

#### Appendix 4. Examples of co-occurrences between empathy and one or more relational values theme

Table A4.1

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##### Examples of co-occurrence between empathy and one or more relational values theme

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The more I work on it like with those, I experience some anxiety thinking about regenerating those patches and what's going to happen if it's going to happen. When it's going to happen. But you know working in between the patches and seeing like that there I'm like oh there a healthy trees here. There is hope here, you know.

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I'm frustrated with a lot of things about how the world is, or at least how whatever our Colonial, broken, feudal society, whatever you want to call it is, and so like, just trying to both heal something in a very small sense with like this land.

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I'm hoping for the time being just to keep it on this trajectory and see how many more pollinator species and native plants, and see what the wetland will do as things change. And try to keep them from wrecking that side. So. Um. I think hopefully it keeps getting better. I'm sure there will be challenges. I'm sure there'll be invasive species that come in from elsewhere and, you know, there'll be the balance of letting the kids play on it totally fully and immersively and also, like, trying to prevent them from destroying certain areas that are more delicate or whatever, but, I mean, without making it feel like they can't use it and can't be a part of it. So, that'll be a feature I guess. And then when I'm dead who knows. Hopefully by then people will pay more attention to this stuff and somebody won't come bulldoze it.

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Spouse 1: Uh, there's an old beatnik – and you know I count myself as one of those, though at the time I didn't understand that I really was, and you're too young to know what a beatnik really is, probably – saying “I'm not my brother's keeper, I am my brother.” That's a relationship. You can call me crazy but, after a rainstorm, walking down the road or to the barn or, even just yesterday when I was cutting up some stacked logs, you know before the chainsaw, or the heavy left or right foot of mine killed them, I rescued half a dozen slugs and a bunch of earthworms and finally said “guys I have to much to do, the rest of you are imperiled,” [ha] but that's not just yesterday...

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Spouse 2: That's everyday [haha]. He also has this thing where we'll be driving down the road and he'll see some poor little thing that didn't make it across the road and he'll say “blessings to you beautiful cousin and all your generations [laughing].” So he, he feels bad for every one of them out there.

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Spouse 1: And the ones that are running across the road I go "get off the road! There's nothing but trouble out here for you!" [laughing]

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Um, this, this land they plan to kind of stay out of, in terms of logging and roads, and -- you'll be on the so-called Skid Trail in a minute, which is right now a beaver river [laughs]. And it's good! It does my heart good to see that [laughs].

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Interviewer: Do you think they distinguish you from other people?

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Participant: Probably. Yeah, I've had them walk on my back trail just minutes of my passing. I don't, you know, I know – maybe they know I love 'em [laughs]. When I was younger, I used to climb up the cliff faces and take pictures of the dens and stuff. All kinds of intrusive stuff, which I now, you know, am ashamed about, really. But, I've got the pictures [said with a smile].

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One of the most valued things that I did as a child, this was my playground. All day long, man. This wasn't a study, this wasn't class, this is where I went to get the hell away from bullies. This is where I went to get away from my father who was kind of a jerk. And to, you know, I was safe here, this land, this didn't judge me. Just by spending a lot of time there I started forming this relationship, so now I value this differently, right? I value this as a place of solitude. Of retreat. I think a lot happens, you know, when we spend time in these places that people talk about, and one of them is that we start to, whether we know it consciously or not, we all start getting a little bit of a, here, you notice as soon as we sat down, there's something [slaps rock]. We're just kind of here now, not really thinking about what time it is. You know, and not really thinking about my debt. The papers I have to write. Who I have to call back. Um, yeah, it's just, it's just something about that. You enter into something. Water's really good for that. Water and big views, off of mountains and stuff. It's like that perspective. So, when you allow a child to form relationships that are really personal, then that becomes a value system. Why would I want to hurt this? This wasn't the bully? You know? So I have a dear spot for this, and that's probably why I am the way I am. In part. But, also the, I think then as we get more informed, because that's love, really, that's where the love of it comes from. And when you see kids that grow up in highly urbanized environments and places, it's all like "ok, we're going to summer camp, alright, make sure you put this rock back, datada, don't be part of this." It's fun, but what about the kid who goes out with an old cool whip container and comes back with a pile of minnows and a bunch of bugs he doesn't even understand and it's just like, and he has them. "OK," they all died in the cool whip container because he didn't know how to maintain it, "but I learned a lot!" You know? "I know what little minnows are," and it was like, to me it was like catching a giant trout when I was a kid, going out with a coat hanger and making a little crappy net out of a rag and seeing what I could catch and getting water striders and all these things. Really key memories for me as a kid.

