Soft skills for hard work: an exploration of the efficacy of the emotional literacy of practitioners working within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) with high risk offenders

By

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Declaration

I declare that the main text of this thesis is entirely my own work. This work has not previously been submitted wholly or in part for any academic award or any qualification other than that for which it is now submitted.

Signature...

Date..

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my partner Sue Beardshaw, who gave me the strength and inspiration to commence this work and who will always be my most profound mentor.

Works made possible by this study

- Knight, C. and D. Clow (2010). Supporting Practitioners in Dealing with the Emotional Impact of their work. *Offender Engagement Research Bulletin*. Ministry of Justice. London. Issue 1. (Appendix 15)

- Knight, C. (2012) 'Soft Skills for Hard Work': Using Emotional Literacy to Work Effectively with Sex Offenders in: Brayford, J., Cowe, F. & Deering, J. '*Sex Offenders: Punish, Help Change or Control? Theory, Policy and Practice explored*. Forthcoming with Routledge. (Appendix 16)

- Knight, C. (2012) Teaching materials for students on the undergraduate criminology degree at De Montfort University (Appendix 17)

- Contract confirmed in April 2012 with Palgrave Macmillan to write a book entitled: *'Emotional Literacy in Criminal Justice: Managing and Enhancing Professional Practice with Offenders'* for completion in July 2013.

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List of figures and tables

Abstract

'Soft skills for hard work': an exploration of the efficacy of the emotional literacy of practitioners working within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) with high risk offenders

This study seeks to explore ways in which the emotional content of probation intervention with offenders is central to practitioner/offender relationships, but constitutes a discourse that has been largely silenced within an organisation that favours a business orientated model. Questions addressed within this thesis relate to how practitioners understand, regulate and work with emotion; how the organisational 'silence' on the subject is maintained and reinforced; the costs of this silencing and how practitioners endeavour to surmount it in their daily working practices. The term 'emotional literacy' (Killick 2006) captures the phenomenon of 'emotion work' or the 'soft skills' that many practitioners use in pursuit of the 'hard work' of assessing, managing and enabling change in offenders. It is a qualitative study which has used a thematic analysis to explore the concept of emotional literacy in probation practice. The study is informed by a theoretically eclectic approach and uses Layder's theories of social domain (Layder 2006), and of interpersonal control (Layder 2004), as frameworks for analysis.

Findings from the research demonstrate that the practice of emotional literacy is significantly affected by organisational and contextual constraints. The tensions inherent for practitioners in holding emotionally conflicting and ambivalent positions in their practice with offenders are illustrated. There is evidence that practitioners predominantly exercise interpersonal emotional control through benign means. However, some concerns were highlighted by respondents of the risk of more collusive, manipulative or even repressive means of interpersonal control being deployed. It is argued that in the absence of training and support in the area of emotions and emotion management, most of this

'underground' emotional work is subjective, idiosyncratic, undervalued and largely unnoticed by the organisation.

It is further argued, that the silencing of the discourse imposes a burden on workers, providing them with few opportunities to explore the implications of their emotions in practice, and limiting the effectiveness of the organisation in enabling offenders to change. The research also reveals some gender implications. An argument is developed for the explicit building of emotional resources within the organisation to sustain the development, enhancement and support of emotional literacy in the workforce, and for an increased profile to be afforded these 'soft skills' in policy debates.

Chapter 1: Introduction and context for the study

1.1 Introduction

The research for this thesis is based upon my own personal experience of undertaking, and subsequently teaching, probation practice in the period 1972 to the present (40 years). The context for the study is the probation service, an organisation that has, during this period, undergone a transformation in its culture, remit and organisational structure, from its origins as a 'welfare' service for offenders to its modern identity as a corrections agency of law enforcement, risk assessment and management, and public protection (Whitehead 2010). This study seeks to explore the ways in which the emotional content of probation intervention with offenders has continued to be central to practitioner/offender relationships but is largely invisible within an organisation that now favours a more business-orientated model. The analysis is informed by Layder's theory of 'domains' (Layder 2006), and make particular reference to his theory of 'interpersonal control' which explores the mutuality of people's relationships with others and the relationship between interpersonal control, power and emotion (Layder 2004).

The themes addressed within this thesis relate to how practitioners understand and work with emotion; their own and those of the offenders with whom they engage; how a combination of 'professional' rules and 'feeling rules' of the organisation (Hochschild 1983), impose a 'silence' on the discourse of emotions and how practitioners endeavour to surmount this in their daily working practices.

The term 'emotional literacy' (Killick 2006), is used to capture the phenomenon of 'emotion work' or the 'soft skills' that many practitioners use in pursuit of the 'hard work' of managing and enabling change in offenders. It is a study that has been conducted within the discipline of criminology but has drawn upon a wide range of psychological, sociological, educational, philosophical and linguistic theoretical perspectives.

1.2 Reasons for the study

My practice experience in the probation service began in 1972, at a time when the philosophical approach of the service towards offenders was to 'advise, assist and befriend' (Home Office 1907), and training to become a probation officer was undertaken as a pathway within a social work training programme (Knight 2002). The subsequent change in philosophy to one of 'punishment in the community' and the introduction of 'What Works' principles, led to the heralding of cognitive behavioural approaches to tackling offending behaviour (McGuire and Priestley 1985).

A key purpose of probation is now defined as 'the proper punishment of offenders' (National Offender Management Service 2011). It will be argued in this thesis that the effects of this shift towards punishment, and the power of the on{Bailey, 2007 #281}{Bailey, 2007 #281}going political discourse on 'being tough on crime' (Batty 2012), suppresses and indeed denies any alternative public discourse on the 'softer' and yet potentially equally 'tough' side of probation intervention. Although there may be no obvious affinity between punitivism and managerialism, it will be argued that the managerial approach, by focusing on measurable outputs rather than qualitative processes, has allowed for a potential absence of care, a general 'coarsening' of attitudes, and for the exercising of more repressive forms of interpersonal control, power and emotion (Layder 2004). This managerial approach has also had the effect of silencing the voices of practitioners as they have endeavoured to continue to work with the emotional lives of offenders within an organisation that largely denies the relevance of emotion. It will be argued that these cultural shifts have had the effect of diminishing the creative, albeit somewhat 'laissez faire' approach by probation officers to their day-to-day work, including the encouragement to build strong relationships with offenders.

There is evidence that some of this 'encouragement' is returning with the emergence of what has been termed the 'renaissance of rehabilitation', which is 'evidence-based and demonstrates positive outcomes for accredited offending

behaviour programmes (Canton 2011). Within the framework of what is now defined as Core Correctional Practice (CCP), building a 'therapeutic alliance' with offenders and using the process of this 'alliance' to enable and help offenders engage in the change process is making something of a comeback (Dowden and Andrews 2004). This comeback is reflected in the evolving literature on 'desistance from offending' (Rex 1999, Maruna and LeBel 2010, McNeill, Raynor et al. 2010, Raynor, Ugwudike et al. 2010), and in the Offender Engagement Programme (OEP) now established within the National Offender Management Service (NOMs) (Ministry of Justice 2010). The Government Green Paper 'Breaking the Cycle' (Ministry of Justice 2010) and its response published in June 2011 (Ministry of Justice 2011:24) argue that punishments must be 'robust' and 'demanding' but also acknowledge the importance of the offender/worker relationship. Of significance in the Green Paper is the introduction of new National Standards for probation which allow for a return to greater practitioner discretion (Ministry of Justice 2011); much of which had been eroded by early versions of National Standards (Home Office 1992). This cycle of change and development in the significance of practitioner discretion and of relationships in probation practice reflects the span of my career and provides a platform for this study.

The idea of studying the subject of 'emotional literacy' within probation practice comes from four different sources. The first can be traced back to the early days of the time of my own probation training and the reading of Monger's 'Casework in Probation' (1972); a core text then. The concept of the 'casework relationship' at that time was built on a psychotherapeutic model and prescribed a relationship between probation officer and 'client' based on trust, respect, positive regard and a non-judgemental approach (Rogers 1943, Rogers 1959).

> *"Psychoanalysis has provided a springboard from which social workers can examine the interactional element in relationships through the theory of transference and counter-transference."* (Monger 1972: 125)

Thus offenders would be encouraged to change and develop through the medium of a positive relationship in which the worker would be sensitive to the

potential for the transference and absorption of some of the more powerful emotions emanating from the client (and vice versa), and the imposing of some of their own unresolved feelings onto the client ('counter-transference') (Rogers 2004). The skills involved in building and maintaining these relationships were not described as 'emotional literacy' but there was recognition of the need for an emotional investment in the relationship (Mayer and Timms 1970, Monger 1972).

The second strand is a more recent one arising from the work on emotional intelligence (Goleman 1995), and emotional literacy (Orbach 2001, Sharp 2001, Killick 2006).

The third strand has evolved through experience of teaching and assessing probation students in the practice setting and in the delivery of probation training at De Montfort University. Whilst I continued to believe in the significance of the relationship in probation practice, I had to recognise that some of the skills that I had considered essential to work with offenders were no longer valued, or indeed required, in the same way as the probation service began to move further down the road of punishment, correction and surveillance and away from its earlier roots of 'befriending' and rehabilitation; (what Garland refers to as the 'crisis of penal modernism' (Garland 2002)). It was no longer a core part of probation training (Knight and Ward 2011). My experience of working with probation students was that their in-service learning about a cognitive behavioural approach to practice placed a strong emphasis on the 'thinking' and 'doing' components of offending behaviour and a tendency to overlook the 'feeling' elements. This raised the question as to what evidence there might be that emotional connections with offenders were still viewed as important by practitioners.

The fourth route reflects a more personal interest in identifying the powerful ways in which interactions and decisions can be articulated in one way (front stage), whilst carrying very significant emotional undercurrents and meanings that are frequently hidden from view and unaccounted for in day-to-day living

and working (back stage), (Goffman 1959/1990), and the privileging of certain discourses that favour some voices over those of others (Foucault 1977). In this instance the managerial, 'tough' and, often perceived as 'male voice', is seen to be favoured over the softer, more emotional and, often perceived as, 'female voice' of the practitioner.

1.3 Hypothesis

It is acknowledged that it can be difficult to engage with and motivate people who are resistant to change, for whatever reason. This thesis takes as its starting point the belief that the relationship continues to be central to this change process within offenders, and that building relationships with potentially difficult people (offenders) requires particular emotional skills and emotional maturity that are referred to as 'emotional literacy'. The hypothesis for this research is that there is a tension between operational functions and philosophical approaches within the modern probation service. The rhetoric of 'punishment in the community' and being 'tough on crime' (Batty 2012), combined with the managerial drive to meet targets and prove effectiveness through instrumental means, is the public face of the service, whilst the more 'private' or hidden means to achieving this is through the medium of the relationship and the use of emotional literacy.

The hypothesis further asserts that despite the public 'front stage' (Goffman 1959/1990), of punishment, correction and control, workers have always 'back stage', found ways to care about the offenders they work with, to do the 'underground emotion work' (Layder 2004), needed to build relationships with them, and to work with the values of respect, non-judgmentalism and a belief in their capacity to change. The hypothesis also refers to a gendered analysis of power within society and criminal justice; that men are generally seen to undertake the 'hard work', in this instance the 'punitive' work of criminal justice, and women the 'soft' emotional work or emotional labour. Whilst this 'soft work' is in fact very complex and challenging, priority and status is still largely given to the 'hard work' of 'punishment' as the primary 'modus operandi'. The debates

about intervention tend to use the language of contact sports and war; 'confronting', 'challenging', 'enforcing, 'tackling' and 'targeting'; a male language designed to impress with a demonstration of power (Cordery and Whitehead 1992), and the 'soft work' is excluded.

1.4 Emotional intelligence/emotional literacy - definitions

Research and literature on *emotional intelligence* has, to-date, been largely centred on the world of business, management and leadership e.g. (Goleman 1995, Bachmann, Stein et al. 2000). *Emotional literacy* is a term more commonly applied in education and learning e.g. (Sharp 2001; Killick 2006) although some have written about its relevance in other social settings (Steiner 1997, Dayton 2000, Orbach 2001, Spendlove 2008).

Emotional intelligence is defined somewhat ambiguously as about '*perception'* of emotions, without being clear if this is in one's self or in others:

> *"The capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth..."* (Mayer and Salovey 1997:197).

Emotional literacy has been defined as being about self-awareness:

> "*The capacity to register our emotional responses to the situations we are in and to acknowledge those responses to ourselves so that we recognise the ways in which they influence our thoughts and actions..."* (Orbach 2001:2).

These definitions suggest the terms are almost interchangeable although some writers have endeavoured to offer explanations for a difference e.g. (Sharp 2001). The description 'emotional literacy' is chosen for this thesis, as it seems to represent both self-awareness and sensitivity to others. It is an activity or skill that can be employed to engage and build relationships with others.

Other concepts related to emotion are deployed within this study including 'emotional labour' (Hochschild 1983), 'emotion work' (Bolton 2005) and 'emotional capital' (Reay 2004, Zembylas 2007). The term 'emotional labour' is generally used to define the commodification or exploitation of emotion in individual workers in the pursuit of organisational objectives (Hochschild 1983). It is also viewed by some writers as a gendered concept with women undertaking the majority of emotional labour both at home and work (Smith 1992, Du Gay 2003, Bunting 2005, Garey and Hansen 2011). However, Bolton's more complex framework for the use of emotion in organisations includes emotion offered as a 'gift' by workers to service users, particularly in the field of nursing, and has more direct relevance to probation practice than some of Hochschild's examples from within a commercial setting. Emotional capital is a concept that builds on Bourdieu's work on human capital (Reay 2004) and refers to the accumulation of positive and enhancing emotional resources within a relationship, group or organisation.

As yet there is limited evidence of a literature on emotional literacy or emotional labour within the criminal justice arena, although there is some on emotion management in prisons and policing (Crawley 2004, Crawley 2009, Schaible and Gecas 2010, Crewe 2011, Van Stokkom 2011), and in relation to offenders (Puglia, Stough et al. 2005).   There is literature that relates it to mental health (Akerjordet and Severinsson 2004), health care (Clarke 2006), and in a range of other settings (Salovey and Sluyter 1997, Bar-On and Parker 2000).

The closest association for this thesis is the use of emotional intelligence in the field of social work, which is still in its infancy, (Morrison 2007, Howe 2008), although there is a substantial body of literature on the importance of relationships within the social work context; for example (Thompson 2009, Hennessey 2011).

Layder's analysis of four domains of social reality; the individual's psychobiography, situated activity, social settings and contextual resources, is used to locate the exercise of emotional literacy in the probation service and

within wider structural frameworks, such as gender (Layder 2006). Layder's representation of a continuum of interpersonal emotion work from 'benign' and healthy to the more pathological exercise of manipulative, repressive and exploitative forms is also used as a framework for analysis (Layder 2004) (Appendix 1). It is argued that it cannot be assumed that probation workers will always offer benign 'emotional labour' or 'emotional literacy' in the best interests of the offender, when functioning within the context of a managerial and punishment orientated organisation.

1.5 Research method

The research for this thesis was undertaken with 26 probation officers and two psychologists, responsible for the supervision of high risk offenders, including sex offenders and domestic violence perpetrators in six Midlands probation areas using qualitative methods (semi-structured interviews and one focus group).

1.6 Structure of thesis

In Chapter Two, this thesis reviews relevant literature across the subject areas of emotion, criminal justice, criminology, the probation service and emotional literacy.

In Chapter Three, the thesis introduces the research paradigms and theoretical frameworks for the thesis, and in Chapter Four, the context for the operation of emotional literacy within the values that inform probation practice are discussed, considering the inter-relationship between these values, diversity issues, and power. It is here that the construct of gender and its association with emotions and power is introduced. Chapter Five sets out the research strategy and methodology for the study. The research findings are presented in Chapter Six, beginning with the identified core elements of emotional literacy; motivation, self-awareness, self-regulation, social competence and empathy (Sharp 2001; Killick 2006), and adding the new areas (for emotional literacy) of organisational constraints and the significance of gender. The findings are analysed with

reference to Layder's social domain theory (Layder 2006), and within this the constructs related to interpersonal emotional control (Layder 2004). The first three sections of this chapter (6.1, 6.2, 6.3) fall under Layder's concept of 'self as object of its own control' and relate to the agency and self- control with which individuals attempt to 'master' their social world (Layder 2004). This lies within the domain of psychobiography (Layder 2006). Section 6.1, examines the concept of 'motivation' and how the research participants considered their motivation for the work was informed by their values. Section 6.2 identifies how research participants had learnt to understand themselves and their emotions through language and reflexivity and Section 6.3 reflects on the ways in which the research participants had learnt to self-regulate their emotions within the practice setting, including using strategies of controlling, masking and integrating their emotions. In the next two sections, 6.4 and 6.5, the thesis refers to the domain of situated activity; the ability of people to influence others and to control them benignly or repressively (Layder 2006). Section 6.4 examines the ability of the research participants to use their emotional skills to influence and control offenders through the medium of the relationship and in Section 6.5, this theme is developed and explored regarding how emotion pervades not only the relationship but also the processes by which community orders are managed and enforced, including assessing and managing risk. The next section 6.6, located in the domain of social settings (Layder 2006), reflects on the way in which the research participants perceived organisational and professional expectations to be imposing regulation on their emotional expression and what, if any, 'feeling rules' might apply in the context of probation practice (Hochschild 1983). Section 6.7 is located within the fourth and final domain of contextual resources (Layder 2006), and examines the evidence for emotional literacy being gendered. In Section 6.8, the strategies and resources that research participants used to surmount the perceived organisational silence on the subject of emotion are examined. In the final Section 6.9 the findings that illustrate emotional literacy in practice and with particular reference to the evidence arising from the focus group with experienced sex offender workers are examined. In Chapter Seven, the thesis

is concluded with an overview of how the aims of the study have been met, and offers a commentary on some new theoretical perspectives on emotional literacy in a probation context that have emerged from this research. The implications for the organisation and its management strategies, for training and for further research are identified.

1.7 Conclusion

This introduction has briefly outlined the background and context for the study, related to my own personal experiences and the wider trends and changes in criminal justice and within the organisational structures and policies of the probation service. It introduces the main themes and offers some definitions of key terms. It sets out the hypothesis for the research which is that the 'soft' skills of emotional literacy remain core to probation practice but that they are subsumed within and hidden by, a discourse based on hard, instrumental and managerial processes within the probation service and the wider context of criminal justice. It suggests that this is informed by a gendered analysis of criminal justice, which gives priority to these 'hard' facts over the 'softer skills'. Layder's theories of social domain and interpersonal control are introduced as providing frameworks for analysis of the data generated within the study (Layder 2006; 2004).

Chapter 2: Overview of the field of emotional literacy, criminal justice, criminology and probation practice

2.1 Introduction

The literature reviewed for this thesis comes from a range of sources across the disciplines of psychology, neurobiology, philosophy, psychotherapy, sociology, criminology, forensic mental health and educational theory. Whilst the core of the project is to examine the use of emotional literacy as a key skill in the practice that probation workers undertake with offenders, there are a number of underpinning and over-arching layers that need to be clarified in order to set the context and understand the territory. The review aims to start in the centre with what is understood by the term 'emotion'; how emotion is regulated, the debates about emotion and reason, and about how emotional labour within organisations has been commodified or exploited to serve the needs of the organisation. It will identify some of the current literature on both emotional intelligence and emotional literacy. It will then move on to examine emotion within criminology and criminal justice and the influences that have highlighted its significance within probation relationships, in order to present a framework for an examination of the role of emotional literacy in probation practice.

2.2 Emotions

Emotion as a concept has been written and theorised about for thousands of years through philosophy, literature, drama, and spirituality. The Latin root of emotion is 'emovere' meaning to move out or away (Hughes and Bradford Terrell 2012), which indicates a powerful association between emotion, movement and motivation; the desire to act. Philosophers including Descartes drew upon this Latin root of emotion to formulate their ideas on emotion (Harre` and Parrott 1996). Aristotle emphasised that emotions serve to induce activity, have moral relevance and can affect our judgements. He provided a detailed discussion of emotions in his work 'Rhetorica' (Harré and Parrott 1996). Emotion arousal was viewed by Aristotle as essential in persuading people to

form the right judgments; that feelings can cause us to change and alter our judgements (Evans 2003).

2.2.1 Early theories of emotion

A 'scientific' approach to the understanding of emotions was initiated primarily by Darwin's 1872 publication 'Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals', (Darwin 1998) in which he argued that emotions are the mental states that cause archetypical bodily expressions (Gendron 2010). Darwin identified the principal emotions in terms of how they are expressed and how the body behaves, and studied them in terms of their value for the survival of the species (Howe 2008). Darwin has largely been the source of what is commonly called the 'basic emotion' approach. By contrast the 'cultural' theory of emotion, subsequently developed through the discipline of anthropology, argued that emotions are learned behaviours that are transmitted culturally in a similar way to language (Evans 2003). On the basis of this theory people living in different cultures would be expected to experience different emotions. However, the psychologist Ekman undertook research that examined how people in very different cultures seem to recognise, as Darwin had proposed, a core or 'basic' set of human emotions (Ekman and Wallace 1975, Ekman and Wallace 2002). Ekman and colleagues also showed that there is an autonomic nervous system activity that corresponds to these basic emotions; namely that these emotions are not learnt but are inherent in the human brain (Ekman and Wallace 1975). The cultural differences were seen as largely relating to rules of display; what it was acceptable to present or hide (Evans 2003). Building on Darwin's work and supported by subsequent research, humans are said to experience at least six 'primary' or 'basic' emotions, namely: anger, fear, sadness (or distress), happiness (or joy), surprise and disgust (Evans 2003, Turner 2009).

There are critics of the concept of basic emotions. It is argued that humans have the potential to experience a large number of different emotional states and the cultural and historical context in which we live selects the states that will possess particular relevance (Harre` and Parrott 1996, Kagan 2010). Plutchik

compared emotions to a colour wheel, with mixes of primary emotions at different points in the colour wheel generating varying secondary and tertiary emotions (Plutchik 1980). The analogy suggests that these 'primary' colours contain a 'spectrum' of hues and shades reflecting the strength of feeling and that they also mix with each other to produce more sophisticated and subtle emotions (Killick 2006:27). For example, some emotions are described by a single word e.g. 'jealousy' or 'shame', when in fact they are likely to contain a complex mixture of other feelings including anger, fear and disappointment.

Descartes identified the hydraulic theory of emotion which viewed feelings as mental fluids that circulate the mind; with '*the nerves as pneumatic pipes, transmitting the pressure of 'animal spirits' from nerve endings to the brain, and thence to the muscles*" (Evans 2003:55). Metaphors such as 'bottling up your feelings' and 'letting off steam' owe their origins to this 'humoural' theory which dominated medical thinking in the West until the 18th century (Lakoff 1987, Damasio 1996, Payne and Cooper 2001, Evans 2003). Freud drew on this theory in his explanations about the risks of inhibiting natural emotional expressions that could lead to dangerous consequences. The idea of catharsis, or 'cleansing', of being able to 'discharge' emotions and 'get them out of your system'; has underpinned much psychotherapeutic thinking and practice. It has been argued that when the core emotions are suppressed and/or remain unexpressed it is likely that a more pervasive and unexamined 'mood' may take over and that mental ill-health can emerge (Freud and Freud 2005).

2.2.2 Contemporary theories of emotions

For the first part of the 20th century the disciplines of both psychology and sociology tended to dismiss the importance of emotions as relevant for scientific study or see them as contaminating the proper study of people and their behaviour (Howe 2008:3). The Behaviourists of the 1950s who began the ongoing developments around cognitive behavioural psychology that remain relevant to the work of the probation service today, were suspicious of emotions (Howe 2008). It is only in the last 30 years or so that there has been a

significant growth in theories of emotion through psychology, psychotherapy, sociology and more recently neuroscience (Gendron 2010). There remain, however, substantial areas of disagreement including; the nature of emotions, the degree to which emotions can be identified neurologically or are largely socially constructed, the number of distinctive emotional states produced by humans, the relationship between cognition and emotions, behaviour and emotions, and between emotions and rationality (Turner 2009). There is also a lack of agreement on definitions; the extent to which an emotion is understood as occurring in the brain or body, a verbal description, an interpretation or a behavioural response to a situation (Kagan 2010).

An early disagreement on definitions centred on whether emotion was the actual feeling or the process of evaluating that feeling; this is known as 'appraisal'. Within psychology there are a set of approaches emphasising that emotions are not formed until there is an appraisal of both objects and events; only after appraisal has occurred are the relevant emotions seen to be activated (Turner 2009). With the development of sophisticated technologies that enable imaging of brain states there are now claims that the brain state that mediates a feeling is the more accurate referent for an emotion (Damasio 1996).

Neuroscience has identified a section of our brain known as the amygdala that is implicated in evaluating stimuli as good or bad at a relatively early stage in the perceptual process (Franks 2010). Howe argues that emotions appear initially to operate outside of a person's immediate consciousness; their response to a stimulus in the environment comes via one or more of the senses (Howe 2008:30). Others have argued that there are 'higher cognitive emotions' which are not so automatic or fast as the basic ones and are not linked to a single facial expression for example: love, guilt, pride etc and that these involve greater levels of cortical processing in the brain (Evans 2003:20). LeDoux identifies a 'high' road and a 'low' road that he suggests is controlled by two separate pathways in the brain (LeDoux 2003). He argues that in the experience of fear the first pathway corresponds to the basic emotion; it is a rapid response to signs of potential danger and travels via the sensory thalamus

to the amygdala. It can, however, often set off false alarms. The second pathway travels via the sensory cortex and LeDoux refers to this as the 'high road' which considers the situation more carefully and if it concludes that the danger is not real it cuts off the fear response initiated by the first pathway; these two pathways ideally operate together (LeDoux 2003).

Barbalet identifies emotion as an 'experience of involvement' (Barbalet 2002), either negatively or positively and either profoundly or slightly, or somewhere in between (Barbalet 2002). Similarly, Hochschild argues that emotion is a biologically given sense, (and our most important one) and that like other senses such as hearing and touch, it is a means by which we know about our relation to the world and it is therefore crucial for the survival of human beings. She states that emotion is unique among the senses because it is related not only to an orientation towards action but also to an orientation towards cognition (Hochschild 1983:219). Most current emotion theorists now seem to suggest that emotion is simultaneously a physical, cognitive and social/cultural experience (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn et al. 2001); that emotions operate on many different levels of reality including biological, neurological, behavioural, cultural, structural and situational (Turner 2009:341). If the focus of study is neurological then the emphasis locates emotions in the arousal of bodily systems; if culture is seen as significant then ideologies, rules and emotional vocabularies are critical (Turner 2009). Oatley et al identify the field of emotion theory as fast moving and caution against trying to establish too fixed or inflexible a definition (Oatley, Keltner et al. 2006).

Notwithstanding the complexity of finding a definition of 'emotion', the argument at the heart of most debates on emotion centres on whether emotions help or hurt our decision-making processes; whether they cause us to lose control (seen as a 'bad' thing) versus arguments that they provide important input to decision-making (Loewenstein 2010).

2.2.3 Emotion and reason

Plato saw emotions as obstacles to intelligent action; he is considered to have held a negative view of emotion (Evans 2003: 22). So too the stoics of ancient Greece believed that feelings undermined rational thought; that if we are to lead the good life we should not allow ourselves to be at the mercy of our passions (Howe 2008). At the core of much of the thinking on emotion is that of the potential for acting unreasonably as a result of our emotions (Frijda, Manstead et al. 2000). It is argued that we may not have a choice about what emotions we feel but we have a choice about what to do with that feeling (Oatley 2010). The argument that has held powerful sway is one that states that if actions are to be considered rational it is necessary that we overcome our 'base' emotions. This has been promulgated by Western Philosophers such as Descartes and Kant who saw the emotions as basic, primitive and disruptive. They argued that human enlightenment required us to rid ourselves of our 'animal passions'; to tame them and rise above emotion (Bendelow and Williams 1998).

The 18th century European Romantic Movement took a different perspective and saw emotions as central and life enhancing (Howe 2008:4). This movement considered that faced with a choice between emotion and reason the heart should predominate. The Enlightenment period, by contrast, placed emphasis on the power of reason and opposed superstition and intolerance. However, philosophers of the Enlightenment period such as David Hume, Adam Smith, and Thomas Reid who wrote about 'sentiments' and passions', were also fascinated by emotion and considered that it was rational to be emotional and that no science of the mind could be complete without also addressing the 'heart' (Evans 2003: xiii). The emotions were considered to be an integral part of our individual and collective psychology and at the heart of what beliefs are about (Howe 2008). David Hume, an 18th century empiricist, argued that the impulse for action comes not from reason, which is 'dispassionate', but from passion which provides the push and drive for action (Frijda, Manstead et al. 2000).

Emotions can also lead us to make mistakes, to misjudge situations and to interpret present events through the lens of a memory distorted or clouded by feelings. Emotions can generate anxiety and disrupt our thinking (Howe 2008:16). They can also lead us to do things we might later regret (Evans 2003). However, an ability to respond rapidly to 'gut feelings' can be advantageous in certain circumstances, particularly in potentially risky situations (Gladwell 2005). Experiencing a range of emotions is now generally seen as an important aspect of living a rich and fulfilling life. Whilst certain 'negative' emotions can be a major source of misery they also have their place in, for example, highlighting injustice and motivating action. People crave emotions, and spend time seeking out certain emotions, for example; fear on roller coasters; tragic films, disgust at Halloween. In addressing this paradox it is proposed that negative emotions are often sought in situations in which the outcomes that the emotions typically signal are absent (Andrade and Cohen 2007). This vicarious activity divorces fear from any actual danger and provides a sensation with no consequences.

Western philosophical thought has tended to juxtapose emotionality and rationality at opposite ends of a continuum. Traditionally reason was equated with objectivism. The mind was seen as an abstract machine and thought was abstract and disembodied; independent of the limitations of the physical body (Lakoff 1987). More recent studies, especially within anthropology, linguistics, neuroscience and psychology have produced evidence which has challenged this objectivist view of the mind

Freshwater sees the endeavour to separate out emotion from reason as a:

> "...dangerous polarisation of will and desire with the aim to conquer unruly nature so indicative of the scientific community..." (Freshwater and Robertson 2002:216).

The more common argument now is that thought is in fact 'embodied'; that the structures used to form our conceptual processes grow out of our bodily experiences and make sense in terms of them (Lakoff 1987). Lakoff argues that if we understand reason as mechanical then we devalue human

intelligence, particularly as computers become ever more efficient. This is not, however, to deny the potentially harmful influence of emotional bias and that emotions can cause difficulties in the reasoning process (Damasio 1996), but rather that the denial of emotion is equally damaging and just as capable of compromising rationality (Loewenstein 2010).

2.2.4 Emotion regulation

The idea of being able to control or regulate emotions has a long history; for example Plato's concerns about the dangers of 'emotional incontinence' (Barbalet 2011). Many of the earlier writings on theories of emotion endeavoured to find ways in which emotion could be 'categorised' in order to control it. A more functional approach (Harre and Parrott 1996, Tamir 2011), suggests that regulating emotions is important in terms of achieving instrumental goals rather than necessarily making the recipient feel good (Tamir 2011). Goleman argues that accomplishment of every sort is based on emotional self-control, whereby gratification is delayed and impulsiveness stifled (Goleman 1996). He describes the feeling of being 'flooded' or overwhelmed by feelings and refers to this as 'emotional hijacking'. When emotions are running high there is a tendency to talk and act more; the person may be in the grip of many different and conflicting emotions that can make rational behaviour and decision-making problematic (Howe 2008). This suggests a negative view of an individual being governed by their emotions, lacking self-regulation and the need to regulate these emotions in order to obtain sought after goals (Tamir 2011). It is this approach that is largely taken in the work on emotional intelligence, particular with reference to successful management and leadership (Cherniss and Goleman 2001). Whilst there is evidence that the 'regulation' of emotions as opposed to their 'suppression', can have important consequences for physical and psychological health and for operating with flexibility and adaptability in a range of situations (Tamir 2011), such writers also argue that too much constraint risks losing something essential about our humanity and agency.

Supporting Freud's view of the importance of catharsis, research has identified the suppression of emotions leading to an increase in blood pressure, an increased risk of cancer and a decrease in rapport with others (Ciarrochi, Forgas et al. 2001). However, assuming that a degree of emotional regulation is necessary in day-to-day social life, the issue of which emotions should be the most controlled is another key question. Some researchers on emotion regulation assume that individuals see unpleasant emotions as undesirable and pleasant emotions as desirable (Campos, Walle et al. 2011, Charland 2011), but people may seek instrumental goals rather than hedonistic ones; emotions such as anger can generate motivation to act, for example against perceived injustices (Tamir 2011). Feeling 'better' may not be the desired end-state of the transaction. People may renounce short term pleasure if it can lead to greater benefits defined as 'long-term pleasure' (Izard 2010); the decisions about what and how to regulate are made continuously.

2.2.5 Emotion vocabularies

Wierzbicka argues that it is the combination of being able to 'feel' and 'think' which distinguishes emotions from 'sensations', that the ability to talk about feelings is a central concept in the understanding of what emotion means, and is central to research into emotion (Wierzbicka 2010). It is suggested that appraisal of feelings can be combined in many different ways to produce finely nuanced and differently experienced feeling states although in reality, we only use a comparatively small number of verbal labels to actually communicate them (Kuppens 2010). People asked to describe how they feel after a very traumatic event will often say that they have no words to express their feelings (Cameron 2011). The metaphor 'lost for words' stands in for these unutterable feelings.

Although we may not use a wide emotional vocabulary, a research project led by Simon Baron-Cohen at Cambridge University found that the English language has at least 1,512 emotion words (Baron-Cohen 2003). He identified that emotional vocabularies developed with age and his taxonomy sought to

establish different levels of sophistication of emotional expression (Baron-Cohen 2003). The majority of children gradually learn a degree of control in their emotional self-expression and by adulthood the average person has increased their cognitive abilities to the extent that they can identify and locate the source of their emotions and, at least in their working lives, generally maintain control on their more overt expression (Fischer 2000).

In the field of psychotherapy the lack of a significant vocabulary to describe feelings is called 'Alexithymia'; a condition in which a person, particularly male, has difficulty in articulating emotion (Bar-On and Parker 2000). It was first introduced by Sifnoes in 1972, and means 'having no words for emotions' (Muller 2000). Muller suggests that people who are unable to verbally express negative emotions will have trouble discharging and neutralising their emotions physiologically as well as psychically. Alexithymia is sometimes also referred to as' mind-blindness' (Baron-Cohen 2003), which includes being uninterested in the emotional states of others, and is apparently common in autistic children. There are links here with violence perpetrated by men within a domestic and/or sexual context who may struggle to identify a range of emotions, and respond instead from the position of being aroused but unaware. This may be accompanied by demonstrations of aggressive, controlling or violent behaviour (Lane and Nadel 2000, Romito 2008). However, it is also acknowledged that for some men not articulating feelings may be an active or strategic choice in holding onto power. In a more therapeutic context, the gradual expansion of emotional vocabularies is seen to help develop the process of clarifying and understanding what another person feels (Ekman 2008), and a developing emotional vocabulary is seen as one of the key building blocks of emotional literacy (Sharp 2001).

2.2.6 Use of metaphor

A 'metaphor' is defined as a 'figure of speech', talking about something in terms of something else (Cameron 2011), of contrasting something else into on-going talk (Cameron and Low 1999), or substituting the name of an attribute for that of

the thing meant (e.g. '"turf" for horse-racing' (Lakoff 1987:xi). Metaphors are ubiquitous in everyday speech and writing but often unacknowledged. It is suggested that everyday language is not adequate for capturing the experience of emotions, especially intense ones, and that metaphorical language makes it possible for people to convey what would otherwise be difficult or impossible to express (Coupland, Brown et al. 2009, Crawford 2009); e.g. 'exploding' with feelings.   People unsure of the safety of the emotional climate of their workplace, for example, or indeed the research interview, may use metaphor as a safe device to explain feelings. It can be a way of uncovering or revealing what is going on under the surface of a discourse (Cameron, Maslen et al. 2009). Metaphors are an agreed way of sharing our views of the world; they also challenge the 'traditional' view that argues that reason is abstract, disembodied and transcendental by building connections between ideas and feelings (Lakoff 1987).   Hochschild argues that metaphors that suggest 'agency', 'residence' and 'continuity through time' often convey with' uncanny precision' just what it feels like to experience an emotion (Hochschild 1983:204).   However, Cameron suggests that in the face of very powerful emotions a person tends to speak more graphically (Cameron 2011).

This difficulty in expressing how we feel in literal language may reflect the difficulties in conceptualising it. Crawford argues that emotions are abstract and not clearly defined in their own terms. Whilst emotions are the foundations of social life she suggests it is nearly impossible to communicate them, and instead we refer to physical dimensions such as brightness, auditory pitch and size; for example: 'light and dark' to represent happiness and sadness respectively, and positive feelings being described as 'up' and negative feelings as 'down' (Crawford 2009:138).   The idea of emotion as part of a hydraulic system (Descartes' theory) continues to be represented in such metaphors as 'she was filled with sadness', 'he was overflowing with joy', 'she was swept off her feet', 'he was engulfed by anger', 'letting off steam' and 'blood boiling' (Crawford 2009:130).   Similarly, fine art, music, poetry and novels are often

viewed as better vehicles for the expression and conveyance of feelings than prosaic language.

2.2.7 Emotion and gender

A number of writers have identified a process of gender socialisation through which they argue women are more likely than men to see the significance of emotional connections with others (Miller and Stiver 1997, Kram and McCullom 1998, Cherniss and Goleman 2001). Baron-Cohen identified that girls learn expressive language including more extensive and earlier vocabularies, reading abilities and word fluency than boys (Baron-Cohen 2003). Girls as young as one year have been found to react with more empathy and distress than their same age male counterparts (Fischer 2000:30), which suggests a mutual dynamic between the ability to articulate feelings and empathy. Other research has found that women are generally perceived to have a greater emotional vocabulary than men and to have greater facility in using it (Langford 1997, Bunting 2005, De Coster and Zito 2010). Research by Glenberg et al found that women understand sentences about sad events with greater facility than men and men understand sentences about angry events with greater facility than women (Glenberg, Webster et al. 2009). 2009). Collaborative and nurturing behaviour is also more often reinforced by women (Cherniss and Goleman 2001), with the suggestion that women have a greater tendency than men to have the personal and interpersonal skills to engage in relational learning. However, Cherniss and Goleman devote only two pages to the implications of gender in developing emotional competence and emotional intelligence through relationships at work.

Fischer argues that men are, in fact, just as emotional as women, citing examples of male behaviour when watching sport, when angry, when trying to avoid embarrassment etc and instead challenges the persistence of the dichotomy between the stereotype of emotional women and unemotional men (Fischer 2000). However, some emotional expressions are associated negatively with women (e.g. crying, being anxious, fearful etc (Katz 1999,

Fischer 2000) whilst other emotions such as anger, more commonly associated with men, are seen as instrumental in achieving a goal rather than as 'being emotional'. It is argued that women may cry rather than externalise the anger they are actually feeling and men may get angry rather than get in touch with feelings of vulnerability, humiliation or fear (Katz 1999). It is also suggested that it is often these emotional qualities that make women very effective managers, although other attributes such as assertiveness and self-confidence, more generally associated with men, are the ones most likely to lead to promotion in the workplace (Ryam and Haslam 2005). This may be one of the reasons why, despite the majority female workforce, the management of the probation service is still unrepresentatively male compared to the probation workforce as a whole (see Section 4.5).

2.3 Emotions in the workplace

2.3.1 Emotional 'labour'

The difference between the private and public sphere of emotion regulation exposes differing ideas of how emotion might be managed (Hochschild 1983, Theodosius 2008). In the private realm, emotion work, defined as the work necessary to take care of the emotional lives of others, is considered to be 'personal' and 'individual', and takes place mostly in the home. In contrast, 'emotional labour' is described as the display of expected emotions by service agents during service encounters and is seen to stimulate pressure for the person to identify with the service role (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993). A number of writers have engaged with the idea of 'emotion work' or 'emotional labour' (Hochschild 1983; Ashforth and Humphrey 1993; Bunting 2005; Theodosius 2008), in which employees are required to invest their personality and emotional skills in order to do a good job (Du Gay 2003). Du Gay suggests that there is emotional dissonance when service providers experience a conflict between the emotions they feel about the job and the required emotions the organisation has determined to be acceptable to display (Du Gay 2003:291). Schaible provides an example of this by looking at emotional labour and value

dissonance within the police force in terms of its impact on subsequent 'burn-out' (Schaible and Gecas 2010). This conflict, between feelings and beliefs, is explored in Section 6.6 on organisations and emotions. Du Gay argues that, not only have the emotional demands of the workplace increased significantly in recent years but also that emotion work is remarkable for its sheer ordinariness; how it is frequently dismissed or belittled (Du Gay 2003:61).

