it exemplifies the overarching opinions of the staff members who were interviewed.

Well, it's really important not to try to infect them with your own ideas about a certain person, so staying objective is really important. Listening to what they think. Putting it back on them, what do you, what is your opinion of this person or this idea or whatever.

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Really placing a huge importance on their ideas and opinions about things and ...not judging or dismissing. (P4FP)

The theme of autonomy and staff members' influence was present throughout the interviews but was not asked directly. Furthermore, after conducting the individual interviews and noting the promotion of autonomy within CGC and by staff members, it became evident that a further examination of the roles that Partners, staff members, the Executive Director and the board play in promoting autonomy was necessary.

The second phase of interviews and the focus group were conducted to address this theme, along with others that emerged through the first phase. During the second phase of interviews, staff participants were asked to discuss the promotion of autonomy and to detail situations in which they may have to step in or influence decision making. Staff participants supported the response to staff influence during the first phase of interviews, noting that they will have discussions with the Partners and try to remain unbiased. When staff participants were asked to discuss incidents when they would have to step in and restrict someone's autonomy, they noted that this only took place when the Partners were at risk of hurting themselves or someone else, or in cases where hygiene could affect health standards.

Three participants emphasized the need to restrict a person's autonomy in incidents when there is the risk of harm to self or to others. One participant explained that being involved in an industrial kitchen means that at times staff members are required to step in as Partners may be placing themselves at risk of getting burnt or cut. Two participants discussed incidents when they have had to become involved because of a person's mental health. During these discussions, two participants noted that they work on a case-by-case basis getting to know Partners, finding out how far they can push and when they need to step back. Furthermore, these

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participants noted that it is important to validate everyone's opinions and to promote open communication with and among the Partners, about the consequences and benefits of their decisions. One participant mentioned how staff will provide the Partners with multiple choices and that those choices are originally selected by the staff members. Lastly, two participants noted that they try to encourage and facilitate communication and support among the Partners, so that the staff role in the Partners' decision making is reduced. As one participant noted, "try to encourage them to discuss it, to call each other, to make some dispute or argument...a discussion and then to solve those questions. And then I encourage them to communicate with each other" (P3SP).

A second participant described the process that is involved in facilitating this support and communication among Partners:

I just gave out the idea that we're all going to sit down and talk about this, and that a Partner had something important to say. As soon as you say that, a lot of the Partners join, and they sit and they listen... the person who was having the issue had the chance to explain, however long it took them to explain what they were feeling, what the problem was, and then each Partner had their own individual time to go around the circle and explain how they were feeling, what they were disappointed about. (ISP)

This participant described how this interactive problem solving process continued with each Partner expressing expectations about how to address the problem and the nature of their expectations of the person with whom they had the concern, and the individual having an opportunity to respond.

Throughout the interviews, staff participants from both phases described an environment that promotes autonomy. Staff discussed many factors embedded within CGC's organizational

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structure, including the voting process that is implemented to bring potential Partners into the businesses, to terminate other Partners, and to hire staff members for the locations. Additionally, staff participants discussed the Partners' involvement in decision making surrounding the operation and expansion of the businesses, with self-initiated and directed learning and in managing the group. Lastly, two staff participants highlighted the importance of the Partners' paycheque affording opportunities for persons to make money-related decisions.

During the first phase of interviews the influence of staff members on the autonomy of Partners was not asked directly; however, staff participants discussed being aware of their bias and influence on decision making. During the second phase of interviews, staff participants noted that, in addition to being aware of biases, staff will restrict a person's autonomy when a decision is placing Partners at risk of hurting themselves or someone else. Furthermore, staff members discussed the potential harms that are present in each of the locations. Lastly, staff participants from the second phase discussed restricting autonomy in cases where the standard of the products produced are at risk, specifically surrounding cases of hygiene.

Equality

Although the staff members were not asked directly about the presence of equality within the workplace, during both interview phases participants frequently referred to the Partners as equals. The theme of equality was present during the staff discussions about the nature of CGC, the impacts on the Partners, the past experience of Partners within competitive employment and the role of staff members in supporting the businesses. More specifically, three participants discussed their view of persons with developmental disabilities in general with one participant asserting "I don't look at them as people with disabilities, to me they're just the people I work with" (P1FP). A second participant stated that "I treat them as who they are as a person, you

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know. They have this disability but that can't be your only impression of the person" (P2FP) and a third participant noted that "I always work as equals" (P5FP). Furthermore, in discussing aspects of the businesses several participants discussed examples which reflect this sense of equality within CGC. As one participant noted, "we do our best to work in a flattened hierarchy" (P5FP) while a second participant asserted that "we don't just stand there and watch over them, we work side by side" (P1FP). Many of the participants emphasized the importance of treating the Partners like they would treat anyone else. As one participant explained:

If we're decorating cookies, and they look like shit, I won't send them out, because I don't think that... I'm not paying for something that looks crap, and you know, I think that the food should be a representation of the business, not of the people, right? And if somebody can't do something right, then you spend time working with them so that they can get it right, but you don't send it out looking horrible because you know what, people aren't going to understand and then they won't order again. (P5FP)

A second participant discussed the importance of treating the Partners like everyone else, and the impact that has on the representation of the businesses and CGC itself:

I don't care if you have a disability. I know it, you know it, what I care about is if you act like a [expletive] downstairs that's what I care about because disability, no one's seeing that, what they are seeing is they are seeing your behaviour, right? ... 'cause some of them are like "oh, my excuse is I have Down Syndrome" and I'm like, "I don't care if you have Down Syndrome. You know you can still pick up a chair and move it over there" and I think it's just sometimes how society treat[s] people. It's the diagnosis so I said I'm judging everyone for their ability not their disability. So that's where we stand...where the expectations are... (P2FP).

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In addition, participants discussed the challenge of reminding Partners about their role in the businesses as being equal and part of a team. In providing examples of how they manage these situations, one participant described how they sometimes need to say to a Partner, “I’m not any higher than you, we’re on the same team” (ISP).

Lastly, three participants provided examples that reflect this idea of equality between the staff and Partners within the workplace. More specifically, these examples focus on situations in which the staff members rely on the Partners in the same way that they would rely on anyone else in a workplace. As one participant stated “we need people to be able to do the job. The job coaches can’t be working all the time, you have to have, the Partners have to be active all the time” (P4FP).

When staff participants discussed the nature of CGC, the past experience of Partners within competitive employment and the role of staff members in supporting the businesses, there was a predominant theme of equality present in the language used and the examples that were provided. This theme of equality was closely connected to the descriptions that were provided by staff participants about CGC as an employment model that is balanced in the way that it supports the Partners.

CGC as a Balanced Employment Model

Interestingly, although CGC is a social enterprise, very few staff participants actually noted this in their interviews. However, through discussions about the nature of CGC, the role of staff members, the impact of CGC on the Partners, when discussing what keeps CGC going and in the recommendations for others to replicate this employment model, staff participants described a balanced employment model that seeks to provide the Partners with both social and financial gains. Furthermore, and more specifically, staff participants described an employment

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model that creates a non-judgemental and equal work environment that focuses on the capabilities of the individual, provides opportunities, and places the responsibility for the businesses on the Partners.

Promoting strengths and accommodating for weaknesses. Staff described a workplace environment that was non-judgemental and promoted a person's strengths while providing accommodations for weaknesses. As one participant asserted:

I can't do everything, there's some things I'm not good at, there's some things I excel at, and so I will work on the things I'm not good at, same as where I know people have capabilities in some things and not in others. You have to work with people's strengths, and take their weaknesses and try and, like, work with them. (P5FP)

Participants discussed how CGC is proactive by placing Partners in work locations that promote their strengths and/or consider their weaknesses. More specifically, in discussing what keeps CGC going and the nature of CGC, staff participants described how Partners are given recommendations on the worksite location that would best suit their strengths. As one participant explained:

The Foundations' coordinator knows the Partners or the potential Partner students very well so they can ... basically advise which location they will do better in. So, for example, [one of the Coffee Shed locations] is very busy there's a lot of caterings so that would be like a different skill level; [another Coffee Shed location] is a lot slower... and it's not as busy so that's a different skill level too... some of the Partners...may not like to be [in] very crowded [areas] so if there's a crowded space so [at one of the Coffee Shed locations] we have that separate room so they're not going to feel so uncomfortable or

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they're not going to get anxiety about working in a small space so we also base it on that too...where they would feel comfortable. (P3FP)

Two participants discussed how programs are developed and businesses are started based on people's strengths and needs for accommodations. More specifically it was noted that the newest business venture, CLEANable, was developed to accommodate persons who are uncomfortable with social settings, loud environments, and/or taking part in customer service. Furthermore, participants discussed opportunities that are provided to improve Partners' strengths, such as external workshops for résumé writing, money handling, or sexual awareness. They described procedures that are in place to accommodate for weaknesses, such as shorter shifts, shifts taking place during certain times of the day, code words for when someone is dealing with mental health concerns, and colour coding for persons who cannot read. As one participant described:

There's a lot of accommodating that we do for different people...if someone's on medication for instance and they can't work in the morning because they're kind of groggy, then they might have an afternoon shift. There's certain ways that you can make it work for people so that they, they're still a huge part of the business. (P4FP)

Lastly, staff members discussed the efforts involved in building relationships, learning about people's strengths and weaknesses and the teaching methods that are directed at both promoting strengths and recognizing weaknesses. As one participant stated "Just teaching something you might teach the same thing in four different ways so you make sure that everyone gets it. Not everyone might get it but it happened eventually" (P2FP).