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Interviewer: If this land could talk, what would it say?

Participant: [Breath out through nose]. Wow. That's not in your list! Um... I don't know. "Crazy old bat?" [5 second pause]. I don't know. "You done well? You tried." Maybe that's the word. "You tried. You left it better than when you started." I don't know. Maybe "you haven't done enough." Probably, I think it's all of those. "You haven't done enough." I know I haven't done enough. I can't do enough. I want to do a lot more but I can't. I'm alone. And I've got a wife and kids and grandkids, but I'm alone. You know, they don't have the same values I do. Uh, that is, my wife doesn't. I think the kids, two of the kids do. The third one is off and running. I think "you tried. You did alright. You haven't done enough." All of that! "I'm better off than when I started." Um. "Keep going, pass it on." I think all of that.

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Everything about this place is like really challenging. The soils are bad, and borderline non-productive in many places. It is unbelievably steep. The access is poor. The lower section of it is essentially landlocked. Massive issues with invasive species. Massive issues due to past logging that just make it really hard to deal with. Huge deer overabundance issues that contribute to the problems caused by past logging. Yeah, everything like I sort of feel like this property in some ways is like this like injured compromised thing that I'm like like trying to take care of but it's everything about this place is hard. You know and it's like a place a place that only a forester could love really. And a forester who is it who is actually into like timber production and like making money off the land would not love it.

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My hope is that this place can be a place of, you know, the forest here can be healthy. You know and at least relatively free to pursue you know mostly natural processes of forest development, free of many of the sort of interfering factors created by humans like invasive species, and like development, fragmentation. And you know that the remnants of, or the legacy of the land use history of this place, yeah I just want I just want, I don't care if the forest is valuable or producing anything very valuable. I would like it to produce something because I think the production of forest resources is really important on a broader scale but I don't care if the forest is valuable, I just want it to be healthy, and just to be able to provide habitat and do all the important services that forests provide for us behind the scenes. That would be just my goal. I don't think it has to do anything for me really. I just want it to be healthy.

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Yeah I'm, there's just so many scary things coming down the pike for forests. Invasive species continue to be an issue. Deer browse here is an enormous issue that if unattenuated will just get worse. And really negatively impact all these other things, parts of what I'm trying to do. Terrified of development and that someday after I'm gone that this place will be developed and subdivided in just become like every other developed place on Earth. Terrified of some of the invasive diseases that we have, especially in the case of this place, especially like hemlock woolly adelgid and oak wilt. Because if we like the hemlock here has already been basically clear-cut, that there's a few of them and if we but I think it will be increasingly a part of this forest and then oak is just if we lost oak and hemlock, and we've got beech bark disease, it would just be really scary. And that stuff that I feel there's not that much that I can do about it. I'm just hoping that it's either that those problems are either solved or they just never get here. That's that's scares me. I would say also that increasingly I've realized zooming out from this property and just talking about Chittenden County in general, that bad logging, high-grading, just poor logging practices are bad and are scary, but the thing that keeps me up at night is development. Cuz forests can you know over a given enough time forests can recover from bad logging, development's permanent. Loss of forests. Permanent loss of forest land is what keeps me up at night. I would so much rather see a place that was just horribly high-graded, then a place that was developed.

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They criticize me highly because I'll say to them what if you were that tree and then they like see that's my point you're worshiping the tree and I'm like I am not worshiping the tree I am trying to tell you that if you weren't who you were and you were thus and so, do you think you would have any thoughts or feelings about that? Because my heritage says that is a living being. That, and then that's another whole argument that I've been discriminated against and harassed about. Yeah.