Hochschild defined emotional labour as occurring in organisations that involved frequent customer contact and in which emotion displays are controlled by the organisation (Hochschild 1983). She examined how flight attendants were trained to offer a quality service to passengers and referred to this as 'emotional labour'; staff had to learn how to project a certain image of themselves and of the organisation for which they worked (Hochschild 1983). Workers had to be taught how to do this rather than it being seen as something 'natural' and particular attributes and dispositions were seen to define a particular line of work. There is some limited literature that relates to emotion labour within criminal justice organisations, for example Tait's work in prisons (Tait 2011) and in policing (Schaible and Gecas 2010, Van Stokkom 2011). Crawley (Crawley 2004) in her work on emotions in prisons, demonstrates a blurring of the private/public sphere of emotion regulation and argues that prisons, in common with domestic settings tend to be emotionally charged. She writes mostly about the emotional lives of prison officers rather than defining any of their work as emotional labour. Prisons and probation hostels are both places where people have to live. However, probation *practice*, which is the context for this study, generally takes place in more neutral office surroundings. Whether in fact any of this work can be defined as 'emotional labour' or is actually more closely akin to emotions offered as a 'gift' by workers to offenders is explored by Bolton (2005).

Using Goffman's 'frameworks of activity' Bolton suggests that emotion work can be 'hard' and 'productive' as well as just something that people do (Bolton 2005). This form of analysis takes as its focus management efforts to control work undertaken by employees and shows how they are sometimes

constrained to comply with 'managerial prescriptions' (Bolton 2005:8). She argues that some employers want more compliance from their employees including emotional commitment to the aims of the enterprise. Bolton argues that using one blanket term 'emotional labour' is insufficient to describe a complex phenomenon such as emotion management in organisations. She identifies four typologies of emotion work within organisations, which she believes represents this greater complexity:

- 'Presentational' (emotion management according to general social rules)

- 'Philanthropic' (emotion management given as a gift)

- 'Prescriptive' (emotion management according to organisational/ professional rules of conduct)

- 'Pecuniary' (emotion management for monetary gain) (Coupland, Brown et al. 2009)

(Bolton 2005:91)

These typologies are used in Section 6.6 to explore and analyse any potential 'feeling rules' within the probation service as identified by the research participants to this study. Most writers seem to share Hochschild's pessimistic concerns about the negative consequences of an organisation that aims to shape and control the feelings of its employees (Bolton 2005).

2.3.2 Feeling rules

Hochschild introduced the concept of 'feeling rules' which she argued guide emotions in organisations by establishing the sense of entitlement or obligations that govern emotional exchanges (Hochschild 1983:56). Hochschild's feeling rules refer to socially shared (though often latent) understandings regarding emotions. They represent what emotions people should express and the degree of that expression according to social roles (Hochschild 1983). Fineman coins the term 'emotion engineers' and cites as an example the McDonalds enterprise which wants a 'smile industry' (Fineman 2001). As an example

within criminal justice, Crawley identified the feeling rules within a prison as those of 'emotional detachment' (Crawley 2004).

'Feeling rules' may include who does the emotional work in the organisation and may specify the range, duration, intensity and object of emotions that should be experienced (Hochschild 1983:89). These feeling rules have also been referred to as 'display rules' that relate to behaviour rather than to internal states, and are relatively easy for customers, managers and peers to observe the level of compliance with the rules (Goffman 1959/1990). Hochschild drew a distinction between surface acting and deep acting in the response to such rules. Surface acting is where the individual simulates or feigns emotions that are not actually felt. (This is accomplished by the careful presentation of verbal and non-verbal cues, by facial expressions, gestures and voice tone). In contrast, deep acting is seen as the more genuine and felt responses to life events, in which the person attempts to actually experience or feel the emotions that they wish to display (Ashforth and Humphrey 1993).

Whilst emotions are part and parcel of all human interaction, whether private or public, Goffman saw 'emotional labour' as performed at the direct or indirect behest of the organisation and operating as a performance or 'front stage' transaction, where the performance takes place, with its hidden aspects or outlet at 'back stage' (Goffman 1959/1990). For example, a nurse who is upset at a patient dying will manage her feelings and display an appropriate face when with the patient (front stage) but may cry when she comes to hand over to another colleague in a nurses' only area (back stage and 'deep acting') (Theodosius 2008). A waitress may be required to be pleasant and polite to customers (surface acting) but may 'bad mouth' them to colleagues working behind the scenes (back stage) (Theodosius 2008). These two examples illustrate the expectations of emotional labour in different work contexts and the processes of emotion regulation as part and parcel of this labour (Theodosius 2008).

There are clear differences between emotions that are 'deep acting' and sincerely felt (the nursing example) and ones that are surface acting for the benefit of the organisation (the waitress example). Theodosius suggests that

> *"…emotions must be understood within the structural relations of power and status that elicit them..."* (Theodosius 2008:13).

Although both the nurse and the waitress in these examples are female, men too can be required to undertake emotional labour although may find ways, through the power of their role, of side-stepping this (for example, male hospital consultants can assume emotional detachment and expect nursing staff to undertake the emotional labour for them (Smith 1992, Theodosius 2008)).

Whilst 'emotion' is considered a feature and a resource of all organisations (Bolton 2005), it has also been examined as a gendered concept, with women seen to undertake more of this emotional labour, particularly in the arena of nursing (Smith 1992, Ashforth and Humphrey 1993, Wellington and Bryson 2001, Theodosius 2008), and in the service sector (Du Gay 2003; Bunting 2005). Some have argued that in the public realm 'emotional labour' is sold for a wage as a commodity and takes place at work where, as a feminised commodity, it is largely undervalued (Hochschild 1983; Smith 1992; Du Gay 2003) and invisible. Whilst practical tasks, for example, those required within nursing to care for a patient, are visible and measurable, emotional responses may not be. Organisations also identified as 'high emotional labour jobs', including social services, teaching and other 'caring' professions (Brotheridge and Gradey 2005), have a preponderance of female staff at main grade level. This demographic is equally true of the modern probation service (Knight 2007).

Hochschild considers that emotion work is not as important to men as to women and that there are reasons and consequences for this. She suggests that women traditionally have had less access to power, authority and financial resources than men and have lacked the status that men carry in society. She sees this as leading to four consequences for women:

1. Their lack of access to resources mean that women use feelings as a resource and offer them as a gift to men in return for more material resources that they do not have.

2. Boys and girls are taught differential ways of managing their feelings, for example, girls and women are taught to control their anger and aggression and 'be nice' whereas men are required to undertake 'aggressive' tasks against those who break the rules and that this requires them to control their feelings of fear and vulnerability.

3. The general subordination of women leaves them vulnerable to picking up the displaced feelings of others, what she describes as a weaker 'status shield' for verbal abuse from airline passengers (her study).

4. For both genders part of the 'managed heart' is used for commercial reasons.

(Hochschild 1983:163)

2.3.3 Emotional capital

The notion of 'emotional capital', which in itself is a metaphor, has also been used to capture the idea of emotions within a workplace, organisation or community. Drawing on Bourdieu's conceptual framework, ideas of emotional capital, as a subset of human capital, have been used to demonstrate how 'emotional resources' are circulated, accumulated and exchanged for other forms of capital (Zembylas 2007). Theodosius argues that in order for an exploitation of this 'emotional capital' to occur for the benefit of the organisation, the organisation needs to impose its own set of rules and management as described in the previous section (Theodosius 2008). However, if released from the potential for organisational exploitation, emotional capital could also represent a more equitable resource; a network of relationships and activities which may facilitate and enable people to maintain their mental and emotional health and well-being within their communities and at work (Adkins and Skeggs 2005). For example, Reay has used the term emotional capital to describe the emotional resources passed on from mother to child. She emphasises close

relationships between emotional capital and well-being in the family and educational success (Reay 2004). Adverse conditions such as poverty are seen to diminish such capital. Zembylas refers to emotional capital in an educational setting being built over time within classrooms and schools and contributing to the formation of particular emotion norms and 'affective economies' (Zembylas 2007:453). The idea of emotional capital being built to sustain the emotional literacy of practitioners in the probation service is developed through this thesis but the term 'emotional resource' is favoured over 'capital' with its financial associations.

2.4 Emotional literacy

The concept of emotional literacy has evolved from theories of emotional intelligence. The choice of the term 'emotional literacy' (EL) for this research project, is based on its association with a 'skill' rather than a 'capacity' (Spendlove 2008), and influenced by the work of psychotherapist Susie Orbach (Orbach 2001). Orbach's work is less about profit and success within business and commerce, (the focus of most writings on emotional intelligence), and more about people and their inter-relationships. Orbach gives examples of what she means by emotional literacy and with particular relevance to this thesis in relation to the political realm; she recognises the emotional implications of political decision-making for people's lives. She argues that the engagement of their emotions and the use of emotional literacy by politicians could lead to deeper and better decision-making. She also understands that emotions can be used cynically by politicians to manipulate people (voters) and that the energy can go into the presentation of an issue rather than the formulation of the right policy.

Spendlove identifies 'emotional literacy' as an educational term, and a number of authors (Sharp 2001, Killick 2006, Park and Tew 2007), have written manuals in which they set out a range of exercises and tests for teachers to use in developing an emotionally literate environment within their school. Killick (2006), also writing from an educational perspective, suggests that emotionally

literate children will have greater resilience to emotional problems, thus implying that emotional literacy is something that children can exercise in the process of living, much like emotional intelligence. Sharp suggests that emotional literacy is the process by which emotional intelligence is acquired. Other writers, however, use the term to refer to the application rather than the acquisition of emotional intelligence (Spendlove 2008, Dayton 2000, Steiner 1997). In the reading for this study it seems that these terms are still used inter-changeably. The 'application', of using emotional intelligence in a 'literate' manner in work with people, is the one that has been used in this research.

2.4.1 Emotional intelligence

The theory base for emotional literacy builds on the concept of emotional intelligence. Until relatively recently a fairly narrow view of intelligence was promulgated; that it consisted of a narrow range of cognitive capacities (Barrett and Gross 2001). The idea that there might be more than one form of intelligence was first proposed by Howard Gardner in 1983 and who has published since then on the theory of 'multiple intelligences (Gardener 1984, Gardener 1993). Gardner argued that intelligence is not limited to the traditional view of IQ (intelligence quotient), but is in fact a collection of between seven and nine different intelligences. These include: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily/kinaesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal (Gardener 1984). The last two of this list are most closely associated with the current concept of emotional intelligence.

The first use of the term 'emotional intelligence' in psychology was by Payne who believed that emotional intelligence was stifled by a tendency to suppress emotions, leading to a range of mental health difficulties (Payne 1985 cited in Howe 2008:11). Salovey and Mayer went on to define 'and develop this concept' (Salovey and Mayer 1990), and it spread fairly quickly to the media and popular science (Howe 2008). People with good emotional intelligence were seen to do well at school and at work; and in particular were good at social relationships. Goleman popularised the concept and extended it to business

and leadership (Goleman 1995, Goleman 1996, Goleman 1998, Goleman 2002). Goleman builds his theory from a range of sources and identifies what he calls the 'great divide' in human abilities that lies between the mind and heart, or what he calls more technically between cognition and emotion (Cherniss & Goleman 2001). He argues that some abilities, such as IQ and technical expertise are purely cognitive, and that other abilities integrate thought and feeling and fall within the domain of 'emotional intelligence'. However, the view that any abilities might be purely cognitive is challenged by other writers e.g. (LeDoux 2003).

Emotional intelligence is not just about managing or suppressing emotions but about the capacity to think and reflect on feelings rather than act impulsively; what Chamberlayne describes as 'experiential truth' or 'emotional thinking' (Chamberlayne 2004), and which, as identified earlier in this review, is also referred to as 'emotion appraisal' (Gendron 2010). Emotional intelligence as a concept has continued to evolve in the fields of business, management, marketing, psychology, psychotherapy and education, and with a small growth in the area of social work (Morrison 2007; Howe 2008). Two writers on emotional literacy in schools, Sharp and Killick, have drawn together a range of perspectives on emotional intelligence in order to define the focus for teachers. Four different perspectives; Salovey and Mayer (1990), Goleman (1996 and 1998), Steiner (1997) and Higgs and Dulewicz (Higgs and Dulewicz 1999) have been seen to share broad agreement about the main themes, with some semantic differences (Sharp 2001:25). Killick summarises these themes in the following way:

Self-awareness

"To know one's own emotional state, to be able to recognise what feelings are being experienced at any one time and being aware of the thoughts that are involved in this".

Self-regulation

"To be able to manage one's emotions, to be able to respond and handle strong feelings such as fear or anger appropriately rather than act them out."

Motivation

"The ability to motivate oneself to achieve one's goals."

Empathy

"The ability to see how another person is feeling or seeing the world that is social perceptiveness."

Social competence

"Interpersonal and social skills we need to get along with others and this involves being able to manage strong feelings in others and to manage relationships."

(Killick 2006:10-11)

2.4.2 Measurement

Some studies have attempted to devise methods of measuring emotional intelligence e.g. (Bar-On 1997), in order to provide it with the scientific credibility that certain authors have afforded to other forms of intelligence testing. Salovey and Grewal (Salovey and Grewal 2005), discuss the potential for measuring emotional intelligence by the use of self-report scales. However, they suggest that there are two problems with self-report: are people sufficiently aware of their own emotional abilities to report them accurately and are they likely to answer truthfully or rather in a 'socially desirable' manner. McEnrue and Groves (McEnru and Groves 2006), undertook a comprehensive review of the research of four of the major tests currently in use for EI (Emotional Intelligence). Their aim was to offer guidance to human resource managers and researchers. They identify it as a multi-million dollar training industry, with 'Human Resources' as the main purchasers. The four tests they looked at were Goleman's four-dimensional trait-based model, Bar-On's five-dimensional trait-based model, Salovey and Mayer's four-dimensional ability model and Dulewicz

and Higg's seven-dimensional trait-based model. They conclude that each model has both advantages and disadvantages but that none of them demonstrated acceptable validity across all five types of validity considered. However, overall they concluded that the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) demonstrated relatively more content and construct validity in comparison to the others.

More recently two new ability Emotional Intelligence tests have been developed; Situational Test of Emotion Management (STEM) and the Situational Test of Emotional Understanding (STEU) (Austin 2010). However, current definitions of emotional intelligence are inconsistent about what it measures; some indicate that it is dynamic and can be learned or increased (an intelligence that is malleable); and others that it is stable and cannot be increased (Mayer and Salovey 1997). One of the most recent training manuals on emotional intelligence uses the Emotional Quotient Inventories (EQ-1 and EQ360) which were developed from Bar-On's original EQ-1 model and recently updated. The significant difference in this most recent model is that it incorporates stress management as a component of EI and includes flexibility, stress tolerance and optimism (Hughes and Bradford Terrell 2012).

2.4.3 A critique of measurement

Whilst one of the aims of this study included a question on whether emotional literacy could be measured and quantified, there are considerable methodological and resource issues attached to such an enterprise. Also, concerns have been expressed by Fineman, in particular, that attempts to measure emotions using statistics and numerical profiles, risk privileging one form of emotional knowledge and silencing others (Fineman 2004). Fineman argues that:

> *"The snare is of a Foucauldian sort, where measurement and language are advantaged to the extent that they become a taken for granted template for inquiry processes and their control..."* (Fineman 2004: 6).

As Fineman cautions, the movement to identify a measurement of emotional intelligence risks imposing a set of measurements and numbers on a quality that to some extent defies these parameters (Fineman 2004). Locke goes further and argues that emotional intelligence is an invalid concept both because it is not a form of intelligence and because it is defined so broadly and inclusively that it has no intelligible meaning (Locke 2005). He concludes that the only useful way to proceed is to focus on the skill of introspection which he identifies as involving the identification of the contents and processes of one's own mind. Through introspection Locke argues it is possible to monitor such things as 'one's degree of focus, one's defensive reactions and one's emotional responses and their causes' (Locke 2005:429), and that such monitoring has important implications for self-esteem and mental health.

The central challenge for this thesis has become the need to identify and explore the emotional world of probation practice that has been largely hidden, and excluded from debate and consideration by the positivist emphasis on targets, measurements and monitoring. Whilst some of the scepticism about emotional intelligence and its potential for measurement may be well founded, nevertheless it will be argued that the concept of 'emotional literacy', as a skill, rather than emotional intelligence per se, offers a model for understanding how probation practitioners work with their own and other's emotions.

2.5 Emotions, criminal justice and criminology

2.5.1 Emotions and criminal justice

The criminal justice system is seen to be pervaded by emotions (Karstedt 2002:300), and it is argued that:

> *"It is hard to see how the analysis of crime and justice can adequately proceed without some serious attention being paid to the place of emotions in social life..."* (De Haan & Loader 2002: 243)

Emotions are deeply implicated within criminal justice; whether through the dynamics of domestic violence within a family, victims of hate crime, the policing

of mass protest, the anger, guilt and shame of offenders or the fear and humiliation of victims. However, the study of emotions has generally remained peripheral to the criminological enterprise. Whilst many theoretical perspectives have pondered the motivation for crime: for example, rational choice theory, routine activities theory, control theory, there has been less curiosity about the underlying emotional processes and influences on offending (De Haan and Loader 2002), given the development in other disciplines within the humanities and social sciences as outlined earlier.

There are relatively few studies that refer specifically to the link between emotions and crime although Karstedt et al's recent book makes a substantive contribution in this area (Karstedt, Loader et al. 2011), as does (Scheff, Stanko et al. 2002). The evolving literature on desistance makes some links, for example (Farrall and Calverley 2006). Significant numbers of crimes are committed when the perpetrator is in a highly emotional state and/or wanting to achieve an emotional state or 'buzz' (Katz 1988). Offenders, victims and witnesses bring their emotions to the court and sentencing process, and judicial decisions can cause public outrage and anger. Offenders can feel shame and remorse. Offences can provoke feelings of disgust, and victims as well as some offenders can evoke both compassion and sympathy (De Haan and Loader 2002, Karstedt 2002, Loader 2005, Karstedt, Loader et al. 2011). Crawley has identified the largely negative emotions apparent in prisons when things go wrong including the anger of the prisoners concerning the conditions of their confinement, the disgust of prison officers at the damage to the prison, and the confusion and fear generated by disturbances. However, the emotional life of prisons when things are routine, has attracted much less interest. Crawley argues that the day-to-day emotional life of prisons is in fact highly significant because:

> "...'it is through the day-to-day performance and management of emotion that the prison itself is 'accomplished...'" (Crawley 2009:412).

King suggests that strong feelings are often engendered in the public when concern is expressed about criminal sanctions, but that much less is known

about empathy, forgiveness, mercy and the sanctions that align with these sentiments than about the punitive orientations (King 2008). The media powerfully manipulates the negative emotions in its choice of graphic crime stories to grip the attention of readers and viewers. Issues of power, manipulation, coercion and shame can be very significant in the processing of offenders through the system (Karstedt, Loader et al. 2011), and yet it seems that theorising and policy-making in relation to crime and punishment has sought to set aside the question of emotions in the pursuit of a 'rational' and 'objective' system (Loader 2005).

As an example of emotions going to the heart of the sentencing process, three studies identified how people perceive crime as being more serious when fewer people are affected. Nordgren and McDonnell undertook a test using students and also examined cases between 2000 and 2010 in which individuals from corporations had been found guilty by juries of negligently exposing members of the public to substances such as asbestos, lead paint or toxic mould and their victims had suffered significantly (Nordgren and McDonell 2010). These studies confirmed the researchers' hypothesis that people who harm large numbers of people get significantly lower punitive damages than people who harm a smaller number.

Goldacre argues that although there may be factors such as large companies being able to employ competent lawyers, it is hard to discount the contributory effect of empathy (Goldacre 2010). In other words, in cases where there are large numbers of victims this has the effect of reducing the sense of grievance and understanding of culpability; the smaller the number of victims the more 'sentencers' can feel aggrieved on their behalf and seek to impose greater sanctions on their perpetrators. This offers one example of the power of emotions to influence the apparent 'objectivity' of sentencing; others have written about this phenomenon e.g.(Fitzmaurice and Pease 1986). The research reaffirms that it is the 'personal' and individual narratives about crime that impact emotionally and it is, of course, the personal crime stories that sell newspapers and bring in audiences for TV crime dramas. Individual victims of

terrible crimes are used by the media to campaign for more punitive sanctions; what has been referred to as a 'moral panic' (for example the killings of James Bulger and Sarah Payne) even when there is little statistical or 'scientific' evidence to indicate that the risk of further such serious events occurring is anything other than small or would be made smaller by the use of more punitive sanctions (Cohen 1972).

2.5.2 Emotions and criminology

It will be argued that the drive towards 'modernity' with its emphasis on science and scientific explanations for all phenomena which began in the late 19th century and continued into the 20th century has had the effect of devaluing and suppressing the role of emotion in criminology. Criminology as a discipline had its beginnings in the 18th and early 19th centuries with Beccaria and the establishment of the classical school of criminology (Taylor, Walton et al. 1973). Garland identifies the Enlightenment writers such as Beccaria, Bentham and Howard as writing

> *"...secular, materialist analyses, emphasising the importance of reason and experience and denigrating theological forms of reasoning..."* (Garland 2002:20).

This saw the beginnings of criminology as a scientific enterprise and by the middle of the 19th century, Garland argues that this 'scientific' style of reasoning about crime had become a distinctive feature of the emerging culture of amateur social science (Garland 2002:21). The tendency to look to 'scientific' knowledge as a source of solutions to social and personal problems was becoming apparent not just within political thinking but also within the wider society. As the influence of religious and moral discourse began to wane the idea of the expert practitioner began to emerge (Garland 2002).

The evolution of positivist criminology and increasingly large-scale quantitative studies of criminal behaviour was almost exclusively led by male academics and with male offenders as the subjects of research. Feminist criminologists, beginning in the 1970s with the work of Carol Smart (Smart 1977), struggled to

assert a different approach in the context of the history of criminology as a male preserve based on a scientific enterprise. Smart argued that the experiences of women as victims and as offenders were fundamentally different from those of men. She also claimed that the position of 'malestream' criminology; the belief that their scientific studies had universal application, was mistaken. Smart, and the feminist criminologists who followed her, for example (Heidensohn 1985, Morris 1987, Gelsthorpe 1989), began to reclaim the emotional territory in criminology by identifying the validity and relevance of women's (and men's) subjective experiences. It was this understanding of a feminist 'standpoint' (Smart 1995), that validated the experiences of women as offenders and victims of crime and identified previously largely invisible areas of crime against women and children. This understanding of the significance of the subjective, emotional experience of women offenders and victims has been slow to translate itself, within criminology, to anything other than a relatively marginal place in the discipline although work on 'masculinities' has begun to challenge this (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008).

2.6 The probation context

The probation service as a community-based organisation within the criminal justice system began with the probation of Offenders Act 1907, as a court welfare service using voluntary help in the form of police court missionaries, charged with

> *"...stopping the revolving-door syndrome which the repeated use of short-term imprisonment represented..."* (Gelsthorpe and Morgan 2007:5).

The broad historical and philosophical changes within the probation service since its inception are set out by a number of authors. McWilliams wrote a series of articles in which he charted the evolution of the service from its religious beginnings through to a social work service and to what it has now become, a corrections agency (McWilliams 1983, McWilliams 1985, McWilliams 1986, McWilliams 1987). Other writers have identified the shift from a philosophy of 'advise, assist and befriend' to that of 'punishment in the

community' (Williams 1995, Garland 2001, Cavadino and Dignan 2002, Raynor and Vanstone 2007, Vanstone 2007, Raynor and Robinson 2009). Garland describes how probation was in the vanguard of penal progress and often regarded as the 'exemplary instance of the penal-welfare approach to crime control' (Garland 2001:177), but he argues that it has had to move away from its original mission towards priorities that reflect the new penological climate of

> *"...changing offenders' behaviour; reducing crime, achieving safer communities; protecting the public; supporting victims..."* (Garland 2001:177).

Historically, the service was seen as making a significant impact on the humanisation of justice and was a driving force in the attempts to reduce the centrality of imprisonment within the penal framework (Nellis 2007, Raynor and Vanstone 2007). By the early 1970s the probation service was viewed as a well established and well respected presence within the English criminal justice system. The kindness and respect offered by probation officers to offenders, was referred to as 'personalism' (McWilliams 1987), which was seen as the common ground.

From the 1970s onwards, three major and overlapping cultural shifts subsequently altered the focus and work of the probation officer. These shifts came about as a result of an increasing interest by Government in the work of the service and a demand for greater accountability for its activities. First, the loss of faith in the treatment model led to what was described as a collapse in the rehabilitative ideal and alternatives to custody, a rise of penal pessimism and belief in the efficacy of punishment. The associated emphasis on assessing and managing risk, and 'protecting the public' came about largely as a result of the 1991 Criminal Justice Act (Canton 2011).

Secondly, the impact of the 'Nothing Works' research, (see Section 2.6.4) although later partially retracted, was influential in the development of the 'What Works' movement in the 1990s, which saw a move away from the radical ideologies of the 1970s and a return to an emphasis on the individual culpability

of offenders and on cognitive behavioural approaches to addressing offending behaviour through accredited programmes of intervention (Whitehead 2010).

Thirdly, the creation of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) in 2004 combined the work of the prison and probation services and promoted the 'Offender Management Model' (OMM), which aimed to deliver end-to-end management of offenders through prison and into and out of the community (Canton 2011). This development was preceded by the emerging emphasis from Government downwards, of a managerial and audit approach to the work of the service with the setting of targets and the monitoring and evaluating of outcomes related to re-offending (Vanstone 2007, Whitehead 2010, Canton 2011).

The existence of the probation service as an organisation in its own right is now under question. Its standing within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is as a junior partner alongside the larger and more powerful prison service with the majority of senior managers coming from the prison service (Raynor 2012). The power to commission services from other providers; public, private and third sector, brought in by the Offender Management Act (2007) (Home Office 2007) has also opened the service up to competition, privatisation and fragmentation, which is further endorsed by the recent Green Paper (Ministry of Justice 2010). The new concept of 'Integrated Offender Management' involves co-operation between the police, probation, voluntary and private sector organisations, supported by a policy of 'payment by results' (Flynn 2011). Whether there will continue to be a perceived need for a public sector agency that offers a 'treatment' service to offenders in the future is uncertain. Whether such an agency would continue to operate within a punitive agenda of punishment, control and surveillance leaving the 'softer' elements to be farmed out as a 'social work' service to be provided by a range of voluntary and private sector agencies is also uncertain.

These ideas were first mooted as far back as 1988 in the Green Paper 'Tackling Offending' (Home Office 1988). With this as the background, it is perhaps

unsurprising that during the last five years, with two different Governments, there has been little evidence of clear political initiatives or media reporting that reflect the work of highly skilled probation staff working with high risk, (and in particular sex offenders), to assess, address and potentially limit their offending behaviour. The political and public discourse uses the language of needing 'toughness', of 'tightening up' and of 'undue leniency' within the probation service (Batty 2012). This language implies the need for greater punitiveness, surveillance and control, which, despite the use of the term 'rehabilitation' in the Green Paper (Ministry of Justice 2010), suppresses an alternative discourse that might recognise the use of 'soft skills' to undertake the 'hard work' of change, rehabilitation, and reform in offenders. The debate continues to be suffused with 'popular punitiveness' (Garland 2001).

As well as the lack of any political vision about the work of the service, it is argued that the 'What Works' developments within probation practice also diminished the role of these 'soft skills. As indicated, these developments placed a cognitive behavioural treatment (CBT) model at the centre of probation intervention (Whitehead 2010), and whilst in theory, CBT involves reference to feelings and emotional expression (McGuire 2000), in practice much less attention has been placed on the emotional context of a range of offending behaviours, (particularly those related to violence), or to the emotional impact for workers and offenders, of the learning and development required of offenders in the change process.

2.6.1 The significance of the relationship in probation practice

The significance of the relationship between probation officer and offender has a strong historical base. McWilliams outlines the way in which the early police court missionary used a religious imperative of redemption and repentance to encourage offenders to change their ways. The relationship built with an offender was similar to that of a minister and his congregation in which, in this instance, the religious message was imparted in order to compel, encourage or frighten the offender into changing his (sic) behaviour for the better (McWilliams

1983).   Nellis refers to this as 'preventive justice' whereby the courts ensured good behaviour without the need for punishment and was the essence of the 'being on probation' contract (Nellis 2007). The early religious philosophy of the service remained influential to some degree until the 1970s (McWilliams 1985) although from the 1960s, the religious motivation of probation staff was being replaced by a more humanistic approach with training located within a social work base and a treatment model of intervention (Bailey, Knight et al. 2007).

The origins of the probation service were based on the principle of 'befriending' offenders (Monger 1972, Bailey, Knight et al. 2007, Nellis 2007), which gave permission and encouragement to probation officers to build strong relationships with offenders in the belief that this would enable both regulation of behaviour and influence in a process of change away from future offending. Within this context, the welfare of the offender was seen as paramount and the regulation almost an afterthought (Foren and Bailey 1968). The organisation of probation work was influenced by the introduction of American-inspired case work methods in the 1930s, which led to the development of a greater sense of professionalism and of some independence from the courts (Bailey, Knight et al. 2007). 'Case work' referred to one-to-one work with offenders in which the practitioner built a relationship through which assessment of need was undertaken and plans formulated to bring about change. The Morison Report of 1962 made reference to 'social case work' as the 'scientific' base of the probation service's claim to expertise and professional status (Nellis 2007:41). This is perhaps one of the first claims to scientific principles that have come to dominate probation practice in recent years.

Monger refers to 'relationship by order of the court' (Monger 1964).   To be placed on a probation order, prior to the 1991 Criminal Justice Act (Home Office 1991), required the consent of the offender, and to that extent the question of whether or not they were 'willing' or 'unwilling' to enter into this contract was a significant factor in building a relationship on a degree of motivation for change. How the probationer regarded the prospect of probation would;

> "*...clearly depend primarily upon the quality and nature of the relationship he (sic) forms with his officer...*" (Monger 1964:45).

Probation officers then worked with children as young as ten, so the influence of the family and of school was far greater than is now the case.

2.6.2 The influence of social work and psychotherapy

Probation had been a branch of social work from the 1960s up until the 1990s. Many of the skills of assessment, relationship building, and referral to a range of resources for help with personal and family problems were viewed as core to both professions. Probation students were trained alongside social work students within the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW), replaced by the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW) delivered by Universities in partnership with local agencies (Knight 2002). Probation viewed its role as being primarily that of a social worker to the courts, offering a welfare service to 'clients'. This system of training continued until the 1990s when government policy on probation began to define its work as something other than social work (Smith 2005). The 1994 review of training recommended the abolition of the Diploma in Social Work as the required probation training (Dews and Watts 1994). The introduction of the Diploma in Probation Studies (DipPS) as an employment-based, degree programme which combined a National Vocational Qualification with a degree, was established under the incoming Labour Government in 1998 (Knight and Ward 2001, Knight 2002). Despite the changes, significant numbers of probation staff continued to believe in social work principles, particularly with regard to building relationships with offenders.

Through its connection with social work, the association with psychotherapy was a significant influence in probation training and practice from the early 1950s through to the 1970s (Smith 2006). Probation training at that time included models of counselling informed by psychotherapeutic principles; in particular, person-centred counselling which originated with Carl Rogers (Rogers 1943). Some of the core principles of a helping relationship, as defined by Rogers as important within a person-centred therapy model, were

traditionally used to aid the probation officer in understanding their own and their client's emotional reactions (Monger 1972).

Much of the earlier literature on relationships within probation orders made reference to the use of these principles within a continuum of 'care and control' (Jordan 1970, Monger 1972, Smith 2006), and recognised the inherent power and authority inequalities within all therapeutic relationships not merely court-mandated ones. In work with young offenders, the probation officer was exhorted to reflect on the use of 'authority' in the relationship and the overtly 'parental' role of the probation officer (Foren and Bailey 1968). Foren and Bailey make reference to the potential for the 'client' to view the probation officer as the 'coercive and forbidding punitive bad parent' when the hope was that they would in time come to represent the 'love and control of the good parent', which has a strong resonance with psychoanalytic theory (Foren and Bailey 1968; Smith 2006).

The forming of a strong relationship based on a person-centred model of therapy was seen as key to aiding the process of change in offenders and where the offender might show some resistance, the worker was offered strategies and techniques to overcome these based on the use of the relationship (Jordan 1970; Monger 1972). This parent-child model represented some of the paternalism of the service at that time, and an infantilising of the agency and rights of the offender (Smith 2006). Bailey et al described how graduates trained at the Tavistock Clinic and other centres of psychotherapeutic education, who were part of this 'psychiatric deluge', achieved a degree of dominance (Bailey, Knight et al. 2007). In the privacy of the interview it was argued, offenders may be able to show a different front to that which they show their friends or to other people. The offender was thought to be able to sometimes reveal feelings and attitudes which he might hide or subdue elsewhere (Foren and Bailey 1968:92).

One of the useful insights arising from a psychotherapeutic approach was an understanding of the potential for transference and counter-transference of

feelings between therapist and client; between probation officer and offender. Transference refers to a client (offender), transferring feelings onto the therapist (probation officer); for example, seeing them as a 'parent' figure. Counter-transference refers to the therapist having attitudes towards the client resulting from the therapist's unconscious and unexamined feelings related to earlier events or relationships (Truax and Carkhuff 1967, Herman 1997, Rogers 2004, Schaverien 2006, Murdin 2010). It can include the invoking of past trauma experienced by the therapist on hearing the painful narratives of the client (Herman 1997).

Another insight arising from Rogerian principles was the significance of an understanding of 'self' as a psychotherapeutic principle, in the building of effective relationships with offenders and has close associations with a more contemporary understanding of emotional intelligence and emotional literacy (Sharp 2001; Killick 2006). The blocks to insight in understanding the problems presented by offenders, were seen as being about a lack of understanding of 'self' (Smith 2006). Stress on the importance of understanding the self would have been entirely familiar to probation officers trained in this psychoanalytically influenced environment of the 1950s and 1960s (Vanstone 2007). It was argued that the quality of the therapeutic relationship and the personal qualities of the therapist were more important influences on outcomes than the theory and methods that the counsellor employed (Truax and Carkhuff 1967). Truax and Carkhuff identified these qualitative factors as, 'acceptance, accurate empathy' and 'non-possessive warmth' (Truax and Carkhuff 1967:1).

However, there were limits to the understandings offered by this analytical approach, shaped by the culture and norms of the time (Nellis 2007). In the article 'Sentenced to Social Work', probation officers of the time, myself included, were challenged to reflect on the risk of imposing more 'coercive' and manipulative elements of social work interventions within probation supervision (Bryant, Coker et al. 1978), through 'enforced help'. The inequality and imbalance of power between worker and client remained largely unexplored.

2.6.3 The influence of sociology and structural analyses

Whilst the psychoanalytic theory used to analyse an offender's progress on the probation order, including any difficulties or obstacles within the relationship, had its strengths it also had limitations, including an undue attention to individual pathology and the individual responsibility of the offender to understand and change his/her own behaviour. There was little reference to the wider social and economic context within which this behaviour occurred. Vanstone argues that there is not much evidence that this psychoanalytic approach directly impacted on practice at that time (Vanstone 2007), and it was subject to some criticism from influential criminologists of the 1960s and 70s (Smith 2006).

The opening up of wider sociological, economic and structural theories of the causes of crime (Dyson and Brown 2006), including Marxist theories (Walker and Beaumont 1981), labelling theories (Becker 1963), ideas of radical non-intervention and the emergence of the anti-oppressive agenda (Thompson 2006), including the evolving body of feminist criminological research and theorising (Smart 1977; Heidensohn 1985; Gelsthorpe 1989), all contributed to a shift in focus away from the individual pathology of the offender. Within these evolving theories any potential resistance to 'treatment' by the offender was identified in more political and structural terms rather than being seen as solely the failure of the individual offender (Walker and Beaumont 1981).

Whilst these radical approaches encouraged practitioners in the 1970's and early 1980s to widen their analysis and assessment to incorporate these structural factors it did not offer many alternative strategies for direct work with the offenders they supervised. This was the era of 'Intermediate Treatment' for young offenders, and workers were able to plan and undertake a range of challenging activities, including residential periods away from home, to develop and enhance the lives of young offenders (Knight 2008a)). They were encouraged to develop links with wider community groups and to understand offending patterns within communities and neighbourhoods.   However, the

basic task of supervising the offender continued to be the one-to-one contact and the building of relationships through which help, advice and practical support could be offered and change encouraged. The focus at this time remained based largely on a 'welfare' model of intervention.

2.6.4 The influence of politics and the development of 'performance management'

The probation service had been subject to little overt political direction from central government prior to the 1980s. However, as part of a wider focus on value for money and greater accountability, the Home Office began to impose increased central control from 1984, with the publication of the Statement of National Objectives for the probation service (SNOP) (Home Office 1984) and by using the Audit Commission, the National Audit Office and HM Inspectorate of probation as tools for enforcing the implementation of its policies (Cavadino and Dignan 2002). The move towards what Garland refers to as 'the crisis of penal modernism' saw a hardening up of the processes of supervision together with the constraining of the personal discretion and autonomy of professionals (Garland 2001; Garland 2002). The first National Standards for the Supervision of Offenders were introduced in 1992 (Home Office 1992), with a much greater emphasis on enforcement of the requirements of statutory orders and the performance management of officers. These Standards were updated in 1995, 2000, 2007 and 2011 (Home Office 1995, Home Office 2000, Home Office 2007, Ministry of Justice 2011), and now cover all aspects of 'offender management'.

The incorporation of work within prisons after the probation service took over the role of voluntary through-care agencies in the mid-1960s, and the introduction of new court orders, led to probation being subject to a period of sustained growth in the period until the early 1990s and a shift of focus towards a more 'treatment' model of intervention. However, although the 1991 Criminal Justice Act had placed the probation service in a more central role, it was not long before Michael Howard was proclaiming that 'prison works' (Howard 1993),

and many of the more progressive features of the 1991 Act were changed by the Criminal Justice Act of 1993. There was also an evolving scepticism of the effectiveness of a 'treatment' model encapsulated in what became known as the 'Nothing Works' era promulgated by Martinson (Martinson 1974, Lipton, Martinson et al. 1975, Brody 1976), which claimed that no transformative intervention could be shown to be effective in reducing reoffending.

Contrary to the pessimism within the literature associated with this period, I recall it as a time of creativity and innovation for practitioners where building strong relationships with offenders was seen as central to practice. Many criminologists and policymakers at that time were predicting the demise of imprisonment with a much greater faith being demonstrated in the potential for engagement with offenders and rehabilitation in non-custodial settings (Wacquant 2009).

The 'Nothing Works' approach was criticised at the time and later recanted (Martinson 1979, McGuire 1995, McGuire 2000), but the power of this negative ideology had influence in the evolution of the subsequent 'What Works' movement.

2.6.5 What Works

The 'befriending' principle remained to the forefront of practice, surviving the 'Punishment in the Community' ethos introduced by the 1991 Criminal Justice Act, until the arrival of the 'What Works' enterprise and the emergence of evidence-based practice in the mid 1990s (Chapman and Hough 1998, Vanstone 2007, Whitehead 2010). The 'advise, assist and befriend' requirements were removed from the legislation when the probation order became the community rehabilitation order under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 s.43. (Home Office 2000). The developing ethos of 'punishment in the community' and the transformation from a welfare-orientated agency to a corrections agency led to the replacement of the therapeutic models of intervention with more instrumental models of change based on cognitive behavioural principles (McGuire and Priestley 1985; Whitehead 2010).

The 'What Works' movement identified a renewed interest in psychologically based theories of causation and intervention (McGuire and Priestley 1985) and a drive to 'instruct' offenders in new ways of thinking about, and taking responsibility for, their behaviour. The report by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) on 'Evidenced-Based Practice (Chapman and Hough 1998), summarised a range of research outputs that identified the most effective methods of reducing re-offending based on a psychological model of individual change.

Managerialist concepts of efficiency and effectiveness became increasingly important in the 1980s and 1990s with an emphasis on outputs and performance rather than inputs as the main indicators of success (Newburn 2003). The development of a 'What Works' approach to the public sector as a whole, of ideas on what constituted 'effective practice' and the rise of 'managerialism' all came to be seen as central to the New Labour approach (Newburn 2003), with ever more complex electronic systems for the monitoring and control of data (Aas 2004). The concept of 'New Public Management' began around the time of the Conservative governments from 1979 and continued without significant changes with New Labour from 1997 with the emphasis on control from the centre (Whitehead 2010). Budgets were centralised and managers given increased powers of control; services were to be provided by a 'purchaser-provider' split through competition not a monopoly of service (Whitehead 2010).

The creation of the National Probation Service (NPS) in 2001 saw a further centralisation of authority and control, and was followed speedily by the Correctional Services Review (Carter 2003), and the response by the Home Office (Home Office 2004). This led to the creation of the National Offender Management Service in 2004 (NOMS) which combined the work of the prison and probation services, and the Offender Management Act (2007), (Home Office 2007), which set out the new arrangements for managing the work of both services.

Traditionally the main 'clients' of the probation service had been offenders subject to probation supervision, with probation staff answerable to the Magistrates who made these orders and who were elected as members of local probation committees (Whitehead 2010). The current beneficiaries of the service are now conceptualised in much broader terms with the courts and 'the public' seen as key stakeholders. The reconceptualising of the needs of the offender as 'criminogenic' and 'non-criminogenic' (Chapman and Hough 1998), narrowed and sharpened the focus of probation practice on specific elements of behaviour to be addressed, with concerns about 'risk' in dominance.