Staff participants discussed a number of processes that are present within CGC to promote the Partners' strengths while accommodating for limitations or weaknesses.

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Specifically, staff participants discussed the recommendations that are made by the Foundations' coordinator to Partners concerning worksites that would best suit them, businesses that are developed to support strengths and accommodate for weaknesses, schedules that are created to accommodate for limitations, external programs that are offered to strengthen the Partners' weaknesses, and differential instruction that is used to teach to individual strengths. In addition to a number of processes that are engrained within the system of CGC, the staff participants noted a number of opportunities that are provided to the Partners to learn and further their skill development.

Providing opportunities for learning and skill development. In addition to focusing on a person's strengths and accommodating for weaknesses, CGC and the staff members go beyond a typical work environment by providing the Partners with a multitude of opportunities to improve their life and work skills. This aspect of CGC is in line with the goals of a social enterprise. When the focus group participants were asked to describe a social enterprise, one participant noted that in addition to CGC providing support for adults with intellectual disabilities in operating and owning their own business, "I [we]should add educational services"(P3SP). Throughout the interviews, staff members noted a number of additional educational programs that have been developed to provide the Partners with an opportunity to improve both social life skills and work-related skills; these programs are outside of the educational services that are provided during the Foundations Program. Included in these programs are the following: a creative writing club, sexuality program, relationship building and self-awareness programs, workshops on résumé writing, interviewing skills, and writing speeches, and work-related programs on financial literacy, food preparation, health and safety, and money handling.

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Staff participants also described a number of work-related job opportunities that are provided to the Partners that go above and beyond what would be considered typical ‘jobs’ for their worksites. Included in these are product development, advertising, fundraising, public speaking, and opportunities to train the trainer and to teach their peers.

Staff participants described a number of programs that are offered in addition to the Foundations Program. Each of the programs discussed addressed the primary goals of a social enterprise meeting both the financial and social needs of the persons they support. Staff participants also described the sense of ownership that is fostered by staff participants and CGC emphasizing the importance of Partners taking responsibility for their businesses. This is a unique aspect of CGC that is unlike any traditional type of employment offered to persons with developmental disabilities.

Partners’ responsibilities. In addition to promoting strengths, accommodating for weaknesses, and providing opportunities, and in line with the promotion of autonomy and the recognition of equality, the participants also reported that Partners have a number of work responsibilities and expectations. More specifically, these expectations are ones that are similar to the responsibilities that are required of anyone who is interested in running a successful business. Four participants, two from the first phase and two from the second phase of interviews, discussed job responsibilities and the importance of Partners providing good quality service and products. Two staff participants emphasized the importance of Partners taking this responsibility very seriously, noting that it affects both the revenue and the reputation of the businesses and is a key factor in changing the way persons with developmental disabilities are viewed within the broader workforce. Furthermore, one staff participant discussed the personal responsibility and accountability that happens with Partners if the products are not up to quality

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standards. More specifically, this participant notes that Partners are expected to pay for lost product, when they are responsible for the loss of that product.

During the second phase of interviews, one participant described this responsibility and noted that the Partners are also responsible for teaching their peers and ensuring that they are providing the best quality products and service. As this participant remarked:

Instead of me being one-on-one with a new ... Partner, I have them team up with the other Partners and have the Partners teach new Partners so that it's everybody's responsibility in teaching, it's not just one, and then I'm there as an extra support as well as teaching both sides, but it's generally that they teach each other. So if one person learns from an experience, just say,... the coffee grinds go into the coffee, you know, they'll learn from that, and then they'll pass it on, and I'm like ok, you've got to make sure the rest of the Partners know that, and then we all pass it along, so that we know we're all on the same track. (ISP)

In addition, participants discussed the responsibility that Partners have to the partnerships. More specifically, two staff participants discussed the responsibility of the Partners to pay for their supplies, administrative fees, and banking fees before taking the profits from the businesses. Furthermore, two participants discussed the Partners' responsibility to adhere to workplace commitments with one explaining that "they have to follow their workplace commitments so punctuality, reliability, there's a list of things they've come up with and their definitions of that so what they hold themselves, in terms of being responsible, to the Partner[ship]" (P2FP). Lastly, staff participants discussed the responsibility that Partners have in hiring persons who will contribute to their businesses, emphasizing this for both the staff working with them and the Partners who will share their businesses.

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Throughout the interviews, staff participants emphasized CGC as an employment model that is unique, one that cultivates equality and promotes autonomy, but also provides Partners with experiences that they would not encounter in traditional or mainstream employment. More specifically, staff participants discussed many of the characteristics that are reflective of a social enterprise. The continued commitment of staff and the organization to providing the Partners with accommodations for limitations was emphasized. These accommodations include recommending specific work locations that are based on strengths, providing shifts to accommodate for times when a Partner may have difficulty working (ex. as a result of the effects of medication), and providing differential instruction to support the Partners' varying needs and communication styles. In addition and related to accommodating for weaknesses and focusing on strengths, staff participants provided details about programs that are offered to Partners, outside of the Foundations Program, to assist them in the continued development of life and work-related skills. Moreover, staff participants frequently discussed the capabilities of the Partners highlighting the importance of placing the responsibility and the expectations on the Partners who own and operate the businesses. In discussing the balanced nature of CGC in meeting the needs of the Partners, it became clear that the staff participants are involved in a multitude of roles and are required to take on a number of responsibilities. In these discussions it was evident that staff participants are exposed to many of the factors that have been related to staff stress and burnout.

Staff Stress and Burnout

In discussing the recommendations for persons who are thinking about working with individuals who have developmental disabilities in the field of employment, one participant commented on the personal characteristics of staff working in this field. More specifically, this

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participant discussed the high burnout rate among staff members who are supporting persons with intellectual disabilities, emphasizing that the work within this field generally, and particularly within CGC, can be very stressful. This participant explained:

Hopefully you're not motivated by money, right? Hopefully you're not here to sort out your own personal problems. Social work is a field of distinct folks that come from very broken situations or are here to save the world. I think that you should be here just to do what you can, do what you're capable [of]. It can be very emotionally draining. There's a burnout rate of 7 years in this field for a reason ... because you take on the emotional. It's such a heavy, there's a lot of abuse in this field and there's a lot of really heavy stuff that occurs right and it's ... you need to be able to emotionally support yourself and get the support you need and also recognize you have to advocate for yourself... you advocate for the folks... but you also have to advocate for yourself, 'cause there's stuff that happens here and I'm like "I'm gonna go into therapy and I'm taking some days off because I need to do this for me so that ...I'm able to take care of [the] situation better" or whatever. But we don't tend to do that for ourselves but you will be exposed to some really horrible stuff and they will come to you about really horrible stuff and you have to deal with it professionally and also be able to digest. (P2FP)

The theme of staff stress and burnout amongst support workers within the field of disabilities is predominant in the literature and is reflected throughout the staff interviews (Devereux, Hastings, & Noone, 2009; Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu 2011; Kowalski et al., 2010; Skirrow & Hatton, 2007; Vassos & Nankervis, 2012). More specifically, staff participants, although not asked directly, provided a number of discussions about some of the factors related to staff stress and burnout. Staff described situations that would lead to experiencing emotional

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overload, they emphasized the multiple roles they are expected to take on and, with that, they discussed issues surrounding professional boundaries and the lack of resources that are available at times. During the second phase of interviews, staff participants were directly asked about stress within the workplace.

Emotional overload. Contributing to the stress described above are work situations that participants described as being emotionally difficult for them to cope with. Three participants noted that in doing their job they are exposed to situations that tend to cause them undue stress. They provided examples of incidents when they are responsible for a person's well-being and safety. As one participant explained:

I've just gone through two years with someone who I've recently had to fire. Not my choice, it was the choice of the business Partners who decided to vote this person out... someone who I believe has mental health issues that have never been addressed, that have always been put onto behavioural issues because of his developmental disability, and it's been two years of counselling. I'm not a counsellor, but trying to help this person. (P5FP)

This participant described the extreme situation faced by this Partner who had significant medical and psychological concerns that required support and extensive advocacy with a wide range of other support services in the community. A second participant described a similar situation but placed an emphasis on the difficulty of managing one person's crisis while protecting the Partners and the business:

I've had a few episodes where I've had an individual come in and... she's severely depressed ... When you have an individual come in and they've had a really rough day they can go from being happy to [dangerous behaviour] so it's very, it's just a domino effect. So if one person is upset they kind of releases (*sic*) that energy to everyone else

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and you're kind of stepping on glass. So it kind of makes the environment really edgy. So you kind of have to control the individual and then make sure everyone else is ok at the same time. It's basically jumping in or it could be great one moment and the next everything is a mess. (P3FP)

A third participant described how Partners are forced to rely on CGC and staff members because of a lack of services within the community. In this discussion, a staff participant emphasized that being the only support in a person's life can expose staff to a lot of stressful situations:

One of the Partners went into crisis and ...we were their lead agency so then all of a sudden I have to deal and because I already know this person and this person knows me she's willing to work with me and help me with her crisis because we had no support ... there's no other agency attached to her... that one person needed housing, needed a support worker, need[ed] all sorts of major stuff and was in major crisis... it was really mind blowing at the beginning...I was like you've got to be kidding and realized the role that we have. (P2FP)

Staff participants discussed dealing with a number of emotionally difficult situations. They noted that there are times when they have to be a counsellor, a psychologist, a therapist, a case manager, a crisis worker, and an advocate. In addition to describing a number of incidents that could place staff members at risk for burnout, staff participants described a multitude of roles that they are expected and responsible for assuming.

