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“You can’t leave your life to chance.” Transitioning from offending in  
emerging adults.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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May-Lee A. Chong

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### **Abstract**

There is currently limited very research about how emerging adult's transition out of crime. This study interviewed nine emerging adults who successfully transitioned out of crime by the age of 25. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and transcribed verbatim. The data was analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis. Participants described their experience of transition as a build-up of distress combined with reasons to stop, shifts in perceptions around offending and their identity, a challenging process that they felt fortunate to have accomplished, a noticeable improvement in their lives and ongoing temptation or thoughts about offending. The results suggested three main findings; that the process of desistance is similar in emerging adults and adult populations, that there could be a universal mechanism of change underlying all behaviour, and that control theories may better explain desistance behaviour than dominant models of behaviour change such as the transtheoretical model of change.

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He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata. What is the most important thing in this world? It is people, it is people, it is people.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 16/26.

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