Hayles argues that the preoccupation with the inventories required for completion of risk assessment tools such as the Offender Assessment System (OASys), reduced the exchange between worker and offender to a process of data collection aimed at identifying offending–related factors. She believes this has limited the narrative or uniqueness of the offender's life story to a 'catalogue of components' (Hayles 2006) and with the implication that emotion is sifted out of the catalogue (Aas 2004).

The contemporary profile of the probation service is that of an organisation concerned with improving and maintaining public safety and order, monitoring, controlling and punishing difficult and problematic behaviour in people (offenders), and ensuring they follow the rules of good conduct (DirectGov 2011). The core aim of NOMS is to protect the public and reduce reoffending (National Offender Management Service 2011). This work is undertaken under the umbrella of 'evidence-based practice'.

2.6.6 Evidence-based practice

In the early literature on evidence-based practice (McGuire 1995; Chapman and Hough 1998; McGuire 2000), there was an active discounting of the traditional approach to working with offenders based on a psychotherapeutic model of change, and through the medium of the relationship (McGuire 1995; Smith 2006). The new emphasis was on thinking skills (cognition) and social skills (problem solving), and a requirement on practitioners to give priority to the

actuarial assessment and management of risk (Smith 2006). Practitioners were actively discouraged from writing historical accounts of the early lives and experiences of offenders and encouraged instead to locate the causes of their behaviour primarily in poor thinking and problem-solving skills (Underdown 1998). These new directions were strongly influenced by the risk-need-responsivity model which was initially used in Canada, and introduced in the UK as part of the 'What Works' initiatives of the mid-1990s.

Evidence-based practice was formulated on the following principles of:

- 'Risk': which asserts that criminal behaviour can be reliably predicted and that treatment should focus on the higher risk offenders
- 'Need': which highlights the importance of criminogenic needs (those factors which have a direct link to offending) in the design and delivery of treatment programmes
- 'Responsivity': interventions should be delivered in ways which match the offenders' learning style and engage their active participation
- 'Programme integrity': interventions should be rigorously managed and delivered as designed.

(Chapman and Hough 1998)

Of these principles, the risk principle has dominated policy and practice in recent years with the development of a range of risk assessment tools (Kemshall 2003, Kemshall 2008), and with pressure on staff to complete detailed paperwork (Oldfield 2007). The assignment of offenders to categories of risk has become the central task, from which follows different levels of intervention, control and surveillance. The 'need' principle centres on factors closely related to offending behaviour rather than on 'welfare' need, which is seen as the remit of other community-based organisations or partnerships (Whitehead 2010). The evidence drawn on indicated that the most effective forms of intervention were "cognitive-behavioural group work programmes with a strong focus on offending behaviour" (Mair 2004:26). These programmes, which emerged from effectiveness research, (much of which was conducted in

Canada), became the only form of practice regarded by probation managers as sufficiently evidenced-based to be defensible (Smith 2005). With the evolution of this approach came new methods and developments in practice skills that were taught to staff to enhance the above principles.

2.6.7 Motivational interviewing

Moving away from the notion of 'befriending' as a means of engaging reluctant offenders, motivational interviewing offered workers a 'tool kit' of strategies and techniques to engage their responsivity (Fuller and Taylor 2003). This approach had initially been developed with clients suffering with addictions and was based on the concept that change is not a single process but a cyclical one (Miller 1996, Miller and Rollnick 2002). The tool kit included guidance on the use of 'Socratic questioning'; a process aimed at encouraging the person to look at discrepancies in their thinking and belief patterns (Fuller and Taylor 2003). The tool kit was introduced as a stand-alone process unconnected to any formal training or education around the relationship-building process. Nevertheless, it recognised the importance of engaging with offenders and the four basic principles as set out by Miller and Rollnick included:

- expressing empathy

- developing discrepancy

- rolling with resistance

- supporting self-efficacy.

(Miller and Rollnick 2002)

It was initially presented in contrast to some of the non-directive counselling approaches, as being a more focused and goal-directed approach, with the resolution of ambivalence as its central purpose (Sandham and Octigan 2007). Miller and Rollnick have, however, like Truax and Carkhuff (1967) before them, emphasised that the therapeutic alliance or partnership between worker and

client was more important than individual techniques; in particular they stressed that a confrontational style can be ineffective (Miller and Rollnick 2002).

Whilst both motivational interviewing and the responsivity principle in theory allowed for a continuing focus on the importance of strong relationships in order to motivate and support offenders, Mair argues that in practice the fourth principle of evidenced-based practice, that of 'programme integrity', which defined a need to ensure the accurate and consistent delivery of the programme content, tended to over-rule these approaches (Mair 2004). Mair considered that the dynamics of interactions and relationships within offending behaviour group work programmes were subordinated to the need to ensure consistent delivery of the content of the programme through the medium of the programme manual. This was subsequently compounded by the fact that the majority of core offending behaviour programmes were run by probation service officers who lacked any formalised training in relationship building or group dynamics (Knight and Stout 2009).

There were other critics of the rush to establish accredited programmes as the central tool of interventions with offenders on the basis that they had a thin evidence base, employed a pathological and individual model of criminality and that not all individuals were suited to the 'one size fits all' model (Gorman 2001, Whitehead 2010). Many practitioners continued to operate within a paradigm of concern and respect for the individual and continued to see relationships as key; but the organisational structures established to promote the evidence-based agenda no longer prioritised these core elements of practice. The evidence-based approach had had a tendency to throw 'the baby out with the bathwater'; discarding the importance of the relationship rather than coupling it with the new approaches involving cognitive-behavioural principles.

2.7 Recent theoretical models and the re–emergence of the 'relationship'

2.7.1 The revival of 'rehabilitation'

Andrews and Bonta have argued that the 'get tough' approach to offenders and increasingly punitive measures have failed to reduce criminal recidivism and that a better option for dealing with crime is to place more emphasis on rehabilitation and on approaches that adhere to the Offender Management model (Andrews and Bonta 2010). Something of a revival in the principles of rehabilitation and the recognition of the importance of staff practices in achieving this had in fact begun towards the end of the 1990s. Rex (1999) and others have argued that people on probation are prepared to accept and even to welcome, a firmly directive style on the part of supervisors, a sense of 'legitimacy' (Chapman and Hough 1998), as long as it is accompanied by a demonstration of concern and respect for the person; a return perhaps to the use of 'authority' and the balancing of 'care' and 'control'(Foren and Bailey 1968, Rex 1999, Marshall and Serran 2004). Like earlier writers, Rex too believed that there was every reason to think that the quality of the relationship mattered as much in group work programmes as in one-to-one supervision.

This gradual rehabilitative 'revival' was encouraged by a paper that emphasised the importance of staff practice and the ability to demonstrate warmth, enthusiasm, respect and likeability in work with offenders (Dowden and Andrews 2004). The term 'therapeutic alliance' used by Dowden and Andrews (2004) re-aligned the idea of therapy with 'treatment' in a probation context. Marshall et al (Marshall and Serran 2004), undertook research that examined the characteristics of therapists in the treatment of sexual offenders. Empathy, as a quality shown by a practitioner, appeared across all the institutions in which the research was carried out and was seen as statistically significant. The researchers indicated that this was contrary to previous claims that if a programme is consistently delivered to the same standard the therapist characteristics should not be relevant, and they recommended that therapists should pay attention to the influence of their behaviour and attempt to adopt a more empathic, warm and rewarding style (Marshall and Serran 2004). Andrews and Bonta have subsequently recommended that:

> *"...staff should be selected partly on their ability and potential to build high quality relationships with a difficult clientele, and then be given training that further enhances these skills..."* (Andrews and Bonta 2010:50)

Dowden and Andrews introduced the model of 'Core Correctional Practice Skills' (CCPs), which continued to be informed by the risk, need and general responsivity principles, but reviewed the evidence from meta analysis that identified staff characteristics and training in core skills as essential in order to ensure the maximum therapeutic impact of programmes of intervention (Dowden and Andrews 2004). Building on the CCP model the Offender Management Model (OMM) includes a staff characteristic of "*Forming and working through warm, open and enthusiastic relationships*" (NOMS 2006). All of these features were examined in the Jersey study (Raynor, Ugwudike et al. 2010) which, interestingly, showed that the Jersey officers, trained in a social work model, concentrated more on the skills needed to establish and maintain relationships. However, no specific reference is made in the CCP model or in the Jersey study to the significance of self-awareness of emotions, or of the effective management and regulation of emotion in workers.

2.7.2. Theories of 'desistance'

Alongside these developments in the late 1990s and early 2000s was an emergence of the criminal careers literature which discussed the wider social processes which cause people to stop offending (Rex 1999). From this has evolved models of desistance from offending as offering a more positive and maturational model of change in offenders, with desistance from crime understood not as a single event but as a process of maturation and change (Rex 1999, Farrall 2002, Maruna, Immarigeon et al. 2004, McNeill 2004, Burnett and McNeill 2005, McNeill 2006, Maruna and LeBel 2010). The general maturation of the offender is seen, in this literature, as more important than any single programme of intervention. The model takes the individual narrative (McNeill 2009, McNeill, Raynor et al. 2010), of the offenders as its focus, in some contrast to the rehabilitative model which borrows from the medical model in being a top down imposed set of ideas and constructs that are imposed on

the individual in order to change and correct them. Associated with the desistance movement has been the development of strengths-based models of rehabilitation (Ward, Polaschek et al. 2006), including the 'good lives model' and the 'better lives model' particularly in relation to sexual offenders (Day, Casey et al. 2010). The 'good lives model' (GLM) considers offender supervision from the perspective of the offender and identifies the resources and capital in their lives that can be harnessed to enable them to move away from offending (Ward, Polaschek et al. 2006, McNeill, Raynor et al. 2010, Raynor, Ugwudike et al. 2010). This model also makes connections with the significance of relationships and stresses that individuals should be understood in a holistic, integrated manner.

The resurgence of interest in the relationship in the academic literature has been a welcome development. A recognition of the importance of the relationship is now supported by the Offender Engagement Programme (OEP) (Ministry of Justice 2010, Rex 2012), recently established within the NOMS, that is undertaking research on the nature of the offender/worker relationship and reinforcing the idea that one of the central components of offender management is the relationship between the offender and their offender manager. One of the pilot initiatives, entitled the Reflective Supervision Model (RSM), is looking at how middle managers and Trust leaders can support practitioners in building effective relationships with service users (Ministry of Justice 2010). However, the practice-focused research currently being undertaken continues to rather side-step the opportunity to highlight the importance of *feelings* in the change process and of the emotional skills of the practitioner

2.7.3. Offender readiness to change

Recent research and writing has begun to focus more directly on issues related to issues of treatment readiness in offender programmes (Day, Casey et al. 2010). Reference is made to the risk/needs/responsivity model and Day et al argue that the third factor 'responsivity' is the one that they believe has been the most neglected and lacking conceptual clarity (Day, Casey et al. 2010). Day

and colleagues introduced the 'Multifactor Offender Readiness Model' (MORM), and suggest the individual factors include; cognitive (beliefs, cognitive strategies), affective (emotions), volitional (goals, wants, or desires), and behavioural (skills and competencies) (Day, Casey et al. 2010). Day et al also argue that therapist skills and style are central to the development of a therapeutic alliance and cite Marshall and Serran's research on work with sex offenders which suggests that promoting approach goals rather than avoidance goals is likely to increase programme effectiveness, and that the focus should be on promoting pro-social behaviour rather than ceasing anti-social behaviour (Marshall, Serran et al. 2000).

One of the potential obstacles to offender readiness to change is the extent to which the offender may or may not be ready, within him/herself to make the necessary changes to lead a non-offending lifestyle. An assumption frequently made within the popular press, and also within much political debate, is that offenders are the 'villains', victims are the innocent parties and that a sharp distinction can be drawn between the law-abiding majority and the (relatively) few who prey on them (Canton 2011:179). The simplistic presentation of crime in the media separates out the roles of offender and victim as discrete and oppositional, whereas in reality many people can occupy both roles at the same or at different times in their lives. There is strong evidence that offenders are a disproportionately victimised group and that many female offenders, in particular, have themselves been victims of abuse and violence (Boswell 2000, Rumgay 2004, Ward, Devon et al. 2006, Canton 2011). They are very likely also to have backgrounds of disadvantage, discrimination and poverty which will have shaped their world view and their experience. One outcome of the polarisation and stereotyping of 'victims' and 'offenders', as Canton argues, is that offenders become ineligible to be victims (Canton 2011).

The What Works drive has tended to view the immediacy and impact of the offending behaviour as the core target for intervention and the majority of programmes are designed to tackle this through a cognitive behavioural model. However, the psychotherapeutic literature, the recent work on 'desistance' and

the potential for offenders to also be victims, identifies a much more complex picture of how and when people are ready to make changes in their lives and how receptive they are to learning about new ways of being and behaving. The concept of 'readiness' is core to therapeutic work with voluntary clients. Mearns argues the client's 'readiness' will affect the speed with which trust is developed and the establishment and maintenance of this trust (Mearns and Thorne 2008), (see Section 6.5). The idea of 'readiness', like the cycle of change' (Miller and Rollnick 2002) is, however, a somewhat shifting process.

If workers are to enhance 'offender readiness' for those offenders who have been victims themselves there is evidence from the psychotherapeutic literature of the sorts of needs they are likely to present. Research on work with victims of abuse and trauma (McCann and Pearlman 1990), identified seven psychological needs which should be addressed by the therapist when working with traumatised victims. Dayton describes similar and additional characteristics including Alexithymia (Dayton 2000). Regardless of whether the probation worker can respond to the offender as a potential 'victim' as well as an offender, demonstrating empathy for another person's predicament is seen as a crucial stage in building trust, and trust is seen as necessary for a person to be able to share 'risky', personal or particularly sensitive information (Mearns and Thorne 2008). This may be of particular relevance in the area of sexual offending where the information to be disclosed is of a personal, intimate and quite possibly shameful (for the discloser) nature (Ward, Devon et al. 2006).

2.7.4. Revisiting attachment theory

The desistance literature in particular, highlights the importance of understanding the perspectives and feelings of the 'client' group, the offenders. Whilst there has been research examining potential causes of crime ranging from individual pathology, to environmental and social causes, the studies that focus more specifically on childhood trauma, abuse and disadvantage are less substantial. Research undertaken by Boswell on young offenders in secure institutions has highlighted how childhood trauma can be linked to later violence

(Boswell 1996, Boswell 2000). Bowlby, in his work on attachment, had speculated that potentially a lengthy period of 'maternal' deprivation could be a significant cause of subsequent delinquency (Bowlby 1969, Bowlby 1978, Bowlby 1980). Attachment theory identifies that the child who experiences sensitive and responsive caregivers (i.e. is able to form a secure attachment to his or her caregivers), has been found to be more cooperative, cry less, explore more and be more comfortable with 'less familiar' adults. In contrast those who suffered sexual, emotional or physical abuse, rejection, lack of support, emotional coldness or disruptive experiences with their parents in childhood are much more likely to be insecurely attached, to have problems relating to others in adolescence and adulthood and to be more likely to suffer from emotional loneliness (Moriarty, Stough et al. 2001, Rich 2006).

Attachment theory was taught as part of probation training in the 1970s and social inquiry reports were expected to elicit and draw out significant childhood events that may have resulted in subsequent difficulties. Routinely offenders were asked about their early memories, their family life and their experience of schooling. The introduction of the pre-sentence report following the 1991 Criminal Justice Act largely saw the end of this focus on the history of the person in the assessment process. With the evolution of the What Works agenda, workers were encouraged to examine the 'here and now' in an offender's life; to consider the cognitive distortions that lay behind their offending behaviour and to recommend that these be addressed through programmes of intervention that tackled this distorted thinking. Report writers were discouraged from writing anything of any significance about early childhood experience.

However, the one area in which contemporary probation workers have been allowed to retain aspects of this approach in both assessment and intervention is in sexual offending. Recent work that uses attachment theory in the understanding of some sexual and violent offenders (Renn 2000, Rich 2006, Ansbro 2008), has highlighted the significance of early damage causing later criminality. Marshall and Barbaree's model (Marshall and Barbaree 1990),

makes reference to attachment theory, and Pat Crittenden has led the field in making the links between early childhood abuse and deprivation and later sexual offending in adolescence and adulthood (Crittenden and Claussen 2000). There is a growing body of research evidence that suggests that significant areas of impulsive, (generally male), offending behaviour such as violence, and more controlling forms of sexual and domestic violence, can be traced to the process of the 'acting-out' of unprocessed and unresolved feelings from childhood and a failure of attachment to the original care-giver(s) (Seidler 1998, Dayton 2000, Dobash, Dobash et al. 2000). There is evidence that male child sex offenders experience high levels of emotional loneliness, fear of intimacy and isolation (Ward, Devon et al. 2006)(Ward, Devon et al 2006:194), and Marshall was the first to make links between intimacy deficits and sexual offending (Marshall 1989).

It will be argued that attachment theory continues to have relevance to work with sex offenders, to an understanding of wider crime causation, and in building subsequent attachments with offenders within the working alliance. In psychotherapeutic terms the access that the therapist gains to the client's internal working model through the development of attachment patterns in the working relationship, enables them to see and help to change these working models (Mallinckrodt, Gantt et al. 1995). Ansbro makes a plea for the return of the use of attachment theory in work with offenders and suggests it has congruence with theories of desistance in which offenders are encouraged to 're-write' the narrative scripts of their lives away from offending; she too claims that the relationship between worker and offender is pivotal in this (Ansbro 2008). Renn also provides a powerful example of the effectiveness of attachment theory used in the case of a man with a history of violence and alcohol abuse (Renn 2000).

2.8 Associated writings

There is no substantive literature of direct relevance to this thesis. In a text for probation trainees on knowledge in the probation service, Whitehead and

Thompson devote two pages to '*feelings: last but not least*' (Whitehead and Thompson 2004). They identify the significance of emotion in relation to offending behaviour and the fact that the impact of feelings on the achievement of successful outcomes is complex. They also highlight the need for practitioners to 'walk a sophisticated tightrope' between controlling or hiding their own feelings and expressing feelings towards positive outcomes. They go on to identify the concept of emotional intelligence as a useful theory but suggest it is impossible to describe or prescribe and difficult to assess. They therefore leave it out of their codified knowledge for probation practice. A book on psychology in the probation services written in 2005 makes no specific reference to emotion including the chapter on work with sex offenders (Crighton and Towl 2005).

Howe's work on the Emotionally Intelligent Social Worker (Howe 2008), and the article by Morrison on Emotional Intelligence and Social Work (Morrison 2007), set out to explore the emotional territory of social work practice and to examine the links between emotional intelligence, professional relationships and skilled practice. Social work has been identified as an emotionally demanding career but, as with probation practice, there has been little recent attempt to address this in training or via supervision (Bunting 2005). Dwyer argues that 'emotional labour' has become one of the hardest parts of the social work job but that it is not talked about explicitly in team meetings neither is it overtly recognised at higher management level in social services departments (Dwyer 2007). She suggests it is largely confined to the inner world of the individual practitioner and she is critical of the lack of supervision that addresses the emotional dissonance of practice and provides a safe place for staff to be able speak without facing criticism (Dwyer 2007: 52). Van Stokkom's work on emotional intelligence in policing suggests the need to train police officers in 'emotion management' (Van Stokkom 2011).

There have been attempts to address emotions and emotional intelligence in relation to other helping professions. Aiyegbusi & Clarke-Moore provide an edited collection of writings about therapeutic relationships with offenders which

examines the work of forensic mental health nursing from a psychodynamic perspective (Aiyegbusi and Clarke-Moore 2009). They refer to the particular emotional intensity of work with offenders in this setting and they examine the emotional labour of forensic nursing. The other text to make specific reference to work with offenders is Harvey and Smedley's edited book on psychological therapy in prisons and other secure settings (Harvey and Smedley 2010). In particular there is a chapter on attachment-based psychodynamic therapy. The authors argue for thinking differently about rehabilitation and focusing on 'therapy' as opposed to 'criminogenic needs'.

2.9 Conclusion

This review of the literature has set the context for the study in terms of the theoretical perspectives on emotion, and its association with criminal justice and criminology. It has provided an overview of the current literature on emotional literacy and emotional intelligence. It has concluded with an overview of the historical and more contemporary perspectives on the significance of the relationship within probation practice and some of the external influences on this. Whilst there is a growing literature on emotion theory, and on theories of emotional literacy and intelligence, there is very little that brings this together with probation practice or examines some of the particular emotional challenges of working 'therapeutically' in a prevailing climate of punishment and control, in the modern criminal justice system.

Chapter 3: Methodological orientation

3.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the methodological orientation to the research which includes a discussion of the epistemological foundations within the discipline of criminology. It explores the relevance of the different research paradigms that have been applied to an understanding of emotions, including scientific, subjective, and postmodern. Reference is made to Foucault's 'technologies of self' and the way in which power influences which knowledge and whose 'realities' prevail. The ontological status accorded to 'agency' and 'structure' is central to an understanding of the role of emotion within probation practice. Layder locates this traditional dualism within a broader macro-micro debate through his 'domain theory', which is outlined later in this chapter (Layder 2006). The chapter also introduces Layder's theory of interpersonal control as a useful construct for exploring the operation of emotional control as a component of emotional literacy within probation practice.

3.2 Epistemological and ontological foundations

This research is undertaken within the discipline of criminology most of which, from the 19th century onwards, was tied into positivism (Newburn 2007); the belief that human behaviour is determined by objective social factors which can be directly observed and where the researcher is detached from the evidence (Bondi 2005). Criminology was also largely a male enterprise; male criminologists studying predominately male offenders with the minority female offender population analysed through this 'male' lens (Smart 1977). In contrast much of the feminist criminology which has emerged since the 1970s has been more substantively informed by subjectivism (Dyson and Brown 2006, Wykes and Welsh 2009). An aim of this thesis is, within this tradition, to give a voice to the practitioners.

With the evolution of feminist criminology and the subsequent development of a more theoretically eclectic approach, a range of research inquiries emerged which combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches to studying crime and criminal behaviour (Noaks and Wincup 2004). To some extent this mirrors the development of thinking and research in the area of emotions, although the two disciplines; criminology and emotion theory, have rarely intertwined (Karstedt 2002). The more recent drive for 'evidence-based practice' across the public sector has contributed to the search for 'scientific' evidence on which to base policy and practice.

The core of the subject of this thesis is the concept of 'emotion' within probation practice. Emotion inhabits and pervades all aspects of our lives and has been of interest to philosophers and artists for centuries. However, as a subject of academic study it has been significantly neglected, particularly in the field of criminological inquiry. Recent emotion research, from both the psychological and sociological disciplines, presents it as complex and multi-dimensional (Frijda 1986, Evans 2003, Bondi 2005, Gendron 2010, Barbalet 2011). The recognition of the significance of emotion within the actual research process is even more recent having historically been perceived as largely irrelevant in the pursuit of scientific 'truths' (Bondi 2005; Layder 2006). Epistemologically the subject of emotion has been examined from both positivist and constructionist perspectives, but recent inquiries, (with the exception of those within neuroscience), are concerned to explore the interrelationship between agency and structure; between the individual's own activity and the social context in which the activity, in this instance emotion, is generated and exhibited (Layder 2006).

Emotion is an elusive concept which can be theorised on a continuum from 'individualistic' at one end to 'cultural' at the other; the continuum being the extent to which human beings actively shape the emotional world in which they live, or the social context shapes the social or emotional activity (Layder 2006). The work by Goleman (2006), which aims to ascribe measurement to emotional intelligence can be seen as at the individualistic end of this continuum whilst

ideas of 'emotional capital' (Reay 2004), and 'emotional labour' (Hochschild 1983), can be located at the other end. A different continuum of realism and essentialism at one end and postmodernism and anti-essentialism at the other, has Goleman at the realist end and feminist and postmodern approaches to the silencing of voices (of women, in particular) (Foucault 1977, Gilligan, Ward et al. 1988) at the other.

The 'objective' or 'rational' model identifies emotions as problematic. Emotions, which refer to anything other than that which enhances the power of the established order, the status quo, are accorded negative moral value (Lakoff 1987). The subjective model is seen to represent the more fluid world of art, spirituality and emotion (Lakoff 1987). The tensions between these two perspectives has continued for centuries with the rational model dominating, particularly in the post Romantic period and into the era of Modernism with the ascending strength and significance of the scientific enterprise as a whole. This thesis will consider the extent to which the rational model has continued to dominate criminal justice discourse, diminishing the softer, more subjective discourse of emotions.

3.2.1 Scientific approach

The study of emotion has, within a positivist epistemology, taken a scientific approach by examining human behaviour (psychology) and the human body (physiology) to discover the source and the expression of emotion. It has examined scientific measurements of bodily responses such as heart rate, sweating, flushing and rate of breathing to provide an indication of emotional activity (Evans 2003). More recently in the field of neuroscience, researchers have begun to uncover and learn a great deal about brain activity and in particular the function of certain centres of the brain, such as the amygdala, on emotion (Lane and Nadel 2000, Beech and Mitchell 2005, Cappa, Abutalebi et al. 2008, Dalgleish, Dunn et al. 2009). For example, researchers have begun to speculate about potential damage caused to the amygdala in some sex offenders by their own early childhood abuse and their subsequent attachment

and emotional difficulties (Gerhardt 2004). This thesis makes only passing reference to these areas of study and acknowledges the speculative and sometimes over-simplified usage in understanding complex behaviours.

3.2.2 Subjectivist approach

Emotions have been examined, within a subjectivist approach, as one of the internal means through which people endeavour to make sense of their world (Dyson and Brown 2006). Within this broad brush approach sit a number of research paradigms including phenomenology (Husserl 2006), and symbolic interactionism (Mead 1934), which have been used in the study of emotion. These approaches examine the assumptions that human experience and human emotions in particular, are a product of our own interpretations and that meaning is generated and negotiated in the process of social interaction (Dyson and Brown 2006). A phenomenological approach to the study of emotion involves an attempt to describe the 'life-world' of others, to understand at a deep emotional level, what the 'lived experience' of other people may be like (Dyson and Brown 2006). This approach is mostly closely associated with the fields of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, which endeavour to work at the deepest levels of conscious and sometimes unconscious thoughts and feelings within the patient or client (Rogers 2004; Mearns and Thorne 2008). This study uses the work of these writers and others who have applied it directly to offenders (Smith 2006, Aiyegbusi and Clarke-Moore 2009), to understand the research participants' emotional experiences as described by them, and how they build and use relationships with offenders. In particular, it considers the potential for these relationships to be used for positive (therapeutic) or negative (punitive) effect within the realm of probation practice.

Within an interactionist approach Goffman refers to the significance of 'impression management' when dealing with emotions, particularly in the carrying out of certain social roles (Goffman 1959/1990). In this thesis 'impression management' is referred to as one of the ways in which probation

practitioners manage and negotiate their emotional lives in the interactions between themselves and the offenders they supervise.

3.2.3 Postmodernism

The thesis largely discounts a positivist paradigm for the study of emotions, and favours a subjectivist approach. However, a third paradigm, arising from postmodern schools of thought and particularly from feminist research is also considered. Postmodernism rejects grand and 'totalising' theories and instead seeks to examine the hidden discourses that have been suppressed or repressed by the interplay of power relations. The postmodern emphasis on discourse and deconstruction takes language as the focal concern and argues that no one discourse should be privileged over another (Doherty, Graham et al. 1992). Foucault argued that not all discourses will carry equal weight or power and that some will account for and justify the appropriateness of the status quo (Foucault 1977). The exclusion of the 'emotional' or 'subjective' from criminological discourse could be seen as part of this maintenance of the status quo. This thesis considers a postmodern perspective on the manner in which the discourses of emotion, and the voices of probation practitioners on this subject, have been largely excluded or silenced. It makes reference to Foucault's concept of 'technologies of self' through which workers, silenced by the feeling rules of the organisation and profession (Hochschild 1983), that expect emotional detachment, also internalise this surveillance and self-monitor their emotional lives (Foucault 1990). Foucault's work on prisons recognised the ways in which the surveillance of prisoners via the central panopticon was designed to ensure that prisoners internalised the implied 'gaze' from the guard tower and became self-monitoring, and it is argued that practitioners similarly guard and monitor their own behaviour in anticipation of the gaze of their employers and profession.

Postmodern theory has made significant contributions to an understanding of the relationship between values, power, knowledge and language and to the theorising of social control and resistance to such control (Fox 1995).

Foucault's work has shed light on the way that the criminal justice system is shaped and operated by the interests of the powerful at the expense of the least powerful (Foucault 1977). A postmodern approach to criminological research questions whether in fact there is a single 'truth' out there waiting to be discovered and argues instead that there are many different realities each with their own legitimate claims to knowledge. Such an approach articulates the notion of 'hiddenness' and 'recovery' as of particular importance to subordinated groups (Humphries 2000). It argues that positivism fragments reality and encourages people to see the world in a compartmentalised way and in isolation from one another. Such divisions are encouraged because they are seen to stop the less powerful seeing the connections; referred to as 'false consciousness' and 'reification' of knowledge (Dyson & Brown 2006). Lukes' third dimension of power identifies how the 'powerless' may settle for a subordinated position or indeed lack of awareness of their own 'subordination' (Lukes 2005). Whilst probation practitioners may not view themselves as a 'subordinated' group they nevertheless have less power than their managers in the organisational hierarchies and their narratives are less likely to be heard. However, whilst a postmodern perspective has relevance to this study it embraces only part of the story and largely ignores the issues of power at the individual or psychobiographic level, and the inter-relationship of power and emotion that Layder identifies (Layder 2004). Together these theories have provided a conceptual and practical guide to the research process.

This broad span of potential philosophical approaches, from phenomenology to postmodernism, reflects the conceptual complexity of social reality. The ontological status accorded to 'agency' and 'structure' is central to this. Layder locates this traditional dualism within a broader macro-micro debate through his 'domain theory' (Layder 2006), and it is within his framework of social reality that the analysis for this research is located. Layder's model identifies society as layered or 'stratified' and including both micro-phenomena (people's individual lived experiences) and macro-phenomena (structural and

institutional). He argues that social interaction is based upon and draws together psychological and social realities.

3.3 Social domain theory

Layder's social domain theory stresses that the creation of meaning by individuals is influenced by an amalgam of subjective, external and situated influences (Layder 2004). His theory maps the 'social' universe and considers four domains of social reality:

Contextual Resources		
Social Settings		
Situated Activity	Relations of Power ⇒	Stretched across time and space ⇒
Psychobiography		
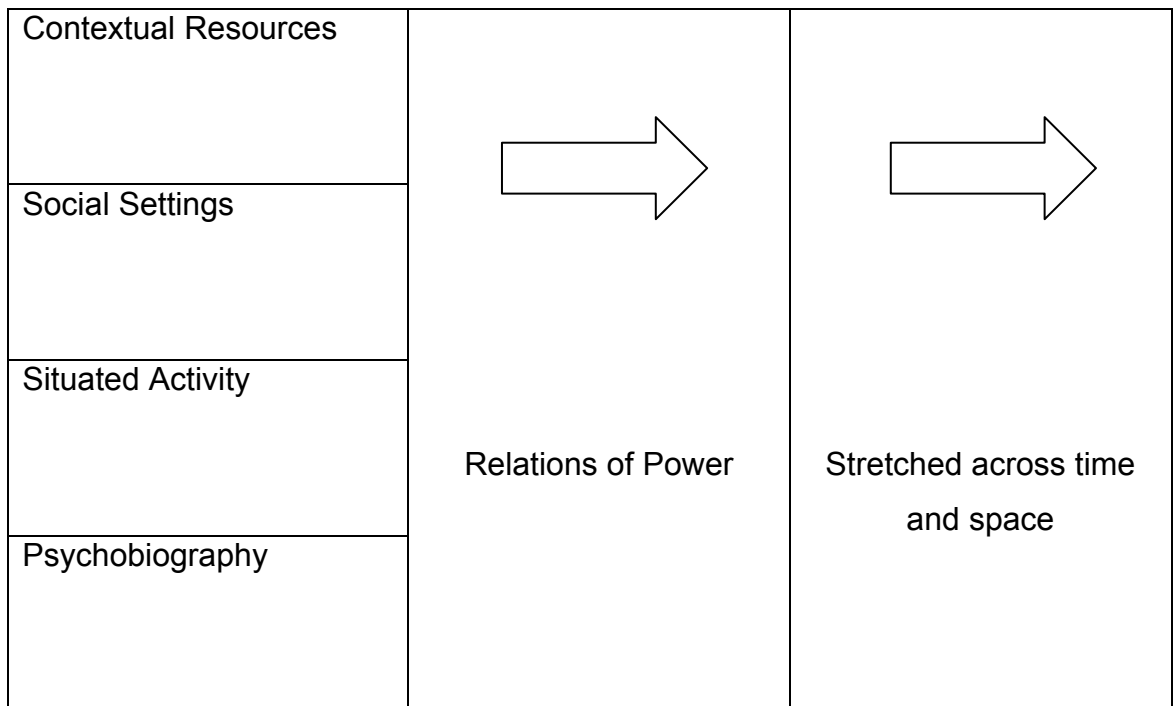
(Layder 2006:273)

The four social domains on the left are represented as vertical layers of social reality

> *"...with the lower layers representing the more personalised and immediate elements of social reality while the higher ones are more remote and impersonal..."* (Layder 2006:273).

All of them have a relationship with power and all are 'stretched across time and space; Layder argues that this vertical dimension gives ontological depth.

The domain of psychobiography describes a person's existence and their 'career trajectory' through time and space in the social world. It makes reference to the unique characteristics of that individual, their interactions with others, their experiences and how they have managed them. This is the domain within which the research for this thesis was originally conceptualised, taking a phenomenological perspective to interrogate the meanings that research participants to the study give to their emotional lives. However, Layder's domain theory identifies the individual as living both 'inside' and 'outside' society in that people can never escape social influences but are able to retain a significant degree of independence from them (Layder 2004).

The domain of situated activity, as the next layer is 'an arena in which meaning is created' (Layder 2006:277). Layder describes situated activity as

> *"...a subtle and complex mix of the powers, emotions and mutual influences of multiple individuals that unfold in the real time of the encounter..."* (Layder 2006:279).

Situated activity represents the practical focus of transactions between people in lived time and mediates between the subjective and objective elements of social reality. Layder highlights activities that go on under the surface, particularly emotions and feelings, some without the conscious awareness of the participants, and argues that all the individuals entering this encounter have emotional needs that they hope will be met. Such needs include approval, inclusion, etc so that the person's identity, security, self-esteem and self-value are affirmed and reaffirmed. He describes this as 'underground emotion work' (Layder 2006:279), in which there is a constant shifting of feelings of alignment and attunement or estrangement and awkwardness, and suggests this is evidence of the highly-skilled nature of being human.

The domain of social settings, sometimes referred to as the 'systems element', provides the immediate environment of the situated activity. Layder suggests these settings can vary in their organisational form. In some the relationships are formal and structured for example: schools, universities, hospitals,

industrial/commercial firms, government bureaucracies etc., whilst others are based on informal, loosely patterned relationships such as friendships, partnerships and family networks. These settings constitute a collection or accumulation of reproduced social relations, positions and practices; the 'reproduced outcomes of past activities that influence behaviour in the present' (Layder 2006:280). In more formal settings, such as an organisation like the probation service, social relationships are clearly defined and, according to Layder usually hierarchical with a graded sequence of positions and statuses. Interaction within this setting is defined through these positions and commitment to them is through inducements such as career opportunities, pay etc.

The fourth domain of contextual resources is the outer layer of the four and represents the most encompassing feature of the social environment. Layder defines two key elements; how material resources are unevenly allocated, and the historical accumulation of cultural resources such as 'stored knowledge' (cultural, ideological and institutional) through artefacts, media representations, fashion etc. The unequal distribution of resources he associates with groupings is based on class, ethnicity, age, gender and status. These include resources that support the immediate socio-economic context of particular social settings, for example: education, occupation, family and neighbourhood as well as the inner mental lives of individuals (Layder 2006:281). These aspects of social reality; practical and cultural resources, have been reproduced in time and space through regular usage by successive generations of individuals. Layder suggests that historically they have become relatively independent of current activity and that this characteristic distinguishes them from the real, present time of unfolding situated activities. In this sense elements of agency and system interfuse and influence each other but without destroying their distinctive characteristics and generative power (Layder 2006). Although these four social domains are clearly distinguishable from each other Layder argues that it is important not to lose sight of the links and continuities between them.

3.4 Theory of interpersonal control

In his work on emotions in social reality, Layder developed the theory of interpersonal control and argued that it was a distinct domain of social reality in its own right as well as being influenced by and influencing other domains (Layder 2004). It is an example of what he refers to as 'adaptive' theory in which he explores the different types of interpersonal control on a continuum from soft and benign to manipulative, repressive and exploitative (Appendix 1). He considers the different control strategies used by people, in different social settings and the emotional states and feelings involved. These phases involve agency-structure links, and their translation into issues about emotion and interpersonal control (Layder 2006:295).

Layder suggests that within sociological research the links between emotion, power and interpersonal control have not been sufficiently emphasised and accorded the importance they deserve for grasping the complexity of emotions in the social world; what he refers to as the 'lost heart of society' (Layder 2004:2). Power and control, as discussed in Chapter Four, are multifaceted concepts and can operate through the different layers of social reality via individual agency, mediated or situated activity between people or be inherent within the social structures and resources that shape the society in which people live. Layder identifies that we are all involved in control of ourselves and others in a range of ways, although he suggests that some people consider the idea of 'control' as solely about negative behaviour that causes harm or makes people do something against their will, invoking negative emotions. By contrast he believes that 'control' and maybe even 'manipulation', can be understood in 'softer, kinder and more compassionate terms' and can open up new areas for people and lead to positive emotions (Layder 2004:1). He sees benign control as getting others to willingly do what we would like them to do, through 'influence, persuasion and charm' and by persuading them that it is in their best interests to act in this way. Exploitative or manipulative control is where a reluctance to comply is managed with threats, deceit or punitive sanctions such as might be exercised within the prison service, for example.

Layder suggests that we are aware of the more exploitative forms of interpersonal control but tend to deny or ignore the more benign forms of control. He examines the way in which both forms of control influence everyday life and the quality of our relationships and describes interpersonal control and the situated activities in which they take place as representing the real 'heart' of society (Layder 2004). To influence others and control them 'benignly' requires an ability to 'read' their feelings and respond to them in a mutually satisfying way (Layder 2004). This has close associations with theories of emotional intelligence and emotional literacy (Goleman 1995; Sharp 2001; Killick 2006), and offers the framework within which the emotional lives of individual probation workers and the emotional transactions between them and offenders can be understood. It also allows for an exploration of the potential for either benign or repressive forms of emotional control within the practice of the probation service.

This study aims to examine how emotion is experienced and expressed within the situated activity of probation practice; to 'uncover the lost heart' (Layder 2004:1), or 'soft skills' of this practice, and locate them within an organisation, the probation service, that has, in the pursuit of some 'hard', objective, measurable goals of 'punishment in the community' (Whitehead 2010), tended to suppress and deny the significance of the emotion work undertaken by offenders and practitioners.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the different epistemologies that could be applied to an understanding of emotion within criminal justice including positivism, feminism, subjectivism and postmodernism. It has reflected on the strength of the drive for rationality and a positivist approach within criminology that has concealed knowledge and understanding of emotions, and how a feminist approach has opened up this area of study. The complex inter-relationship between agency and structure is examined through the lens of Layder's social domain theory and with reference to an analysis of power, which is further

developed in the next chapter. Emotional literacy has generally been theorised at the level of the individual and their inter-relationships with others. This research will make reference to all four layers of Layder's domain theory in order to examine the impact of the broader levels of social reality on the skills of emotional literacy including those of the organisation and the wider contextual resource issues within which it operates. Layder's model of interpersonal control provides a framework for an analysis of emotional interpersonal control used by practitioners in their work with offenders. Whilst it may be assumed that emotional literacy is a 'benign' process, Layder's model allows for a consideration of the potential shifting of this 'benign' emotional interpersonal control towards the more repressive or exploitative end of his continuum (Layder 2004).

Chapter 4: Setting the context: values, diversity and power

4.1 Introduction

The literature on both emotional intelligence and emotional literacy generally identifies it as a skill acquired and developed in individuals (the psychobiographic layer of social reality) and used in a range of social interactions with other people to improve communication and learning, and lead to successful outcomes in a range of different settings (situated activity) (Layder 2006). However, it will be argued that in order to understand the social reality of the research participants to this study, their interpretations of their emotional lives and inter-relationships, requires an examination of all four layers of Layder's social domain theory (Layder 2006) (Section 3.2). The existing literature on emotional intelligence and emotional literacy has little to say about the wider social settings and contextual resource layers of social reality and their potential impact on the development and exercising of these skills.

The domain of social settings, in this instance the probation service as an organisation, represents the immediate environment in which situated activities take place (Layder 2006). Layder argues that the positions and practices of social relationships in social settings are drawn from tradition, precedent and best practice that determine what behaviour is acceptable. It is within this framework that the concept of 'probation values' and their significance for emotional literacy is located. The values that have informed the work of the probation service over the last 100 years have generally been viewed as based on humanitarian principles (Nellis 2005), although there have been shifts in direction in recent times with a stronger focus on public protection than on the welfare of the individual offender (Canton 2011). Staff joining the service at various points in its history have been expected to sign up to the prevailing 'values' and principles of the organisation. However, values are not a skill to be acquired, they are related to the individual's experience of the society, and to

the social systems and contextual resources within which they live, including cultural differences, diversity in identity, and power (Seidler 1998, Layder 2006).