Multiple roles. In describing their roles, staff participants discussed the ones that are specifically related to ensuring both the financial success of the businesses and the personal success of the Partners. The business related responsibilities discussed by the participants

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included the following: teaching life skill such as communication and social skills; teaching work- related skills such as customer service and money handling; quality assurance and financial accountability; and administration such as placing orders or scheduling shifts. In addition to business-related skills, and in line with the social enterprise goal of persons gaining both financial and social gains, the staff discussed their responsibility to the Partners' overall well-being as described in the examples provided in the section above. More specifically, participants noted that they are involved in providing the Partners with educational workshops, promoting social events inside and outside of work, encouraging and facilitating communication between Partners, and managing conflict. Interestingly, participants always noted the importance of the Partners being in a good emotional and mental space in order to run their businesses effectively. One participant eloquently discussed the multitude of roles involved in their day-to-day work:

Well ... it's kind of a bunch of roles in one. It's business-related... so running a business, it's also sort of case managing as well because you have to advocate... there's a team model so you work with the Partners but you also work with their families members or their ... case managers on the side so kind of have a team support. I also do teaching, ...so it's life skills, work skills...advocating... some of these guys don't always have a case manager on the side or their parents or family members aren't thoroughly involved in what they're doing so we kind of take on that role. If there's anything extra they want to do or any programs they want to get involved. ...so there's resourcing as well there's referrals. (ISP)

In discussing their roles, each of the staff members reported the challenges associated with trying to support a person's business while supporting their well-being and safety. In

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general, staff participants discussed their job as including managing conflict and personal crises, keeping people safe and looking out for their well being, while being challenged to support everyone's needs and learning styles. More specifically, staff participants described their job as "massive" and "overwhelming", "emotionally draining" and "difficult," with second phase participants placing an emphasis on the fact that their roles can be ambiguous: "wearing one hat one day and one hat the other" (ISP) and "I think we create a new job description every single day" (P2SP) and "you can't really say exactly what I do, because as new things come up we'll tackle it (*sic*)" (P7SP).

Additionally, participants suggested that professional boundaries are unclear, with staff describing situations in which they are spending time outside of their work developing programs, assisting in job searches, finding Partners a place to live or spending time in social settings. The following excerpt is exemplary:

There's actually a Partner now who just left and she wants help on job searching. She doesn't know how to job search so we set up an appointment next week. I said you know I have 3 hours off in the afternoon, come in we'll sit down in the computer room next door and we'll job search, I'll teach you how to job search. So we...they can still come back to us and we can still work with them but it's not our job title. So we're kind of doing it outside of our job but still helping them because it's...some of these guys, it's hard for them to get workers or services or they're on a waiting list and if I can just do that in 2 hours and then make you feel a lot better about moving forward and accomplishing a goal you want to accomplish, then let's do it. So I don't know... there isn't a guide that we're supposed to follow. I don't know if I'm supposed to say that but we still, I still do it and I know a lot of the other job coaches do too. (P3FP)

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This theme of professional boundaries was clearly evident in the second phase of interviews. When participants were asked about professional boundaries, each of them agreed that it is an ongoing challenge. In addition to extending their supports to outside of their scheduled shift, participants also discussed extending supports to the Partners' family members and to their social circles. Staff responses surrounding this issue were mixed, with some staff participants noting that they feel a sense of pride in the Partners achieving their goals and that with social events they view the Partners as their equals, people with which they work, stating that it is not unusual to be involved in social settings outside of work with persons you work with. One participant discussed an incident where he/she has been involved with the Partners outside of work: "I've taken some of the guys to the movies because we want to see the kids movie and my nephews don't want to see it anymore and I want to see it" (P3SP). Other participants stated that there needs to be professional boundaries and barriers and that they experience challenges when implementing these barriers. As one participant noted:

I think there needs to be a barrier in place. I think that's a challenge that people deal with, boundaries, big time, because you can come to me with any problem, but we can't hang out in certain ways or do certain things. Like there's definitely has to be a boundary that has to be in place between professional, personal, and anything else. (P7SP)

Other participants from the second phase of interviews provided more detail concerning boundary setting:

Some of the Partners have my cell phone, and for example, some of them have texted me over the weekend, and I've not replied and I come back Monday and I say, my cell phone, I have given you the number, it is for emergencies only. If you start texting me and calling me just to say how you're doing, hello, blah blah blah, the moment we're

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having a real emergency, I'm not going to answer the phone. (P4SP)

Lastly, two participants emphasized that their jobs are made more difficult by a lack of general resources within developmental services and a lack of staffing at the actual worksites. This was exemplified when one participant discussed the challenges of teaching more than one person with different learning styles: “we’re very small in numbers, and the Partners are a lot bigger in numbers...so a lot of the one-on-one ... is really difficult, but we manage to get it done” (P5FP).

Overall, staff participants discussed a number of factors that have been associated with staff stress and, particularly, burnout among support workers in the field of disability. More specifically, staff participants discussed being exposed to emotionally challenging situations where they are required to take on a number of roles that are outside of the business itself. Related to this, staff participants discussed being responsible for a number of roles included in running the businesses, supporting the emotional well-being of the Partners and providing opportunities for the Partners to gain both life and work-related experiences. Lastly, staff participants emphasized the challenges related to implementing and maintaining professional boundaries. This response was mixed for participants, with some reporting that because they view Partners as co-workers and as equal members within CGC, it is not unusual that they would spend time with them outside of the work environment. Others noted that having relationships with the Partners outside of work creates challenges with Partners recognizing and respecting boundaries; staff participants emphasized that this evokes more stress in that they are responsible for so many roles within their work day and do not need to continue that outside of their work.

Interestingly the literature on staff stress has associated multiple roles, role ambiguity, and emotional overload with burnout among support workers in the field of disability (Devereux,

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Hastings, & Noone, 2009; Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu 2011; Kowalski et al., 2010; Skirrow & Hatton, 2007; Vassos & Nankervis, 2012). However, staff participants from CGC noted that they are not concerned with burnout, have never experienced it, are not worried about experiencing it and, overall, they love what they do. In contrast to factors that related to staff burnout, literature has also focused on the protective factors that are found among support workers that have been associated with coping and relieving stress. Staff participants from both phases discussed many of these protective factors.

Protective factors. In addition to describing some of the traditional factors related to burnout, participants engaged in conversations about the general impact that CGC has had on their lives, the reasons why they chose to do this work and what keeps them with CGC. In doing so, many of the participants discussed aspects of their jobs that protect them from experiencing unmanageable amounts of work stress. In describing staff roles and the reasons for choosing this type of employment, staff participants from both the first and second phases of interviews discussed liking what they do, the people they support, and the skill of the job. In one participant's description of the job, he/she reported:

I like the concept and the model, and I love the Partners that I work with and the staff, team works really well together, so and it's just it's different, it doesn't, it doesn't feel like an agency, like having worked in an agency before, it doesn't have that kind of clinical feeling like you don't, you'd never hear the word like client or something like that, it definitely has a more upbeat, positive feeling. (P6SP)

Furthermore, they discussed a sense of equity between themselves and the Partners, noting that they feel that they receive as much from this job as they give, and describe having a sense of control over the direction of CGC. "This is where we can think outside the box, so

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we're under the Common Ground umbrella, we can do whatever we want in terms of any partnership. We're not limited to only doing food sector businesses, we can do whatever" (P2FP).

When discussing the impacts that CGC has had on their lives, both groups of participants noted that feeling appreciated and being a part of change are key factors in maintaining their own well-being and sense of satisfaction. All of the above factors were noted in the first interviews and re-emphasized during the second phase of interviews. In addition to the themes that were present during the first and second phases of interviews, during the second phase participants were asked directly about why they stay with CGC, and particularly about staff burnout and how they alleviate or protect themselves from work-related stress. In addition to the themes that were already mentioned, second phase participants discussed the importance of agency and team support and the role that having a challenge plays in their continued commitment to CGC. As one participant stated:

The Partners, working with them, I never get bored. I have a thing where I get bored really easily, and this is one of the first jobs where I never have gotten bored. I've never gotten burnt out. I've never been angry that, like everybody here's been so supportive, so it's fun, it's really a lot of fun. You enjoy each day. (ISP)

Staff participants emphasized a number of factors that have been noted in the literature as contributing to staff stress and burnout (Devereux, Hastings, & Noone, 2009; Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu 2011; Kowalski et al., 2010; Skirrow & Hatton, 2007; Vassos & Nankervis, 2012). More specifically, staff participants discussed being exposed to stressful and emotionally challenging situations; they discussed having to take on a variety of roles to promote the well-being and overall success of the businesses. In addition to discussing a multitude of roles that

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they are responsible for, staff participants highlighted role ambiguity in their job descriptions and discussed the effect that limited resources for persons with developmental disabilities has on their list of roles and responsibilities. Lastly, staff participants emphasized the challenge of determining the nature of personal boundaries outside of the work environment, noting that many times their numerous responsibilities do take them out of their work shifts, and that setting boundaries and limits is difficult. Interestingly, when staff participants were asked about burnout, they all noted that this was not a concern for them. A number of protective factors that have been addressed within the literature were also reflected within the staff participants' responses throughout the interviews. These protective factors included liking what they do, the Partners and the business-related skill, and having a sense of equity in that they feel like they gain as much from the job as they give to the job and the Partners. They also discussed having a sense of control over the direction in which CGC is headed. Lastly, staff participants reported that they feel appreciated in their jobs: they have a sense of purpose and feel that their job has a cause.