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Um, there's just something about it, um, you know, maybe because it's a flat spot with lots of pretty trees and stuff. Maybe because it's got the ditch, so to speak, the wetlands and so forth behind it. Um, but we always just find peaceful. And maybe because it's almost pure hemlock. And I don't know why that would make me happy [laugh] but... And it seems to be, you know, another healthy place. Hey, look at that, a purple mushroom.

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On my property I don't think I destroy nests, because I'm just grazing. And so the cows, I don't think that's a, that that doesn't really effect, umm, nesting and fledging as much as if I was, back in my dairy farming days where I'd have my equipment and I'd be mowing through these nests and mowing through fawns and stuff, like I used to do. And turkeys. I've cut turkey legs off by mowing, not seeing them and mowing right through. That wasn't, that was not a good thing.

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And they accidentally mowed part of our field. You know, the point isn't just to like whine about neighbors, but... I wish that these people were more involved with their field, and maybe some of them are but like, you know, it wasn't on purpose but it was when they were mowing too late, they hire someone to mow it, they don't mow it themselves, and then someone came through and plowed through the edge of my milkweed up there on accident. But you know, it was when, it was in September so you're not supposed to cut it before the frost so then we have less milkweed the next year and they chopped up some monarch caterpillars, and I was super pissed, and that's why there's posts up there so they don't do that again.

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And, you know, I wouldn't feel good if I was, if I was destroying my land. And not caring about it. And I probably would um, wouldn't even own it, if I was, if I was doing a poor job and there was no enthusiasm to be on my land, I probably would sell it. So I wouldn't even be an owner.

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The farm in our village is river bottom, sandy loams that are perfect for growing vegetables. So I feel good selling to this [farm name] farm, because they understand soil health. And they're resting, they're resting those soils these last couple years they're not growing anything. So they understand soil health too, so I'm happy to pass those soils on to them.

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But I'm just so worried, because of beech bark disease and deer browse and the amount of beech that was here I'm just really so concerned that I would have just cut a beech monoculture and grow another beech monoculture. Which is hugely disappointing. Which is another reason why I tried to make the patches as big as I could is because beech is less competitive in the open.

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Like I would rather die than do something to hurt this piece of land.

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So just, if you pick up a tuft of reindeer moss, just put it back. I try, I try not to come out here actually that much because I just sense that it's extremely sensitive.

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Um, but, the [family] up on East Hill are very efficient at cutting firewood. And so, we bought six cords of wood every winter for many years from them. They bring the dump truck a couple of times and dump it out in the yard. And I don't have to grieve over trees that I knew. [laugh]. Sometimes I stick them in the stove and look at the moss on them and think ooh! That was too bad, that was a nice one. But other than that I'm just as happy, I'm happier getting firewood from somewhere else.

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We have the kids pretend to be an, um, little ball gall fly egg hatching inside of the stem of the goldenrod, and chewing on the insides of the gall as it grows around them, and spending the winter inside sleeping and, then pupating, and chewing it. Actually they chew the hole almost to the edge of the outside of the gall in the fall when they've still got teeth, because after they come out as pupa they don't have teeth anymore, so what they have is this bulbous head filled with, they fill with fluid. And that they can butt their way open so they hang on to the inside of the tunnel and this swollen fluid head is sort of, uh, breaks that last membrane and they can walk out and dry their wings and then be gall flies for, what, two weeks. Cuz most of their life is as larvae. And the more you can, uh, feel, um, empathy, uh, or, even that you could imagine being some other organism, the more it, the more that question, what is it for, becomes irrelevant. Really. It's itself. It has its life. It's a wonder that here we are in a place that has gall flies.

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We're in that being's territory. We're only borrowing it, and it's not it doesn't know that this is a car. It's just another type of animal to them probably or they don't even know what it is. And I've had people tell me what they should know to hurry up. I'm like what? What?! you should know to slow down! I like, I just want to pull my hair out! Because there's that disconnect.

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