The contextual resources layer of social reality (Layder 2006), offers a framework for understanding who holds power in society, who has the least power (offenders in the system generally have very little) and how emotion is interconnected with concepts of gender, power and control which all have a bearing on this subject. This chapter examines some of the social and contextual issues that inform the values underpinning probation practice and their connection with the emotional lives of practitioners played out through their psychobiography and the situated activities in which they engage (Layder 2006).

4.2 Probation values

The history of probation values can been traced from the early beginnings of the organisation as a Police Court Missionary Service, with Christian values predominating, through to a social work service from the late 1960s onwards (McWilliams 1983; McWilliams 1985; McWilliams 1986; McWilliams 1987). More recent writers have grappled with the impact on these values of the change from a primarily 'welfare' service for offenders, to a service delivering 'punishment in the community' (Vanstone 2007; Canton 2011). Many early probation workers took their values from their Christian beliefs and saw their work as a distinctively moral endeavour (Canton 2011). The evolving educational link from the 1960s onwards with social work, and its associated values, encouraged probation staff, myself included, to believe that positive change in offenders would take place via a relationship built on respect, a withholding of negative judgments and concern for the individual, and as '*the institutional expression of some of the values that ought to characterise a decent society'* (Canton 2011:45). Canton argues that excesses of punishment are likely to be corrosive for any society and that the probation service has historically represented humane and welfare-orientated values that uphold a belief in the capacity of an individual to change through their own volition.

Canton also argues that values are intimately connected with practice; they define how things are done as being no less important than the outcomes.

4.2.1 Working 'credos'

In exploring the 'how' of probation practice, Rutherford suggests that the values and beliefs that shape the work and concerns of criminal justice practitioners are 'working credos' and that they fall into three clusters:

1. The punishment credo, described as the 'punitive degradation of offenders'
2. The efficiency credo, described as a concentration on 'management, pragmatism, efficiency and expedience'
3. The caring credo, which identifies an attitude towards all service users in the criminal justice system based on 'liberal and humanitarian values'.

   (Rutherford 1993) p. viii

The 'punitive credo', potentially exercised through the controlling, coercing, humiliating or manipulating of offenders and the imposition and/or threat of external controls and sanctions, draws on ideas that originated with Durkheim (Garland 1990), and incorporates the belief that the criminal law should be an expression of the values of the society and be about denouncing and condemning criminal behaviour (Canton 2011). The efficiency credo, potentially exercised through a managerialist approach to probation practice, prioritises the setting and meeting of targets over other, more qualitative processes. The 'caring' credo has been exercised through the more traditional notions of the role of the probation officer to 'advise, assist and befriend' (Monger 1972).

The extent to which modern probation policy condones, or encourages, the exercising of one or more of these credos is core to this thesis. Does emotional literacy require particular, underpinning values in its exercising and if so what might they be? Canton suggests that instrumental and managerial strategies, (the 'efficiency credo' (Rutherford 1993)), can be indifferent to the issue of

'values' and that this is one of the ways in which criminal justice may lose sight of its moral character (Canton 2011:31).

4.2.2 Current probation policy

Amongst all the criminal justice agencies the probation service has historically experienced the most tension between the exercising of a 'punitive credo' and a 'caring credo', between 'care' and 'control' (Foren and Bailey 1968), with oscillation at both policy and practice levels between the need to 'punish' and 'control', and the need to 'help' and 'change' (NOMS 2006). An examination of current operational policy in the probation service (Layder's domain of social settings (Layder 2006)), suggests that these tensions continue to exist.   The policy is outlined in the Offender Management Model (OMM), which includes the four-tier framework against which all cases can be mapped. This describes four broad 'modalities' for working with offenders:

•   Punish

•   Help

•   Change and

•   Control

(NOMS 2006)

The allocation of resource are undertaken against these modalities and the decision about which modalities of intervention are relevant to each individual offender depends on an assessment of the level of risk of reoffending and of the potential dangerousness of the behaviour, using the Offender Assessment System (OASys) (Canton 2011). It is specified that all cases will require the implementation of the 'punish' mode, most will require 'help', a proportion will require 'change' and a few, described as the dangerous and very prolific, will require 'control' (NOMS 2006).

The concept of 'punishment' in this context refers to giving effect to the sentence of the court, as opposed to a particular kind of painful or retributive sanction such as imprisonment. Broadly speaking, 'punishment' and 'control' are seen to be exercised through the enforcement of community orders; ensuring offenders keep to the conditions of their orders, give up their free time to attend programmes or complete unpaid work, and by returning them to court when they are in breach of these orders. 'Help' and 'change' is undertaken through the provision of a range of 'instructional', 'therapeutic' and practical programmes either provided directly or via partnerships agencies. It is argued that the extent to which probation staff will be able to handle the emotional tensions and moral dilemmas that exist between these different strategies of 'helping', 'punishing', 'changing' and 'controlling' the people they are charged to supervise is largely ignored within operational policy.

As described earlier in the discussion on Dowden and Andrew's work, Core Correctional Practice (CCP) makes reference to a set of required staff characteristics. The 'emotional balance' held by the practitioner between these characteristics as they work with offenders, has not been clearly explored or defined in contemporary probation literature, although some similar tensions have been identified in research with prison staff which has examined the conflict between providing support and maintaining authority and control (Tait 2011). In relation to the CCP staff characteristics it is argued that the '*firm, fair and clear use of authority*' could be filtered through a punitive credo in a hectoring and authoritarian manner or through a caring credo in a more supportive manner. The '*modelling of pro-social and anti-criminal attitudes*' could be undertaken in a moralistic or evangelical manner, or through the provision of positive and caring models of alternative behaviours. The '*teaching of concrete problem solving skills*' could be undertaken in a didactic (potentially authoritarian) manner or an interactive and enabling way. The forming of '*warm, open and enthusiastic relationships*' (Dowden and Andrews 2004), is perhaps the closest to a 'caring credo' underpinning emotionally literate practice, but such relationships could nevertheless vary depending on the

values and skills of the worker; from patronising, authoritarian or insincere, to ones based on humanitarian values of respect, a non-judgmental approach and equality of opportunity. It appears that current policy offers the practitioner no guide to the underlying values or emotional management of these characteristics.

4.3 Diversity

Layder's domain of 'contextual resources' includes an understanding of how material resources are unevenly distributed, and how the historical accumulation of cultural resources such as knowledge, mores, and artefacts, is also the ultimate source of societal values (Layder 2006:281). It is within this domain that the concept of 'diversity' is located. Since the mid 1970s, debates on probation ethics and values have incorporated an increasingly complex agenda of 'diversity', initially framed as 'equality of opportunity' and 'anti-oppressive practice' (Thompson 2006), then as 'valuing difference' (Knight, Dominey et al. 2008), and more recently through the lens of Human Rights (Gelsthorpe and McIvor 2007, Canton 2009). It is argued that an understanding of the issues of diversity and discrimination is of fundamental importance to the values underpinning probation practice given that the negative impact of individual or institutional discrimination on an offender's rights and liberty can be profound, as evidenced from research and inquiries (Knight, Dominey et al. 2008b)).

4.3.1 Statistical evidence

The statistical evidence of advantage and disadvantage in contemporary British society is available through a range of sources, in particular the first Triennial Review by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), 'How Fair is Britain' (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2010), and the 'The Spirit Level', which pulls together a wide range of research from many different sources to identify the differences in, for example, 'health inequalities' and career opportunities between people (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010). The Spirit Level highlights how rates of imprisonment and rates of mental illness can be

five times higher in the most unequal compared to the most equal societies (Wilkinson and Pickett 2010:176). Murder rates are also likely to be higher. The Marmot Review argued that action on health inequalities required action across all the social determinants of health including education, occupation, income, home and community (Marmot 2010). This presents two issues for consideration, one is to do with egalitarianism in the demographic or statistical sense, should everyone be treated equally, and one is a more moral or political question about whether it is 'fair' that people should experience differential outcomes. Probation practice has tended to support the view that differential needs require differential interventions in order to ensure equality of outcome.

4.3.2 Protected characteristics and hierarchies

These reports and other recent literature, identify ways in which British society has been changing since the introduction of legislation to outlaw discrimination over the last 30 years (Bagihole 2009). The most recent piece of anti-discrimination legislation is the Equality Act (2010) which brings together all of the different areas of legislation in what are now referred to as the 'protected characteristics' of; age, disability, gender, race and ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation and transgender status (Home Office 2010). The EHRC review examines these different characteristics and considers evidence for changes in attitudes and in access to resources and opportunities to, for example, legal security, employment, health and education. Legislation has progressively widened not only to include other groups to whom legal protection is now afforded, but also developed a wider conception of what discrimination can be, including the concept of indirect discrimination (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2010).

However, some areas of discrimination and disadvantage continue to be afforded a higher profile in criminal justice policy than others, for example there is an abundance of policies on 'race' and gender, whilst issues of sexual orientation, disability and class have received less attention. Of particular relevance to this study, given the gendered associations of emotion already

mentioned, are the theories of masculinity and crime that have evolved from explorations by feminist criminologists of the gendered nature of crime (Smart 1977, Messerschmidt 1997, Buckley 1999, Gelsthorpe 2002, Cowburn 2005, Heidensohn 2006, Petrillo 2007). These theories have identified the particular characteristics of being male in this society that lead to greater criminality amongst men; approximately 80% of all arrests and court sanctions are for men (Ministry of Justice 2011), and the highest rate of offending for the most serious (indictable criminal offences) is among 17 year old young men (Office for National Statistics 2012). Serious violent crime is largely committed by men and men are also the primary victims of violent crime (Wykes and Welsh 2009). The majority of sexual crimes are committed by men and the greatest proportion of these offences is committed against women. According to Home Office statistics, of 14,449 recorded rapes in 2005/06, 92% were against women. In terms of domestic violence, whilst women are occasionally violent, it is overwhelmingly men who use violence against women partners (Dobash, Dobash et al. 2000, Heidensohn 2002). Research evidence suggests that sexual and violent offending is supported by patriarchy; or male dominance in social relations (Brownmiller 1975, Dworkin 1981, Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008).

Other 'protected characteristics' have, belatedly, been brought to the attention of public sector agencies through examples of discrimination in terms of; disability (Independent Police Complaints Commission 2009), sexuality and sexual orientation (Groombridge 2006, Chakraborti and Garland 2009), religion (Spalek 2002, Chakraborti and Garland 2009), and age (Gelsthorpe and McIvor 2007; Knight, Dominey et al. 2008). Class is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 but is identified by a number of writers as a significant diversity issue and area of discrimination within criminal justice (Gelsthorpe and McIvor 2007; Knight, Dominey et al. 2008).

4.3.3 Intersectionality

In a challenge to the 'hierarchies' that have evolved around issues of discrimination, the diversity debate has begun to incorporate the concept of 'intersectionality' which refers to multiple discriminations and in particular arises from feminist research identifying the different inequalities and identities that affect women's lives (Bagihole 2009, Seidler 2010). As this theory highlights, inequalities intersect in complex and varied ways (Bagihole 2009). In terms of criminal justice, gender is a diversity strand that intersects with other identities to create complex patterns of advantage and disadvantage. For example, the majority of service users of the probation service are male, white, working class and young, (although there is a disproportionate number of black males and females in prison (Ministry of Justice 2011)) and, as explored later in this section, the majority of leadership and management roles within criminal justice are occupied by white men (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011).

4.4 Power

Layder identifies each domain of social reality as embodying a different form of power (Layder 2006). Thompson's PCS[1] model has enabled generations of probation students to understand how power and discrimination can operate within these different domains. These include the personal (psychobiographic (Layder 2006)), the cultural (social settings (Layder 2006)), and the social (contextual resources (Layder 2006), (Thompson 2006)). Thompson talks about the different amounts of influence and power that prevail within each of these levels from relatively minor at the personal level, to highly significant at the structural or social level. Whilst this offers a useful framework, Thompson's model does not explore the more subtle forms of power identified by Lukes. Lukes argues that power should be understood as a multi-dimensional intermingling of forces, rather than a one-dimensional process. He suggests governments control people in three ways; through decision-making, non-decision making and ideological power (Lukes 2005). The one-dimensional

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[1] Personal, Cultural and Social

view is understood through a process of identifying who prevails in decision-making and this determines which groups or individuals have more power in society (Lukes 2005:13). In the context of the probation service these forms of power are held primarily through government and the legislature, and operated by policy makers and managers in the National Offender Management Service, and by local chief officers in each probation region. The majority of managers in NOMS are from the prison service and are white and male. The two dimensional model takes as its focus the 'rules of the game'; the set of

> *"...'predominant values, beliefs, rituals and institutional procedures that operate systematically and consistently to the benefit of certain persons and groups and the expense of others..."* (Lukes 2005:17)*.*

This incorporates an analysis of power that relates to who controls the agenda of politics and what issues are kept out of the political process. In relation to the context for this thesis the argument is that policy makers and managers in NOMS have the power to set an agenda of 'hard' quantifiable and measurable targets and to keep off the agenda the 'softer' more qualitative issues related to emotional processes. However, even this is considered to be too narrow a conception of power by Lukes, and lacking a sociological perspective within which to examine not just the decision-making process but also the ways in which latent conflicts can be suppressed. Lukes argues for a third dimension, a deeper analysis, one which incorporates the power to influence wishes and beliefs and to make people want things against their own self-interest (Lukes 2005). He argues that a full critique of power should include both subjective interests and those "real" interests that might be held by those excluded by the political process.

The power to influence the development and maintenance of relationships between probation workers and offenders involves both subjective, emotional power and the more contextual exercise of power through the prevailing ideologies of the organisation. This level of analysis will be used to examine the extent to which probation workers 'buy into' and support the organisational systems without necessarily understanding how the exercising of power has

shaped their awareness and values about their 'emotional' practice. Foucault's work has identified ways in which the criminal justice system is shaped and operated by the interests of the powerful at the expense of the least powerful (Foucault 1977). A question to be addressed is how, in the building of relationships with offenders, the power inherent within the criminal justice system could be used or misused, to manipulate and control offenders into compliance (Foucault 1977). Foucault's concept of the internalisation of surveillance (the panopticon) could inform an understanding of how probation officers use their emotional skills to persuade offenders to 'conform' and subdue their offending behaviour.

4.4.1 Who holds the power?

In their report '*Sex and Power*' the EHRC provides statistical evidence for the way in which gender continues to shape the demographics of who holds power in British Society, with white men continuing to occupy the majority of leadership and decision-making positions (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011). This report, supported by research undertaken by Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey (2008), confirms the criminal justice system (CJS) as comprised of agencies that are strikingly gendered. In terms of where the power lies in criminal justice decision-making; 77.6% of Members of Parliament, (which constitutes the legislative body of the United Kingdom), and 83% of the judiciary are male (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008). In terms of policing, 79% of staff across all ranks in the police service are male (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008). Within the prison service, male officers outnumber females significantly (66% of total employees are male).

There is a considerable body of literature that identifies the ongoing limitations on women performing to their full potential in the workplace despite the evidence of their success in education (Itzin and Newman 1995, Bagihole 2009, Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011). Whilst men do not outnumber women in all the agencies, nevertheless the overall development of criminal justice policy, for example within the judiciary and the police (Silvestri and

Crowther-Dowey 2008), is male dominated. The fact that 90.45% of all administrative support staff within the probation service is female is just one example of how women continue to occupy roles that are traditionally viewed as 'servicing' more senior staff and are generally less well paid (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008).

The probation service, whilst historically a majority male service (Annison 2007, Knight 2007), has traditionally been located at the 'softer' or more 'therapeutic' end of the criminal justice system. The more recent 'toughening up' or 'hardening' of the service has, ironically, been occurring at a time when increasing numbers of women have been entering and progressing through the ranks (Annison 2007; Knight 2007). The staff composition has changed quite radically since the 1970s. Men continue to have a higher representation in senior management in the probation service, occupying 52.5% of chief officer ranks, 54.55% of deputy chief officers and 54.29% of assistant chief officers (Ministry of Justice 2007). Women have increased their representation at all senior ranks within the service quite significantly, but this is still not representative of the overall workforce and suggests the continuation of a glass ceiling (Davidson and Cooper 1992, Ryam and Haslam 2005).

The increasing numbers of young women joining the service from the 1980s onwards led to a recommendation in the Dew's Report in 1994 that the service needed more mature men (Dews and Watts 1994, Knight 2007). There was no evidence presented by Dews to show that a lack of 'mature men' was causing a problem for grass roots probation practice. The lack of 'mature women' at leadership level was not similarly cited as an issue to be addressed. These concerns about the diminishing numbers of male practitioners in the service were reflected in a report 'The Heart of the Dance' published by the National Probation Service (NPS), which described diversity as a key business objective for the NPS (National Probation Service 2003).

The EHRC report acknowledges that the proportion of male to female workers in the probation service is comparable with the public sector average of 65.2%

female staff (Equality and Human Rights Commission 2011). This demographic context poses some interesting questions about the motivation of staff to work with offenders. Research evidence indicates that women are generally more likely to be attracted to work that involves helping and enabling people to change, and that despite the more punitive rhetoric this is still the main motivation for people joining the service. Women are also less driven by financial and status incentives than men (Knight 2007). These findings were confirmed by work undertaken by Annison and Eadie in examining the views of trainee probation officers during and post, qualifying training (Annison, Eadie et al. 2008).

Annison identifies the probation service prior to the mid-1990s as fitting the characterisation of a 'Gentleman's Club' and as a male-dominated hierarchical structure at a time where women tended to occupy 'specialised 'niches' at main-grade level' (Annison 2007). She describes the trade-off typified by such a culture as 'gentlemanly overprotection' and by women recognising what they might lose if they challenged common practice (Annison 2007). This is reflective of Lukes' third dimension of power, in which the female officers at this time settled for an unequal status with their male colleagues (Lukes 2005). Clearly, with the increase of women staff at all ranks of the organisation this association with a 'Gentlemen's Club' has gone. However, it is argued that this male 'patronage' has been replaced by an organisation that supports a culture of managerialism and bureaucratic measures of output and effectiveness which arguably still favours the 'rational' and 'objective' (male). Annison argues that the probation service can now be seen to display a 'Smart Macho' organisational culture where efficiency, performance targets and budgetary constraints predominate (Annison 2007). She cites the following authors:

> *"Women are allowed to join if they can prove that they can deliver, and are tough enough to stand the pace. Power is more fluid and there are fewer rules about how it should be exercised so women may have a tough time..."* (Itzin and Newman 1995:17)

To continue the imagery of 'Smart Macho', much of the language of current probation practice is, or has been, associated with contact sport and war and is male language. It is suggested that its objective is to impress with a demonstration of power (Cordery and Whitehead 1992). Words such as 'challenge', 'confront', 'enforce', 'tackle offending behaviour', and 'target', all have these associations. This language and this imagery is supported and sustained by political rhetoric on crime, some of which was built around Tony Blair's assertion, when the new Labour Government came into power, that they would be 'tough on crime and tough on the causes of crime' (Vertaik 2004). This has continued with the present government making similar assertions and using similar language (Batty 2012). According to Annison, central government has endeavoured to impose a more masculinised ideology in relation to the probation service (Annison 2007), despite the fact that the workforce has continued to be a predominately female one at the main-grade level (Ministry of Justice 2007). Itzin and Newman suggest this is common to the public sector as a whole with images of 'macho' or 'cowboy' styles of working.

4.5 Emotions and values

Probation staff undergo training on issues of diversity and equality in order to help them understand these complex issues of identity, discrimination and power, and to guard against the risk of their own individual 'prejudices' affecting their practice. However, while such training is generally helpful in imparting knowledge it is argued that the emotions underpinning the values and beliefs associated with diversity and discrimination are often left unacknowledged and unexplored in such training.

The domain of psychobiography highlights a person's unique experiences and interactions with others and the different ways in which they respond to their environment (Layder 2006:274). Whilst the previous sections have highlighted some of the 'contextual' or statistical evidence for continuing discrimination and disadvantage in social life, which shapes our values and our understanding of diversity, crime and criminality, there are, additionally, subjective or

psychobiographic factors that can support discrimination. An assumption underpinning this thesis is that being 'emotionally literate' is, by its nature, a 'good' thing; i.e. likely to be beneficial or therapeutically enabling to the offender, rather than punitive or coercive. However, it will involve control, albeit benign control (Layder 2004), and the offender may not always perceive the worker's interventions as benign. There may be instances when a worker's intentions are 'good' but their actions deny the diversity and life experiences of the offender.

Emotions are closely associated with the development of morality and ethical principles (Batson 2011, Blair 2011, Chapman and Anderson 2011, Charland 2011, Cushman 2011, Greene 2011, Horberg, Oveis et al. 2011). Moral and ethical beliefs are generally first formed in childhood through parental influence and the emotional attachment to these beliefs can be very strong and resistant to change. As an example, and of particular relevance given the nature of certain crimes, is research on the formation of powerful moral judgments on the basis of feelings of disgust (Schnall, Benton et al. 2008, Schnall, Haidt et al. 2008, Pizzaro, Inbar et al. 2011). Disgust, as an emotion, can influence people to take avoidant or punitive action, or a combination of both.

The domain of situated activity is the main arena in which social life is conducted. Through social interaction Layder argues that personal powers vary and other social domains influence the extent to which this power prevails (Layder 2006:277). Situated activity is located in the present time of a particular interaction, unlike the other domains, which are located across time and space. In the context of an organisation charged with delivering 'punishment in the community', the power of emotions such as disgust, unprocessed or lacking reflection, to influence the beliefs and practices of its workforce in their work with offenders, needs to be interrogated. So too other emotions such as fear and anger, are likely to influence both consciously and unconsciously, beliefs and values. For example, a worker disgusted by, and fearful of, a particular example of sexual offending, may form a negative moral judgment that supports the exercising of a punitive credo in his/her practice. A worker 'angered' by the

whole idea of imprisonment, and in particular by the state of many British prisons, may have very strong 'anti-custodial' values that influence how they shape recommendations in court reports. It appears that current probation policy fails to adequately consider or address any of the emotions underlying the values of probation practitioners.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has taken an overview of the development of probation values in the changing orientation of the service from the welfare of offenders, to punishment in the community. With reference to the four domains of social reality (Layder 2006) it has explored the way in which values are informed by an understanding of diversity, discrimination and power, and how emotion is intertwined within these processes. An argument has been presented that within the contextual resource domain, gender continues to be a powerful factor both in understanding causes of crime and in opportunities for holding power and influencing decision-making. These two gendered constructs set the context for this study.

The cause of much criminal activity is seen to be linked to concepts of masculinity in British society, and the management and processing of these crimes lies in the hands of a predominantly white male legislature, judiciary, police service and probation management (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008). However, the hands-on work of intervening with primarily male offenders is undertaken by a majority female probation workforce. As will be seen in Chapter Six, working with offenders poses particular emotional challenges and makes emotional demands on workers. Despite the assertions of the Dews report that the service needed more male practitioners (Dews and Watts 1994), female workers may be particularly suited to this work. However, it seems that they lack the substantive power to influence the policy, operational decision-making and values that shape their practice. This applies equally to male probation workers operating at grass-roots level who experience the same

'disempowerment' from the decision-making process although are likely to have increased opportunities for career enhancement than their female colleagues.

Staff may continue to find ways of maintaining a value base with a 'caring credo' to their practice, and of resisting, subverting or mediating policy in order to make it work in practice (Canton 2011). However, with reference to Lukes' third dimension of power, the issues of significance for them may be subsumed or obscured within the 'hard-edged' agenda of their managers, and built around measurable objectives rather than the more qualitative emotional processes of practice. Women workers are additionally likely to be affected by the intersectionality (Bagihole 2009), of holding the power and status afforded by their roles as probation workers within the agency but lacking it in terms of the ideologies that underpin male violence and aggression in the offenders with whom they work.

Chapter Six of this thesis examines how research participants to this study incorporated an understanding of values, diversity and power in their exercising of emotional literacy within their practice and reflects on evidence for the emergence of both 'caring' and 'punitive' credos.

Chapter 5: Research strategy and methodology

5.1 Introduction

The choice of strategy to be employed for this study required a consideration of how best to address the original aims of the research which were:

1. To identify and examine the extent to which the skills of emotional literacy are core to productive work with high risk offenders, with particular reference to sex offenders
2. To examine the gendered nature of these skills and the implications for staffing within The National Offender Management Service (NOMS)
3. To consider the extent to which these skills are taught, valued and measured within NOMS in the context of the current 'managerialism' and 'new punitiveness' (Nellis 2005)

Layder identifies three main areas as the objects of the energy for interpersonal emotional control; (Layder 2004: 13):

•   Self as object of its own control

•   The ability to influence others and control them benignly

•   The individual's current life situation

These seemed sufficiently close to the concept of emotionally literate practice to use as a framework for the study. Although the original aims largely remain valid, the idea of 'measurement' of these skills (aim three) has proved beyond the scope of this particular study. There has also been a growing awareness through the process of conducting this research that employing quantifiable and measurable tools carries with it a risk of submitting and limiting emotional literacy to the same positivist demands that are seen to deny and suppress the reality of emotions and emotional lives (Jewkes 2011).

Using Layder's model the following objectives offered a route to exploring the above aims:

1. To examine the research participants' understanding of 'self as object of its own control'; their experiences of emotion in themselves and the processes by which they have learnt self-regulation. The achievement of this objective will be through a focus on the perceptions of the research participants and within the domain of psychobiography (Layder 2006)

2. To examine the ways in which research participants use their emotional skills to build relationships with 'other people' (offenders); to influence and control them benignly. This objective will focus on the domain of situated activity and with reference to the theory of interpersonal control (Layder 2004)

3. To consider the individual's current life situation and the inter-relationship between the domain of interpersonal control and the domains of social settings and contextual resources (Layder 2004). This will include reference to the organisation (the probation service), to gender as a construct and to hegemonic masculinity as an ideology. Consideration will be given to the links between situated activity, the social setting and the contextual resources domain; how the research participants' skills of emotional literacy are enhanced or constrained by these broader structures (Layder 2004).

The narratives of probation workers were central to achieving these objectives and therefore qualitative methods were seen as the most appropriate way to approach them and gain a view of their perspectives as 'social agents'. The aims of the study were, however, also broad and exploratory in nature and a wide range of literature needed to be referenced in order to examine the history, and the political and social contexts that inform contemporary probation practice. The role of the researcher as 'participatory' (Hiles 2008), was crucial within the process.

5.2 A phased approach

Prior to the start of the fieldwork a guided study visit was made to a school in North London which had introduced the concept of emotional intelligence at all levels of operation and was in the process of embedding it within teaching practice. This served as a blueprint for how emotional intelligence might be recognised in a learning environment (Appendix 2). The research for the thesis was undertaken across six probation areas, which are anonymised for the purpose of this study. The field work was undertaken in four phases; the first or pilot phase involved interviews with seven probation practitioners. The second, main phase involved interviews with a further 19 practitioners. The third phase involved a focus group of practitioners who had undertaken individual interviews. The fourth and final phase constituted the sharing of findings from the research through a series of eight seminar/workshops.

5.3 Research Instruments

Two principal methods associated with qualitative research are open-ended interviews and participant observation (Morgan and Krueger 1997). Participant observation was briefly considered with a view to observing some practitioners in the practice of running an accredited programme with high risk offenders. However, the advice at an early stage of the project was that it was unlikely, for reasons of confidentiality that permission would be given by any probation area to observe direct practice with offenders. Therefore, a combination of semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups with probation practitioners was planned.

5.4 Sampling

A process of purposive sampling was used which involves choosing participants or a particular setting that can expose salient features or categories relevant to the research (Ritchie 2003, Denscombe 2008). As the original aim of the thesis was to explore emotional literacy in probation practitioners working primarily with sex offenders, the target group was probation officers working either as

programme tutors on sex offender programmes or as offender managers with experience either as specialists, or within a more generic caseload, of working with sex offenders. This is referred to as a non-probability sample, which does not strive to create a randomly selected group but aims to:

> *"...identify people who either possess characteristics or live in circumstances relevant to the social phenomenon being studied..."* (Mays and Pope 1995).

The aim was to find a selection of individuals that typically represented the issues being explored although I was entirely dependent on the good will of the chief officers, their research officers (in some instances) and line managers, in terms of which staff was apprised of my request, who was encouraged to volunteer and who found the time to correspond and then meet with me. 'Snowballing' as a technique (Mason 1998), would have been useful but, with the exception of two very experienced workers both known to me who agreed to participate, I was only permitted to approach individuals within each area through their line manager and not through other, more informal routes.

5.5 Interviews

The choice of a semi-structured interview approach allows for flexibility and also opportunities for depth (Robson 2002, Noaks and Wincup 2004), whilst maintaining focus. Some facts needed to be established such as job role and experience; however, the main interest was the feelings of the staff and their beliefs and attitudes about this. The semi-structured approach provides some structure but also allows for probing, asking follow-up questions, modifying the line of enquiry and investigating 'underlying motives' (Robson 2002:273). A semi-structured interview format can also provide a form of consultation and participation with research participants, which was seen as important to this study (Smith, Flowers et al. 2009).

The interview schedule used for the first seven interviews (Appendix 5), which constituted the pilot phase of the study, asked a wide range of questions around emotions, and included certain emotional words as triggers for research

participants to indicate relevance for them and for the offenders they supervised. The learning from the pilot was that this schedule was too lengthy; that research participants had a rich and variable language to describe their emotions and that the use of word lists was too prescriptive. The decision was made to reduce the number of questions and to be less prescriptive in the remaining 21 interviews. For the remaining field work a set of broad themes or questions were identified (Appendix 6) to use as the basis for a 'conversation' with the research participants; as a way of finding out about them, their ideas and beliefs (Oakley 2005). Oakley suggests that an interview can be viewed as a mechanical instrument of data collection, a masculine paradigm, but from a feminist perspective she argues that:

> *"...the goal of finding out about people through interviewing is best achieved when the relationship of interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical and when the interviewer is prepared to invest his or her own personal identity in the relationship..."* (Oakley 2004:263).

Themes were identified from the reading undertaken on emotional literacy and discussions in supervision. 'Demographic' questions were asked as a 'warm-up' and also to gain factual and contextual information (Robson 2002). This was followed by more 'depth interviewing' (Jones 2004) which encourages the varying of the wording of questions and sometimes asking more probing questions, understanding that people construct meaning through a process of interaction and that depth interviewing is one way of achieving this. There is a risk, through taking a non-directive approach, of allowing research participants to ramble and have little idea of the researcher's interests. This was mostly pre-empted by the use of an information sheet and a summary of the research given at the beginning of each interview (Appendix 8), and by returning to the interview schedule at regular intervals through the process. The need to build a degree of trust from the research participants about how their data would be used (Jones 2004), was acknowledged. Also recognised was the importance of paying attention to non-verbal cues such as facial expressions, posture, eye contact etc, and of adopting a warm and empathic approach (Noaks and Wincup 2004).

5.6 Focus group

The focus group has evolved as a research instrument located alongside and between individual interviews and participant observation, either in its own right or as a supplementary or multi-method approach (Morgan and Krueger 1997). Focus groups are described as 'group interviews' with the explicit use of group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without this interaction (Morgan and Krueger 1997). They are also conceptualised as 'social spaces' in which participants construct a particular view by sharing, acquiring and testing knowledge (LeHoux, Poland et al. 2006). They offer the potential for the evolution of new ways of thinking and conceptualising issues that may not have previously occurred to the researcher (Box 1997), and can create an approximation to a 'normal' situation; providing unique and often unanticipated perspectives (Burrows and Kendall 1997). They can enable people to articulate experiences in ways which break away from the clichés of dominant cultural constructions (Kitzinger 1995), and where different assumptions are thrown into relief by the way group members challenge one another. The potential for the operation of humour, candour, consensus and dissent, make it a tool that can be sensitive to cultural variables (Kitzinger 1995), and for filling the gaps not covered by other research methods (Kohler, Dolce et al. 1993). Group dynamics can also encourage open conversation about embarrassing subjects (Kitzinger 1995). The strategy was to run a number of focus groups with participants who had given individual interviews; to share with them an overview of the findings and to invite them to comment and debate these findings.

5.7 Data collection

The project was discussed with the local Director of the Regional Probation Consortium (Appendix 7) who had been supportive of the research ideas throughout and who offered advice and guidance on how to contact chief officers (COs) in the region. Letters and emails were sent to key players within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), and positive replies

received from all of them about the research intentions and subject area (Appendix 7).

The first phase of the project involved building on relationships already established in a local probation area with the CO and with a team of sex offender workers. From these contacts a pilot study was undertaken with seven probation practitioners. The second phase involved the Probation Consortium Director raising the topic of the research at a Consortium meeting at which all COs were present, followed by a letter sent by him to all COs asking for their support for this research (Appendix 4). This was followed up with my own letter (Appendix 3) and I subsequently received replies from seven probation areas of which six put me in touch with line managers of teams with workers involved either exclusively or partially in sex offending and domestic violence work. I also attended a regional sex offender forum in which I made a presentation of my ideas and invited people from the relevant areas to participate in the interviews. Following contact with line managers I was able to meet, share further information and arrange interviews with practitioners.

All interviews, bar one, were tape recorded with the written agreement of the research participants and subsequently transcribed. The transcripts were anonymised and given pseudonyms. All interviews appeared in the same electronic format (A4), with an adjoining column for the researcher's notes and observations that took place during the interview (Denscombe 2008). After each transcription the script was emailed to the research participant who was invited to make amendments, corrections or comments ('member checking' (Dyson and Brown 2006)). Thirteen research participants took up this opportunity with a few making suggestions for minor amendments.

The initial aim was to run three focus groups with interviewees in different probation areas once the individual interviews had been completed. However, despite a number of contacts it proved impossible to achieve this and ultimately, the members of the sex offender team who had offered support from the beginning, and who gave the interviews for the pilot stage of the research,

invited me to the lunch time period of a team 'away-day' in which I could hold a 'brief' focus group. Six workers and the senior probation officer were present, which included four workers who had previously given interviews and three who had not. The session lasted for approximately 40 minutes and was tape-recorded. This was a smaller membership than the optimum numbers for a focus group (8-10 members) and shorter in length (optimum 90 minutes) (Morgan and Krueger 1997). Some preliminary findings from the interviews were presented and the team was then invited to discuss these ideas and to develop their combined understanding of emotional literacy in practice. The individual interviews took place during 2007/8 and the focus group in 2009.

The fourth and final phase of the fieldwork comprised a series of seminars and workshops in which some of the emerging themes from the research were presented and questions and comments sought from the participants who were a mixture of practitioners, managers, policy makers, academics and students. This process assisted in refining the themes presented in this thesis to those of greatest interest and relevance to practitioners. Some of these participants had given the original interviews and their involvement in the development of the study was crucial; an additional form of 'member checking' (Dyson and Brown 2006).

5.8 Research participants to the study – individual interviews

Profile of Research participants

Table 1a)

Gender		
Male	Female	Transgender
9	19	0

Table 1b)

Disability	
Yes	No
1	27

Table 1c)

Sexuality		
Gay/Lesbian	Bi-Sexual	Heterosexual
1	0	27

Table 1d)

'Race'	Number
Asian	2
Black	1
White British/Black Caribbean (dual heritage)	1
White other (nationality Dutch)	1
White British	19
White	1
White Welsh	1
White Scots	1
English	1
Total	28

Table 1e)

Age				
21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	60+
5	5	11	4	3

Table 1f)

Length of service						
0-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21-25 years	26-30 years	30-40 years
6	12	1	5	1	1	2

Table 1g)

Work role			
Probation officer	26	Psychologist	2

The research participants for the study reflected the gender balance within the service with nine men and 19 women in the individual interviews (33%/67%) (Ministry of Justice 2007). The balance was more even in the focus group with three men and four women (43%/57%). Six staff in the focus group were white and one identified as Asian. The research participants represented a range of ages and of length of service, although it was generally a very experienced group of staff with 22 having worked for six or more years in the service. The largest grouping had worked in the service for between six and ten years and two had more than 30 years service. Two of the research participants were employed as psychologists within one probation area, with a specific role to work with the sex offender team. All of the remaining research participants were qualified as probation officers, although the term 'probation worker' is used in the thesis as role boundaries have changed in recent years and many tasks formerly undertaken only by qualified probation officers are now undertaken by probation service officers, or in this instance, qualified psychologists.

5.9 Analysing the data

Early consideration was given to using an Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA) for the analysis (Smith, Flowers et al. 2009). IPA is associated with a phenomenological epistemology and is about understanding people's

everyday experience of reality, in great detail, in order to gain an understanding of the phenomenon in question (McLeod 2001). Following a workshop on metaphor analysis run by Cameron (Cameron 2011), an IPA approach was used with one extract of interview data (Appendix 9). This involved a close, line-by-line analysis of the:

"...claims, concerns and understandings of each participant, the identification of emerging patterns, the development of dialogue between researcher, their coded data and their psychological knowledge, and the development of a structure or frame to illustrate the relationship between the themes..." (Smith, Flowers et al 2009:79)*.*

However, although revealing patterns in how this particular research participant used metaphor to articulate her emotions, this approach is generally designed for small numbers of in-depth interviews and proved unsuitable for the numbers of interviews in this study and for the breadth of the issues arising (Layder 2006).

Thematic analysis is seen as a foundational method for qualitative analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006). It is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns or themes within data. It is argued that a clearly structured and transparent thematic analysis does not require the detailed theoretical and technological knowledge of approaches such as grounded theory and can offer a more accessible form of analysis, particularly for those early in a qualitative research career (Layder 1998; Braun and Clarke 2006). Thematic analysis shares many of the principles and procedures of content analysis and the two are sometimes used interchangeably although the former is primarily for analysing texts (Marks and Yardley 2004). However, it is suggested that when content analysis conforms to a fairly rigorous 'counting of words' exercise, it can destroy the presence of 'meanings' and interpretations, which is at the core of thematic analysis. The latter allows the researcher to combine an analysis of the frequency of codes alongside an analysis of their meaning in context and so adding the advantage of subtlety and complexity (Marks and Yardley 2004).

For the purposes of this research thematic analysis is used as a contextual method, located across all four of Layder's domains of social reality (Layder 2006), to examine the ways in which events, realities, meanings and experiences are the effects of a range of discourses operating within society (Braun and Clarke 2006). For both content and thematic analysis there is a need to create conceptual tools to understand and conceptualise the phenomena in question. This involves searching for that which is most relevant to the research question, which is done by coding (Marks and Yardley 2004).

5.9.1 The process of coding

The fieldwork for this research generated a large amount of data (28 interviews, a focus group and eight seminars/workshops) which constitutes a 'manageability' problem (Layder 1998). This is generally resolved by a process of coding which needs to be directly related to questions of analysis and interpretation of data, and the process needs to be clearly set out (Layder 1998). Codes are labels attached to particular themes or sets of meanings within a data set. A theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.

Determining themes can include questions of prevalence, in terms both of space within each data item and of prevalence across the entire data set. There may be a number of instances of the theme across the data set, but more instances do not necessarily mean the theme itself is more crucial, and the judgment of the researcher is necessary to decide what constitutes a theme (Marks and Yardley 2004). The theme may be drawn from existing theoretical ideas that the researcher brings to the data (deductive coding) or from the raw data (inductive coding) (Marks and Yardley 2004). Theoretically driven themes allow the researcher to replicate and extend previous research, but in this case there was no real equivalence of research into emotional literacy in a criminal justice setting and therefore the process was primarily an inductive one.

Framework analysis offers a relatively structured means of organising data, divided into five stages, which was broadly followed during the analysis stage (Ritchie 2003:6):

1. Familiarisation with the data (becoming thoroughly immersed in the material collected)
2. Developing a thematic framework (identifying key issues from the data)
3. Indexing data (labelling key issues that emerge across a set of data)
4. Devising a series of thematic charts (allowing the full pattern across a set of data to be explored and reviewed)
5. Mapping and interpreting data (looking for associations, providing explanations, highlighting key characteristics and ideas)

Familiarisation with the data, (stage one) was achieved by reading the transcripts and listening to the tapes. Stage two, developing a thematic framework, was undertaken in two different phases. Layder suggests an initial or 'primitive' pre-coding device through highlighting various pieces of text, which trigger some association with a particular concept, category or idea (Layder 1998), also referred to as first order concepts (Sayre 2001), (second order concepts are the researcher's ways of explaining the patterns found in the first order concepts (Sayre 2001). Initially using a deductive process, the core themes set out in the semi-structured questionnaire were used for the thematic framework and various pieces of text that matched these themes across the data set were highlighted, colour coded and ascribed a number. For example in Table 2 below the first highlighted piece of text was identified as 'positive motivation for the work' and given the number one and the second highlighted text was 'dislikes within the work' and numbered two.