Dedication

During discussions about what keeps CGC going, one participant suggested that it was the dedication of staff. However, in reviewing all of the interviews from both the first and second phases, it is evident that the theme of dedication is woven throughout the interviews and the subsequent analysis. More specifically, staff showed dedication in their sensitivity to people's needs and by providing the necessary support to address those needs. Dedication was exemplified in the amount and types of programs that are created to meet the needs of the group. Staff members are dedicated to providing differential instruction and opportunities for the Partners to gain further skills and involvement in the community. They are dedicated to taking

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on multiple roles and extending their work to outside the workplace. Finally, staff members are dedicated to changing perceptions, to providing the public and themselves with the message that persons with disabilities are just like everyone else, that they are capable and valued members of society.

Discussion

Despite the recent initiatives through international covenants and government policies which highlight the right to access equal employment without discrimination, persons with developmental disabilities are still among the most marginalized groups within the employment sector. This is evidenced by substandard employment rates, with only 32.7% of Canadians with developmental disabilities being involved in labour force participation (Statistics Canada, 2006). Moreover, those who are employed experience high levels of termination and job breakdown (Banks et al., 2010). Furthermore, it has been reported by the Canadian Association for Community Living that 75% of persons with developmental disabilities live in poverty. In reviewing the plethora of information regarding the benefits of employment and the barriers faced by persons with developmental disabilities within the employment sector, it becomes clear that more needs to be done to improve the state of employment and the way in which persons with developmental disabilities are viewed within the workplace. Social enterprises provide an alternative work space with characteristics similar to entrepreneurship but with one distinct difference: the dual goals of a social enterprise are to support both financial and social gains.

Barriers to Traditional Employment

Research has indicated a multitude of barriers for persons with development disabilities within the employment sector. These barriers were classified by Martz et al. (2009) as fitting into two categories; personal and environmental. Some of the personal factors that are

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associated with poor employment outcomes are deficient workplace skills, lack of education, and the need for assistive technologies and/or accommodations. Interestingly, when staff participants in the present study were asked about the barriers to traditional employment, factors presented by Martz et al. (2009) were not the focus of their response to this question. However, in discussing the nature of CGC and the impacts on the Partners, staff participants described CGC as an employment model that addresses the personal factors described by Martz et al. (2009). Specifically, staff participants describe CGC as a place where Partners can develop both life and work-related skills and where Partners are provided with accommodations to address limitations and optimize strengths. Additionally, Martz et al. (2009) asserted that environmental barriers, such as physical barriers either on the worksite or within the environment, have also contributed to low employment rates. Participants in the current study did not discuss these as barriers associated with traditional employment, but did note that location and the physical environment of the businesses supported by CGC are not set up for persons with physical disabilities; they noted problems with transit and issues surrounding ODSP. Included in the discussion of barriers by Martz et al. (2009) was the community members' perceptions of the employability of persons with developmental disabilities, which was also a concern in the present study with participants emphasizing the role of CGC in changing these limited community expectations.

In addition to supporting the literature on the barriers to traditional employment as described by Martz et al. (2009), staff participants described an employment model that can address the social construction of disabilities, as outlined by Wendell (1996). More specifically, Wendell (1996) discusses several social factors that contribute to the social construction of disability. Firstly, Wendell (1996) describes the impact that the pace of life has on persons with disabilities, noting that those who are not able to keep up to the pace of life are marginalized and

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discriminated against. Secondly, Wendell (1996) discusses the impact that pace of life has on the expectations that society has on a person's performance and productivity. Wendell (1996) emphasizes that those who are not able to "keep up" with society's pace are also not able to maintain the expectations that are put upon them by society, highlighting that unsuccessful individual productivity leads to perceptions that persons' with disabilities are incapable. Staff participants describe CGC as an employment model that can provide accommodations for persons' pace of life, specifically noting that CGC and its associated enterprises accommodate for this need of individual Partners by varying the amount of work time and time of day when Partners work in order to optimize their strengths.

Furthermore, staff participants emphasized that the Partners' strengths are matched to the nature of the business demands in order to ensure the success of individual performance. In addition, staff participants highlight the role of CGC in changing the perception of persons' with developmental disabilities as incapable, placing an emphasis on the ability of CGC to accommodate for limitations and support strengths. Thirdly, Wendell (1996) discusses how the physical structure and the social organization of society create physical obstacles that make it difficult for persons with disabilities to access all aspects of a community, further exacerbating a split between private and public worlds. Wendell (1996) suggests that this reinforces disability as a private matter, which results in a lack of exposure to able-bodied persons of persons with disabilities and can reinforce negative perceptions that persons with disabilities should not be in the public world with the rest of society. Although staff participants emphasized the role of CGC in exposing community members to the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities, they did note that some of the barriers associated with CGC are related to physical access and transportation. Lastly, Wendell (1996) discusses the social dependence that is created

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by society's unwillingness to provide supports that will create ability among persons who do not fit the ideal of the "paradigm citizen". Wendell (1996) provides the example of social assistance benefits, as contributing to the unemployment of person with disabilities, emphasizing that the belief that assistance should be less than a person can earn from being employed in competitive employment is keeping persons with disabilities below the poverty level, which further limits access to a persons major aspects of life. Staff participants support this literature (Wendell, 1996) in their discussions about the impact of ODSP on the Partners' ability to work more shifts and, on their motivation to maintain employment in general.

More broadly, the medical and social model perspectives can be used to describe the stigma and discrimination associated with the overarching perception that persons with developmental disabilities are incapable and unemployable. Staff participants discussed CGC as an employment model that balances these two perspectives.

Medical model and social model perspectives. Both the medical model and social model perspectives on disability have been used to account for the stigmatization and discrimination that is faced by persons with developmental disabilities (Harlan & Robert, 1998; Rothman, 2010). More specifically, the literature suggests that the medical model perspective places an emphasis on persons with disabilities as being incapable and limited in their cognitive and adaptive functioning (Harlan & Robert, 1998; Rothman, 2010). This perspective has been held by the hegemonic structures that have reinforced the idea that persons with developmental disabilities, because of these perceived limitations, are largely unemployable (Harlan & Robert, 1998). Current employment options for persons with disabilities reinforce these perspectives, with segregated employment excluding persons with developmental disabilities from being

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engaged in community-based workplaces and supported employment generally providing menial jobs for token wages.

In contrast, the social model perspective emphasizes that disabilities are socially constructed and are a result of disabling conditions present in society (Harlan & Robert, 1998). The social model perspective recognizes that persons with disabilities, much like able-bodied people, experience personal limitations but that these limitations may be exacerbated by their environment. More specifically, Rothman (2010) asserts that disability is created by the structure of society, emphasizing that social order defines the conception of “normal,” creates ideas about differences and capabilities, and creates inaccessibility, stereotypes, and discrimination. The social model, however, does not account for the limitations or need for accommodations that may be experienced by some persons with developmental disabilities. This is reflected in the barriers associated with competitive employment, where lack of accommodations leads to high rates of termination and job breakdown (Banks et al., 2010; Martz et al., 2009).

Scholars from disability studies, such as Thomas have worked towards a better understanding of disability as a balance between both medical and social model perspectives (2004). In her article, aptly entitled *How is disability understood?*, Thomas (2004) suggests that a common ground needs to be found between the two major perspectives, highlighting that the stark dichotomy between them leads to an underdeveloped understanding of the sociology of disability. In her critique, Thomas suggests that established theorists in the field, arguing on behalf of both perspectives, actually have many elements in common. More specifically, Thomas notes that supporters from medical and social model perspectives agree that the social model perspective of disability is flawed, in that it denies the effect of a person’s impairment on

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his/her experience of disability independent of social factors that contribute to it further. Both perspectives recognize that the impairment caused by a disability contributes to the disadvantages and oppression of this population. Thomas concludes with a suggestion for scholars and disability activists to find common ground between the perspectives, noting their similarities. She also advises that, in order to develop the sociology of disability, the medical model perspective needs to recognize the social oppression that causes impairment and the social model perspective needs to consider the impairment of disability as contributing to disability.

Current employment options for persons with developmental disabilities reflect the stark dichotomy discussed by Thomas and other scholars (Harlan & Robert, 1998; Linton, 1998; Rothman, 2010; Wendell, 1996). As a social enterprise, CGC reflects Thomas' contribution to the sociology of disability, as an employment model that actively balances both perspectives by recognizing that persons with developmental disabilities do have limitations, but that accommodations can be made to the environment to address those weaknesses. As such, persons involved with CGC are afforded the opportunity to work in an environment that recognizes their strengths while accommodating for their weaknesses (Hall & Wilton, 2011).