Table 2: Example of highlighting of text for first order concepts

I.	if you are training, you are constantly learning because you have to… kind of, read up on it, *so it just feels like I am not staying stagnant I am constantly building on what I know and I… I really think this is important work and although it doesn't work for every one that we work with, when you see the light-bulb moment it is really rewarding (1)*
C:	so for you, the front line work is what you enjoy?
I:	yes*, well I enjoy both, with the men who have committed actual abuse but I also enjoy training colleagues* [yes] and what I don't like about it usually it's to do with, office politics,,, or when the dynamics go wrong,

This was an initial attempt to order and classify the data, become familiar with it and build a thematic framework. From this first process of 'pre-coding', a more inductive process was followed whereby patterns and themes began to emerge, sometimes through volume of content. For example, anger at the perceived bureaucracy and managerialism in the management of the service that almost all research participants viewed as hampering to their practice, became a broad theme of 'managerialism' and within this theme various smaller and focused codes, were defined. The initial summaries of these data units were given more precise codes, and comparisons made with other sections of data using a chart (see example below).

Table 3: Example of initial coding process

Interview	Initial Code	Focused code	Comparisons
1	Helping people to change	Motivation	
3	Keeping in touch with 'people' (i.e. offenders) is central	Values	And EI
6	Being close (intimate) to colleagues	Emotional needs	Team work
10	Choosing to be 'dependent' on others as a way of learning	Learning style? Or identity issue? Or self-awareness	Apprenticeship
2	Taking a back seat		
2	Not wanting to claim false or undeserved	Self-awareness	Reflexivity

	expertise		
4	Enjoyment of intellectual and practical aspects	Motivation	

Layder argues for a parallel process of 'open-coding' in which a preliminary way of analysing the data also allows for the discovery of new and provisional codes (Layder 1998). This process runs in tandem with the use of existing theoretical assumptions. Unlike grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967), this process does not necessarily need to narrow down to more restrictive types, but allows for the continuation of provisional codes that may be validated by ongoing data collection; it means that emergent theory is not cut off (Layder 1998).

A second trawl of each interview transcript and the focus group transcript was then undertaken. A brief description of what the text was about was included in one column, a judgement made as to its meaning, and a code ascribed. The final column enabled tracking of how the text was subsequently used in the analysis.

Table 4: Example of tracking of use of words in text

Interview No.			
Data Bit	What text is about?	How to code it?	Report use
1	Emotional support is provided by partner	Strategies for support	6.8.2
2	Holding onto feelings while at	Self-control	6.3.4

	work is very important	Professionalism	6.6.3

Stage three (Ritchie 2003), involved indexing the codes. Some units for coding were single words and some were lines and phrases, depending on the patterns that were emerging across the data; for example, whether particular emotions were associated with particular people or particular situations. It also became apparent that some codes were relevant to only one category whereas a considerable number of codes fell into more than one category. For example, the large number of references to anger and stress in workers arising from their perception of 'managerialism' in their service fell under the umbrella theme of 'organisational issues' and related to codes of 'emotional labour', 'gender' and 'response to stress'. Sometimes the same code was used in more than one place and sometimes the decision was made to create a new code that better reflected the content of the text.

A list of 'emotion' words that appeared in interviews was maintained and subsequently a word search through all the data identified the total use of these words across the data set to check for any patterns. Ultimately two patterns emerged; the use of metaphor to describe feelings, and the volume of negative emotions in research participants and, as perceived by them, in offenders. The data was also searched for unexpectedness; for concepts or themes that were not anticipated from both my own experience or from the initial literature searches (Gibbs 2004). For example, a number of research participants made reference to 'boundaries', 'emotional vocabularies', 'masking of emotion', 'being out of step with the organisation' and to 'trust' from which new codes began to emerge. In searching for 'negative' cases as examples of a contradiction between what is being looked for and occurrences or patterns that do not fit the hypothesis of emotionally literate practice (Gibbs 2004), there were a number who referred to a 'poor me' syndrome in offenders, which led to coding around

'victim status' and an exploration of how this concept was potentially at odds with their overall expressions of empathy towards offenders.

Stage four (Ritchie 2003), involved devising a series of thematic charts to allow the full pattern across a set of data to be explored and reviewed. In the extract below a spreadsheet of emotion words used by research participants about themselves was examined for prevalence and patterns;

Table 5: Example of patterns of emotion words

Interview	Joy	Humour	Kind	Fond	Excited	Sure	Surprise	Anger	Fear	Disbelief	Total
1			√			√		√√			4
2	√		√			√√		√√	√		7
3	√	√	√					√√			5
4		√		√				√√			4
5	√					√			√	√	4

Stage five involved mapping and interpreting data (looking for associations, providing explanations, highlighting key characteristics and ideas) (Ritchie 2003). Analysis involves a constant moving back and forward between the entire data set, the coded extracts of data that are being analysed, and the analysis of the data produced (Braun and Clarke 2006). The codes were then placed in a spreadsheet (Code Book) with an explanation afforded to each code, the number of times this code was used across the data set and in how many interviews. The interview transcripts were also marked to indicate where the codes had been used.

Table 6: Example of mapping of concepts

Code Name	Explanation	Occur.	Int.
Bureaucracy	Dislike of paperwork/computers etc.	111	3
Being Emotional	Negative connotations of expressing emotions		
Being Emotional +	Expression of emotion is normal – expected		
Boundaries	Examples of how staff set or negotiate boundaries	1	2
Bullying	Examples of staff feeling bullied	2	

The data was returned to on a number of occasions to check whether the original codes could still be justified in the light of other perusals of the texts and question marks inserted where there was doubt about their use. An initial test of reliability is to apply the code to the text on different occasions with time in between to check if the distinctions are clear in the researcher's mind (Marks and Yardley 2004). If the researcher cannot apply them consistently then no-one else would be able to either. The data was also searched for more latent or subtle links across some of the codes; for example, a link for the research participants between being or feeling 'professional' and the need to control their emotions in the work context, and of 'ambivalence' in relation to holding more than one feeling at a time. Associated with this was an emerging pattern related to 'masking' of emotions, so further evidence for this was sought in the data to see if it was sustainable as a key theme.

Table 7: Example of searching for patterns ('masking' as a strategy)

Interview	Page no.	Extract
11	133	Shock and horror, the acceptance and masking the feelings in interview
11	135	I mask that I want to punch that guy for a start (Laughs)
17	198	I think we all mask emotions don't we and then it's kind of actually this what's really going on
27	359	You can mask your emotions and it's very difficult to tell how someone is feeling. I am very good at masking my emotions….I had 6 months off sick. I had masked all that stress

Having established a significant number of codes and considered patterns, the codes were brought together under themed headings and the process of analysing and interpreting the data continued with reference to the literature. How coding 'adds-up' to become 'theory' is aided by the process of memo writing, which was undertaken in order to;

> *"...ask questions, pose problems, suggest connections and so on about how the properties of concepts or categories are revealed, exemplified or contradicted in some way by the incoming data and the process of coding..."* (Layder 1998:59).

The use of the above techniques was systematically applied to the whole data set on more than one occasion. The writing up of the findings sections also aided this process of analysis (Noaks and Wincup 2004).

5.9.2 Metaphors

In the process of trawling the data the frequent use of metaphor to explain emotions was noted. The significance of this was noted in the context of the use of metaphors to describe feelings (see Chapter 2). The use of metaphor analysis across sections of the data was considered given the number found in

the data (Appendix 10). However, as with the use of IPA, the judgment was that this was too small a focus to take on a large data set. In the event one example of metaphor analysis was used (Appendix 9) and then other powerful metaphors, for example, 'standing in their shoes', to mean 'empathy', were harnessed to illustrate some of the concepts within emotional literacy.

5.9.3 Theory elaboration

The discovery of patterns and relationships across the whole data set allowed for what Layder (1998:116) calls 'theory elaboration'. This involves a consideration of the core concept as the centre of a web (emotional literacy), and then the identification of a number of satellite concepts that seem to be related to the core, for example; the individual perceptions of research participants, the situated activity of probation relationships, and the organisational and contextual domains such as 'managerialism' and 'gender' (Layder 1998:117). Secondary elaboration involves a concentration on each of these satellites as sub divisions of the original cluster for example, 'gender' and examining themes related to them, for example, issues of control; the nature of control and forms of control, and how they might be gendered. A tertiary theory elaboration requires reference to more general theory, for example, Layder's theory of interpersonal control, or Foucault on power (Layder 1998:124). Decisions needed to be made about which aspects of general theory should be co-opted. The emerging themes in this study grouped well with both the main conceptual framework of emotional literacy (Killick 2006), and with Layder's interpersonal control theory (Layder 2004), and the thesis is constructed within these frameworks.

5.10 Quality

Issues of quality within research are managed slightly differently from the traditional methods used for quantitative analysis. The terms 'validity', 'reliability' and 'generalisability' are not seen as adequate to capture the range

of issues raised through qualitative research (Seale 1995, Seale 2004). For example, instead of reliability, relating to the execution and presentation of the research, trustworthiness of the research procedures employed is seen to provide confidence that the data was handled and treated consistently and responsibly (Guba and Lincoln 1981). Trustworthiness involves four aspects; credibility (like reliability), transferability (external validity), dependability (like reliability) and confirmability (Guba and Lincoln 1981). Layder suggests that findings should be produced as a result of rigorous testing and questioning (Layder 2006). Ways of achieving this include audit trails, 'member checks' which involves confirming results with participants, and referential material adequacy (Guba and Lincoln 1981).

The production of data from different sources and different people offers the opportunity for 'triangulation' and cross-checking of responses (Denscombe 2002, Noaks and Wincup 2004). Triangulation is suggested as a method for overcoming intrinsic bias that stems from a single method and a single observer although in this instance only one researcher undertook the different methods (Noaks and Wincup 2004). The issue of 'trustworthiness' is always partial as there will be a series of interpretations being made throughout the research process, and in reality there will always be a 'temporary consensus of view about what is considered true' (Seal 1999:468). However, to enhance quality in this project a number of 'checks' were made, for example, simple counting to establish how representative certain issues and categories were across the data (Silverman 2000). These 'internal' checks were employed to enable orientation throughout the analysis, which included the identification of negative cases in order to depict 'anomalies' and thus provide a thicker description (Geertz 1993), and avoiding anecdotalism (Silverman 2010).

Standard formats for the collection, handling and storing of data were used and full, rather than partial transcripts of all interviews (bar one) and the focus group are available. The repeated testing of categories was carried out (Dyson and Brown 2006), as was member checking through the sending out of transcripts to the research participants. The process of data collection and analysis in this

study aims to be auditable and repeatable however the researcher effect inevitably means there are limits to this.

Qualitative research is assessed not by validity but by credibility or fidelity; being faithful to the process, i.e. the extent to which true-to-life descriptions or interpretations of the experience are recognised by the people who had the experience, or by others who recognise the experience after reading about it (Box 1997). In this research the interviews constituted the majority of the data but the focus group provided a different method of interrogating the concept of emotional literacy and the seminars and workshops provided a third method. In terms of the focus group, there is limited evidence that this can be repeated and expected to achieve the same results. The issue is related more to the repeatability of the process (Dyson and Brown 2006). Even this might prove difficult in this instance given it was associated with a specific team event. However, there was a matching of the goals of the research with the data that the focus group produced (Morgan and Krueger 1997). The seminar/workshop series in which presentations were made and questions and comments sought from the research participants were used as a further check and validation of ideas emerging from the data. Some of the speculations about the applicability of the findings across probation areas and between different practitioners were tested by this approach and in most instances the feedback confirmed a degree of inferential generalisation (Dyson and Brown 2006). A summary of issues raised is included in Appendix 11.

5.11 Participatory research

Given the subject area and the paradigms for the study, the power of the researcher to impose their own values in the process of the research has to be considered (Denscombe 2002). Historically, 'good' research, whether qualitative or quantitative was seen to be undertaken with 'objectivity' and 'distance'; there was little evidence for understanding the emotions of the researcher or how they might impact on the research subjects (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn et al. 2001). Researchers are often trained to use the

distanced, academic voice of the natural sciences and to provide reflections on events in research participants' lives, but rarely into their emotional lives (Game 2008). However, there is an evolving literature on emotions in research, for example (Kleinman and Copp 1993, Payne and Cooper 2001, Bondi 2005, Burman 2009, Jewkes 2011), and there is a growing acknowledgement that research practice can be an emotional and personal journey. Emotional risks within the research process are now acknowledged and the British Sociological Association's statement of ethical practice recognises this (British Sociological Association 2002). Emotions expected of researchers range from passionate immersion associated with the 'drive' needed to conduct research, to the cool contemplation associated with a capacity to 'stand back' and reflect critically on one's own ideas (Bondi 2005).

The development of feminist research methods has highlighted the significance of reflexivity and subjectivity in the research process e.g. (Humphries 2000, Etherington 2004, Weller and Caballero 2009, Jewkes 2011). The notion of 'standpoint feminism' (Heidensohn 1996), of identifying the world through the eyes of the research participant, based on a phenomenological paradigm, has much in common with concepts of empathy and of emotional literacy; with allowing people to speak for themselves. Jewkes exposes some of the ways in which research within prisons based on a positivist paradigm, has tended to be 'cold, calculated, surgical…' and argues for an approach that incorporates the emotional realities of both researcher and subject (Jewkes 2011:6). The evolving use of 'user voice' methodologies has also been influenced by feminist research and it is questionable how far an understanding of relationships and 'engagement' can be explored without attention to how this is experienced by service users.

The concept of 'participatory knowing', the study of the research experience in itself (Hiles 2008), also referred to as 'heuristic inquiry' (Hiles 2008), emphasises the role of the researcher in the research process and identifies the researcher as having a direct and personal encounter with the phenomena being investigated. This can involve 'self-research', self-dialogue' and 'self-

discovery' (Hiles 2010). It often includes the significance of reflexivity in the research process as highlighted by feminist researchers (Stanley and Wise 1983), and of 'mindfulness, discernment, tacit knowing and self-dialogue' (Hiles 2010:12). Hochschild suggests that the researcher's account of research participants' experiences will be 'shrouded in emotionality', involving as it does listening and interpretation; the use of both cognitive and emotional functioning (Hochschild 1983). Hochschild suggests that people's viewpoints are inferred from how they display their feelings, and emotion has a 'signal function' in that it offers clues about what is actually going on (Hochschild 1983:31). The researcher's own emotional response can alert them to the meanings and behaviours of those being interviewed and can offer an interpretative function in that it enables the researcher to gain intuitive insight (Treweek 1996), and emotionally sensed knowledge (Hiles 2008).

I aimed to avoid using jargon in interviews (Robson 2002), although recognised that in some ways my use of probation service jargon would enhance my 'insider' status and the assumption of the role of a 'trusted' person in whom it was safe to 'confide' (Humphries 2000). Of equal importance was the use of language that was accessible to both male and female participants (Bhopal 2002). I understood, however, that I could not assume 'trust' and that it needed to be worked at (Noaks and Wincup 2004). My role in the interviews was generally a reflexive and involved one, and I was conscious of using my 'self' and demonstrating empathy towards the research participants (Humphries 2000). I used the interviews largely as conversations (Oakley 2004); as exploratory vehicles to find out sometimes quite personal and tentative feelings. In a number of interviews, research participants began with a degree of guardedness and uncertainty about what was being expected of them. The validation of their early answers by me, led to some of them being very open and emotionally revealing in their answers. A more prescriptive and rigid process is unlikely to have achieved this level of candour.

The contradictions inherent in this approach are that in order to achieve its purpose the researcher has to adopt a warm and approachable manner whilst

simultaneously devising a structure and formality that ensures the data gathered follows guidelines for rigour, accountability and validity (Robson 2002). The feminist approach to research would argue that the process should include statements and discourses about my own experiences with the phenomena under question (Bhopal 2002 citing Oakley 1981:41), which I offered, and where the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee is non-hierarchical, which it was. I also, to a degree, brought with me the concept of the 'passionate enquirer' (Humphries 2000). I held strong views both about the focus of the study and of the wider political and managerial contexts affecting the work of the probation service. It is suggested that women bring to their interaction a tradition of 'women talk' and are used to helping each other develop ideas and are typically better prepared than men to use the interview as a 'search procedure' (Devault 1990:101 cited in Bhopal 2000:72). Whilst this was true for many of the interviews with female research participants it was equally true with the majority of male research participants; having offered to participate it seemed that the male research participants had similar experiences and expectations (Knight 2007).

The researcher needs to be aware of the need to debrief if emotions are aroused in the research participant as a result of the interview (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn et al. 2001). On one or two occasions in interviews when research participants had expressed emotions during the process, I offered the opportunity to 'debrief' on these feelings. At the end of the interviews a number thanked me for listening to them, and were appreciative of the supportive role I had adopted towards their position as practitioners. I was clearly 'on their side' and whilst this enabled a number of them to talk with a degree of openness, and created a mutuality of exchange, it also demonstrated a degree of bias on my part which I have endeavoured to incorporate within the analysis of the thesis. In some instances I have also made reference to the emotions of the research participants in the actual interview; recognising their validity as data in their own right (Treweek 1996).

5.12 Ethical conduct

In considering the ethical issues that might arise reference was made to the Central Office for Research Ethics Committees (COREC), the information provided by the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, and the British Society of Criminology Code of Ethics for Researchers in the Field of Criminology (British Society of Criminology 2006). A request for ethics approval was submitted and confirmed for the study by the University in March 2007 (Appendix 12).

With regard to demonstrating respect for the probation service's research processes, Probation Circular (PC59/2005) 'Quality Assurance for Research' (National Probation Service 2005), and the National Offender Management Service 'What Works' Briefing 3/05 (NOMS 2005) 'Understanding research methods and findings' were read, and contact made with Chloe Chitty, the nominated person within the Research Development Statistics (RDS) of NOMS for advice about approaching chief officers of probation for permission to undertake this study. A confirmation email was received (Appendix 7) that the proposal did not need to be submitted to the RDS Project Quality Approval Board, although indicating that they would find it helpful to have sight of the proposal, with details of my plans so that they could be aware of the research should a probation area ask about it (this was provided). However, they made it clear they do not need to see this before approaches were made to chief officers in the region.

In terms of their participation in the study, written information about the purpose of the research, and the uses to which the data will be put, was provided to all research participants. They were assured that participation was voluntary, that they were free to withdraw at any stage of the process and that they could choose to withdraw their data at any stage before the final write-up. They were advised that a combination of audio recordings and note-taking would be used. They all signed a consent form to indicate that they understood their rights and agreed to participate (Appendix 8).

With reference to anonymity and confidentiality it was made clear that no information which could identify the participants would be stored with the tapes or transcripts of the interviews. Digital recordings would be numbered and stored on a password protected computer and similarly all transcripts would be stored electronically and password protected, accessed only by the researcher. They were told that where material was quoted in the thesis or in any future published work, all efforts would be made to ensure that as individuals they could not be identified. They were also advised that digital records and transcripts would be destroyed when the study was completed.

Participants were interviewed at a time and place convenient to them. It is acknowledged that this study is examining complex and emotionally charged work and that talking about this can be emotionally draining and stressful. Research participants were offered emotional 'space' and support for any expressions of feelings that the discussions invoked, and, where appropriate, checks made that alternative forms of support and counselling were available to them (Knight 1996). Powerful and personal disclosures were made by some research participants when describing their emotions, mistakes they felt they had made and anxieties about their working practices. These encounters required and demanded sensitive handling in addition to the assurances agreed by informed consent.

5.13 Conclusion

This study was undertaken using semi-structured interviews and one focus group, and the emerging findings were checked and largely validated through a series of seminars and workshops. Some of the benefits and limitations of the methodological approach are discussed in the conclusion to the thesis, however, in summary the strengths of the participatory process were that it enabled a 'conversation' to take place with the majority of the research participants in which they increasingly felt able to reflect on, and provide

examples of, their emotional experiences in their working lives. The limitations relate to the risk of 'bias' both in terms of imposing my own perspectives as a former practitioner and manager on what I perceived to be the concept of emotional literacy in practice and my views on the impact of 'managerialism' on this skill. I also held a view that emotional literacy was a force for good rather than a manipulative or coercive skill.

Chapter 6: Research findings

6.1 Motivation and values

6.1.1 Introduction

The examination of emotional literacy within probation practice commences in this chapter with a consideration of what it is that motivates and energises the research participants to undertake this practice and to persevere with a range of challenges presented by offenders and demands from their employing organisation. It begins with Layder's first main area of interpersonal control; 'self as object of its own control' (Layder 2004: 13), which falls within the psychobiographic layer of Layder's four domains of social reality (Layder 2006). Taking a predominantly phenomenological stance (Husserl 2006), it examines the views of the research participants on what motivates them and how they build emotional resources to sustain them in their work. The main value issues raised by research participants relate to the importance they placed on treating offenders with respect and adopting a non-judgmental attitude towards them. The connections between values and emotions are examined and some of the emotional difficulties of withholding judgments are explored. The conclusion reached is that that there is an inevitability in workers forming some negative value judgments on the basis of feelings; the issue is whether or not they have the space and capacity to process these feelings, that ultimately determines the quality of their thinking and their practice.

6.1.2 A vocation

Work with offenders has been described as a 'vocation', a career people choose because of beliefs or values that they hold, for example, about justice, fairness or helping others, rather than a job undertaken for primarily financial gain or status enhancement (Knight 2007, Annison, Eadie et al. 2008). It can be a challenging choice of career, involving contact with sometimes dangerous and often quite disturbed, traumatised or 'anti-social' individuals. It can carry considerable rewards in terms of variety and intellectual stimulus and can offer

a range of opportunities to undertake creative and innovative work with offenders (Senior 2008). The work can be emotionally demanding and job satisfaction can be elusive particularly when roles and expectations change (Bailey, Knight et al. 2007). If the primary judgments of effective practice with offenders relate to programme completions and a reduction in re-offending rates (Chapman and Hough 1998), then 'success' may be moderate. However, if offender learning, reflection and engagement in a change process are also considered as features of 'successful' intervention, then the rewards for workers may be greater (Raynor 2011).

Research participants to this study were mostly very positive about their choice of career and their sense of vocation; being able to make a difference to the lives of offenders was what sustained them. They were, however, all volunteers for the study and therefore perhaps more likely to be optimistic and positive about their choice of career and methods of practice. Most of them identified their job satisfaction as arising from direct face-to-face work with offenders and their most frequent complaints and dissatisfactions centred on their perceptions of 'management' and 'managerialism' as restricting their ability to work in an emotionally literate way, controlling and micro-managing their practice, and sometimes even bullying them. These issues are explored in Section 6.6 in relation to organisations and emotion.

The majority of research participants expressed a commitment to working with offenders that incorporated a set of humanitarian values related to how they believed people, as clients of a public service, should be treated (Mawby and Worrall 2011). Whilst there are those who have argued that the service has lost its way in relation to a clear value base (Mair 2004; Nellis 2005), research suggests that people, and particularly women, continue to be drawn to the probation service by altruistic motivations of offering help and care to people in trouble (Knight 2007; Annison, Eadie et al. 2008), and that this has persisted despite the many political attempts to change the nature of probation and emphasise its punitive and controlling role at the expense of its helping role (Canton 2011). The majority of research participants in this study reinforced

this perspective and their primary orientation appeared to be towards 'welfare' rather than 'punishment'; a 'caring' rather than a 'punitive' credo (Rutherford 1993).

6.1.3 Motivation

As with almost all human activity a degree of motivation is necessary to ensure the individual is energised to undertake the task in hand. As set out in Section 2.2 there is a powerful association between emotion, movement and motivation; the desire to act. The educational perspectives on emotional literacy e.g. (Sharp 2001; Killick 2006), describe motivation as a key element in encouraging children and young people to develop their interpersonal skills. Sharp argues that:

> *"People with high self-motivation are able to focus and concentrate well and to channel both their cognitive and affective skills into achievement-orientated behaviour"* (Sharp 2001:26).

Feelings of enthusiasm, confidence, and persistence in the face of setbacks, are seen as important in enhancing achievement in all fields (Goleman 1996). In a probation context, the positive emotions that provide energy and commitment can be crucial in sustaining the worker when faced with the challenging and/or stressful circumstances of some offenders. This motivation was apparent from the majority of research participants to the study, a number of whom (Amy, Pat, Sandy, Damien, Sophie, Mary, Gill, Jai, Hannah, Karen), described liking the offenders they worked with. They offered this as one of the reasons they enjoyed their work.

Amy identified that even when she was upset or shocked by the offender she was generally still able to find something to like in the person she was working with:

> "….*and respect for them as a person...despite my earlier private reactions, which doesn't always happen, a core belief of mine is based on equality... he may have done something horrendous and I don't condone or excuse*

that at all, but at the end of the day its very very very rare that I can't find something that I like about him…" (Amy)

Mary observed that the emotional attachments she formed could lead to her feeling an almost parental pride in the positive changes made by some offenders:

"…but on the other hand when you have worked with somebody and they've done really well and...they are now independent living and they've got a job, the emotional attachment is that you feel really proud of them..." (Mary)

It was clear that many research participants gained energy and enjoyment from the process of building relationships; the connections and interactions between themselves and the offenders they worked with, and witnessing a change process, (Amy, Tony, Howard, Indira, John, Angela, Robert, Pat, Tess, David, Sandy, Maggie, Damien, Mary, Gill, Jai, Nick, Heather and Lynn).

"...to form a relationship with somebody is very satisfying … that's why, you forget that's why you came into the job really, that sounds like a bit of a cliché really…and when you feel like you're clicking with somebody..." (Mary)

"I enjoy the face-to-face group work that I've been doing since 1984, and I also enjoy one to one work with offenders…I get excited by the work... when a light goes on and the offender can see or understand…when I've helped them to unpick their feelings and behaviour, and they can begin to learn to control it." (David)

"I like working with…the offenders. The…face-to-face contact with them, you know and getting engaged and getting…some work done." (Angela)

6.1.4 Building emotional resources

These feelings seem to represent a form of emotional 'capital' (Reay 2004; Adkins and Skeggs 2005), or 'emotional resource', in which the workers, through the building of positive relationships with offenders were enabled to sustain themselves in their work. These ideas are further explored in Sections 6.6 and 6.8. Given the challenges inevitably present, some also acknowledged the draining of this resource:

"The rewards can be very small and you know, it can be … an emotionally draining job." (Gill)

6.1.5 Emotion and values

As set out in Chapter Four, the values of staff undertaking probation practice will be crucial to the manner in which the actual practice is conducted and the extent to which the values are informed by powerful and deep-rooted emotions (Canton 2011). However, the connection between values, beliefs and the underlying emotions that sustain or enhance them, is relatively under-theorised in criminal justice, although Haidt has written more generally in this area (Haidt 2001). With reference to Rutherford's 'working credos' (see Section 4.2.1), there was little evidence of research participants holding either a 'punitive' or an 'efficiency' credo, although some expressed frustration at offenders which they acknowledged could lead them to behave more 'punitively' than they might wish, and some referred to colleagues with more punitive attitudes. Many offered evidence of the extent to which the managerial climate of the modern service was most supportive of the 'efficiency' credo (Rutherford 1993).

Research participants were not asked directly about their values during the interviews, and as a result most of the evidence about values is generalised and inferred from comments that arose in the course of discussions about emotions. For example, Amy expressed some concern that newer and younger staff lacked the opportunities that she had had throughout her career to hone and shape her values through mutual support and discussion with colleagues:

> *"Yes ... it's the organisation ... these young officers ... they don't come into a protected caseload with a good practice teacher, like I had and supervisor ... not nurtured with the team that ... meets regularly, has shared values, shared activities, identity ... has some sense that it is valued by the organisation. They are all stuck with their computer and their caseload."* (Amy)

In a more specific way Jai identified that 'values' are critical to work with sex offenders, and where they are lacking this impacts strongly on practice:

"…in the sex offender programme, one of the things it prioritises is the values that people have, but if the values aren't there … it has a huge impact ..." (Jai)

Robert made the connection between emotions and beliefs; he acknowledged that if told something by an offender that conflicted with his own beliefs he would have an emotional response to this:

"...(an) emotional response, I think is about how you… comprehend information that is given to you so that it's your own…. how it interacts with your own beliefs, whether there is any conflict there about how you… you take information from offenders" (Robert)

6.1.6 Withholding judgement

The struggle to reconcile emotions, values and judgments came through most powerfully from the research participants in their commitment to adopt a 'non-judgmental approach' in their work. Twenty of the research participants, without prompting in the interviews, highlighted the significance of this 'non-judgemental' approach towards the offenders they worked with (Michael, Amy, Tony, Indira, John, Robert, Victoria, Pat, Maggie, Damien, Aruna, Mary, Gill, Jai, Geoff, Hannah, Nick, Heather, Karen and Lynn). They understood the significance of working with people whose behaviour could be unacceptable and who may also be different from themselves, not just because of their offending behaviour but also their identity or 'diversity', for example: their race, gender, sexuality, age and class (Knight, Dominey et al. 2008). They were very exercised by the need to not 'judge' these behaviours or differences negatively although they were not always clear about what it was they were not 'judging'.

Holding a non-judgemental attitude is seen as of particular significance in work with offenders because of the nature of their often negative and damaging behaviour which lends itself to public condemnation (Garland 1990, Trotter 1999). It is considered an important ethical approach in all helping and counselling professions:

"To be acceptant of each facet of this other person which he (sic) presents to the therapist..." (Rogers 2004)

and has many of its roots in psychotherapy (Rogers 1943; Truax and Carkhuff 1967). It is sometimes referred to in the therapeutic literature as 'unconditional positive regard' or 'non-possessive warmth' (Mearns and Thorne 2008). It has, historically, been a key component of both social work and probation education and practice. 'Society' may want its criminal justice workers to uphold an ethos of condemnation (Durkheim cited in Garland 1990), and adopt a 'punitive credo' (Rutherford 1993), but historically the underlying message to individual probation workers has been to treat offenders as human beings in need of help and to resist the urge to judge and condemn (Canton 2011).

Biestek, writing more than 50 years ago in the 'Casework Relationship' was one of the first to set out the principle of holding a non-judgmental attitude in work with social work clients. He defined it as:

> *"The nonjudgmental attitude is a quality of the casework relationship; it is based on a conviction that the casework function excludes assigning guilt or innocence, or degree of client responsibility for causation of the problems or needs, but does include making evaluative judgments about the attitudes, standards or actions of the client; the attitude which involves both thought and feeling elements is transmitted to the client..."* (Biestek 1961) p.90

Biestek identified 'judging' as placing blame on a client and declaring 'him' (sic) either by words or by non-verbal indicators, as somehow responsible for the problems he faced or on his dependency on the social worker. He argued that the responsibility to 'judge' was vested in certain authorities (such as courts and tribunals) but judgments by people without that authority constituted a violation of human rights. He related this back to the early days of social work in which a client's 'worthiness' or 'deservingness' was a consideration in giving or withholding help, implying this was now inappropriate. Interestingly, this attitude still prevails in much political discourse and particularly in relation to sex offenders who are generally seen as undeserving of help (Harrison 2010).

Victoria and John are both clear that being non-judgmental is essential to building relationships. Victoria sees it as not demonstrating any 'bias' whereas John sees it as modelling a different form of relationship:

"I suppose going back to the point about not being judgmental would be one thing, I don't think you can build up a relationship with anybody if you are …. expressing any sort of biased opinion about something..." (Victoria)

"For a lot of people you are probably the first person that they've got to work with in a non-judgemental environment …their upbringing as well… how damaged they are …I think just being able to model that sort of relationship can be therapeutically beneficial..." (John)

Although John goes on to explain that this is not an easy position to adopt:

"...an ability to be non judgemental about individuals...to sort of really try and consider where someone is coming from as opposed to just reacting to what you are seeing in terms of their behaviour...which is not always easy to do..." (John)

Given its importance to the research participants, the integration of this 'non-judgmental' attitude within practice raises a number of important questions for them that inevitably impact emotionally. Whilst the principle might be commendable, how the worker implements this when faced with a particular offender is likely to be more idiosyncratic and subtle; for example, demonstrating empathy towards an offender who has behaved illegally and maybe also 'immorally' in the worker's eyes. Some research participants articulated a need to distinguish between the person and their behaviour whilst also recognising the inherent ambivalence and difficulty with this position:

"...but I do have a deep belief, … Charlotte, I do have a very deep belief that … I think it is something that my granddad taught me when I was a little girl and he used to say that there was good in everybody, and if you can't find it you are not looking in the right place..." (Heather)

"I would never be disrespectful …, to whoever was in front of me, whatever they did…. and you've got to, after knowing the person and building a relationship with the person from whatever they did, it's your job after all, you then have to deal separately with what they've done, of course there's overlaps but that's, that's I guess the difficulty really isn't it?" (Robert)

Gill sees it as a positive challenge:

"The fact that we do work with some very unpleasant people and you know, sometimes it's how you separate your own personal views on

somebody from what somebody has done and your job, I suppose the 'personal / professional' dilemma really. … on the one hand that can be a challenge in itself but on the other hand it's part of the job that I love doing..." (Gill)

Indira also draws a distinction between making judgments about risk and about the person, and she refers to the importance of respect:

"...the work isn't about judgment...it's about risk but not personal judgement. I hope I give them no messages that I respect them less than another human being." (Indira)

This position is also identified in some of the more recent approaches to work with sex offenders that recognise the importance of tapping into an element of optimism in an offender's life rather than a constant focus on the negative elements (Ward, Devon et al. 2006; Day, Casey et al. 2010). It is reflected in the desistance literature, which identifies the importance of positive emotions in the process of desisting from crime (Farrall and Calverley 2006).

Cherry talks of the need to empathise but not collude (Cherry 2010), although she acknowledges that this is a tightrope that practitioners walk every day; the demonstration of emotional literacy alongside the need to 'suspend' or 'conceal' what some might perceive to be very normal emotional reactions to unpleasant and sometimes disturbing behaviour. Whilst the history of probation practice and its alignment with social work training and values has encouraged a non-judgmental approach, as Biestek suggested in 1961, this generally refers to a holding back of judgment on the person's guilt/innocence or responsibility. Workers have always been encouraged to make 'evaluative' judgments about the current attitudes and behaviour of the people they work with. Directives arising through the What Works literature and the Offender Management Model (NOMS 2006), actively encourage a demonstration of disapproval of antisocial behaviours and the promotion of pro-social attitudes and behaviour (Farrow, Kelly et al. 2007). Workers are also required to make judgements about the behaviour of offenders in relation to their potential 'dangerousness'; the harm they might cause to others, and the risk of their further offending. It may be a

small step from these evaluations to acquiring a negativity or punitiveness associated with how it makes the worker '*feel*'. However, an approach informed by both motivational interviewing (Miller and Rollnick 2002), and person-centred counselling (Rogers 2004), would argue that being 'offended' at the words or indeed the behaviour of a person; in this case an offender, merely closes down the opportunity for communication. It is suggested that the worker needs to recognise that the negative behaviour being portrayed is unlikely to represent the whole of the person (Mearns and Thorne 2008). Lynn explains her understanding of this:

> *"….basically you respect them even though you don't like how they behave in some way, and as I say, you demonstrate that in some way in how you behave from the beginning to the end of an interview..."* (Lynn)

Whereas Heather provides a more nuanced example of some careful judgments she feels she needs to make about when and how she might express her disapproval with something the offender has done:

> "*I think that to be angry with someone you have got to feel quite safe in the relationship with them and they've got to know that you are angry with what they have done, not them, otherwise you are just repeating the anger that they have had on them all their lives and it is not very productive...*" (Heather)

The achievement of this understanding and the withholding of feelings where 'appropriate' may require a considerable degree of emotional resilience. Aruna refers to the need to 'grit her teeth' implying that she holds back from expressing her disapproval or annoyance with some effort, which may, of course, be apparent to the offender through her non-verbal behaviour (Biestek 1961):

> *"….frustration because you are being respectful towards them, you're being nice and polite and everything and they're not being the same to you, you treat them how you would want to be treated and they don't want to do that, you just kind of find yourself gritting your teeth and thinking, 'okay, let's try and change tack then..."* (Aruna)

David provides an example of how he aims to communicate via his own behaviour rather than condemn the offender's behaviour:

"In the programme we model emotional communication and respectful communication..." (David).

And Janet describes how she endeavours to work with respect despite the difficult message she wishes to convey and the fine balance between creating safety for learning but also providing the challenge to change:

"I don't think you can go to someone you don't know and say 'look, this is the way you swear at home but you know we really do find it' ..., you can't just stand there and say 'right, stop using that language', or you might say, 'look you might use that language at home, but here we feel quite uncomfortable about it and would you mind minimising that'. They think 'oh this person is treating me with some respect so I'll not do it', but sometimes it's not safe to do it and I don't think they feel safe not to do it and I don't think we should make them not feel safe, not to challenge..." (Janet)

Some research participants acknowledged quite honestly, that it was hard to be non-judgmental and/or gave examples of when they had in fact been judgmental, either because they believed it was the right thing to do or because their feelings had got the better of them. In particular, feelings of frustration or irritation, which they acknowledged, could get in the way of being 'non-judgmental'. Pat admits with some considerable honesty how her feelings can be very strong:

"Yes, I want to smack some of them right in the face, especially one at the minute and I'm not alone because everyone (laughs) *says to me* (laughs) *he's horrible you know, so, I have that, I really* (laughs) *want to punch* (laughs) *somebody but you know...,"* (Pat)

Pat's annoyance and irritation could give non-verbal signals to the offender that may lead him/her to feeling judged and therefore not free to talk about him/herself (Biestek 1961:92). Similarly Sophie is willing to acknowledge how her feelings of disgust can have an impact on how she presents her challenges to an offender, and the importance of weighing up when is the right time to

challenge rather than just in response to an emotional feeling, leading to a moral judgment being generated within the worker:

"… sometimes I can be too challenging and that's going to… negatively impact on what they are likely to be going to say to me and that is a failing of mine and it comes from some form of disgust obviously….. I think of their offence really ...and that's something that I... don't always necessarily think that … it's always wrong to be challenging, I think that you have to be challenging but I think that ..., you have to choose your moments and perhaps not … during a PSR for example..." (Sophie)

Some research participants were honest enough to share examples of when their more negative emotions had affected their response to certain offenders and what they had done to try and re-balance this. Lynn linked her feelings of disgust with a sense of disappointment that a particular offender could behave in this way:

"I was once terribly disappointed with a bloke who, he was on a parole, not just disappointed but really quite disgusted as well. What else, it wasn't disgust but, yes it was almost disgust. It turned out that he had raped an old woman..." (Lynn)

This illustrates how workers make an emotional investment in the relationships they build with offenders such that further re-offending of any sort, or as in this case of a particularly violent and unpleasant sort, can impact on and damage that relationship. These next extracts from Karen's interview demonstrate her struggle to contain her feelings of anger with, and her subsequent judgments about, a particular offender who was demonstrating misogynistic views:

"…. I had an experience with a domestic violence group last week and frankly I could have, I could have marched that man out of that room and said, go outside, you are a pig, and that was because he was behaving in the session like he behaves in his life generally and … he was, ... very rigid thinking, very misogynistic." (Karen)

She went on to describe how she was persuaded, almost against her better judgment that he did wish to learn how to communicate better. She also demonstrates how she struggled with her understanding of the potential for

racism and discrimination in the judgments about who gets to stay on the programme and who leaves:

> *"...he persuaded me that he wanted to communicate better with his children … and I felt that was enough for him to be on this programme, and also he was a black male and I don't want to discriminate further against him and … so I'm thinking that we've got a white lad that's hostile and angry, but we'll have him and we've got a black guy who is hostile and angry and we won't have him, so you know, that made me…" (Karen)*

She concludes by reflecting on her ambivalence about this particular offender. She senses that he is beginning to show glimmers of understanding about the need to talk; she recognises he is a dangerous offender, but also that he is a father and that there are children who need to be protected from his unresolved anger and failure to communicate. Karen's observations illustrate some of the dilemmas workers have in deciding who can be worked with, who has the potential to change, and how to continue to engage despite the sometimes appalling behaviour being demonstrated by the offender. Karen identifies her emotions (anger) but also her values, that he should not be discriminated against just because he presents as an 'angry black man'. She is able to acknowledge that he is showing some signs of wanting to change, and that he is a father.

Rogers suggests that the major barrier to interpersonal communication is our natural tendency to judge, to evaluate, to approve or disapprove, the statement of the other person or the other group (Rogers 2004:330). This can be accompanied by strong emotional feelings and can be particularly evident towards offenders who have committed acts of violence and abuse towards children and women (Harrison 2010). As the work by Schnall and colleagues demonstrates, feelings of disgust can be at the root of powerful moral judgements about behaviour (Schnall, Benton et al. 2008; Schnall, Haidt et al. 2008). The extent to which a worker can ever be truly 'non-judgmental' when faced with very dangerous and damaging offending behaviour including, minimisation, denial and lack of cooperation, is of course, questionable. What

is of more significance is the extent to which the worker learns to use and manage these feelings appropriately (see Section 6.3).

Howard demonstrates an example of a judgement on sex offenders that seems to justify any form of intervention if, in his view, it ultimately protects the victims:

> *"How am I going to fuck with his head to make him do it…(Laughs). It's what L. and I describe ... some elements of the programme as being ... 'head fuckery of the highest order ... something I quite enjoy doing ... not very academic but it works for me..."* (Howard)

He went on to explain his pragmatic commitment to 'evidenced-based' practice:

> *"...the tools that I use...things I've learnt and things that have been demonstrated through experience through watching experienced colleagues …how used in the past, the theory behind them...tells me that these are the most likely to be effective.."*

> *"If you were to tell me that if I was to make scrambled eggs, toast and coffee for a rapist at 6.15 a.m. every morning ...and that would ensure to a degree of more than 50% that he wouldn't commit another offence I would happily do that...because I'm a pragmatist...whatever means is necessary...equally if you told me I had to remove his penis, fry it up and make him eat it....I'd do it...I've got no qualms about it at all. The bottom line is too important to be precious about whatever method you use...what's more effective than anything else with that particular person...I believe in the principle of responsivity...you have to tailor it to that person...whatever it is I wouldn't care. At the end of the day children's lives...human's lives are being utterly utterly ruined as a result of what these men do...the stakes are very very high."* (Howard)

The concern with Howard's take on his work is that his pragmatism seems to be based on a position of 'ends justifying means'; of motives of 'avenging' the victim rather than considering the motives or the underlying psychology of the man, which allows him to potentially justify any form of intervention as ethically sustainable.

Some research participants were critical of colleagues who were not able to hold back from being judgmental:

"...but I had seen other people and I think they can be... sometimes and again, this is not a criticism. But sometimes they don't listen and are sometimes too quick to jump on that behaviour and the problem in terms of, for me in terms of doing that, you set a precedent in terms of that interaction because next time they'll feel that .... that they can't ever express their emotions because that is a taboo thing to do with you and that it can't be had, and your reaction to it is so extreme that it will either result in you terminating the interview immediately or just not being willing to hear it..." (Nick)

Whilst in the majority of social relationships there is a level of mutual emotional 'management', influence and control (Layder 2004), in unequal relationships such as those between worker and offender, there is the risk of the control becoming pathological and exploitative (Layder 2004:104). Menzies' study on the use of social defence systems within nursing (Menzies 1959), reviewed recently by (Lowdell and Adshead 2009), was the first to identify that professional carers might actually have negative feelings towards those they care for; that caring is not the highly idealised activity it seems to be, but that these feelings are frequently ignored or unacknowledged (Lowdell and Adshead 2009). This has implications for staff who, if they are not allowed to articulate and reflect on the negative judgements they may feel, have the potential to exercise 'malign' or 'repressive', as opposed to 'benign' control in their professional relationships (Layder 2004).

The aspiration towards 'non-judgmentalism' by the majority of research participants may be admirable, but its exercise is challenging and complex. Fine judgments are called for, particularly in the field of sex offender work, but these can remain susceptible to the emotional state of the worker. From the evidence presented within the data it appears that matters of judgement are not suspended but are put to work and in most cases with the offender's interests at heart; for example anger can be demonstrated in the context of a good relationship (Heather). However, as illustrated by Howard, there is scope for more repressive approaches to be adopted by workers which may go unscrutinised by the organisation.

6.1.7 Conclusion

This section began by considering the nature of probation practice as a 'vocation'; a career that people generally enter for reasons of ideology or belief rather than for economic or status reasons. It has identified the perceptions of the research participants of some of the emotional drivers or motivations for undertaking work with offenders. In particular it highlights the importance to them of building relationships with offenders, and taking pride in their achievements, as significant in building emotional resources that act to sustain and energise them. It was suggested that the pleasure they take in working with offenders is a strong motivating force in enabling them to persevere with the more difficult and intransigent problems presented by offenders. It affirms that for the majority of research participants to this study the desire to make a difference in the lives of offenders, to treat people with respect and to hold back on judging them in a negative sense, is all part of their commitment to the work. This 'holding back' on negative judgments is presented as a significant emotional challenge within probation practice. Also described was a research participant who felt able to justify any form of intervention regardless of its impact on the offender, if it resulted in protection of the victims. This could, in theory, place him at the opposite end of Layder's model of interpersonal control; as potentially holding and using repressive or exploitative power (Layder 2004, Appendix 1).

The data illuminates some of the struggles that the research participants had in handling the negative feelings that emerged in response to aspects of their work and how they relied on the value of non-judgmentalism to try and control these feelings. As Lowdell and Adshead's work illuminates (Lowdell and Adshead 2009), the issue is not so much this value, to which most research participants ascribed, it is how the 'feelings' are acknowledged, processed and conveyed to or hidden from the offender, and with what effects, that ultimately determines the quality of their work and how emotional resources are supported and sustained.

6.2: Knowing yourself; how research participants describe their emotional lives

6.2.1 Introduction

In this section, I continue the examination of Layder's first area of interpersonal control; 'self as object of its own control' (Layder 2004: 13). The focus is the manner in which the research participants understood their emotional lives; the language and concepts they used to describe their feelings and how they expressed these feelings within the workplace. Perhaps unsurprisingly it reveals a turbulence of feelings, and highlights some of the differences and tensions between the research participants' inner, (largely invisible and 'underground') world of emotion (Scheff, Stanko et al. 2002; Layder 2004), and the organisational systems that represent the public image of the organisation. This section aims to illuminate some of the substance of this inner emotional world through exploring the words, metaphors, emotional expressions, non-verbal indicators and reflections employed by the research participants. It identifies some of their struggles to adequately express themselves and their reflections on how they think their feelings impact on their professional behaviour. It examines some small gendered differences in the use of language.

6.2.2 Context

'Self-awareness' is a concept recognised historically in the probation service as an 'understanding of self' (Smith 2006; Vanstone 2007). It was supported through a supervisory process that placed emphasis on this (Monger 1972). Since the 1990s this understanding has become increasingly at odds with an emphasis on behavioural 'competencies' that have dominated contemporary training, with a tendency to define good practice solely in terms of adherence to organisational procedures and national standards (Smith 2006:362). 'Self-awareness' is, however, seen as a prerequisite of emotional literacy (Sharp

2001; Killick 2006). It is argued that we first need to 'know' and understand our own emotions if we are to be able to recognise and respond to the emotions of others. The self-aware person is described as having a good understanding of what motivates them, where their feelings come from, what triggers these feelings, how they are expressed through physical sensations and non-verbal communication, and how they are thought about, appraised and verbalised (Frijda, Manstead et al. 2000, Freshwater and Robertson 2002, Ansbro 2008). Killick describes self-awareness as:

> "Knowing one's own emotions at any one time. Recognising a feeling when it is being experienced and being aware of the thoughts that have led to the experience of the feeling..." (Killick 2006:42).

A number of writers have identified some key themes in relation to self-awareness which include; having a positive self-regard, an extensive feelings vocabulary and reflexivity, which is defined as an ability to reflect on feelings and behaviour (Sharp 2001, Killick 2006, Sparrow and Knight 2006, Howe 2008).

Amy provides an example of her knowledge of the importance of understanding herself as core to her practice:

> "Two things that come to mind as planks of practice would be the use of the relationship and the use of self".

She is revealing her knowledge of a person-centred approach to her practice; the reference to 'use of self' is based on Rogerian principles (Rogers 2004).

6.2.3 Emotional vocabularies

The role of language in the construction of meaning is particularly important in relation to emotional experiences. Mead, an anthropologist, first suggested that the distinguishing feature of the behaviour of humans compared with animals is their capacity to use language (Mead cited in Layder 2006:73). An 'emotional vocabulary' suggests a wide-ranging lexicon specific to the emotional world. As set out in the literature review, a number of researchers have endeavoured to

come up with basic sets of emotions and have tried to distil these from looking at language. Generally these are considered to be:

- Joy

- Distress

- Anger

- Fear

- Surprise

- Disgust

(Ekman and Wallace 2002)

From this Baron-Cohen has generated 412 discrete emotional concepts classified into 24 emotional groups (Baron-Cohen 2003). In the pilot phase of the research research participants were offered a range of emotion words from these groups and asked if they had meaning for them in their work. However, on analysis this proved too prescriptive; Kagan suggests that most emotional words are not sufficiently able to describe the subtle differences in how a person feels (Kagan 2010). The concept of 'basic' emotions proved to be only a very rough taxonomy and whilst all the six basic emotions were mentioned by research participants they were not predominant and they used a range of additional words to express their feelings. For the remaining interviews the research participants were not guided in their choice of words or expressions, the assumption being that they would choose the words that best described their feelings. They were, however, asked a series of questions related to their understanding of the concept of 'emotion' and 'being emotional'.

The research participants used words to describe emotions associated with feeling 'good' about themselves, and emotions associated with feeling 'bad' or 'negative'. The most significant finding from the initial analysis of words used was that the research participants expressed a much wider range of negative

feelings (some 25 feelings were identified as negative) and generally had more to say under this heading than under the 'positive' heading. The most frequently identified 'negative' feelings were grouped as; sadness (44), fear/anxiety (29), anger (17), frustration (18), and upset (14). Many of those who identified feeling frustration located this more frequently in their attitude towards 'management' rather than towards offenders; finding the managerialism and target-driven culture of their organisation an immense source of frustration. Some expressed the stronger feeling of anger towards management although in almost equal proportions it was also towards offenders who had committed particular unpleasant offences and/or had proved particularly resistant to their interventions. Some (five) acknowledged feelings of disgust at offences that offenders had committed, and how hard it was to try and detach these feelings from the work they had to do with that person. Sadness was a feeling expressed by a considerable number of the research participants.

6.2.4 Gender and language

The data was perused for any differential significance for male and female probation staff. A small number of gender differences became apparent through this coding process; insufficient to claim any strong generalisability. There was some, limited, evidence that the female research participants used more emotion words to describe themselves than the male research participants (an average of 5.4 words for the females and 4.6 for the males). The strongest of the 'positive feelings' were a sense of satisfaction, enjoyment and happiness in the direct work with offenders and of feeling a sense of empathy and concern towards them. The female research participants used slightly fewer positive words and slightly more negative words than the males. Three females (15% of total) and four males (44% of total), used only one positive and one negative word to describe their feelings in relation to their work. A significantly larger percentage of male research participants (44%) were likely to find humour and fun a positive emotion aroused by the work, than the females (10.5%). However, 84% of the female research participants used words related to enjoyment and happiness whereas only 55% of the male

research participants used such words. Interestingly 44% of the male research participants used the word 'kind' to describe how they felt towards their work and only 26% of the female research participants used this word. Some females used terms related to uncertainty (21%), disbelief (10.5%) and embarrassment (5%) whereas none of the male research participants used these terms.

These small gender differences either suggest that the female research participants gained slightly more enjoyment from their work, alongside carrying more negative feelings, including greater measures of ambivalence and uncertainty about the work, or that they were more willing to describe these feelings in an interview. This is in contrast with their male colleagues who expressed less enjoyment but found more humour in their work and saw themselves as kind. They did not express the same level of confusion or uncertainty as their female colleagues. This does reflect other studies that have examined the differences between how men and women describe their feelings in the workplace (Oakley 2005; Glenberg, Webster et al. 2009). However, it is acknowledged that the differences in this study are slight and interpretation of this area is complex.

6.2.5 Talking about emotions

Some of the background factors in relation to developing emotion vocabularies; an ability to find the words to explain feelings, are set out in Section 2.2.5. What was highlighted during the course of the interviews was the struggle that many of the research participants had to find words to explain or conceptualise their feelings. Layder argues that the linguistic rules, whilst making it possible to communicate, also limit what counts as correct or understandable (Layder 2004). These limitations can be viewed as significant in an analysis of who holds the power in the modern probation service (Section 4.5), and how the organisation is able to influence both what is and is not on the agenda for discussion. How staff conceptualise and 'own' or dismiss the relevancy of particular issues in their work; in this instance emotional issues, is potentially

bound up in issues of power (Coupland, Brown et al. 2009). This accords with Lukes' third dimension of power (Lukes 2005); that not only do the powerful in the organisation set the agenda, those with less power often fail to see these limitations. The choice of what might be articulated and what might be concealed in the course of a research interview could also be affected by the perceived power relationship between interviewee and interviewer as well as by what is considered 'permissible' language within an organisational context. Whilst I was mostly an 'outsider' to the organisation and offering confidentiality, nevertheless, the research participants may well have been influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the expectations, cultural norms and 'feeling rules' (Section 6.6.4), of their organisations in the choice of what they revealed or kept hidden in the interview (Lukes 2005; Coupland, Brown et al. 2009).

Research participants were being asked to use their cognitive skills to describe and explain their understanding of emotion and the ways in which they expressed emotion. This inevitably involved them in a process of appraisal or reappraisal of previous occurrences in their lives which offers some explanation for the hesitancy of their language and their non-verbal behaviour during the course of the interviews (Berkowitz 2000). Some of the research participants were clearly unused to being asked about their 'feelings' and un-practiced at articulating in words and in a work context, how they thought about their feelings (Oatley 2010; Ansbro 2008; Kagan 2010; Izard 2010). When powerful feelings are to the forefront the ability to think about them can be inhibited (Fargason 1995, Rogers 2004). Goleman refers to the power of the 'emotional brain' to overpower or even paralyse, the 'thinking brain' (Goleman 1996:78).

Questions about the meaning of emotion proved a challenge for many of the research participants; for example, Aruna acknowledged that she routinely expected offenders to be able to articulate their feelings, without realising how difficult this could be until confronted with the question herself. Pat, when asked what feelings she had, described incidents and events that *caused* positive and negative feelings rather than describing the actual feelings. By contrast, other research participants, particularly those who had worked for many years in the

areas of sexual offending and domestic violence seemed to have had more opportunity to process and then articulate their feelings, and were better able to explain them. For example, Indira, Sandy and Heather were all very articulate in this area and all had worked for ten or more years in the service; predominantly with high risk offenders.

Fourteen of the research participants gave clear indications of pausing to think, and struggling to find appropriate words. For some this was demonstrated in the rather convoluted manner in which they expressed themselves:

> *"...oh yes, yes, and I think it can be quite alarming to being, to try to, explore as well, I don't know what it is about emotions and yes, I guess some people would probably, …and because of their experiences… but sometimes people can't always name them, the feelings and then don't always feel very comfortable actually talking about them..."* (Lynn)

Karen acknowledged that the very nature of 'emotion' made it difficult to articulate:

> *"I think that what emotion means to me on a deep level, it can mean not being able to express how you feel…"* (Karen)

Whilst others were just identifying their struggle to conceptualise the meaning of the different words used to describe the subject under discussion:

> *"..., it's, sometimes I have difficulty understanding… - differentiating between emotions, feelings and moods..."* (Jai)

All of the research participants had acknowledged the significance of 'emotion' in the context of the work they were doing by agreeing to participate in this research and the majority subsequently confirmed this during the course of the interviews.

> *"They (emotions) are a crucial part of my job, helping people to identify them and understanding the importance of them..."* (Hannah)

Some moved on to make the connection between thoughts and feelings, or how they believed that their feelings were mediated by cognition (Gendron and

Barrett 2009). One very experienced worker described how she had to dig beneath the surface to reach the feelings beneath the words, an example of Layder's underground emotion work (Layder 2004):

"...well it is just getting in touch with your feelings about something. It goes beyond the thinking ... It is fascinating how often you ask people, how does that make you feel? And people instantly move into how they thought or what they did. But I would say, but what was the feeling that was there?" (Lynn)

The majority of research participants decided that 'emotion' was about 'feelings', lots of different feelings and getting in touch with feelings. Other explanations included the idea that emotions were 'pure' (Victoria), that some were soft and others stronger (Janet), that they were normal but irrational and could creep up on you (Michael), and that they were an immediate reaction to something that could not necessarily be controlled (Victoria). Lynn talked about the 'rawness' of emotions and being in touch with what your body or heart is saying to you. As the interviewer I was asking the research participants to identify the 'internal conversation' that goes on when we are thinking something through, when we are endeavouring to see ourselves through the eyes of others and anticipating how they will respond (Layder 2006:74). Language, or 'symbolic communication' creates the conditions for a much more subtle and complex form of interaction between people than might normally occur (Layder 2006:74). Others who have written in this area suggest that talking with others about emotional experiences may, in the course of the interview, cause them to redefine or even change their own emotion experiences (Fineman 2003, Coupland, Brown et al. 2009). The process of having your feelings understood and validated by an empathic and non-judgmental listener can enable appraisal and cognition to take place (Rogers 2004; Hennessey 2011).

For a minority of research participants their range of emotional words and their engagement in the interview was more controlled and distant. Robert used only one word to describe his emotions at work, which was 'kind' and he was not able to describe any particular emotional experiences within the work environment:

> *"I've not really been upset… in terms of face to face ... no I can't, nothing springs to mind that really…"* (Robert)

Much of the language used by the research participants to describe their understanding of emotion was metaphorical and offered some powerful symbolism of the mind/body connection and the differences between a sense of the innateness of emotions and the cultural contexts in which they are shaped. The responses conjured up a complex mixture of the familiar and the obvious, alongside a certain bewilderment that it was so hard to explain and define. None of the research participants had any difficulty in recognising the significance of emotion in their lives but the very nature of its 'unpredictability' and to some extent its 'uncontrollability' proved challenging for research participants to both acknowledge and articulate. This may be another reason why, despite its ubiquity, generations of writers within the social sciences have struggled to incorporate the concept of emotions within their research and writing, and that it is only relatively recently that it has begun to gain some centre ground (Layder 2004).

6.2.6 'Like a duck on the water' – the use of metaphor to convey feelings

A metaphor can be a way of uncovering or revealing what is going on under the surface of a discourse. A great deal of a person's emotional life is conveyed through metaphor and sometimes they can be quite apocalyptic or cataclysmic such as 'exploding' with feelings (Cameron, Maslen et al. 2009). In the following extract Pat conveys the notion of the 'underground emotion work' (Layder 2004) that is going on whilst the outward appearance of calm is maintained:

> *"...you're like a duck on the water, underneath you're paddling like mad but you're calm on the surface..."* (Pat)

As Pat's quote reveals, in order to do her job in certain difficult circumstances she needed to work extremely hard, even perhaps 'frantically', as the 'paddling like mad' image conveys, whilst outwardly conveying to the world calmness, stillness, and competence. Layder refers to the outward appearance of

smoothness and of nothing untoward going on, which actually conceals a complex mix of emotions and influences going on underneath the surface of the encounter (Layder 2006).

Our language is riddled with metaphor and it could be argued that all language is, to a greater or lesser extent, a metaphor for understanding how we think, feel and relate to others (Cameron and Low 1999). An example of the use of metaphor in elements of one interview (Amy's), illustrates the complex and nuanced ways in which we may seek to articulate some very significant and powerful feelings. An analysis of this extract is included in Appendix 9.

6.2.7 'Being emotional'

Most research participants provided examples of feelings provoked by face-to-face work with offenders. Some talked about times when their emotions had been close to the surface and sometimes very overtly expressed. Some indicated that they had been in tears or obviously angry. Others indicated that they had been nearly in tears, and with hindsight thought that the offender would have noticed, but nevertheless they kept some control on their distress. One described going 'red in the face' such that the offender would notice, but otherwise controlling her responses. Some admitted to showing other non-verbal signs such as 'sighing'. Sandy gave an example of how she could not always predict how she might feel in a given situation:

> *"I remember reading about a guy, it was awful abuse but the bit that made me really sad was reading about the state of the beds that the children had slept in, it had nothing to do with him, they had maggots in and I think, that bit really frightened, upset me because I was quite prepared for the sexual stuff that I had read, dealt with that, but I suppose those things catch you when you least expect it."* (Sandy)

This suggests Sandy had 'prepared' herself for unpleasant revelations about sexual behaviour but was caught unawares by the poverty of the family situation. Howard referred to how a dreadful sexual offence did not have an impact on him whereas a different offender's behaviour did. The suggestion he

makes to explain this is that he found one man likeable and another made him feel angry.

"I worked with a man in the group who raped his three year old daughter... over an 18 months period...vaginal penetration...but he was a really nice bloke. Unbelievable...I couldn't tell you why...but he demonstrated that he'd taken on the learning...he was still very confused and had big issues to do with gender confusion. I worked with him...his offence...we don't have hierarchies of offences but everyone has a value system...that's way up there with the man who's stabbed but I didn't feel angry with him, in the way I felt angry with the other man...I can't tell you why....I don't know why... So I've met men who've done a range of absolutely horrendous things...and I've never been able to predict whether or not they would affect me emotionally." (Howard)

The issue that Howard did not go on to explore, and I did not ask him about, is the extent to which his anger towards the second offender might have caused him to intervene or respond inappropriately. Neither did we discuss any potential for transference or counter-transference to be taking place (Mearns and Thorne 2008). The potential for this discussion only occurred to me later on re-reading the transcript.

Damien identified a powerful roller coaster of affective states in himself:

"I think, honestly if I could choose every emotion I could slot into, I could feel really, really happy one minute and then go downstairs and see someone and something has happened, that I was hoping that, you know, that they could progress and that something happened and they have committed another offence, I feel quite sad about, but only for that, maybe very short period of time because my emotions and feelings would change again." (Damien)

Maggie described feelings that were almost overwhelming and which arose from the risks she feared a particular offender posed. She was worried about this offender and the road in question that she refers to below, is where he lived. She provides an example of the degree of responsibility and anxiety felt by many workers that has to be 'contained' or 'lived with' throughout their daily lives and not just when in a face-to-face situation with an offender.

"Yes… well one incident did happen one evening when I was leaving W…. they had blocked off the road, the main road to get out and my heart was just going: dooff, dooff, dooff, dooff and I thought, 'Oh no, that is right near so-and-so's house that is', and I was worrying about it all the way home, and I was thinking, 'Oh God', as soon as I got in and then I had to phone up the next morning and find out if it was his house, because I was worried about his behaviour, but I imagine… I was a bit restless and I was thinking about it at home, I was watching the news and I never watch the news, … and I was quite stressed out but it transpired that it was actually a car accident and …. they had to block the road off for it. Then when he turned up the next day, my heart was in my mouth…" (Maggie)

The extent to which feelings of this magnitude impinged on Maggie's ability to subsequently present as calm and act 'professionally' with the offender in question was not something explored with her at the time, but it seems likely that this level of feeling had consequences for her overall health. Again, with hindsight, this could have been taken up with her.

In some instances this sense of 'being emotional' was defined as a personal characteristic; that some people were naturally more 'emotional' and displayed their feelings more frequently, but for others it was just something that could 'spill over' for anyone, in times of particular stress or distress. This latter group of research participants saw people as normally living within certain parameters of social conduct and 'being emotional' meant moving outside these normal parameters (Berkowitz 2000). Some also considered it to be an extreme expression of feelings such as being very weepy or very angry (Jai and Karen).

Some talked about 'being emotional' in relation to themselves:

"…and again, sometimes for me it bubbles over..." (Angela)

The metaphor of 'bubbles over' has an association with Descartes notion of a hydraulic theory of emotion, which viewed feelings as mental fluids that circulate the mind (Evans 2003). The use of this metaphor suggests that Angela feels her emotions are unpredictable and fluid. Whether emotion occurs in an 'out of control' manner because it exists independently of free will and thought process is debatable (Lakoff 1987; Theodosius 2008). The idea that emotion can 'bubble up' may suggest that it is something 'out of control'. However,

Hochschild argues that we should not let language, through the use of metaphor, define emotion as having autonomy and agency, she suggests it is dependent on how we represent it through language (Hochschild 1998).

Research participants also gave descriptions of how they saw 'being emotional' in relation to other people. Robert conveyed a sense of disapproval:

> *"...whether good or bad, there's lots of people who shout and scream, 'oh my god, this is happening' and whatever… I am not one of those people, I tend to kind of… deal with information myself and kind of, I'm not very expressive outwardly about things..."* (Robert)

Whereas Heather, whilst recognising the negative stereotype, actually welcomed it:

> *"…but when people talk about being emotional we tend to use it in a negative way rather than see it as somebody in touch with certain feelings and that can be, that can be a positive..."* (Heather)

The overall picture painted by the research participants was that 'emotionality' or outwardly florid expressions of emotion were not welcomed within the probation service and were viewed as both negative and in need of control. It was also seen by a number as having an association with mental ill-health which they felt was largely unacknowledged within the service:

> *"...and it shouldn't be taboo, and this is in terms of … you know when people are off with stress or their mental health is not particularly good, ... some people have good mental health and some people don't, and it is almost like there is a stigma around mental health..."* (Gill)

Emotionality was seen by some research participants to carry a negative gender stereotype (Langford 1997, Ciarrochi, Hynes et al. 2005), which is further developed in Section 6.7.

6.2.8 Non-verbal indications of feelings

In addition to words there are important non-verbal indicators of feelings conveyed through body language, that people may have greater or lesser self-awareness about (Howe 2008). Darwin first emphasised the importance of

these signals in 'Expressions of the Emotions in Man and Animals' (1872/1998). He referred to gestures, including sets of facial and bodily movements caused by internal mental states seeking expression, as 'emotional expressions' (Darwin 1998; Gendron and Barrett 2009). Darwin explained emotional expressions as habits or reflexes prepared by evolution to enable the person to deal with the situations with which they are confronted (Darwin 1998). There are also cultural differences in body language, which can convey different meanings in different contexts. Non-verbal communication can be invisible to people who have not learnt how to read the signs, and this is particular evident for people on the autistic spectrum (Baron-Cohen 2003).

An understanding of the non-verbal aspects of communication in building relationships and engaging offenders in the change process was referred to by a significant number of research participants (Michael, Amy, Indira, Victoria, David, Sandy, Maggie, Damien, Aruna, Sophie, Gill, Jai, Geoff, Hannah, Nick, Karen). They were not directly asked about their own use of non-verbal communication although some of this was apparent during the course of the research interviews. There were signs of emotional expression in some research participants (in particular Tony, Victoria, Sophie, Gill and Hannah) with two being close to tears on occasions. There was also evidence of flushing as an indicator of either distress or embarrassment, and some signs of both frustration and anger, for example; sighing, tightening of the lips, furrowing of the brow etc when they recalled particular organisational or management issues.

Eye contact is a very socially significant piece of non-verbal communication (Thompson 2009:116). Lack of eye contact can indicate a lack of interest, disapproval, a lack of confidence or even untrustworthiness. Michael acknowledges this:

> *"Body language and eye contact – very important messages I'm trying to give to someone."* (Michael)

Sophie talked of being criticised by her supervisors for her non-verbal communication skills and was clearly still feeling humiliated by the challenge and subsequent handling of this issue:

"I've been criticised for, when I was in training, not engaging in eye contact … this is something that I've never really got because sometimes, I find that I'm uncomfortable with somebody I don't really know, I find that an intrusion, so I've made the assumption that from somebody else's point of view that might be uncomfortable …but I don't know.. whether … this is something about me that … that if I don't know how I'm coming across then perhaps I'm not receptive to other people's criticism of me because I think it is alright not to always have eye contact with somebody … you know I've been criticised for that on a number of occasions so I've had to sort of think about that a bit." (Sophie)

Her comments suggest that her supervisor(s) have seen eye contact as a very significant element of communication and have endeavoured to address this with her. Sophie demonstrates ambivalence; a mixture of understanding and resistance to the idea that she needs to change her non-verbal behaviour. Her discomfort with the issue was further articulated when she said towards the end of the interview, in response to a question on how had she found the interview:

"I found it quite emotional actually" (Sophie)

"did you?" (Charlotte K)

"yes but… and I sort of wonder, if I've just ranted on here, are you going to listen and that sort of thing..." (Sophie)

She was subsequently asked whether the interview had made it more difficult for her, and how she was feeling now, and her response was:

"...no, no I'm fine, I think it sort of raises some issues that we don't always… you know, that's why it is nice be part of something like this because you're able to you know focus on… reflect on…" (Sophie)

Tony talked about what he perceived to be the rather cavalier attitude of his manager to the recruitment of new workers to the sex offender team in which he (Tony) had been working for a number of years. He had expressed concern to

the manager at the lack of scrutiny and adequate assessment given to the recruitment of new members to the team:

"I pointed this out to A. His response was pretty scathing – 'look you don't have to be over 40 and armed with a PhD to be able to do your work' – that's what we're up against." (Tony)

As he talked Tony showed visible signs of anger and frustration, in the forcefulness of his expressions and his facial movements. The underlying feeling expressed through these words and more importantly the non-verbal indicators, was that his commitment and the experience he brought to this important and difficult job, were being de-valued, denied and undermined by his manager. His resentment and bitterness was apparent although his words were reasonably measured. In this instance the strength of Tony's feelings could be judged from his emotional expressions as much, if not more, than from his words (Gendron 2010).

Howard was able to acknowledge the negative messages he recognised he was conveying:

"I knew immediately at the time. I acted on my emotions at that time. I think sometimes my voice...sometimes...my body language might portray I'm frustrated...the men might call it anger. I'd call it frustration." (Howard)

6.2.9 Reflexivity: understanding the impact of feelings

Self-awareness may be judged largely by the ability of the person to reflect on their behaviour and emotions. Probation students are taught about the significance of reflective practice (Schon 2003, Thompson and Thompson 2008), and are encouraged to write reflective accounts and learning logs during the course of their training. Some of the experienced Practice Development Assessors (PDAs) on the former Diploma in Probation Studies programme encouraged their students to include reflections on their feelings and responses to the work in the belief that honesty, particularly in relation to mistakes made, was the best learning tool (Knight and White 2001). However, this skill has been variably taught and encouraged. It was a significant focus of the research

interviews, albeit, as previously indicated, there were inevitably limitations on how much the research participants might reveal of their 'inner conversations' with themselves (Layder 2004). In a number of interviews (Sandy, Victoria, Karen, Hannah, Janet – for example), there was a noticeable increase in emotional openness as the conversation progressed indicating that the interaction between interviewer and interviewee was opening up a safe emotional space for disclosure to occur (Truax and Carkhuff 1967; Herman 1997; Rogers 2004). One of the ways this 'opening up' was judged was by the answers the research participants gave to a question that invited them to talk about any time when they felt their emotions might have 'spilled over' into their work more than they would have wished. Research participants gave some quite revealing accounts. For example, Amy said:

> *"Probably there's a level of hostility in the way I'm dealing with them..."*
> (Amy)

which indicated a willingness to acknowledge the potential impact of some of her negative feelings on the men she worked with. Tony, with some diffidence, gave an example of when he had been targeted by a sex offender in a group programme as if he (Tony) had been gay (he was heterosexual), accompanied by what he perceived to be inappropriate humour from the rest of the group, including his co-worker, which had left him feeling confused and angry. He had subsequently raised this in a team meeting and through this medium had been enabled to process some of his distress arising from this incident.

Howard was candid enough to admit to having lost his temper with one man:

> *"I hauled a man out of the group from this very room...to give him an enormous bollocking about lying in the group. I knew he was lying...about his offence...that was precisely the wrong thing to do...I knew immediately at the time. I acted on my emotions at that time."* (Howard)

Howard's language is full of metaphor; he is unlikely to have actually manhandled this offender from the room, but his powerful and rather aggressive choice of words 'enormous bollocking' is male-orientated. This event is

presented as largely feelings-driven and although his emotional language lacks sophistication he is aware, on reflection, of the inappropriateness of his behaviour.

Angela seems to be struggling within the interview to come to terms with how she is perceived by others. This involved some negative labelling from colleagues that she wanted to disown but at the same time was trying to understand. The gaps in her speech indicate the process of her thinking about her feelings and trying to find the words to express them:

> *"I'm, I feel uncomfortable expressing negative things, expressing negative emotions and anger… and I think that's about me as well, you know, my self-esteem and striving to be better… and I think … some of, I get told that I come across as quite anxious and I think that is learned behaviour, I am not actually anxious but the way I can present myself sometimes can be you know, people can say, you're anxious and I am going 'no I'm not, I'm fine, why are you asking me this?' And when I look back on my own life, my father was very anxious, so the behaviours that I've picked up from him are normal to me, that other people perceive as anxious, does that make sense?"* (Angela)

Angela's reflections illustrate aspects of the cultural theory of emotions (Evans 2003); that some of her emotional expression or display has been learnt from her father. However, in her opinion the interpretation of this display by others is inaccurate. Her acknowledgement that she suppresses negative feelings, may offer clues to how her emotional displays are interpreted. She did not indicate that she had been offered help in the work context to think through the underlying causes of her feelings, her emotional expressions and her subsequent appraisal of them.

No direct reference was made by me in the course of the interviews to any non-verbal signs from the research participants as an indicator of their emotions, although I endeavoured to demonstrate empathy and responsiveness to all research participants. Non-verbal responses were not examined in the actual interview as part of the data collection; this would have required counselling skills and a different research strategy. However, I was personally aware of a

sense of closeness and enjoyment that reflected the level of 'emotionality' in the actual interview process.

Tony said the following at the end of the interview:

"…yes but I just wonder really whether I'm doing a counselling session.. you're counselling me… I'm airing a load of frustrations all aimed at the structure and management …if we are talking about EL. Whether I'm demonstrating that in an inadvertent way..." (Tony)

Here Tony presents as anxious that he might have somehow 'misused' the research interview, whereas Victoria, at the end of her interview (with researcher's responses included) said:

V. "No but I'll be honest with you and I, I've had a really bad day today and ... I've come in here feeling quite gloomy and all of a sudden I feel quite ….(smiles)"

C: "Oh well I'm glad about that. I've cheered you up have I?"

V: "Yes, brilliant supervision,..." (laughs)

C: "Oh well that's alright then…" (laughs)

V: "No well, I do feel a lot better, thank you ……." (Victoria and Charlotte)

No advice on her practice skills had been offered, but there had been an acknowledgment and validation of her feelings, and it was this that she had appreciated. Hannah too found it a positive experience:

"No, I have actually enjoyed it. I found it more useful than that counselling thing that I was talking about (laughs)*. It is actually quite hard to talk about it, it is interesting to talk about it…. and in a way by being asked to talk about it and giving examples of how you dealt with it gives you a chance to sort of make you think, yes, make you aware of things that you didn't really know you could do."* (Hannah)

This suggests that the articulation of and reflection on, feelings, helped in some cases to consolidate the process of developing self-awareness as a building block for emotional literacy (Herman 1997).

6.2.10 Emotional resources

As introduced in Chapter Two and first applied in Section 6.1, emotional 'capital' is seen as representing a resource; a network of relationships which may facilitate and enable people to maintain their mental and emotional health and well-being within their communities and at work (Adkins and Skeggs 2005). In Section 6.1 it was suggested that a degree of emotional resource was built up through the pleasure that research participants took in building relationships with offenders and seeing them make positive changes in their lives. However, as this section has illustrated, there appears to be a preponderance of negative emotions expressed by research participants about their work which may impact, and potentially diminish, the emotional resources built up within the probation service as a support to the workforce.

6.2.11 Conclusion

This section has examined the ways in which research participants articulated and thought about their feelings and has offered some analysis of the use of language in the construction of meanings in relation to emotion. Across the interviews a wide emotional vocabulary or range of language and metaphor was employed. There was evidence that some research participants were more aware than others of the impact of their non-verbal communications. For most of these research participants the triggers for their emotions and strong feelings was immensely variable. There was some, limited evidence that the female research participants used more emotion words to describe themselves than the male research participants (an average of 5.4 words for the females and 4.6 for the males). The gender differences in the expressions of positive and negative emotions, whilst small, do have some implications for recruitment, training and ongoing support to staff, who continue to be a majority female group. In particular it seems that the female staff may carry a greater burden of anxiety and concern in relation to their work than their male colleagues, although it is acknowledged that they may have been more willing to express these feelings in the research interview than their male colleagues.

Two significant findings were the volume of negative feelings and the extent to which they were able to articulate and reflect on, the impact of their feelings on themselves and the offenders they worked. Some of the research participants were clearly unused to being asked about their 'feelings' and unpractised at articulating in words and in a work context, how they thought about their feelings. The use of metaphor was an example of the sometimes 'veiled' manner in which emotions are described. It was suggested that this has links with who holds the power within the organisation for example, to exclude emotional discourse from the agenda(s).

The issue of emotional resources was returned to in this section and a question raised about the significance of this level of negativity for the potential diminishing of such resources for workers within the workplace. By its very nature, probation practice is fundamentally associated with troublesome, difficult and sometimes frightening behaviour and attitudes from offenders, and the preponderance of negative emotions is congruent with this. How workers sustain their emotional and mental health and their motivation to undertake work in the light of a preponderance of negative feelings, is explored in Section 6.8. How the research participants managed and regulated these feelings is examined in the next section.

6.3 Self-regulation of emotions

6.3.1 Introduction

Layder's concept of 'self as object of its own control' was introduced in the previous section, through an exploration of the evidence from research participants of their understanding of 'self' and their emotional lives (Layder 2004:13). This focus continues in this section, which examines strategies for emotional control and regulation. The concept of 'emotion regulation', the control and moderation of emotional responses, has long been of interest to philosophers, scientists and researchers (Barbalet 2011), although has only emerged as an independent field of study in the last decades of the 20th century (Gross and Barrett 2011).   Regulating and managing emotions in the

context of day-to-day living is something that all people undertake to a greater or lesser extent as part of normal social interaction and has important consequences for health and adaptive functioning (Tamir 2011). Some of the more extreme life events such as loss, death, conflict and celebration etc may heighten the presentation and expression of emotions (Goldie 2009). A career in the probation service will bring the worker into more frequent contact with some of these major life changing events through the narratives of the offenders on supervision (De Haan and Loader 2002), and is likely to make heavy demands on staff in terms of the need to regulate their own emotions.

Regulating or managing emotions is the second element in becoming emotionally literate. It is described as the ability to use the knowledge generated by reflexivity and self-awareness to manage feelings effectively and to be able to make positive changes to personal behaviour (Killick 2006). It includes the ability to manage a feeling in order to change a pre-existing emotional state (Hochschild 1983), and as an evaluative process it involves people taking a stance about their emotions and the consequences of any subsequent actions (Frijda 1986). As demonstrated in Section 6.2, research participants saw emotions as central to their work. This section explores how research participants described the process of managing and self-regulating their emotions in the context of their work; the fear that some of them felt about emotional expression at work, both their own and those of the offenders, and the various strategies they employed to manage them which included controlling, suppressing or masking them, detaching from them and integrating them within their practice. Reference was made by a number of the research participants to the need to maintain calmness and control in order to meet the standards of being 'professional'. The concept of professionalism as a regulator of emotions is discussed in more detail in Section 6.6 on organisations and emotion.

6.3.2 Learning how to regulate emotions

As the research participants developed their comments around the concept of emotion and how they described their emotional lives (Section 6.2), they identified ways in which they felt they had learnt to regulate or manage their emotions at work. A significant number of them (20) felt that in the early stages of their career their feelings had been much nearer the surface, and less 'processed' and that it was mostly only through life experience and the passage of time that they had learnt to recognise and manage their emotions more effectively. This 'maturation' of emotional control is a recognised process; the ability to recognise and understand what we feel can take a life time (Harré and Parrott 1996). For a number of research participants the learning about the significance of emotions and emotion regulation in order to enhance their work skills, was largely 'on the job', through observation of others; an 'apprenticeship' model. Some research participants gave examples of how they believed they might have initially done it the 'wrong' way but then learnt, through 'trial and error', to do it the 'right' way with an acknowledgement that this was not always an easy process. The indications are that some felt less able to control their feelings when they started their career, and saw this as something of a problem:

> *"In the early days I cried at court..."* (Mary)

Geoff describes how the overall learning process around feelings has resulted in a levelling out of the extremes of emotion that he might have been experienced in the early years:

> *"I think years and years ago I would have had a whole range of quite strong emotions. I would have been quite angry, I would have been disappointed, I would have been sad, but …. I would have been elated when we had a result from somebody you know, when a light-bulb went on, but … I think that has subsided over the years."* (Geoff)

Geoff conveys a sense of the 'passion' in him, involving both positive and negative feelings, being eroded by the passage of time and work; he does not indicate if he feels any regret about this loss. Other research participants described strengths of feelings at certain points in their work and an

acknowledgement that they needed time, or assistance, to regain their composure and their equilibrium and return to the professional role required of them. This was a further indication that they had some concept of the need to take 'care of self' (Foucault 1990), and be 'professional', which they aspired to via a process of control and management of their feelings.

Some gave examples of how they had just learnt through life experience:

> *"Most of my learning (about emotions) has come from my own personal experiences."* (Tess)

> *"I think to summarise, it really is something that you learn from experience, you can't be trained in it in any way, it would be nice if there could be more acceptance of it at the training stage and the relevance of it. … you have to learn to control it when you are dealing with people that we deal with …and forget it when you go home."* (Pat)

Howard talked about how he learned to regulate his emotions, indicating that he had a notion of how this should be achieved through a mixture of maturation, control and cognition:

> *"So the personal skills that I bring from my life experience... I was 36 when I joined probation...I've been around the block a few times …because when I was young I was particularly feelings driven...they were the most important things in my life and they kind of dictated the way I made choices to behave...the choice part of it...the thoughts that militated the way that I behaved were fairly indistinct and not very well developed. Now as an older person with the benefit of life experience and learning...that I've chosen to change the way I live my life...and to militate some of those feelings with thoughts."* (Howard)

Howard's use of metaphor; '*been around the block a few times'* suggests a different form of learning; a 'street' apprenticeship that he believes gave him the skills necessary to do his current job. Other research participants identified learning about emotions, and emotional control that had arisen almost incidentally, as a by-product of being involved in delivering accredited offending behaviour training programmes (Ministry of Justice 2010). They had gained vicarious learning for themselves by reflecting on the courses they had been on

to deliver the programmes, or on guidance in the manuals, about the emotions of offenders.