Staff participants frequently discussed the balanced nature of CGC, as a place that could accommodate for a person's limitations, one that recognizes and also support a person's strengths. The organization provides a number of opportunities for both social and financial growth and places the responsibility for the businesses on the Partners with scaffolded support from staff. These aspects of CGC create an environment where people with developmental disabilities can show their strengths and can be engaged in meaningful work within the community. In so doing, CGC is exposing the community to persons with developmental disabilities in a way that supports the socially-valued roles they play as business operators. As

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discussed by Wolfensberger and Tullman (1982), by promoting and changing the social roles of persons with developmental disabilities to roles that are socially valued, the views of this population will change from considering persons with developmental disabilities as lacking and incapable, to viewing them as capable and successful.

This is supported by the research conducted by McFarlin et al. (1991), with results that indicated that employers who had exposure to persons with developmental disabilities were more likely to view these persons as capable and valued employees. Furthermore, McFarlin et al. (1991) found that within the Fortune 500 companies that they interviewed, companies who had hired persons with developmental disabilities in the past were more likely to see the employability of this population, and as such frequently went to vocational services to hire potential employees for their businesses. Research by McFarlin et al. (1991) suggested that exposure of able-bodied employers and employees to the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities as successful and valued members of the workforce results in the change of attitudes surrounding the employability of persons from this population.

Interestingly, staff participants had a variety of past experiences; some had worked with persons with disabilities before while others had not. Each and every staff participant, when asked about the impact that CGC has had on their lives, responded with some variation of changing perceptions and subsequent attitudes about the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities. More specifically, staff participants emphasized Partners changing their own beliefs about their capabilities; they discussed changes in their own perceptions and the attitudes of community members, from viewing persons' with disabilities as limited to persons who are capable and successful in operating their own businesses.

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In addition to discussing the barriers to traditional employment, staff participants also addressed a number of its benefits and referred to those benefits when discussing the impacts of CGC on the lives of the Partners.

Benefits of Employment and Impact of CGC on the Lives of the Partners

In discussing the impacts that CGC has had on the Partners' lives, staff participants emphasized a number of the benefits that were outlined in the literature for persons who are engaged in meaningful work (Dague et al, 2012; Jahoda et al, 2009; McNaughton et al, 2006; Milner & Kelly et al, 2009; Murphy et al, 2002; Stephens et al., 2005; Su et al., 2008; Timmons et al., 2011; West et al., 2005). More specifically, research on the benefits of meaningful employment have concluded that being involved in work affords the opportunity for persons with developmental disabilities to gain a better sense of personal identity, a sense of self-worth and increased confidence in work-related skills (McNaughton et al., 2006; Milner & Kelly, 2009; West et al., 2005). Furthermore, literature has linked employment with improvements in adaptive functioning, opportunities for financial reward associated with autonomy based on financial freedom, opportunities for social inclusion and improvements in overall quality of life (Dague et al, 2012; Jahoda et al, 2009; Murphy et al, 2002; Stephens et al., 2005; Su et al., 2008; Timmons et al., 2011; West et al., 2005). Staff described a number of these benefits highlighting improvements in Partners' work-related and personal life skills, self-esteem and confidence, autonomy based financial freedom, opportunities for social inclusion, and improvement in overall quality of life. Furthermore, and in addition to the literature that was discussed in this paper, staff participants described benefits to CGC that are unique to their social enterprise model and are not discussed within the literature on traditional employment, namely, segregated and supported employment. More specifically, staff participants noted that Partners are

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supported in an environment that cultivates equality and promotes autonomy. In discussing the social inclusion of the Partners, staff participants highlighted a sense of belonging that is created by Partners working with other Partners who have had similar life experiences; they noted that with this sense of belonging, Partners have an opportunity for social connectedness that promotes the development of friendships outside of work and a work environment that is free from judgement and safe for Partners to grow and learn.

This is consistent with Hall's (2010) contention that social inclusion, when seen simply as the opposite of "exclusion", is not sufficient; instead he suggests that issues of social inclusion should be re-examined, noting that it is more important for persons to find belonging in authentic spaces that are defined by the collective group. More specifically, Hall (2005) asserts that in order for persons to be included, the spaces in which they are present should be authentic and provide "a sense of safety" (p. 109), where persons are not exposed to the environments that are typically created by traditional approaches to social inclusion, such as traditional and mainstream forms of employment (Hall, 2005). Staff participants emphasized this point when discussing the nature of CGC and the impacts of the Partners, noting that Partners find a sense of belonging among their peers and emphasize that Partners grow and learn in an environment that is safe as a result of Partners working with others who have similar life experiences. This is in contrast to Jahoda et al. (2009), Murphy et al. (2002), and Dague (2012) who focus on the social inclusion of persons with developmental disabilities located in workplaces with others who are able-bodied. Staff participants also highlighted that a sense of belonging, which is established through CGC, cultivates friendships and that the priorities for some Partners change in that social connectedness becomes more important than work.

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Furthermore, Hall (2005) proposes that it is not necessarily employment that people seek or demand, but rather access to equal resources and opportunities that are presented to the majority and with that, the accompanying respect of society. This creates a controversy about work as being the only meaningful form of social inclusion and the only means for persons to feel as if they are valued members of society.

Work as a Meaningful Activity

It can be argued that the importance and benefits of work are as socially constructed as disability itself. More specifically, the conception of work as the only way to become a productive member of society, to form a positive personal identity and to feel a sense of belonging and purpose is supported by the same hegemonic structures that support the idea of disability as an irreversible condition that needs to be fixed. As stated by Hall and Wilton (2011):

Scholarship has argued that the social and spatial organization of work under capitalism has been based on a non-disabled norm with the consequence that ‘mainstream’ labour processes, work environments and organizational cultures privilege certain types of bodies and minds over others. (p. 872)

As such, the literature that supports the benefits of employment supports the medical model perspective (Dague et al, 2012; Jahoda et al, 2009; McNaughton et al, 2006; Milner & Kelly et al, 2009; Murphy et al, 2002; Stephens et al., 2005; Su et al., 2008; Timmons et al., 2011; West et al., 2005). Concerns may be raised about the focus of the present study as reinforcing the view that work is the only means for persons with disabilities to become valued members of society, which can be seen to align with the model of the paradigm citizen. However, two issues mitigate this focus. Firstly, the idea of work as being the only way to

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achieve the benefits outlined in the literature is not the focus of this study. In fact, the benefits discussed as being associated with work in CGC-associated enterprises may, in certain other settings, also be accomplished through leisure activities, volunteering, and/or creative arts activities (Hall & Wilton, 2011). Instead, this study aims to support the change of social roles, and in turn perceptions of persons with developmental disabilities within employment, not as a means for all persons to work and achieve said benefits, but to be afforded equal employment opportunities about work participation without discrimination, as outlined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and that these employment options should be seen as choices and nothing more. This focus on the importance of choice is consistent with Brown and Brown's (2009) description of choice as being central to the quality of life of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Secondly, the idea that work reinforces and even supports the paradigm citizen may be true, but this is true for all persons regardless of ability. The social enterprise discussed in this research proposes a model that not only recognizes strengths, but also emphasizes the need for accommodations. An employment model that was to support and reinforce the paradigm citizen would not recognize strengths but would demand them, and would have no room for accommodations. Hall and Wilton (2011) discuss the use of social firms, including social enterprises, as an "alternative economic space" (p. 873), where persons with disabilities are provided the employment opportunities that enable this population. Furthermore, these authors contend that the major pitfall of employment agencies for persons with disabilities is their focus on the employable skills of this population, rather than changes in disabling environments. In discussing social firms, Hall and Wilton note that these organizations differ from their vocational counterparts, in "size, organizational philosophy, division of labour and funding sources, but

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share the purpose that their prime interest does not lie in profit-maximisation, but in building social capacity (e.g. through employing or training socially disadvantaged groups) and responding to under-met needs” (2011, p. 873) and that in focusing on these aspects, social firms are able to balance both the demands of the employer and the need for accommodation.

Social Enterprise: An Alternative Employment Option and a Means to Change

Social enterprises have received a lot of attention from various disciplines over the past decade, including literature from the entrepreneurship, non-profit, and economic sectors (Lambru & Petrescu, 2012; Weerawardena & Mort, 2006). The primary goal and distinguishing characteristic of a social enterprise is the emphasis that is placed on providing both social and financial gains equally (Cooney, 2011). Social enterprises are primarily focused on supporting individuals from marginalized populations, who are currently under-represented in the labor market, with most social enterprises developing from a grassroots organization that is focused on addressing a specific need.

Only a few of the staff participants placed an emphasis on CGC as a social enterprise, with the focus being on both social and financial gains for the Partners they support. However, throughout the interviews, it became evident that the primary goals of a social enterprise were woven throughout the discussions of the nature of CGC, the role that staff members take in supporting the overall mission of reaching both social and financial gains and the impacts that being a part of CGC has had on the Partners. Interestingly, the characteristics of a social enterprise are so engrained in the everyday workings of CGC that the staff participants did not specifically identify the structure of CGC or the roles that they are expected to fulfill as being related to CGC as a social enterprise per se. However, the findings from the current study are consistent with the literature on social enterprises discussed by Dart (2004), Cooney (2011),

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Lanctôt, Durand, and Cobrière (2012). The only inconsistency that was found between the literature on social enterprises and the staff responses was one related to the outcomes for persons working in a social enterprise. More specifically, the literature suggests that persons working with a social enterprise show better outcomes in terms of the longevity of job tenure. Staff participants suggest that the Partners, through gaining self-confidence and developing self-esteem and work-related skills, will use CGC as a stepping stone into other areas of employment. It is important to note that staff participants did not exclude CGC as a career option for the Partners, but suggested that they would like to see CGC become a place where persons can come, get the experience, and move on. This is not consistent with the traditional purpose of a social enterprise.