> *"…as a starting point it really allows the men to consider ….where they learn their coping strategies or where they learn to shout or be explosive or whatever it might be, so in that sense the programme has helped me to look at that … a little bit more, but also …, done additional reading around it, because I think that there is a lot in there."* (Jai)

John makes reference to how a group work programme which helps offenders get in touch with their feelings had helped him to learn about his own emotions, metaphorically 'as he went along', implying a journey of learning (Cameron and Low 1999):

> *"…we do a lot of work on the SO (Sex Offender) programme tapping into emotions...helping people be able to tap into... identify particular emotions. I'd not say I've always been good at doing that myself...so it's something I'm learning as I go along as well."* (John)

David identified the point at which ideas about 'emotion' in offenders entered the domestic violence programmes and how through this he had learnt how to work with emotions:

> *"…and the Scottish Change programme … where emotional issues come across significantly … it is a theme of the IDAP (Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme) programme, but before that it wasn't an issue. I have learnt how to work with emotions over the years – since 1984 ..."* (David)

Tony described a certain resignation in having to just 'deal' with the feelings as they arose, almost as an incidental of the job rather than a core element. He did not go on to specify what 'dealing with' entailed; there is an assumption of keeping them under control as part of becoming an 'expert'.

Hannah, in the next quote, accepts the need to prevent her emotions, aroused by the nature of the offending behaviour, from 'getting in the way' of dealing directly with the person:

> *"...if their offences are very serious, that can invoke really strong emotions in you… of disgust and anger, … and just incomprehensibility, really all of those things but …when you then deal with the person you mustn't let that*

get in the way, because it is about dealing with that person and helping them move forward..." (Hannah)

Geoff, prompted by me, provides a further example of his understanding of the nature of transference and the need to regulate his feelings as a result. He also knows what to do with his feelings subsequently, which is to discuss them in supervision:

G: *"...there might be something that occasionally is slightly stronger than that…where I might become angry with someone but not within the group, that might come out later,..."*

C: *"...you contain it?"*

G: *"...yes, because that is where it belongs, because I am irritated...I am aware I am not angry with the man, I am irritated, but I am angry about other things and so supervision is the place to take that …"* (Geoff)

David referred to a very difficult early life experience that he had been able to successfully 'work through'. His 'success' in dealing with this distressing early life experience had resulted in him being able to maintain 'calmness' in almost all work situations, an aspiration of being 'professional':

"I don't get angry very much myself...I am generally calm; it is rare for me to get upset. I once was engaged in some therapeutic work with colleagues when I recounted an experience I had as a child...but I think my colleagues were more upset to hear it than I was to tell it...I had largely worked through it." (David)

All these responses indicate an assumed 'correct' way in which emotions should be managed and controlled within the work context although, as explored in Section 6.8 whilst some had sought out external help such as counselling courses, and some had received good line management supervision, none of the research participants was able to cite any probation specific training or education about their own emotion regulation provided for them in relation to their probation practice. In the above responses 'calmness' and 'control' come through as goals of emotion regulation; the inference being that strong or unregulated emotional expression would not be appropriate in the

work setting. Fineman suggests that we may not show what we feel because we are aware of the delicate balance to be sustained between showing what we feel and destabilising a social order (Fineman 2001). The research participants appeared to have imbibed a belief about emotion regulation through a life process and a sense of what being 'professional' entailed.

6.3.3 Fear of emotion

These first comments about emotion regulation begin to build a profile of workers seeking to 'calm', 'control' and 'moderate' their emotional responses in order to meet the perceived needs of 'professionalism'. However, underlying this assumed need to maintain a 'stable social order', there was also, for some, a certain fear or anxiety about emotions. Layder refers to an 'ontological insecurity' that the self is subjected to, which can lead to generalised feelings of insecurity and a frequent desire to hide or conceal this from others:

"…it is quite scary as to how you can control all that..." (Gill)

"We're not robots so I think emotions are very hard sometimes to manage..." (Janet)

Sophie raised an issue that had come up in a training session of potentially being aroused by depositions containing graphic accounts of sexual behaviour and how difficult this would be for anyone to admit to, or seek help with:

"...one of the … things that came out of one of these sessions was that, it would take some guts to admit, one of the officers said that you have to recognise that sometimes if you are reading depositions (deps) about sexual offences, that sometimes people might become sexually aroused but to say that in… that kind of setting …kind of like, phew, …, but, it isn't anything that I would explore I don't think…" (Sophie)

Sophie expresses admiration at the bravery of anyone who might acknowledge the arousal of their own sexual feelings, but also her fear of articulating such concerns for herself. In this context Sophie's fear is of the specific and inappropriate emotion of sexual arousal. This was the only statement that came close to any acknowledgment of sexual feelings despite the majority of the

research participants working directly with sex offenders, and is perhaps an indication of some of the inhibitions on discussing emotional, and in this case sexual, feelings in the work setting.

Not all workers demonstrated the same levels of concern about or fear of emotion. Janet reflects positively about her approach to regulating her own emotions. She demonstrates her understanding, similar to the other research participants, of the perceived need in a work context, to 'hold onto' her feelings and not give them full expression but she presents as feeling comfortable with this:

> *"I've been near to tears before but I've never actually done it but …. no, I've held onto it so far, but I've probably got a bit flustered and a bit red in the face and my body language has probably changed you know… but on the whole I think that I manage them quite well."* (Janet)

6.3.4 Strategies for self-regulation

The challenge for the research participants is the judgment of what to do with the feelings that have arisen in them as a result of a particular situation; for example, an offender's behaviour or attitude, or an organisational demand or edict. As explored in Section 6.2 an underlying question relates to self-awareness; the extent to which they understand the reasons or triggers for the feelings that have arisen within them. The feelings may be directly related to the current situation or they may contain elements of transference from earlier or previous difficult experiences in their own lives. The greater their self-awareness about the potential causes of their feelings the more choice they are likely to have in the strategies they employ to regulate these feelings (Mearns and Thorne 2008).

Analysis of the data suggests that the research participants used three broad strategies to manage their emotions in the workplace. These strategies were not mutually exclusive and some research participants described using more than one strategy at different times:

- Controlling, suppressing or masking, such that they did not spill over directly into their work (Goffman 1959/1990)

- Detaching – consciously avoiding the feelings (Crawley 2004)

- Integrating, i.e. incorporating their emotions within their practice – having a 'helping relationship with self' (Rogers 2004; Mearns and Thorne 2008)

Controlling, suppressing or masking

A significant number of research participants (18) considered that emotions, particularly those deemed 'inappropriate' to the context were something that could not easily be controlled, but that nevertheless had to be controlled and concealed, even 'masked' in order to do their job, and remain 'professional'. Thirteen research participants used the word 'control' when describing the management of their emotions in the workplace and they had a range of strategies for achieving this. For some the idea of 'being emotional' meant being 'out of control' with the associated fears of powerlessness and vulnerability. Some saw the gradual development in managing their emotions as the necessary control of a messy and irrational aspect of human behaviour.

"I've learnt in my work to control them more." (Victoria)

"...but I have learned to…(laughs)*…especially in my work, to control them more."* (Hannah)

Aruna demonstrates a progression from 'panic' or fear of her emotional response, through to control and 'management':

"First time you get somebody you kind of panic, you're not really sure what to do, but with practice the more you can deal with it, your emotions, the more you know how to deal with it… the last time somebody kicked off almost… and was getting quite angry and verbal and blaming me and everyone else for all his problems… you know if you raise your voice, then they'll raise and you raise and so on, so it is about making sure you remain calm and making sure that my voice stays at a certain level and it doesn't raise, I listen to what they've got to say and take on board and if they still rant and rave I just repeat my point, and the fact, that okay I understand your feelings, I can't change that ..." (Aruna)

Aruna demonstrates the premise of the majority of research participants, that 'calmness' and control of her own emotions are essential in volatile situations such as this. She also uses assertiveness techniques (e.g. repetition of certain statements (Cherry 2010), to maintain her stance, which she acknowledges works in some situations but not others. Aruna's strategy is to remain calm and, if necessary, terminate the interview. This position is likely to be supported by the health and safety policy of her agency with regard to angry and abusive offenders, which would prioritise her own safety and that of colleagues.

In addition to controlling them, a number of research participants saw emotions as needing to be masked, suppressed or hidden which suggests the erection of a defence or screen between how they were actually feeling and how they presented themselves to the outside world; Goffman refers to this as 'impression management' (Goffman 1959/1990:203). He identifies it as the attributes that are required for the work of successfully 'staging a character 'and talks of people undertaking a 'performance' and 'playing a part' (Goffman 1959/1990:28). He considers that at one extreme the performer could be fully taken in by his (sic) own act and sincerely believe that the impression of reality he is giving is the real one. At the other end of this continuum the performer may not be taken in by his own act and can be 'seen through' by others; Goffman labelled this a 'front' (Goffman 1959/1990:33).

Hochschild also describes the process of emotion regulation as a form of acting and that this is undertaken on either a surface or a deep level. In 'surface acting' the person endeavours to change how they outwardly appear through their body language; for example, a 'put-on sneer, posed shrug, controlled sigh' (Hochschild 1983:35). She describes surface acting as the ability to deceive others about what we are really feeling without deceiving ourselves. In contrast 'deep acting' involves deceiving ourselves about our true emotions as much as we deceive others (Hochschild 1983:33). In this case the 'actor learns to believe in the emotions they are expressing through 'conscious mental work', 'psyching themselves up for a particular activity or event' (Theodosius 2008:18). In 'deep acting' feelings are actively induced, suppressed or shaped. This

raises a question about the point at which regulation of emotions may lead to insincerity or inauthenticity; pretending to feel something that is not actually felt, and whether or not the offender identifies this and with what consequences. Alternatively, it may cease to be self-deception if the worker convinces themselves of its truth to their current situation.

For the research participants, being in control of feelings also meant putting them 'on hold', and to some extent acting as though these feelings were not impinging on them:

"I've got to put my feelings on hold…hopefully it doesn't show." (Jai)

In this example Jai is describing surface acting in which she makes a deliberate attempt to conceal her feelings but recognises, by her doubtfulness that they may still leak through. She also admits to feeling discomfort at showing, or presenting, any negative emotion despite clearly holding some quite strong negative emotions:

"…he was blaming her all the time and her behaviour, and those kind of things make me frustrated and angry and it was one of those cases you know, I kind of let it show, usually I kind of control … my responses in front of a group..." (Jai)

Other research participants gave examples of the need to conceal and mask their feelings, in other words 'perform a part' or put on a 'front'. Tess felt she needed to do so in order to protect the offenders she worked with from her own negative feelings about their situation:

"…generally I would try to conceal, if I feel it would be inappropriate for them to see how I was feeling, particularly with the hopelessness … with the anger aspect." (Tess)

Karen was trying, unsuccessfully, to protect herself from her agency. She did not want her managers to know how distressed she was actually feeling about her work. She gives a good example of both deep acting and the use of metaphor to describe her beliefs and feelings:

"I am very good at masking my emotions and… an example I can give you is when… I had six months off sick when I was in resettlement with stress, and when I had my back to work interview, it was X who said, 'look, I never guessed, I never guessed that you were in trouble really', because I had gone down smiling, so I had masked all that stress, and all the self doubt that was going alongside that and not being able to keep on top of things and not realising that, that is not because I have too much to do, but my thought was that I was not good enough. So I think that you know, that can have an emotional reaction and if you try and suppress it..." (Karen)

In the following exchange between myself and Pat she described how she initially 'masked' her emotions but in the process felt she had 'become harder'. She was initially performing 'surface acting' but this had moved towards 'deep acting':

C. *"You talked about masking feelings sometimes, what were those feelings that you masked?"*

P: *"Well I masked but over the years you become a lot harder…. at the beginning I was close to tears with a lot of things, even in child protection when they had to take a child away I was really close to tears but I had, you know, you become tougher and I had to toughen up to be fair … so you have to hide you know, every emotion really because you have to be this sympathetic ear … because if you screw that up they're not going to tell you anything again."* (Pat)

Despite this declared 'hardness' her final comment suggests that she is balancing a desire to be 'professional' and unemotional, with a belief that only by keeping her own emotions on hold will she enable the offender to express his real feelings. Rogers argues for the creation of a 'helping relationship with myself' (Rogers 2004:51), by which he means a sensitive awareness and acceptance of his own feelings that then offers a better chance of forming a helping relationship with another.

Drawbacks to strategies of control

Whilst maintaining a 'front', and controlling and masking emotion may be an essential skill in the probation workers strategy, (for example, the expression of disgust at the narrative of a sex offender would effectively terminate all effective communication (cf. Sophie and Lynn in Section 6.1), it also has some potential

drawbacks. In masking an emotion the worker may have insufficient time, resource or opportunity to reflect on the causes of the feeling (self-awareness). They may be unaware of the potential for such repressed feelings to leak out and infect or corrupt their exchanges with another person (Rogers 2004). Rogers suggests that if, as a therapist, he is experiencing an attitude of annoyance towards another person but is unaware of it, then his communication will contain contradictory messages (Rogers 2004:51). The words are giving one message but in subtle ways he will be communicating the annoyance he feels and thus confusing the person and making (him) distrustful, even although that person may also be unaware of what is causing the difficulty.

In this next quote, Sandy is explicitly recognising the importance of an understanding of self as a pre-requisite to being able to work constructively with others and the potential dangerousness of workers who lack this self-understanding:

> *"I think most people come into this job because they have something to fix often and I would have said some years ago that I didn't, ...then I realised that I did and so I went and sorted it, but then I think what happens is that you learn from those skills, and I would quite like them to have the opportunity to fix because quite honestly some of them are dangerous..."*
> (Sandy)

Detaching and distancing

A significant number of research participants chose to consciously distance themselves from the emotional world of the offender (Tony, Angela, Robert, Victoria, Pat, Aruna, Sophie, Mary and Gill) and disengage their feelings from what they were hearing. There is evidence of this as a general strategy in many organisational contexts (Du Gay 2003). This form of detachment is primarily focused on protecting the individual from excessive emotional demands and stresses in the working environment and can be an important strategy for avoiding 'burnout'. Some described it as a process of 'getting tougher' which could mean an emotional resilience or an emotional distancing or immunity:

"…unfortunately I think you do become a little bit hardened to it so it only really affects you on the extreme cases and I so think you get a little bit desensitised to issues..." (Mary)

Mary's comment indicates some fear on her part that she may miss or lack sensitivity towards certain aspects of the lives of the offenders' she was working with. Robert gives a good example of a form of surface acting that enabled him to detach his feelings from the distressing circumstances of the people he worked with (Hochschild 1983). He even makes reference to acting:

"...yes, it was sort of a conscious decision because when I first started doing the job I realised that people can tell me quite shocking things and it can really get to you if you take them on board, the reality of it, it can be quite shocking so I kind of see myself walking through the door as if I am going to a theatre or television set and I am kind of participating in it in some kind of way…..you go through the pain barrier and you start dealing with difficult cases and then you get used to it to some extent and then, quite probably deal with it by, I was going to say not thinking it is real, because it is real, but that kind of, I don't know, just keeping it out of your own personal box …I try not to… try to kind of switch off that … part of my brain in a way, try not to become emotionally involved ..., I find it easier to go home and not worry about what people are telling me and …and not take troubles home… so I don't actually feel too much…" (Robert)

Robert uses metaphors in his explanation of how he manages to self-regulate and control his emotions. As described in Section 6.2 the use of metaphor is a powerful way of describing emotions, or in Robert's case, his determination to exclude as far as possible, his emotions. He talks of work with offenders as 'going to a theatre' and 'participating' presumably in some form of 'play' or 'drama' (Goffman 1959/1990). He talks of going 'through the pain barrier' which implies something quite frightening and painful to him such that he tries to 'switch off' the part of his brain that might actually feel this pain. He is also clear he does not wish to take 'troubles home', implying they should be left behind at work.

Aruna uses another duck metaphor to suggest that she was untroubled by the emotional context of the work:

"... but I think that I'm more, 'water off a duck's back' nothing really bothers me that much, I don't think I let things get to me, they don't bother me that much,..." (Aruna)

Sophie was honest enough to admit that she found it distracting and time consuming if an offender became emotional, by which it seems she meant 'upset', rather than, for example angry, in an interview:

"…they become emotional, but unfortunately if it's not actually related to what I am trying to write the report about, it is also quite time consuming..." (Sophie)

Nick recognised he had gone through a process of desensitisation or conditioning as a form of protection:

"But we work in an environment where we, the files contain some horrific… you know offences, but I don't know, I think sometimes you can become quite blasé you know almost conditioned in a sense…" (Nick)

This 'conditioning' is an expectation of prison staff and is developed within a prison culture that sees 'kindness' as being mistaken for 'weakness' (Crawley 2004). Displays of emotion in the prison context are seen as leaving the worker open to manipulation, collusion with and exploitation by the prisoner; with a presumption that no prisoner can be trusted. These are the same (mostly) men with whom probation staff work and the transfer of such strategies, whether consciously or unconsciously, to probation practice is not such a leap to make, particularly for probation staff seconded to work in prisons and/or responsible for significant numbers of prisoners and parolees.

Drawbacks to strategies of detachment

The problem with detachment as a strategy is two-fold; the worker may, through standing back from emotional engagement fail to harness the motivation of the offender and secondly fail to pick up on important signals and information about the offender's state of mind and attitudes. Chamberlayne identifies an emergent pattern of emotional retreat by professionals at key moments of interaction, which she argues can reinforce a sense of social exclusion in the

'client' at the point at which there is a chance of doing something positive about the real and underlying problems (Chamberlayne 2004). Some research participants were able to acknowledge that being 'detached' could mean showing insufficient empathy (Janet and Sophie), and that this had begun to change for them with experience and confidence; they felt they could show more.

Managing emotions within practice

The third strategy came from those research participants who seemed more comfortable in their discussion of emotions for both themselves and the offenders they supervised. These were staff who talked about strong emotional support at home and/or with work colleagues and who, in many cases, had experienced counselling or counselling type support in other employments or through personal interest.

> *"I've never been in a situation where my own house isn't reasonably in order..."* (Indira)

This group of staff seemed to appreciate the understanding and management of their emotions as an important part of their personal growth and development. This is supported by writers who argue that emotional learning and maturation are central to professional competence and that this involves personal growth and development (Akerjordet and Severinsson 2004). These research participants felt they had less need to control, mask or detach from their feelings and were more able to 'be themselves' and act naturally, albeit still retaining their awareness of professional boundaries. They were able to maintain a degree of congruence between their feelings, the feelings of the offender and the interaction between them such that they were generally able to integrate their feelings within their practice and make appropriate judgments about how they used their emotions as part and parcel of their skill repertoire (Haidt 2001, Rogers 2004). They talked about 'working it through' and their observations included examples of reflective practice (Schon 2003), where the research

participants acknowledged their feelings and reflected on when, where and how these feelings might be best regulated:

"Most of the time I'm okay but just occasionally I think...you showed them something there that you shouldn't have done...it's a fine line...we are saying to people...it's okay to show emotion it's fine, but actually some emotions are best suppressed at times...it's a very fine line." (Michael)

"If they (the depositions) are particularly bad I will feel angry, outraged, feel like ripping his head off. For me it takes about 24 hours for that to settle down...not always. Thereafter I'm in role...so I then make my way back if you like, to emotions that are centred in some level of compassion, understanding..." (Amy)

Amy is admitting here to very strong feelings of anger generated by reading details of a particularly unpleasant offence and the need to give herself time to regulate these feelings such that what she takes into the actual interview with the offender is empathy and compassion, rather than disapproval and anger. Angela demonstrates an ability to reflect on the emotions she saw displayed by offenders without being overwhelmed themselves:

"…even sometimes you'll get apologies...the next week I've worked through some anger, you're human and hang on let's look at why. I didn't send you a warning letter because I can see you are having a real tough time at the moment and if I thought you were just being abusive and deliberately obstructive I would have sent you a warning..." (Angela)

Tess demonstrates a willingness to understand what might have triggered the offender's feelings and not to take them 'personally' although she acknowledges that sometimes she feels things after the interview, suggesting she has the capacity to regulate her feelings regardless of the potential provocation:

"I don't, I never, it doesn't ever trigger a negative emotion in me if someone is being angry because more often than not there is a reason and it is about their frustration or their inability to express what is going on for them and you know, there is usually a cause for that anger…" (Tess)

Nick demonstrates an acute awareness of the legitimacy of an offender's anger in the face of his (Nick's) inability to resolve the difficulties with his parole

application. He avoids the temptation to rise to defensiveness or anger in return:

"...you know, he threw a few sort of expletives at me and he said, 'you're useless, what have you done for me?' you know, and I sort of came away from there thinking he was right in a way because I have tried to do those things but ultimately I have run into a brick wall myself really in trying to make this happen..." (Nick)

Sandy's emotional response to the very distressing early life experience being relayed to her by the offender is understood by her as legitimate and congruent to the situation in which she was working, namely a one-to-one interview. However, she also recognises that whilst she might have experienced similar feelings if she had heard this account in the context of a group work programme she would have made the decision to conceal her feelings. This illustrates a degree of management by Sandy of the expression of her feelings dependent on the context.

"No, at one point I had tears in my eyes when he was telling me and he saw them, I don't have a problem with that ... I think, because that's just about being congruent in that situation isn't it, but I wouldn't in a group necessarily because I think that is very different … to managing eight, nine people, so one person is in, I mean, they know when it affects us I think..." (Sandy)

This is also reflected by the next research participant:

"I think when you get to know someone you do express your emotions a lot more than when you first time you met them, I've got someone who I have supervised for over a year and got quite relaxed with them now..." (Aruna)

A considerable number of research participants saw self-regulation as part of their personal growth and actively sought out ways of becoming more aware and better able to manage their emotional lives:

"I think that, from someone who was quite detached from their emotions … to actually someone who would kind of...well I wouldn't say I was kind of an overly emotional person, I would say that I was more in-tune with that, I'm more understanding, I remember doing … when I was in the prison

service when I first joined I did a load of psychometric tests, and one of things that was flagged up for me was …that I was very, that I showed very little empathy...it was yes… I suppose at the time it was absolutely right,..." (Damien)

This same research participant then developed his comments further to show how he addressed this, how he had learnt and developed as a person as well as a worker:

"I remember leaving the group …one day to phone my Mum just to kind of tell her I loved her, I suppose I hadn't for about ten years told her that… I mean, it was a massive turning point in my life and yes, I think that kind of changed a lot of me then and I became more about life and I started going, I started doing a counselling course in college to try and understand more about that..." (Damien)

6.3.5 Conclusion

This section has considered the range of ways in which the research participants explained their learning to 'regulate' their emotions. This was mostly through general life and work experience although some had acquired specific learning from the training materials provided for accredited programmes. Some referred to a 'journey' of learning and for one (Sandy), this was particularly related to her identity as a member of a minority group and the work she felt she had had to do on understanding herself, her emotions and her place in society. This was an example of how a research participant gained meaning about her emotional life from interpersonal-relationships with colleagues and from understanding the wider contextual resources within which she lived and worked (Layder 2006).

None referred to any probation specific training or education they had received on the issue of emotional literacy in practice. There was some evidence of a rather generalised fear of emotions within research participants that caused them to wish to suppress or hide feelings when they emerged; some, e.g. Robert, to the point of being able to largely exclude emotions from his practice. There was also further evidence of the use of metaphor to explain feelings. The section explored three different strategies employed by research participants to

manage and regulate their emotions in the workplace which were grouped under the headings of 'controlling', 'detaching' and 'integrating', with examples of each of these strategies and a critique offered. The overall conclusion of this section is that the choice of strategy for regulating and managing emotions in the workplace is a subjective one that depends on the research participants' previous life and work experiences and is largely unaided and unsupported by the organisation.

6.4: Building Relationships

6.4.1 Introduction

The first three sections of research findings have made reference to Layder's '*self as object of its own control*' (Layder 2004: 13), and examined the motivation, values, self-awareness and self-regulation of emotion within a group of probation workers. This section examines Layder's second focus of interpersonal energy; '*the ability to influence others and control them benignly*', and the associated objective of examining the ways in which research participants use their emotional skills to build relationships with offenders. This objective focuses on the domain of situated activity and, with reference to the theory of interpersonal control, examines the manner in which the research participants used their emotions to influence offenders (Layder 2006). It takes the last two elements of emotional literacy, 'social competence' and 'empathy' (Sharp 2001; Killick 2006), to frame what the research participants had to say about building relationships. It begins with a reference to the current expectations of staff working within NOMS; comparing the elements of emotional literacy with the stated requirements for the job (Ministry of Justice 2011). It goes on to examine the understanding and recognition by research participants of a range of emotions in the offenders they supervised. It refers to their use of empathy, the significance of getting emotionally close to offenders and of negotiating emotional boundaries to the relationship. It also considers their recognition of the importance of non-verbal communication in offenders, their use of intuition and the emphasis they placed on building a degree of trust

within the relationship in order to foster motivation or 'offender readiness' for change (Day, Casey et al. 2010, McNeill, Raynor et al. 2010). Building trust, negotiating practical and emotional boundaries and enabling disclosure from the offender, are seen as paramount in the accurate assessment and subsequent management of, risk (Kemshall 2008; Kemshall 2010), which is further developed in Section 6.5.

6.4.2 Social competence

As outlined in Section 2.6, the use of the relationship has been core to practice for most of the probation service's history although the introduction of a more prescriptive and procedural set of practice guidance through the evolution of the What Works movement led to it becoming 'back-stage' for a time. Seventeen of the research participants, without any particular prompting during the course of the interview, expressed views about the significance of the relationship in all the work they undertook with offenders (Amy, Tony, Indira, Kim, Robert, Victoria, Pat, Sandy, Maggie, Damien, Aruna, Sophie, Gill, Jai, Hannah, Nick and Karen). They provided many illustrations of how important they considered the whole process of building relationships. For example:

> *"…trying to get some sense of that person...establish a relationship with them...you're not going anywhere without that. A sense of them as a person..."* (Amy)

The concept of 'social competence' covers a range of interpersonal and social skills seen to be core to all forms of probation practice and with particular reference to the building of relationships. These skills include being able to listen with empathy, resolve conflict, negotiate, summarise, offer positive and constructive feedback and receive it oneself (Killick 2006). The socially competent person is considered to be;

> *"…better able to handle and understand relationships and resolve conflict and disagreements. Socially competent people demonstrate improvements in social problem-solving and cooperative behaviour..."* (Killick 2006:17)*.*

Many of these skills are taught as part of probation qualifying training and reinforced and guided through supervised practice (Knight 2002; Knight and Ward 2011). 'Social competence' is interwoven within the job requirements of probation officers and probation service officers (Appendix 13). None of the requirements specifies the ability to build and maintain relationships but it is difficult to conceive how else the worker could 'support offenders to change', or 'work effectively with others' or 'influence offenders to change harmful behaviour' without the medium of the relationship (Ministry of Justice 2011). It is argued throughout this thesis that a core element underlying these skills is the ability to recognise and respond to emotions in self and others and that this is at the heart of emotional literacy. Whilst research participants to the study made reference to a range of social skills and competencies that they used, the focus of this section is on their ability to understand and respond to emotions in offenders.

6.4.3 Recognising emotions in offenders

In order to begin the process of building a relationship, either consciously or unconsciously, it is suggested that the emotionally literate person seeks to recognise and respond to a range of emotions in the other person (Goleman 1995; Sharp 2001). On being asked to identify the range of feelings and emotions expressed by offenders, most research participants found this easier than when asked to identify their own feelings (Section 6.2). They struggled to think of 'positive' feelings expressed by offenders, identifying only nine themes in total including; happiness, kindness, curiosity, persistence, openness, relaxed, thoughtful, honest and compliant. In contrast, all four of Ekman's basic 'negative' emotions were described (Ekman 2004), with anger/rage/hate being the most prominent and identified by seventeen research participants. The second two largest negative categories were 'manipulation' and 'defensiveness', although manipulation is perhaps a strategy rather than a feeling. These were presented as approaches used consciously or unconsciously by offenders and seen by research participants to block or inhibit the genuine expression of emotions and to act as obstacles to productive work.

Linked to a strategy of manipulation was a range of offender 'feelings' described by the research participants such as disinterest, opinionated, sarcasm, stubbornness and blocking.

The following examples illustrate some of the ways in which research participants described the negative emotions they saw in offenders:

"…talking about sex offenders, there doesn't seem to be too much anger, there tends to be denial and blame, justification… minimalisation, quite a lot of that, trying to change the subject or manipulate you..." (Robert)

"Quite often I see that they get quite angry...not all...a couple of group members...I've only got experience based only on this one group...quite angry and defensive." (Kim)

"Anger… frustration… bitterness….can't be botheredness, whatever that might be, (laughs)… I can't think of the word for that, sometimes you know, disbelief, they can't believe they're really here, you know, emotions that are attached to denial… emotions that are attached to being a victim themselves…very rarely happy..." (laughs) (Victoria)

Some research participants saw these predominantly negative feelings as reflecting need and vulnerability:

"I suppose if I was to describe them generally I'd say they are quite a trusting bunch if you do your work right. They are needy, vulnerable... deviant obviously...defensive, sometimes they can be angry...not very often. Usually for not a long time..." (Michael)

"Early on in the process...fear and trepidation...lack of assurance about what is going to happen to them..." (Howard)

Other experienced sex offender workers also saw fear and anxiety behind the aggression and anger:

"They show...oftentimes quite a lot of hostility, anger, big chunks of resentment, fear, anxiety and sometimes they are quite difficult to read...so emotionally illiterate...and also have a huge amount invested in not showing anything to us or to each other...they are pretty closed down. But you can see the fear and anxiety...creeping out in places..." (Amy)

Research participants were dealing with, and interpreting, a great deal of negative emotion in offenders and their ability to respond positively to this seemed to require considerable empathy.

6.4.4 'Standing in their shoes' - empathy

Empathy was described by three of the research participants as 'standing in their shoes' (Michael, Amy and Tony), and viewed as a process of engagement in which they endeavoured to 'get alongside' the offender. Being able to 'stand in the shoes of' men who may have been publicly reviled for their crimes and expressing a complex range of negative feelings, remains a largely invisible process. Killick defines empathy as:

> *"Increased levels of social perceptiveness and improved ability in reading emotions and in sensitivity to others' feelings..."* (Killick 2006:17)

It is seen as a central dimension of the therapeutic relationship (Mearns and Thorne 2008). Bolton describes this as a 'gift' (Bolton 2005); something that is freely offered by staff in particular work contexts, but which can equally be withheld or not available. This has particular significance in the probation field given the punitive ethos within which the service operates and the level of negativity associated with offending (see Section 6.2.3). Howe identifies empathy as being about acceptance and non-judgmentalism which links to the emphasis placed on being non-judgmental by the research participants and discussed in Section 6.1 (Howe 2008). Empathic people are considered to be better at listening to each other and checking out or 'reading' the non-verbal signals that can provide evidence of the emotional temperature of the other. Empathy has been promoted in recent probation literature as a significant skill within probation practice (Farrow, Kelly et al. 2007; Cherry 2010). There is, however, little objective evidence to suggest that it is specifically encouraged, supported or quality controlled within the probation organisation although there is some recent evidence of a new research interest in this area (Knight and Clow 2010, Raynor, Ugwudike et al. 2010, Offender Engagement Team 2011).

Ekman (Ekman 2008), identifies four concepts related to empathy; 'emotion recognition', 'emotional resonance', 'compassion' and 'altruism'. These two research participants demonstrate a degree of compassion for the offenders they work with:

> *"You're the only one who seems to value them in any way, or spends time talking to them or treats them like a human being."* (Lynn)

> *"...but the main thing that I want people not to want to lose is their self-respect and their self-esteem and you know, that is probably the hardest thing to try and build up in other people..."* (Heather)

However, compassion or 'kindness' can be risky because it is based on a susceptibility to others, an ability to feel 'emotional resonance', a capacity to identify with the 'pleasures and sufferings' of others (Phillips and Taylor 2009). Putting yourself in someone else's shoes can be very uncomfortable although Phillips & Taylor argue that kindness also carries with it the capacity for great emotional satisfaction, which, as explored in Section 6.1 is a strong motivator, and builder of emotional resource for research participants to undertake this work. This is also reflected in the way that many of the research participants were able to engage with the humanity of the person through the use of empathy.

> *"People have a lot of baggage...to be aware of that…. show concern ...empathy..."* (Michael)

Michael is reflecting his awareness of the potentially damaging and disadvantaged backgrounds; 'the baggage' of the offenders he works with. From a phenomenological perspective (Dyson and Brown 2006; Husserl 2006), this highlights the significance for probation staff of being able to 'empathise' with pain and distress emanating from offenders although they are only permitted to do this in the context of addressing and challenging their unacceptable offending behaviour.

Angela saw empathy as a process that involved breaking down barriers, redressing the power imbalance and recognising the commonality of human

emotions. Robert recognised the importance of seeing the whole person and not just the offending part of their behaviour. Maggie provided an example of how challenging this could be:

"...yes, you know, you dragged her down the stairs and you ripped her hair out and you punched her, and you think like, 'Ooh!', but then when you meet them I suppose, ... you get to see the whole person rather than just that one aspect of them..." (Maggie)

Nick articulated how he had gradually learnt to 'read' or understand the negative emotions of offenders such that he now handles things differently. In this next instance he is responding to the frustration of a prisoner:

"I think that when I first experienced that, I found that very difficult to deal with and I think that all… offenders have different feelings about how they would want somebody to deal with that situation because for some it is just an outpouring of frustration … that has led to that point and … there was a case in point on Monday when he was crying and because he was being abusive as well, the easiest thing for me to have done would have been to say that because you are being abusive I am going to terminate the interview and I didn't want to do that for a number of reasons..." (Nick)

He went on to explain his understanding of the meaning of the distress and how he had learnt not to take it 'personally'. He is also demonstrating a rather more complex picture than Ekman's four concepts of empathy, in that whilst he is empathising he is also distancing and detaching himself a little.

"I have to be… sensible and … understand that when he is throwing that at you, the emotions, crying, and the anger that sometimes comes with it, is that it is not personal, I don't believe it is personal, I think sometimes you can perceive it to be personal but I don't think it is. I think sometimes you represent, you're the figurehead at the end of the day, and you sometimes just have to accept that it comes with the territory of the job." (Nick)

Nick is demonstrating how he has learnt to identify two different emotions in an offender (distress and anger/frustration) being expressed simultaneously. He implies that, with less experience, the challenge of being on the receiving end of this might have led him to respond to only one of the emotions (anger/frustration), to take it personally and to consider his own self-protection

by terminating the interview. He would probably have been supported in such an action by the Agency's Health and Safety policy, but instead he chose to regulate his own feelings, acknowledge his agency role, and reflect on the source of the feelings being expressed, demonstrating both compassion and altruism (Ekman 2008). The above example shows a worker acknowledging and containing the angry feelings of a prisoner. Other research participants gave examples of this 'acknowledgement' or 'validation' of feelings (Heather, Sandy, Indira and Angela). The ability to do this but not become overwhelmed with the intensity of the other's feelings is seen as a crucial counselling skill (Mearns and Thorne 2008).

Empathy was seen by some research participants as requiring a 'giving' of aspects of the self, which accords with Bolton's view of philanthropic emotion management (Bolton 2005), (Section 6.6). Amy, Gill and Karen all gave examples of how they recognised the significance of this in their work. It is identified in 6.2 as rooted in self-awareness or self-knowledge. The more depth to this knowledge the more awareness there is of the 'human condition'; a phenomenological perspective (Dyson and Brown 2006). In other words, not only is the worker aware of their own immediate life events and their accompanying emotions but they can locate them in a broader understanding of humanity (Hennessey 2011). The use of 'self' and of judicious 'self-disclosure' is seen to require skill and judgment; a careful balance needing to be maintained between self-disclosure for the benefit of the client/offender and self-disclosure that may be about the worker's own needs. The psychotherapeutic literature e.g. (Mearns 2005), provides guidance on the role of self-disclosure in counselling practice but there is little evidence that any consistent guidance on this is included in probation training or in supervised practice (Knight and Ward 2011). Also, as Nick's earlier comments suggest, the exercise of empathy in a probation context may be qualitatively different from that offered by a counsellor or therapist who endeavours to make themselves fully 'available' to a client (Mearns and Thorne 2008). Research participants in this study gave examples of practice in this respect.

"…absolutely and where appropriate I do share things with, you know… with offenders... if I feel it is going to help our … professional relationship...or they've got a worry about something, something that is obviously upsetting them and … you know can kind of be empathic to that because you're human too." (Victoria)

However, Sandy recognises the risks of giving away personal information that might lead the offender to take advantage of her:

"I mean I don't give very much of myself at all really, occasionally I might say that I drum, but that's it, I won't you know, and I'll talk about my car and that's it, occasionally mention that I've got a cat but that's it, never mention anything that could come back…." (Sandy)

Sandy is demonstrating her awareness of the importance of maintaining personal boundaries and judging when the sharing of mutual interests may be beneficial to the relationship or when it may stray into more risky territory. Gill indicates a lack of clear guidance from the agency about the appropriateness of self-disclosure and her need to work it out for herself. She sees it as a form of reciprocity, giving something back to the offender; giving enough to build a relationship but not enough to yield intimacy:

"...but sometimes you can feel that it is appropriate to share something on a personal level with the people you work with, we would probably be told that it is not allowed, that we shouldn't be doing that, but I think, you know, that it has to be down to that individual offender manager to weigh that up... we don't want the offender to feel sorry for us … but ... we've got to show that we are human, that we are not just emotionally dead inside and that we don't really give a monkeys, but you know, we ask them to turn up and sign a piece of paper that we ask them to sign…" (Gill)

If empathy is indeed a 'gift' then how workers decide when to offer it and when to withhold it, remains a largely subjective and unregulated process

6.4.5 Getting close

Some research participants provided evidence of the success they or others had had in building relationships with the most challenging and problematic people on their caseload. Three research participants made reference to the use of attachment theory in their work with sex offenders, and recognised that

some offending behaviour was related to failures in their early childhood attachments. They used this understanding to inform their belief in the importance of building strong emotional attachments with offenders. However, the extent to which it is appropriate to become emotionally close to offenders is far from straightforward.

Gill poignantly described the significance of getting close to a particular offender, although her response suggested some discomfort in admitting this. She described how, although she had felt they had a good relationship, she had been devastated when the offender took his own life and she had realised she did not know why:

> *"You do get close to some people you work with, it sounds really wrong, but I don't mean closeness like in… it's a working relationship and sometimes you can get closer to some people than to others because they allow you to, you know, and you can become, quite.. more so involved in their life if they are more sort of open and you meet the family and you meet the children, whereas some of them they'll come in and they won't tell you anything you know and for example I lost one of my offenders last year, he killed himself and I was very, very close to him."* (Gill)

Gill was anxious to qualify her use of the term 'close'. Her phrase "it sounds really wrong" reflects her later comments that her distress at his death was met with some surprise and questioning by some of her colleagues and even her partner; the implication being that she had perhaps breached boundaries in her relationship with this offender. She felt that she had formed a strong emotional bond with this man and that they had developed a mutual respect and trust from which they could work collaboratively on his issues. His sudden and unexplained death by suicide had left her distressed and bewildered. It seems that some of her colleagues and particularly her manager had been unable to support her sufficiently in grieving for the death of this man and in reflecting on the guilt she felt at missing key indicators of his underlying distress. She felt undermined by their reactions to her distress.

Some research participants cited examples of where the relationship had become of very great significance to the offender. For example, Damien was

able to recognise, albeit with some initial reluctance, that the relationship he had built with a particular offender had led to him becoming of central importance to this man:

> *"I asked him what was the most, what was really important for him in his life at the moment and he said I was... I was took by shock really and I thought, what's that about? and he said 'well you really are an important part of my life' because I come in, we spend time together blah, blah, blah, and I think I was kind of, suppose I almost brushed him away a bit, and took it as a, almost as joke if you like."* (Damien)

Mary described a rather more ambivalent emotional attachment towards some offenders; as inevitable and unsurprising but also with some fear that it might not be appropriate. She recognised the significance of such an attachment:

> *"...I know there shouldn't be but with some people there is an emotional attachment, if you've been working with someone for three or four years, if there isn't some sort of an emotional attachment there then I think there is something quite wrong, but I think that you have to very aware of it if there is that attachment there, it is a responsibility."* (Mary)

Victoria described occasions when she felt that the relationship was perhaps beginning to mean rather more to the offender than the professional boundaries dictated. However, once she found the courage to raise this with him she was reassured that her concerns were unfounded. The quote below gives an indication of the internal struggle she had prior to asking the question:

> *"I had a feeling and I thought I need really to kind of know this, this is a really important piece of information, so, but different to the first guy I talked to you about, I felt safe in doing it, I was kind of dreading the answer because then I would have to deal with that separately and I was worried about how I might feel about that..."* (Victoria)

Victoria uses the word 'safe' to indicate that in this particular relationship she did feel Roger's fourth element of permitting 'separateness' (Rogers 2004). She was nevertheless 'dreading' the answer, which suggests that had he declared strong feelings for her she would have struggled. Eight research participants made very explicit reference to their concerns about getting too close to offenders (Kim, John, Damien, Mary, Gill, Hannah, Karen and Lynn). Damien

articulates, with some hesitancy, his belief that he was drawn in 'too far' with one particular offender and what this meant for him:

> *"I did get quite, what's the word, quite attached to an offender in terms of the kind of relationship that we had … that I could see that he was doing so well, I was so, kind of pleased that this guy was doing so well and then… it all kind of fell to pieces …and I was really was quite distraught by it all ... I really felt so disappointed, so distressed and that was it for me then, that kind of…a level was drawn, of feelings of empathising so much with people and getting drawn into that, I couldn't go further anymore."* (Damien*)*

As a result of the strong bond developed with this particular offender, when the latter re-offended Damien felt enormously let down and disappointed. He felt he had become 'too close' to this particular offender and had therefore been very distressed when things had gone wrong; implied by his use of the metaphor 'fell to pieces'. Angela articulates her uncertainty about what are the general boundaries of emotional involvement with offenders:

> *"...so I actually found it even really difficult for that first time to actually say hello … you know, because I wasn't quite sure and I wasn't sure with the emotional literacy side how far do you go, sometimes you know, I don't want to get over emotionally involved. You know. …. well sometimes I think you can't help but get involved."* (Angela)

There was other evidence of how research participants tried to protect themselves from what they perceived to be undue emotional involvement for fear of 'collusion' with offenders; collusion being defined as a 'secret or illegal cooperation or conspiracy in order to deceive others' (Stevenson 2010). It is a concept that carries considerable weight within the police and prison systems where there is seen to be a risk of 'collusion' between workers and offenders around the potential for illegal activity (Harvey and Smedley 2010). Within the probation context collusion it is more likely to refer to values, attitudes and beliefs; the risk that the probation officer might collude with strong feelings and 'anti-social' beliefs supporting future offending (Cherry 2010).