The Role of Staff in Supporting Employment Outcomes

In addition to describing the nature and impacts of CGC, participants discussed the role of staff members in supporting the mission, vision, and values of CGC. The examination of staff roles has been a major focus within the disability literature (Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu, 2011; Hatton, 1999; Mank et al., 2000; Windley & Chapman, 2010). More specifically, research has described the roles that staff play in the type and quality of supports for persons with developmental disabilities and the implications that these supports have for those who are supported (Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu, 2011; Hatton, 1999; Mank et al., 2000; Windley & Chapman, 2010). As noted by Windley and Chapman (2010), the primary role of support workers is to encourage and advance both the daily living skills of the persons they support and to facilitate social inclusion within a range of community activities and daily living. Staff members who support persons within vocational services are traditionally entrusted with similar roles. For support workers working in social enterprises, the roles are two-fold; reflecting both the social and financial goals of the social enterprise itself. In discussing staff roles, participants

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highlighted the multitude of roles that are required for these goals to be achieved. In addition to the traditional roles of support workers and vocational specialists, staff participants discussed their key responsibility as being support for the Partners in operating their own businesses and concluded that in doing this they are responsible for the overall well-being of the Partners and assisting them in being successful business owners.

Persons working in the disability service field have a high incidence of staff stress and burnout (Skirrow & Hatton, 2007). There have been a number of models that have been developed to explain this phenomenon, including person-fit environment, demand-control, equity theory (Devereux et al., 2009), and emotional exhaustion or overload (Vassos & Nankervis, 2012). The one characteristic that these theories have in common is the perceived role of the staff members. Interestingly, when describing their roles, each participant member described a number of factors that related to characteristics found within the predominant theories surrounding staff stress. More specifically, staff participants noted a large work-load, role ambiguity, they stated that their job was challenging, they discussed being responsible for emotionally charged situations, they noted that there are limited resources in terms of staff to Partner ratios, and they discussed role conflict in the form of professional boundaries. However, in discussions surrounding why they chose to work with CGC, and what keeps them there, staff participants also noted a number of characteristics that would protect them against staff stress and burnout. More specifically, they discussed loving their job, what they do and the people they support which suggests that there is a good fit between staff participant and the Partners they support, the mission, and the vision of CGC. Furthermore, although staff participants noted that they experience high demands, they also noted that they feel a strong sense of control over the direction in which CGC is heading and noted that they are excited about being involved in a job that has a cause. Moreover, although

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staff participants discussed being involved and responsible for emotionally charged situations, they also discussed the immense amount of support that they feel they receive from CGC, other staff members, and the Partners. Lastly, staff participants discussed the sense of equity they experience between the Partners and themselves with participants highlighting that they have learned more from CGC and the Partners than they could ever have learned in formal education. Participants described that they feel appreciated in their position and that they can rely on the Partners to take control of the businesses and support one and other. Although staff participants described a multitude of challenging and varying roles, detailed incidents of role ambiguity, role conflict, and emotional overload, each and every staff member consistently expressed no concerns about their stress or burnout.

Autonomy versus Duty of Care

As discussed by Meininger (2001), the respect for personal autonomy has become a central component in many policy documents in both the government and health care sectors. Since policies have been created to support and respect autonomy within the social services sector, direct care workers have been faced with the difficult challenge of managing conflicting responsibilities: their duty of care for the persons they support and the duty to respect and support a person's autonomy (Hawkins et al., 2011). During the first phase of interviews, it became evident that staff participants and CGC as an umbrella organization have a number of processes within their system to promote and respect the Partners' autonomy. More specifically, participants described how CGC promotes Partners' autonomy through mechanisms such as the voting process, in the management of the businesses, self-initiated learning, and managing conflict. They reported that no decisions are made without the understanding and commitment of the Partners and explained that, during times when they do need to be involved, they try to

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stay neutral during conversations about decision making and, when decisions need to be made within the group, staff participants encourage the Partners to work with each other to come to a consensus. When staff participants were asked about times when duty of care overrules autonomy, they stated that they intervene only in incidents when Partners are at risk of hurting themselves or someone else, or in cases where hygiene risks the quality standards of the products produced. It is important to note that it was not established by staff participants what someone being at “risk” entailed other than risks associated with kitchen equipment. As suggested by Hawkins et al. (2011), this is a common difficulty in social services. More specifically, the idea of risk is subjective and based on social and cultural values that are influenced by individual experiences, values, and knowledge of the situation. Furthermore, it was clear that some of the staff contribute to choices beyond issues related to risk, since they are involved in decisions about who is accepted into the Foundations Program and they do have influence over which businesses potential Partners are placed in during the Apprenticeship Program. These findings are consistent with the literature on autonomy versus the duty of care, as suggested by Hawkins et al. (2011) who indicated that “little is known, however, about how support workers negotiate the complexity of risk management and the promotion of autonomy in their daily practice” (p. 874).

Limitations

Number of Participants

Due to the size of CGC, the participant sample was small. The views of these staff participants are specific to CGC and although some of the findings reported in this study can provide insight for other employment settings, the perspectives of staff members from CGC may not be transferable to other service agencies or places of employment.

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Selection Process

Participants received a letter of invitation to this study from the Executive Director via e-mail. Although it was explicitly stated that there was no obligation for staff members to participate and the responses were sent to the investigators, the role of the Executive Director in distributing the letters of invitation may have contributed to staff choosing to participate. This selection process was used because of the involvement of the Executive Director as a co-investigator in the research project, due to time constraints and out of convenience. Given more time, the letter of invitation could have been mailed to each of the locations associated with CGC.

Participant Reactivity

Due to the nature of the questions relating to the type and quality of supports provided by themselves and by CGC, staff participants may have felt obligated to answer some of the questions in a particular way. The Graduate Student Researcher attempted to relieve some of the pressures associated with answering the questions by spending time building rapport before the individual interviews began. During this time, the Graduate Student Researcher discussed her previous experience working in a residential setting, emphasized that she did not have experience within the employment sector, and that she was really interested in hearing the participants' perspective about their work within CGC. It was also emphasized that the focus of this study was not to judge what they were doing, but to use their knowledge as experts to describe, in detail, the nature and impacts of CGC. In the second phase, the potential for socially appropriate responding may have been increased given the nature of the focus group format where participants heard the responses of their colleagues. Again, similar steps were taken to decrease the possibility of participant reactivity by reminding participants about confidentiality

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protections, by clarifying that the focus of the study was on information gathering and not on passing judgement, by clarifying focus group protocols such as turn taking to allow for relatively uninterrupted participation, and an emphasis on the safety of an environment that would protect staff participants from any work-related repercussions, such as cut in hours or changes in shifts. In reviewing the responses from each phase, it is clear that concerns surrounding participant reactivity for the focus group phase were not exacerbated by the dynamics of the group. More specifically, responses from the second phase participants were not notably different from the responses provided by the first phase of participants. Furthermore, staff participants engaged in conversations that exhibited differences of opinion, suggesting that the group dynamic did not stifle the opinions of the participating staff members. If the group did create an issue surrounding participant reactivity, triangulation between phases would have been unlikely and restricted responding would have been evident.

Member Check

A member check was not performed with the staff participants of CGC. It would have been beneficial for the participants to be involved in reviewing their responses prior to analysis to ensure that their perspectives were being well represented. This should have also taken place during and after the analysis. Due to time constraints and the extra time this would have placed on the participants, member checking was not conducted for this study. However, there was a high degree of thematic convergence between the focus group and individual interview data. Furthermore, staff participants were encouraged to contact the Graduate Student Researcher, if they wanted to provide more information or change the information they provided during the interviews or focus group.

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Researcher's Perspective

The Graduate Student Researcher has experience with training persons with intellectual disabilities and support workers about human rights, respect, and responsibility. She has been involved in working with individuals with developmental disabilities in residential settings and has received education in disability studies. These experiences may have affected the direction of the questions and subsequent analysis of the results.

Questions for Future Research

Replication of This Model by a Developmental Services Agency

Social enterprises are often grassroots movements that have developed out of a greater need for persons who have been marginalized and discriminated against. The question of whether this type of employment model could be successfully supported by an agency that is already formed and committed to supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in all areas of their lives still needs to be answered. Future research should be conducted on social enterprises supporting persons with developmental disabilities in both a grassroots and employment specific organization compared to a social enterprise that is developed from a pre-existing agency that supports persons with developmental disabilities in various areas of their lives.

Relationships Between Themes

A number of relationships were noted among some of the identified themes. More specifically, throughout the discussions a sense of dedication from the staff participant was evident. Many of the staff responses coded as dedication were also coded as staff control over their work environment. Staff members feeling a sense of control has been reported in the literature as a protective factor against staff stress and burnout (Devereux et al., 2009). Further

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analysis should be conducted on this relationship, with the consideration that providing staff participants with some control over their work environment reduces stress and may contribute to a greater sense of dedication. Furthermore, there was a distinct relationship between the equity discussed by staff participants and the sense of equality described. More specifically, staff participants discussed the Partners as equals within their work environment and described their relationship as being equitable, in that they felt the Partners inputs and outputs matched their own. In instances where staff participants were discussing examples of equality, aspects of equity were highlighted and vice versa. A further analysis of this relationship could provide theoretical insight into the role of equity in promoting equality. More specifically, does a sense of equity contribute to feelings of equality among staff members supporting persons with disabilities and vice versa. All of these relationships, although interesting, were not the specific focus of the study, however they do warrant further exploration.

Technical Skills and Previous Experience in Social Services

Staff participants described a range of previous experience they brought to their work with CGC. A further investigation into the differences of responses from both groups should be conducted in order to provide more information about the role that past experiences have on the support provided and the view of persons with developmental disabilities within the employment sector. More differences between those who come into this type of employment model with technical skills versus those who have supported persons with developmental disabilities versus those who have had experience in both sectors in the past, could assist in providing information about the recommendations for replicating CGC's employment model. Specifically, by examining the differences between the responses provided by all three groups, a description of the relative contributions that people from different backgrounds can offer can be produced.

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This would provide those who are interested in developing a social enterprise with a clear picture of the necessary characteristics of potential staff members.

A Longitudinal Study

A longitudinal should be conducted to examine the longevity of staff members working within a social enterprise versus staff members who are supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in traditional vocational settings. A clearer picture of the impacts of involvement in this type of work on staff stress and the factors related to protecting against burnout should be examined in further detail, to provide more support for social enterprises as creating a better outcome for both persons with a developmental disability and the staff members who support them.

Conclusion

Social enterprise offers an alternative employment model that can provide persons with developmental disabilities with the support and accommodations that are required for them to be successful in their employment ventures. Staff participants provided a detailed account of the nature and impacts of CGC on its Partners, themselves and the community. More specifically, staff participants described an environment that was free from judgement, one that cultivates equality, promotes autonomy and independence, provides accommodations, supports persons' strengths, and provides opportunities for both personal growth and the development of successful businesses. Staff participants emphasized the ability of CGC to change people's perceptions about the capabilities of persons with developmental disabilities within the employment sector. They discussed their previous work experiences and highlighted that they all come from a variety of different backgrounds and bringing different and important skill sets to the Partners and the businesses.

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In addition to describing the nature and impacts of CGC, staff participants provided information about their role in supporting both the Partners and the businesses within the social enterprise model. Concerns and organizational protective factors related to staff stress were explored, along with issues concerning the balancing of their responsibilities for the promotion of Partner autonomy with duty of care. In addition, staff participants detailed a number of recommendations for the replication of the CGG model.

To conclude, staff participants described an employment model that is unique from the traditional forms of employment that are offered to persons with developmental disabilities. Furthermore, in considering the balance between medical and social model perspectives and the ability of CGC to change perceptions by changing the way community members view the social roles of persons with developmental disabilities, CGC is not only an alternative employment model, but one that can change the future view of persons' with developmental disabilities from being incapable, deficient and inadequate, to persons who are valued, successful and employable.

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SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Appendix A**Invitation/Recruitment Letter from Organization's Executive Director: Interviews with Board Members, Funders, Job Coaches, Founders, catering customers, representatives of host organizations, Ministry of Community and Social Services representative**

Date

You are invited to participate in a research project that is a case study of Common Ground and its related businesses. Common Ground is a partner in this research project that is part of the larger Social Business and Marginalized Social Groups Community-University Research Alliance based at the University of Toronto. The goal of this project is to develop a case study of Common Ground that will be helpful to others who may wish to replicate this employment model and that will contribute to the literature on the operation and impact of social businesses. We are conducting interviews and, later in the study, you may also receive information about a short survey.

You are invited to participate in an interview that will last approximately one hour. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time. Beforehand, you will be given an information letter that explains everything in greater detail and will ask for your formal consent to participate. The letter will make it clear that your responses will be confidential and the reports of the study will not refer to anyone by name, in other words, would be anonymous.

If you are interested in participating in the interview please contact the researcher who is conducting this study with her students and research assistants. Frances Owen, Associate Professor of Child & Youth Studies and Applied Disability Studies at Brock University can be reached at fowen@brocku.ca or at 905-688-5550 ext. 4807. She will send you more information about the study and a form so you can give your consent to participate.

Thank you for considering participating in an interview for this study.

Sincerely,

Jeannette Campbell

Executive Director

Common Ground

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Appendix B

Interview Participant Consent Form

Dear

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about the project. This information will help you to decide whether or not you would like to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time.

At the end of the letter, you will find a form to indicate that you wish to participate, should you decide to do so. If you would like to participate in this study and are at least 18 years old, please fill in the form and sign it. Keep a copy for your records.

The name of this research project is: Social Business and Marginalized Social Groups: The Common Ground Case Study.

The nature and purpose of the research is:

- To understand the impact of social business in addressing the needs, both social and economic, of marginalized persons in the GTA
- To work with Common Ground through a community-based participatory research strategy to help develop strategies in building capacity around such needs as are identified through the research, and to put in place a process for researching the effectiveness of these strategies
- For Common Ground, we want to understand the impact of its programs on partners, staff, families, customers, funders, board members, and host organizations associated with Common Ground businesses.
- The results of the case study will be discussed at annual symposia and presented at academic and community focused conferences.
- The findings of the case study may be published in book form for academic and general audiences, in refereed journals, as fact sheets and electronically through the project website.
- Your part in the research, if you agree, is to participate in a phone or in person interview about the impact of Common Ground and its related businesses upon you, the surrounding community and Common Ground itself. The interview will be audiotaped.

What we will do protect your privacy and confidentiality:

- All information will be confidential to protect the identity of participants and minimize any potential risk. Only the lead researcher, Frances Owen, her students and Research Assistants at Brock University will have access to your answers associated with your name. Jeannette Campbell from Common Ground Co-operative is also a research partner but will have access to data from which participant identifiers have been removed.
- Data will be placed in a secure location at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario for five years, and then destroyed.
- Individual participants will remain anonymous in any presentations of the findings

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Potential limitations in our ability to guarantee anonymity are:

- Confidentiality will be maintained except where the law requires disclosure, such as subpoena of records, or if issues related to abuse or threat of harm to self or others are disclosed.

Potential benefits, which you might derive from participating, are:

- The study will provide participants with a better understanding of the impact that their social business is having on marginalized social groups
- The study will provide participants with a better understanding of the impact that their social business is having on their stakeholders
- The study will provide participants with a better understanding of the specific capacity issues that they face as an organization
- Based on the results of the case studies, the researchers and Common Ground will develop strategies to address the identified capacity issues.

Potential harm if any is:

- No harm is anticipated.

Compensation:

- ◆ All interview participants will receive a \$5 Tim Horton's gift card

I hope that you decide to participate. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at either fowen@brocku.ca or at 905 688 5550 ext 4807. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Frances Owen

Associate Professor

Dept. of Child & Youth Studies

and

Centre for Applied Disability Studies

Brock University

St. Catharines, ON

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

To Be Completed by Participants

I have read through this description of the case study and I understand what is required for participation. I understand the nature and limitations of the research. I agree to participate in the ways described. If I am making any exceptions or stipulations, these are:

I understand that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time and there will be no implications as a result of my non-participation.

Name:

Date:

Secondary Use of Data

Are you willing to allow the researchers to include the information you provide in this study with data collected in future studies of a similar nature? As in the present study, information identifying you would be removed from the data.

Yes_____ No_____

Name:

Date:

Contact for Future Studies

Are you willing to be contacted to participate in future studies of a similar or related nature?

Yes_____ No_____

Name:

Date:

This study has been reviewed by and received clearance from the Brock Research Ethics Board. (File# 10-151) If I have any questions or concerns about my participation in the study, you may contact Frances Owen at 905-688-5550 ext. 4807. You may also contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer in the Office of Research Services at 905-688-5550 ext. 3035, email: reb@brocku.ca.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Appendix C

Invitation/Recruitment Letter from Organization's Executive Director: Focus Group with Common Ground Co-operative Staff Members

Date

Invitation to Participate in a Staff Research Focus Group

on June 4th, 2012 from 3:00-4:30 at the Cookery

You are invited to participate in a focus group as part of the Common Ground case study research project. Common Ground is a partner in this research project that is part of the larger Social Business and Marginalized Social Groups Community-University Research Alliance based at the University of Toronto.

The goal of this project is to develop a case study of Common Ground that will be helpful to others who may wish to replicate this employment model and that will contribute to the literature on the operation and impact of social businesses. We have conducted interviews and now we would like to hold a focus group to discuss the nature of Common Ground and its related businesses and the impact that they have on organization members and on the community.

You are invited to participate a staff focus group that will last approximately 1 to 1.5 hours on Monday, June 4, 2012 at 3:00 at the Cookery. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time.

Beforehand, you will be given an information letter that explains everything in greater detail and will ask for your formal consent to participate. The letter will make it clear that your responses will be confidential and the reports of the study will not refer to anyone by name, in other words, would be anonymous.

If you are interested in participating in the focus group please contact the researcher who is organizing this focus group: Courtney Bishop, who is a graduate student in the Centre for Applied Disability Studies at Brock University.

Courtney can be reached at: cw00ak@brocku.ca. She will send you more information about the study and a form so you can give your consent to participate.

Thank you for considering participating in this focus group.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Hope

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Executive Director

Common Ground

Appendix D

Focus Group Interview Participant Consent Form

Dear

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about the project. This information will help you to decide whether or not you would like to participate in this focus group as part of the Common Ground Case study research project. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time.

We have completed a number of very helpful interviews and now we would like to discuss the nature of Common Ground and its related businesses with a group of staff. The purpose of this focus group is to help us to examine the nature of the organization and its impact in more detail.

At the end of the letter, you will find a form to indicate that you wish to participate, should you decide to do so. If you would like to participate in this study and are at least 18 years old, please fill in the form and sign it. Keep a copy for your records.

The name of this research project is: Social Business and Marginalized Social Groups: The Common Ground Case Study.

The nature and purpose of the research is:

- To understand the impact of social business in addressing the needs, both social and economic, of marginalized persons in the GTA
- To work with Common Ground through a community-based participatory research strategy to help develop strategies in building capacity around such needs as are identified through the research, and to put in place a process for researching the effectiveness of these strategies
- For Common Ground, we want to understand the impact of its programs on partners, staff, families, customers, funders, board members, and host organizations associated with Common Ground businesses.
- The results of the case study will be discussed at annual symposia and presented at academic and community focused conferences.
- The findings of the case study may be published in book form for academic and general audiences, in refereed journals, as fact sheets and electronically through the project website.
- **Your part in the research, if you agree, is to participate in a focus group about the impact of Common Ground and its related businesses upon you, the surrounding community and Common Ground partners. The interview will be audiotaped.**

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

What we will do protect your privacy and confidentiality:

- All information will be confidential to protect the identity of participants and minimize any potential risk. Only the lead researcher, Frances Owen, her students, including Courtney Bishop who is organizing this focus group, and Research Assistants at Brock University will have access to your answers associated with your name. Jeannette Campbell and Jennifer Hope are also research partners but will have access to data from which participant identifiers have been removed.
- Data will be placed in a secure location at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ontario for five years, and then destroyed.
- Individual participants will remain anonymous in any presentations of the findings
- Please note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in a focus group data collection because the researcher cannot control potential disclosure by other participants. Participants are asked to keep the discussion confidential.

Potential limitations in our ability to guarantee anonymity are:

- Confidentiality will be maintained except where the law requires disclosure, such as subpoena of records, or if issues related to abuse or threat of harm to self or others are disclosed.

Potential benefits, which you might derive from participating, are:

- The study will provide participants with a better understanding of the impact that their social business is having on marginalized social groups
- The study will provide participants with a better understanding of the impact that their social business is having on their stakeholders
- The study will provide participants with a better understanding of the specific capacity issues that they face as an organization
- Based on the results of the case studies, the researchers and Common Ground will develop strategies to address the identified capacity issues.

Potential harm if any is:

- No harm is anticipated.

Compensation:

- ◆ All focus group participants will receive a \$5 Tim Horton's gift card

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me: Courtney Bishop:
cw00ak@brocku.ca

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Courtney Bishop

Graduate Student

Centre for Applied Disability Studies

Brock University

To Be Completed by Participants

I have read through this description of the focus group and case study and I understand what is required for participation. I understand the nature and limitations of the research. I agree to participate in the ways described. If I am making any exceptions or stipulations, these are:

I understand that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time and there will be no implications as a result of my non-participation.

Name:

Date:

Secondary Use of Data

Are you willing to allow the researchers to include the information you provide in this study with data collected in future studies of a similar nature? As in the present study, information identifying you would be removed from the data.

Yes_____ No_____

Name:

Date:

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Contact for Future Studies

Are you willing to be contacted to participate in future studies of a similar or related nature?

Yes_____No_____

Name:

Date:

This study has been reviewed by and received clearance from the Brock Research Ethics Board. (File# 10-151) If I have any questions or concerns about my participation in the study, you may contact Frances Owen at 905-688-5550 ext. 4807. You may also contact the Brock University Research Ethics Officer in the Office of Research Services at 905-688-5550 ext. 3035, email: reb@brocku.ca.

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Appendix E**Demographic Form:**

1. Name of Focus Group Participant _____
2. Sex _____
3. Name of Worksite _____
4. Length of Employment with CGC _____
5. Previous Employment _____
6. Number of Hours Worked Per Week _____
7. Personal Contact Information _email: _____

Date: _____

Researcher Name: _____

Researcher Name: _____

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Appendix F**Sample Semi-structured interview questions for Common Ground Staff Participants-Phase One**

1. Please tell me about your work with Common Ground. (Prompts: how did Common Ground begin, what keeps it going)
2. Why did you choose to work/be a Board member here?
3. What barriers do you see to employment of people who have intellectual disabilities?
4. How would you describe the nature of the activity that the person/people you support through Common Ground do?
 - a. Is it a job?
 - b. Is it volunteer?
 - c. Is it partial employment?
 - d. In your view, is volunteering equivalent to work?
5. Please describe the impact of Common Ground on the partners.
6. Have you worked/been on a Board of an organization that works with persons who have disabilities in the past? (if so please describe the organization and your role)
7. What impact has your work with Common Ground had on you and on your life?
8. What outcomes do you see from the work of Common Ground (*social, economic, community, other*)?
 - a. What evidence do you have of these outcomes? (please describe)
9. What recommendations do you have for people who are starting to work in the field of supporting people with intellectual disabilities in employment?

Appendix G

Semi Structured Focus Group Questions-Phase Two

1. How would you describe a social purpose business? (Prompt: what does this term mean to you?)
 - a. Follow-up: How do Common Ground Co-operative and its associated individual businesses serve as a social purpose business?
 - b. Do you think this form of business is beneficial for those you support ? Do you think it is more or less beneficial for the people you support than other forms of employment? Why? (Prompt: Please give examples)
2. How would you describe your role as a job coach?
 - a. How does your role as a job coach relate to the other roles you take one while you are at work or out of work? (Prompts: How do you feel about taking on more than one role? Please describe examples of how your roles balance or conflict.)
3. Why did you choose to work here?
 - a. Follow-up: Who was involved in the hiring process? How are you assessed? Please describe the role of partners in hiring and evaluating job coaches?
4. What keeps you here? (Prompt Do you think that job coaches for Common Ground have the same risk for burn out that is seen in other positions supporting persons with developmental disabilities?)
5. What does Common Ground do to promote autonomy among partners? Please describe the job coach's (other CGC staff's) role in supporting autonomy among partners. (Prompt: Can you tell us about a time when you had to restrict someone's ability to make a choice that affects them? How do you decide when to intervene in partners' decision making and when to back off?)
6. What impact has your work with Common Ground had on you and on your life?
 - a. What benefits have you received from working with and obtaining social relationships (if any) with the people you support (what are the benefits for the people you support)?
7. What outcomes do you see from the work of Common Ground (social, economic, community, other)? Please describe/give examples of the impact that GCG and its related businesses have on customers, the broader community, CGC members (other groups?)
 - a. What evidence do you have of these outcomes? (please describe)
8. What recommendations do you have for people who are starting to work in the field of supporting people with intellectual disabilities in employment?

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Appendix H

Themes	FP/D	SP/D	FP/I	SP/I
Tell me about CGC				
General Description	X	X		
History of CGC	X			
CGC as a Co-operative	X			
Social Enterprise	X	X		
Overview of the Businesses and Programs supported through CGC				
Foundations Program	X	X		
Apprenticeship Program	X	X		
Lemon and Allspice Cookery	X	X		
Coffee Sheds	X			
CLEANable	X			
Other Programs	X	X		
What keeps CGC going?				
Filling a Gap within the Current Employment Sector	X			X
Community Support	X			
Marketing	X			
Dedication	X		X	X
The Nature of the Activity in which Partners within CGC Engage- WORK	X			
How is CGC Financed?	X			
Perceived Barriers to Traditional Employment				
Community Perceptions	X			
Characteristics of Traditional Employment	X			
Barriers within CGC	X			
Physical Barriers	X			
Transit	X			
ODSP	X			
Why did you choose to work here?				
Previous Work Experiences	X	X		
Staff Roles				
General Description	X	X		

SOCIAL ENTERPRISE-STAFF PERSPECTIVES

Themes	FP/D	SP/D	FP/I	SP/I
Impact of CGC on the Partners				
Self-esteem	X	X		
Options	X			
Sense of belonging	X	X		
Impact of CGC on Staff Participants	X	X		
Impact of CGC on Community Members	X	X		
Recommendations				
Replication of the CGC Social Enterprise Model	X	X		
Staff Characteristics	X	X		
Autonomy				
Voting process		X	X	
Other decision making		X	X	
Involvement in managing the group		X	X	
Providing autonomy with financial independence			X	
Staff Influence		X	X	
Equality			X	X
CGC as a balanced employment model				
Promoting strengths and accommodating for weaknesses			X	X
Providing opportunities for learning and skill development			X	X
Partners' Responsibility			X	X
Staff stress and Burnout				
Emotional Overload		X	X	
Multiple Roles		X	X	
Protective Factors		X	X	
Dedication			X	X

Figure 2.0 Illustration of the themes identified within First Phase (FP) and Second Phase (SP) using Inductive (I) or Deductive (D) approaches