In this next extract the risk of 'collusion' is related to becoming affected by the offender's unhappy early life experiences:

"…then they start to become… angry at their dad and they're wanting you to, not collude with them but they're really wanting you to say yes, but you are angry at them too, and you want to say 'well what a bastard' but you can't and you just have to nod along, but you are furious as to what they have gone through… you just have to sort of sit back and be careful of your language to be sure that you are not sort of agreeing or disagreeing with them, you are just understanding what they are saying…" (Mary)

This is a good example of how Mary is regulating and controlling a number of quite strong emotions aroused by the offender's narrative. She makes a distinction between 'collusion' and 'understanding'; the former suggesting an over-involvement in the emotional world of the offender, and the latter a more 'measured' response that contains the offender's anger rather than stoking it (Mearns and Thorne 2008).

Hannah has a different sort of dilemma which arises from her recognition of what she might have in common with certain offenders and her need to remind herself not to allow this to take over and lead her into closer emotional involvement than she believes to be appropriate:

"… a lot of the time people that you meet on the sex offender groups are not your typical offender so often I might have more in common with them in terms of background and work and things like that so … that does make it sometimes, easier to associate, because you have more in common with them so it is actually then with some people… I have got to be careful not to ... I want to say, not to like them too much." (Hannah)

When encouraged she goes on, albeit with a degree of embarrassment indicated through her non-verbal expressions, to explain the strategy she uses to remind herself of the need to maintain a degree of distance:

"I've got this man who committed...I mean he is a lovely guy, he is a very nice man and he is a very attractive man, he has got a really good job, he likes his hobbies which are similar to what I do and all those things so it would be easy for me if I met him in a pub you know I would have a brilliant conversation with him, he is that kind of person. But I call him the Tampon Man, because he committed horrendous offences on his step-daughter involving tampons and I just keep reminding myself he is Tampon Man." (Hannah)

The implication is that workers equate emotional closeness with the potential for collusion and risk being swayed by this liking away from being 'professional' and doing the job 'correctly'. These examples highlight some of the challenging issues that can arise in work with all offenders but particularly sex offenders, and the potential for transference and indeed counter-transference of feelings (Mearns and Thorne 2008). Research participants also acknowledged the difficulties for them in building relationships with some offenders, either because of the resistance they encountered from the offender or because the relationship had, in some way, become threatening or problematic for the worker. One research participant (Amy), acknowledged that her own emotional response to a particular man's behaviour meant that building a relationship with him was not going to happen. Offenders do not voluntarily enter into therapeutic relationships in the way that Rogers describes (Rogers 2004), and there can be enormous obstacles to building relationships with people who are resistant, angry, coerced and in many cases feeling powerless to influence the course of the relationship.

6.4.6 Negotiating boundaries

'Closeness' may be a good thing therapeutically but there are risks to both worker and offender if the 'closeness' breaches certain boundaries. Boundaries are seen to be essential in all professional 'helping' relationships (Mearns and Thorne 2008). In order to manage the 'contract' and the relationship between themselves and the offender effectively the probation workers needs clarity about the expectations and boundaries of this relationship (Hennessey 2011). Whilst National Standards (Ministry of Justice 2011), guide the worker in establishing the practical requirements of the contract there are additionally matters of transparency, clarity and honesty that can carry emotional issues within them, some of which are further explored in Section 6.5. Counsellors have to hold and maintain clear boundaries in their relationships with their clients but, with some notable exceptions (e.g. child protection issues), they are also bound by the duty of confidentiality and the therapeutic relationship to work

at the client's behest and within the confines of that relationship (Mearns and Thorne 2008).

Probation workers, as 'law enforcers', have to work primarily at the behest of the courts and the public in their work with offenders, and to take steps to deal with any 'breaches' of orders for which they are responsible. The power balance in probation relationships is significantly different from those within a counselling relationship where the client generally chooses and maybe also pays for the counsellor, and retains the power to terminate the relationship. The offender lacks this control. Probation workers following National Standards may have to return an offender to court for breach and re-sentencing which could involve imprisonment (Ministry of Justice 2011). The balance between 'law enforcer' and guardian of the official contract, and 'therapist' offering an emotional relationship through which the offender may learn to trust and change is struck, it seems, through trial and error, experience, judgment and discretion, and is largely idiosyncratic to each worker and offender.

Research participants talked about how they negotiated the boundaries of the relationship and managed the inter-face between themselves, the offenders and the accountability inherent in their role. It was possible to detect some of the ambivalence they felt in managing these tensions. The quote below shows Pat describing herself in a somewhat contradictory way as both tough and lenient. She distinguishes her current role from the former 'social work' role and also indicates a willingness to accept the consequences of enforcement:

> *"I can usually get quite a good working relationship, I'm very tough but fair, they know where they stand from the beginning, you know I'm quite lenient but I've been called that, but no hesitation in so they know I think, where they stand… I am an enforcer, I am not a social worker kind of probation officer."* (Pat)

Pat is clearly associating social work with a 'softer' approach than probation and fails to make connections with the enforcement role of social work in, for example, child protection cases and mental health.

Sophie identifies her preference for the clarity imposed by the particular boundaries of license supervision:

"When you're supervising people on licence… I am actually happier doing that because there is a clear relationship right from the start, this is it, you know, I am your offender manager and I will be the person to breach you if you whack up..." (Sophie)

Whilst setting the contractual boundaries, such as expectations of attendance, and behaviour may be relatively straightforward, setting the 'emotional' boundaries is quite tricky territory to negotiate and may have to evolve as the relationship develops and as trust begins to build:

"I think sometimes the boundaries if you like, that you need in terms of trying to work with someone, ideally have to be set very early in the work relationship, but that is not always possible because what happens over the course of a working relationship is that you get to know people's personalities and different people do have different working styles and personalities and sometimes their engagement changes with you over the course of a number of weeks and … sometimes at the start it can be almost quite confrontational and very, you know, stilted and then over a period of weeks you get to know them...because they don't trust you, which I think is the biggest issue. What they say or how they interact with you is influenced by their knowledge of you" (Nick)

Whilst this refers to clarity about the implications of sharing information there can also be more personal issues at stake when boundaries are being considered and this relates back to fine judgments around of self-disclosure:

"...well for me it is knowing my own boundaries, I know my own boundaries…… because I don't think everybody does ... in terms of the personal information you give out and your emotional boundaries, so that you will know that if you are angry you are not going to take it out on somebody and that, within that, so that you know you can work safely with somebody because that's what I see as.. missing now, because a lot of people don't have those boundaries and tell clients all sorts of things, you just think, oooh…. and … the way they… people are around clients, a bit like mates and actually we're not, we've got a professional role to fulfil, and a professional function which doesn't mean that you can't have empathy or be kind or any of those things but you do need to have some sort of barrier there and that you've got to know otherwise you are in danger, at risk and you put the other person at risk and I think that's what I see is an issue." (Sandy)

Sandy is expressing her concern about colleagues who she feels lack clarity about personal boundaries and sometimes over-step them. Damien has concerns about his own relationships:

> *"I've got a couple at the moment which I feel want to….want me to be more than their probation officer in terms of you know, they almost want me to be their friend …"* (Damien)

Damien's fear may be of over-stepping an emotional boundary of intimacy and where this might lead, or a behavioural boundary related to how they associate with one another. Probation workers build relationships with offenders often over quite lengthy periods and it is unsurprising that mutual liking and indeed affection can grow within some of these relationships. The key issue is how the boundaries are maintained and protected.

6.4.7 Non-verbal communication

As highlighted in Section 6.2 the non-verbal aspects of communication in building relationships and engaging offenders in the change process were referred or alluded to by a significant number of research participants (Michael, Amy, Indira, Victoria, David, Sandy, Maggie, Damien, Aruna, Sophie, Gill, Jai, Geoff, Hannah, Nick, Karen). Some of their comments suggest that they are able to 'read' the clues given through body language that identify engagement or disengagement by offenders with the learning process. According to research undertaken by Mehrabian, 55% of our communication is conveyed through non-verbal means, 7% by our tone of voice and 7% by the content of the words, this is apparently of particular significance when people are talking about their feelings and attitudes (Mehrabian 1972). It is also suggested that if there is a lack of congruence between someone's verbal and non-verbal communication people are more prepared to believe the latter. People's gestures, facial expressions and other non- verbal behaviours are all seen to give indications of what the other person is feeling or of their intentions and a lack of congruence can indicate insincerity and lead to an erosion of trust (Thompson 2009). The 'reading' or understanding of non-verbal cues from the

offenders was not a question directly asked of research participants but a number explained how they understood or become aware of the emotional state of the offender by these cues.

One of the experienced group workers articulated how she used a method she called 'scanning' to check out what was going on in the group. This skill was not one identified in the sex offender programme manual, but she had learnt from experience the importance of checking the 'emotional temperature' of the group by looking at body language and facial expressions. If she noticed any evidence of discomfort, or lack of interest, or agitation, for example, she would bring this to the notice of her co-worker so that attention could be given to it at an appropriate moment:

> *"Once we know from eye contact and body language...we are very good at scanning round the room...this lends itself to have a much more personal dialogue with the men. As co facilitator...if we see a man in distress we'll bring him out of the room. Although we've made an original judgement about them...they can't anticipate or we can't gauge how emotionally engaged they are."* (Indira)

She went on to explain how she would raise such an issue with her co-worker in a way that did not create a major distraction or interrupt his leading of the group, but indicated that there was an issue that needed attention. Several other research participants also gave very clear examples of how they 'read' the nuances of non-verbal interaction and looked for signs of disengagement or disenchantment with the group process:

> *"One of the guys was new, unusually quiet and sat forward and he was really relaxed and reading everything that was on the board and really taking it in and watching us and looking at us and making a lot of eye contact and I thought, you're really listening, and then,* (laughs) *another guy was like this with his arms folded and I thought… there's a blockade there, you could see his eyes were like wandering and he was huffing and puffing and that sort of thing, not interested at all."* (Maggie)

Of significance in the general 'identification' of emotions was the number of workers who described how they 'reflected back' or 'mirrored back' to the offenders what they observed to be happening in the interview or the group

work context. This generally related to non-verbal cues rather than the content of what was being said. So for example, in the case of an offender whose non-verbal signals were of disinterest, or annoyance, or upset, the worker might make an observation such as 'you seem to be finding this a bit difficult' or 'I can see that you are not happy with what has just been said, do you want to say what is going on for you…?' This recognition of, and passing back of, a 'feeling' seemed to be quite a skilful practice that was primarily articulated by the experienced group workers, although some other workers, in one-to-one situations, also recognised the importance of 'reflecting back' rather than 'absorbing' the emotional reactions of the offender.

> *"One of the things I do try and do, is I try and reflect back emotionally what I'm getting from people. So I'm quite keen on reflecting back... 'it seems as if" or 'I've noticed you are doing this I was wondering how aware you are of that' and...'why do you think that might be'...and then discussing that with that person..."* (John)

In other examples research participants showed how they checked out their initial judgments about the non-verbal behaviour recognising that sometimes they might misread this. For example, they might suspect boredom, or unhappiness at being in the group, but on asking discovered it was more to do with tiredness (Victoria). Geoff gave examples of other non-verbal cues such as sweating, or flushing, recognising that the person concerned may not himself know or understand his physiological reactions to what was going on for him and it might need some careful exploration. Aruna recognised that clues about agitation in an offender needed to be handled carefully if the situation was not to escalate. Jai was aware of how offenders could emotionally 'leave' the programme, if the clues of disengagement were not picked up:

> *"There is kind of like a lot of that going on there, or fixed staring at the board, or they're here in body but they are not here in person, and if, you don't understand what is going on, that they are just disengaging, that it is a behavioural problem… and if you have a different interpretation of it and this is really difficult to press the button and they have just taken themselves off out of here, that is their coping strategy."* (Jai)

Accurate reading and understanding of non-verbal cues can be enabling for offenders in discharging some of the tension and distress they may be endeavouring to hold in. Nick gives an example of a situation when he made a conscious choice to respond to these cues knowing that in itself this also carried a risk of exposing very strong feelings that he would then have to deal with:

> "…he had come to the meeting very agitated. You could see that from the minute he walked in through the door. The prison officer said that to me, 'I could see from the minute he walked through the door and knew this was not going to go well'. I looked at his eyes and I looked at his face because you know you can, I mean, sometimes you don't have to be that perceptive to see in somebody how aroused, you know somebody is, and I knew from that sort of minute but …, if I did anything positive out of that I enabled him to go, okay, I think he released a lot of incredible amount of anger and frustration, and I might not want to hear it but then I also think to myself, where does he take that if he doesn't direct it at me?" (Nick)

This is in contrast to what might be termed the 'Health and Safety' approach that some research participants referred to either in themselves or in colleagues they had observed, where the interview was terminated because of the level of the offender's emotional arousal and the worker's unwillingness to deal with it. However, here this is an acknowledgement by the worker that the anger was coming from elsewhere and needed an outlet, if it wasn't to spill out into other areas.

> "He just mentioned it to me in passing and I mentioned it to my co-worker. When we were doing a piece of work we started to realise that …his offence was against his own daughter. I said 'are you okay?' At this point he broke down...he hadn't wanted to be the monster...there were things he didn't want to do but he'd started to do. How aware he was...you make all your decisions in your waking moments but the extent of awareness...you can be listening and listening...what connections he was making I don't know." (Indira)

6.4.8 'Having a sixth sense' - intuition

Another element of emotional literacy sometimes referred to as 'intuition', 'gut feelings' or having a 'sixth' sense came through in the data. Some research participants referred to having these feelings about what was actually going on under the surface (Indira, Sandy, Karen and Amy).

"Having that sixth sense...or anticipating in advance who are the likely candidates to find the work a bit more challenging..." (Indira)

Indira uses it to reflect on the needs of particular offenders whereas Sandy, in this instance, is using it to take care of herself:

"...that has taken me a long time to get there, I mean I have a really strong gut instinct, I suppose I you know, I mean my psychic ability, intuition whatever you want to call it, so I need to know when I need to protect myself..." (Sandy)

Sandy is referring to situations in which she may be in some personal danger and she trusts her intuition more than other forms of judgement in such instances. This highlights some of the challenging issues that can arise in work with all offenders but particularly sex offenders. Karen relates it back to body language:

"Well… they will be looking around, sometimes they will yawn, … they are desperately trying to be engaged, body language... silence... I am also quite intuitive about picking things up between men...when one man is frustrated with another man, ... and then I know that I need to intervene if one man is talking too much, so … it is not just co-facilitating, it is watching the other group members as well." (Karen)

Prins refers to 'having a 'hunch' (Prins 1999). Gladwell defines it as the 'adaptive unconscious', the part of the brain that leaps to conclusions (Gladwell 2005). He argues this should not be confused with Freud's concept of the unconscious, but rather as an inbuilt 'computer' that is able to process information very rapidly and can sometimes offer better judgements than the more ponderous and mechanical processes that are frequently used within a managerial context. Whilst 'gut' feelings are felt by both men and women, 'intuition' is more commonly associated with femaleness; a 'woman's intuition', and it holds a mixed press, with a sometimes innate suspicion of this kind of rapid cognition (Gladwell 2005). When associated with a 'common sense' approach to life it is generally seen to be a useful check in a range of situations. 'My gut feeling told me it wasn't safe to enter the room'….etc. It can also be derided as lacking logic or rationality and as being of dubious use in a

professional work setting. In this context it has some associations with the concept of 'emotion' and 'being emotional' (see Section 6.2). Within a psychotherapeutic relationship, 'intuition' or identification of feelings generated within the therapist by the client is seen to be highly significant (Rogers 2004). Prins has identified it as a key tool in risk assessment and cites a former chief inspector of probation:

> *"I learned to trust my instincts (if a person frightened me he was probably dangerous) and to go with that knowledge until I had analysed it for what it was worth..."* (Sir Graham Smith, a former HM Chief Inspector of Probation cited in Prins 1999:144).

6.4.9 Building trust

The significance of building 'trust' within the worker/offender relationship was referred to by seven of the research participants as key to effective relationships (Amy, Indira, Gill, Karen, Jai, Nick and Heather). Trust is a fluid and broad concept; for example an offender might be trusted to carry out certain tasks with reliability but not trusted in terms of potential reoffending. Offenders might find a worker trustworthy in that they are sincere and consistent, but they may not trust them to not 'breach' them or recall them to prison.

Some research participants were very upfront about their decision to trust offenders, by which they meant 'trusted' to tell the truth about their lives (Indira and Heather):

> *"We always validate the positive factors. In the first place unless they prove me wrong I'll trust them...I believe them unless they give me a reason not to... I will receive information and also I'll have no reason to disbelieve the offender unless there are inconsistencies in their account."* (Indira)

By showing empathy the worker has a route into building trust from and to the offender but Mearns warns that the establishment of trust in a relationship is a delicate and complex process and that in cases where the therapist is demonstrating great empathy the client may reveal too much, too quickly (Mearns and Thorne 2008). Heather demonstrates her understanding of how

meaningful this trust can be, and the compassion and altruism she had invested in the relationship(s), which has built her own store of emotional resource:

"I just think that, I don't think we can pay one another a greater compliment than doing that, and that when people, particularly people who have not had that experience of trust in others, which a lot of our clients haven't had, a lot of relationships that they've been in have not been trusting ones and when they trust you enough... the girlfriend had said that she thought that I really cared what happened to them and I did, and it really mattered to me that they felt that…so when people trust you and let you in, in that sort of way, I … think that is what has kept me in it all these years." (Heather)

Others identified that to build this trust required time;

"They don't trust you, first and foremost when they first meet you, so they are going to be cautious in terms of what they do demonstrate to you, both emotionally and in terms of their attitudes, so they weigh that, ...they sometimes use that situation and weigh it up over a number of weeks." (Nick)

"...you are trying to relate to them so that, and you know, that is how you build relationships with people, you open up to them and hopefully you know, that trust that they are looking at from you, I mean we don't need it from them but a lot of them need it from us, a lot of them have had such unstable lives where they have never really been given any time, not been paid attention to, not that they crave it, but they may find that in you and like I said that can be a really, really long road." (Gill)

Gill also considered that in some instances there would be offenders who could never be trusted, which suggests the worker makes a judgment about this.

From the offender perspective, Mearns et al identify what they refer to as the 'hardened' client who may have been in touch with a range of helping agencies before and be more resistant to establishing trust in the relationship or may be quick to discern inauthenticity, whether it exists in reality within the worker or not. The suggestion is that the client may want to gauge the counsellor's genuineness and willingness to engage in a non-defensive manner (Mearns and Thorne 2008). The establishment of trust might also be viewed as a risky commitment for any offender to make given the punitive ethos of the system

and the risk of their trust being 'breached' through the enforcement procedures of the agency.

6.4.10 Conclusion

This section has explored some of the emotional components involved in building relationships with offenders within the parameters of the legal and professional requirements of community orders. Whilst all research participants to the study identified relationships as important some were more willing or able than others to dig below the surface of the 'contractual' elements of the relationship as laid down in policy and reflect on the emotional challenges and contradictions inherent in this process. Issues of understanding emotions in others, not allowing your own emotions to intervene too powerfully, demonstrating empathy, getting close and building trust, whilst negotiating and maintaining boundaries are all emotional processes that these research participants identified. What is perhaps most revealing is how variable and unguided these emotional processes are, with research participants endeavouring to find their own, individual and subjective routes through. The research participants to this study generally saw emotional connections as positive and constructive, whilst recognising their power to be used in a negative manner. They demonstrated a degree of subtlety and complexity in the way they managed the empathic components of the worker/offender relationship. They were actively negotiating the tension between relationship building and the obligations to enforce compliance within a community order.

What is not evident from this data is the extent to which any offender really has a choice to resist such emotional relationships with workers. There may be a risk that an aloofness from engaging emotionally with a worker, could lead to a judgement by the worker of non-co-operation or non-engagement with the treatment programme.

6.5: Managing the change process and enforcing orders

6.5.1 Introduction

The previous section examined how the research participants built relationships with offenders and how they used a range of emotional processes to facilitate this. This section continues to examine Layder's second focus of interpersonal energy *'the ability to influence others and control them benignly'* (Layder 2004). It offers some illustration of how the research participants used these emotional processes to negotiate the procedures involved in managing community orders, including assessing risk, and working to reduce the risk of reoffending of the offenders they worked with, which represents some interesting challenges. Reference is made to those procedures set out in the Offender Management Model (OMM) (NOMS 2006), that the research participants perceived as containing particular emotional elements. These include how offenders are enabled and encouraged to disclose significant information about themselves that informs their risk assessment; some of the ambivalence felt by the research participants in handling these disclosures; how they 'challenged' the offender's behaviour in the process of managing risk, and how open and transparent they were able to be in the 'enforcement of orders'.

This section continues to examine social reality primarily at the level of 'situated activity' (Layder 2006). The influence that the worker brings to bear on an offender within the context of a community order, is largely mediated through the medium of the relationship where meaning is created about the nature of the order, the implications of failing to comply with the terms of the order, and the gains to be achieved from engaging with the learning inherent in the order.

6.5.2 Effective practice

Two of the key principles in the effective practice agenda for working with offenders are those of 'responsivity' and 'risk' (Chapman & Hough 1998). The 'responsivity principle' sets the context for addressing the risk principle. The 'risk principle', has become central to the work of probation, with practitioners

required to assess the risk of dangerousness and the risk of re-offending (Kemshall 2008; Kemshall 2010). How the research participants used their skills of emotional literacy in the furtherance of these two principles are examined in this section. Significant to these themes is an understanding of offenders as 'learners' as well as recipients of compulsory 'treatment'. The inference of court-mandated attendance on accredited programmes that address offending behaviour, is that offenders will be 'shown' or instructed on, the correct and pro-social way to think and behave. What is sometimes overlooked is that teaching and learning are different concepts and that in order for a programme to achieve the most effective outcomes and to create lasting change, the offender has to be ready for and responsive to learning. This is supported by a core value of probation that people have the capacity to change through their own volition (Canton 2011). Educational theory highlights the factors that promote learning and they are almost without exception related to openness, safety, positive emotions, mutual support and respect. Coercion or manipulation in the learning process may achieve short term compliance but is unlikely to achieve long term change.

6.5.3 Responsivity and motivation

As outlined in the literature review responsivity is defined as those characteristics of an individual offender that are likely to influence how they will respond to a treatment programme and can include their motivation and the attention given by the worker to any diversity issues they may have (Chapman and Hough 1998; Farrow, Kelly et al. 2007). Responsivity is the least theorised of the three principles of 'risk, need and responsivity'. However, workers are taught how to 'motivate' offenders towards change (Miller and Rollnick 2002).

As the previous section highlighted, motivation can be built through the medium of a supportive and enabling relationship and much of the intervention involves challenging or highlighting discrepancies in the offender's thinking and understanding about their offending behaviour. Additionally building motivation to change may require some acknowledgement by the worker of the offender's

background, including his or her own potential or actual 'victim' status. This can be an important component in the approach taken by practitioners to the idea of 'offender readiness to change' (Canton 2011). An assumption is frequently made within the popular press, and also within much political debate, that offenders are the 'villains', victims are the innocent parties and that a sharp distinction can be drawn between the law-abiding majority and the (relatively) few who prey on them (Canton 2011). The reality facing probation workers is far more complex than this and includes the need to understand that a significant number of offenders referred to the probation service, come from disadvantaged, chaotic, and sometimes violent backgrounds where experience of abuse, poverty and discrimination at many different levels is common.

The following research participant demonstrates her understanding of the potential for this dichotomy and the fact that the decision to work with either or both of these 'identities' inherent in the service user, is rarely straightforward. Whilst the role of the probation officer is to 'challenge the offending behaviour', which in most cases means placing the focus directly on the culpability of the offender for their behaviour, this can be difficult if the offender is consumed with feelings of his or her own 'victimhood'. In this instance the research participant is referring to sex offenders:

> *"Through that work I found that some of the men who offended were victims themselves …dual status … victims and offenders. So that meant different types of support than for the men who just had this one sex offender status. The conflict in the groups was do you pay attention to the offender or victim status?"* (Indira)

The need to balance the confrontational, or holding to account for behaviour, with the need to engage with and motivate an offender towards change requires, according to Day et al, an acknowledgment of 'his' individual circumstances, life history and own perceptions of why he behaves in this way (Day, Casey et al. 2010). However, a number of research participants re-framed the concept of offenders as potential 'victims' to a 'poor me' syndrome which they perceived as offenders feeling sorry for themselves and being unwilling to engage with offence focused work. For these workers this recourse

to a 'victim' status by the offender was seen as a ploy to avoid engagement with the main focus of the intervention or as a manipulation to divert the worker (Kim, Howard, John, Pat and Hannah). Kim explains the difficulties she experiences sometimes between her natural urge to be compassionate and her fear that this might convey the wrong message to the offender:

> "...in terms of the fact if I'm seeing people upset my instinct is to comfort so I have to be very careful... you are not feeding into the 'poor me' ...I think you should acknowledge them... ...but it's ... important to detach ...you fear you might be colluding with that individual or feeding in to their 'poor me' stance that they might have - or if it's not genuine you might be demonstrating to them that you are allowing them to manipulate you..." (Kim)

Howard associates evidence of mental ill-health with a tendency to be self-absorbed:

> "Yes...if they are depressive...it makes me think they are demonstrating 'poor me' and makes me ask questions about...'what's that about?'" (Howard)

John explains how his own feelings can come to the fore when he perceives the unwillingness of offenders to motivate themselves for change:

> "But I think it can be frustrating as well...people who present as a very kind of 'poor me' ...have a victim approach to their offending and life-style. It can be very frustrating to work with people who find it difficult to motivate themselves to make changes." (John)

Hannah admits with some honesty that she has less sympathy for sex offenders, particularly when they present as self-absorbed:

> "I am I think quite good at empathising with them and try to see what they are going through, but I must say that, especially if they are sex offenders, I always think, 'well...Tough!'... it sounds really, really rotten but maybe that is an added way of dealing with it, and as long as it is not a lot of 'poor me, poor me' stuff which you get a lot because that I don't have a lot of time for if it continues... " (laughs) (Hannah)

And Pat acknowledges her irritation:

"…there's always some tears ... it's always self-pity though of course, oh poor me, poor me I've suffered, I do find that quite irritating to be fair …and I do… struggle…to be sort of sympathetic in that circumstance …to be fair, so that's another emotion I have to struggle with, irritation..." (laughs) (Pat)

The common use of the term 'poor me' suggests this may be part of a collective understanding that workers bring to their practice. These research participants will be supported by their agency and the policy on managing community orders, in having little time for offenders who present as 'self-pitying', given their main task is to challenge the offending behaviour. Where this line is drawn in terms of tolerance or even sympathy for the 'victim status' of the offender is variable:

"I can deal much more with straightforward aggression and anger and … what-have-you, but the sort of the moaners and the whiners, and the poor me-ers, I really, even they might be entitled to feel that, who am I to say that they are not? But I recognise that ...I have to name it and I have to actually say, look you know … 'Honeybunch, is it my fault that you are here?'" (Heather)

However, as Indira indicated above, if sex offenders have experienced sexual abuse themselves, then a failure to engage on any level with this early abuse is likely to inhibit their ability to respond to a programme that demands they take responsibility for their own behaviour. Literature from the educational field would suggest that in order to learn well, people need to have their own perspectives and positions acknowledged (Chamberlayne 2004). If all avenues for the expression of their distress are shut down to the offender, they may be unresponsive or not 'ready' for change. Not all people who commit offences of violence have themselves been abused although it is likely that they will have witnessed violence in their earlier lives (Morran, Wolf-Light et al. 2011). It is suggested that the worker needs to be open to the potential for this, which can be particularly challenging in work with domestic violence offenders:

"Practitioners have indicated..., that their experience of engaging with domestic violence offenders on programmes faces them with a quality of resistance to engagement quite unlike their other experiences. While it is distinctly possible that this is a characteristic of angry or ashamed or

callous men themselves, resistance is also diminished or enhanced by the quality of the connection or relationship between the man and the worker."
(Day, Casey et al. 2010:29)

As explored in Section 6.7 some of the research participants found working with domestic violence offenders the most difficult of all the work they undertook. This related to both the nature of the offending; the abusive behaviour towards women, and the men's general 'unreadiness' to change and confront their own behaviour, supported in their beliefs by a society where patriarchy and misogyny continue to have credibility (Romito 2008). Engagement with the potential 'victim-status' of these men is particularly challenging and in many cases actively discouraged (Dobash, Dobash et al. 2000). Whilst the rationale for this is clear; these men need to take responsibility for their misogynistic behaviour, a shutting down of all avenues for them to explore their own early experiences of violence, may limit their ability to be ready to change (Day, Casey et al. 2010).

In a counselling context, Mearns and Thorne's five elements that can indicate a 'low' state of readiness to change are all of relevance in the struggle probation workers often have to engage offenders in a change process:

• Indecision about wanting to change

• General lack of trust for others

• Unwillingness to take responsibility for self in life

• Unwillingness to take responsibility in counselling

• Unwillingness to recognise or explore feelings.

(Mearns and Thorne 2008:161)

In a probation context, particularly when there is a high risk of reoffending and of further serious harm, the balance between emotional support and encouragement to change (benign interpersonal emotional control) and coercion, which starts to move into Layder's 'manipulative and exploitative'

forms of emotional interpersonal control, may be problematic both in practice and in the monitoring of practice (Layder 2004).

6.5.4 Disclosure and risk assessment

In addition to building the motivation for change, emotional literacy can be significant in enabling disclosure that relates to future risk (risk assessment). Disclosure is what probation workers aim for in their initial assessments of risk in the reports they are required to prepare for court, parole and pre-release hearings etc., but it can also be a key factor in future risk assessments. Whilst the report writer usually has access to the depositions and therefore has knowledge of the details of the conviction and the various witness statements and testimonies, the perceptions and beliefs of the offender about the reasons for their behaviour are also crucial in assessing risk, judging culpability and planning an appropriate intervention (Harrison 2010).

One of the requirements of the worker undertaking the assessment and any subsequent intervention is to enable the offender to describe, and ultimately take some ownership of, their offending behaviour and accept responsibility for the harm they have caused (Farrow, Kelly et al. 2007). For some this may be an instantaneous process based on genuine remorse and a sense of guilt; for others this may only be gradually drawn out over a period of time. For others their willingness to accept responsibility may never be forthcoming; for example because they believe or claim themselves to be innocent of the offence or because their sense of 'victimhood' is overriding all other considerations. The offender may in fact become subject to greater degrees of surveillance and control the more 'risk' he/she reveals through disclosing personal information. His/her resistance to disclosure could be interpreted as 'lack of co-operation' or as a rational decision to resist the imposition of even greater control by the 'system'. Given that sexual offending is viewed as especially shameful and abhorrent, the offender may have their own reasons for resistance; the only power available to them in an unequal relationship. Motivational interviewing skills (Fuller and Taylor 2003), pro-social modelling (Cherry 2010), the skills of

emotional literacy and the quality of the relationship, are all tools available within the practice repertoire to encourage the offender to work through a process of minimisation and denial, as confirmed by Victoria:

"...it's really important, but we have got a really good professional relationship and you know since then he has disclosed lots of other things for me, not for me, but to me, which have been really useful in managing his risk." (Victoria)

John took pleasure in the relationship because of the obvious and positive impact it was having in enabling the offender to disclose crucial information as well as satisfying agency demands in terms of public protection:

"I was working with someone yesterday...who is very reticent to discuss aspects of his offending but he has been able to step back and take a hard look at aspects of his offence and lifestyle at the time and he seems genuinely able to do that...very rewarding...therapeutic relationship almost non-forensic...he seems to have accepted he can tell me stuff within reason...things we already know about...and it's not going to impact badly on him...the more he is able to share and reflect and demonstrate some insights…the more reassured the service is going to be..." (John)

John comments that 'it's not going to impact badly on him' so has already made a judgement that disclosures by this particular offender are unlikely to increase his risk of increased monitoring, breach or recall. However, personal disclosure may not always be as straightforward as this. The process of risk assessment continues throughout the life of the order and will be influenced by any future disclosure on the part of the offender. The depth and quality of the information about themselves that offenders are likely to share with their workers was seen by three of the research participants as very strongly dependent on the quality of trust that has been built up (Gill, Nick and John), and as explored in Section 6.4 trust, or a belief in the respective sincerity of the partners, is an important element in building relationships.

Many sexual offenders embark on programmes of change in heightened states of denial and resistance (Marshall and Barbaree 1990). Depending on the skill of the group worker or offender manager, this resistance can be eroded with a growing awareness and acceptance of responsibility by the offender or, if this

skill is lacking there may be an increasing resistance and refusal to accept responsibility with a perceived heightened risk of further offending. This research participant recognised the particular difficulties of expecting disclosure in an accredited group work programme environment where there were constant changes of membership and therefore a lack of trust in the group:

> "…it is cognitive behavioural, but, I think it is more educational really… and also because it is modular-based, you will have different people coming in on different modules, trust can't be established in the same way. I think for change to take place, if you are exposing behaviour that you feel ashamed about then trust has to be there..." (Jai)

Indira understood the importance of reflecting back what she had heard in order to aid the offender's own comprehension of the seriousness of his behaviour:

> "They are also very shocked. They've come to realise the extent of their behaviour when you reflect it back to them. In order for me to note it down I'll say to them, 'so you're telling me that after a while you became sexually attracted to…. ' 'And took this and this measure'… 'Have I understood you rightly?' They'll realise fully what they've done." (Indira)

Perhaps one of the most difficult areas to negotiate for the worker is the permission to the sex offender to disclose sexual fantasies about potential harm to victims, which they may not have previously shared with anyone else (Ward, Polaschek et al. 2006). There is also an acknowledged risk that the offender may gain vicarious sexual pleasure simply from the act of telling, and the worker may become unwittingly caught up in complex counter-transference issues (Schaverien 2006). As indicated in Section 6.3 only one research participant made reference to the potential for sexual feelings in workers; acknowledging such feelings may be harder than acknowledging other emotions. Ward et al suggest that skilled workers should be able to encourage these revelations, hear the unpleasant associations, and challenge the distortions, whilst also supporting and not condemning the offender through this process (Ward, Devon et al. 2006). This is a very challenging set of requirements.

Pat identified the need to be very direct with an offender but even when there was evidence of him being disingenuous she still endeavoured not to impose a

judgment on him. She clearly had sympathy for the men she worked with despite their offences, and recognised the difficulties for some of these men in having to talk about very personal and intimate matters with a person in authority.

> *"I don't want to generalise but a lot of that group, are quite vulnerable a lot, I think most of mine are really, feeling isolated, vulnerable, not very, not good at interaction skills… some aren't of course, … some are quite clever… think they are cleverer than you, and then it's very, very difficult because they want to buck the system. But some are quite… I've got one in court today, you know, he went on the web and was masturbating on the web to people xxxx caught him and it was a young child, he is really, in my interview with him today and he is one those that are really, really shy, really difficult person to, and you have to talk about such personal things in that hour… you know."* (Pat)

However, this does pose its own issues for workers who may have difficulties in listening to these revelations:

> *"…particularly one of my sex offenders was talking to me about the offence, and this was some way into the order… and obviously disclosure, and there were things in there… that… I didn't feel particularly comfortable with… but I had to kind of, not be emotional and not do the behaviour and keep that in and be professional about it so that, sometimes I find that difficult, to you know, deal with, …and obviously I am a human being … and I do have feelings and reactions to certain things …"* (Victoria)

Victoria is offering some insight into how complex and tricky such disclosure in relation to sexual behaviour can be to negotiate. As indicated earlier, sex offenders have many reasons not to disclose and to be particularly sensitive to any indications of negative or stereotypical labelling, hostility or lack of empathy from the worker (Roberts and Baim 1999, Ward, Devon et al. 2006). The preliminary evaluation of disclosures following mandatory polygraph testing has identified the significance of an effective working relationship based on trust and confidence and that offenders were less likely to disclose information if the practitioner displayed a negative emotional response, for example shock (Wood, Kemshall et al. 2010). Victoria may, unwittingly, have been demonstrating some of her discomfort to the offender through non-verbal indicators. Probation staff may have their own reasons for not wishing, or being

able, to hear disclosure of this nature including; their own lack of knowledge about sexual matters, unresolved issues around their own sexuality, early and unresolved experiences of abuse and associated feelings of embarrassment, fear, anger or disgust (Wood, Kemshall et al. 2010). Put together these obstacles to disclosure can be insurmountable and there are risks that worker and offender enter into a collusive relationship of mutual denial and minimisation about the serious nature of the offending (Prins 1999), or a conflictual relationship of challenge and withdrawal, neither of which is helpful in the disclosure and change process (Ward et al 2006).

6.5.5 Ambivalent investment

A further layer of complexity relates to managing contrasting and sometimes conflicting 'positions' and feelings at the same time; best described as 'managing ambivalence'. A worker may experience an offender's distress but also his accompanying abusive behaviour and language (e.g. Nick). A worker may grow to like particular offenders but have to constantly remind herself of the appalling crimes that they may have committed (e.g. Hannah). A worker may be angry or disappointed with the failure of a particular offender to learn from a group intervention but at the same time remember that this person has deep-rooted difficulties with self-image and status. A worker may feel he has built a strong relationship with a particular offender only to be faced in an interview session with resentment, hostility and prejudice when he seeks to blame the worker for some perceived failure of resources or support (e.g. Damien). Kaplan describes this sense of ambivalence as a situation in which an individual has the opportunity to simultaneously indicate both a favourable and an unfavourable attitude towards a given stimulus (Kaplan 1972).

Prins describes this as 'ambivalent investment' (Prins 1999). He suggests that this operates in three ways:

1. "*The worker may not have resolved earlier problems of having to come to terms with any revulsion and fear felt, and the result of this is to blind the*

workers to the realities of the case and make them unable to take the necessary steps to overcome blockages in therapeutic engagement

2. *Even if the worker has overcome this he or she then has to face the fact that they carry a great burden of responsibility for the welfare of the offender on the one hand and the community on the other*

3. *The worker in his/her role has a considerable investment to see that things are going well….which may lead to a degree of unrealistic optimism about the progress of the case and the need for intrusive supervision or monitoring (Prins 1999:129)."*

One of the accusations made about earlier forms of probation practice was that the worker was taking too close and collusive a stance with the offender at the expense of challenging their offending behaviour (Cherry 2010). As indicated by Lowdell and Adshead's work with forensic mental health workers, the risks of avoiding the 'bad' behaviour, or denying the harm caused, may lead the worker to become drawn into a collusive relationship with the offender that condones his minimisation of the crime, or emphasises his own sense of 'victimisation' within a given situation (Lowdell and Adshead 2009). Whilst historically, probation officers tasked with 'advising, assisting and befriending' offenders might have sometimes held a 'non-judgmental approach' that was too heavily weighted in favour of the offender to the detriment of their ability to see and challenge the offending behaviour, contemporary practice is urged to place an almost exclusive focus on the offending behaviour.

For some research participants (Damien, Aruna, Jai and Geoff), the need to understand was of crucial importance and allowed them to place their own emotional reactions to the offence almost to one side:

"People who have committed sex offences, I wouldn't want them to think that actually I think you're sick, and what you've done is wrong and I think you're disgusting, I think well, actually you've done something and I want to kind of unpick, I want to understand the reasons why you've done it …and I want you to understand the reasons why you've done it … and the impact that's had on people, and the impact that's had on the victim." (Damien)

Also awareness that showing their feelings in this context would effectively stop the disclosures:

"I think it is, not being judgmental, not colluding, but not showing your horror at something that someone has done, because they are so tuned in and that would just shut the person off, so actually … presenting as though this isn't the worst that I have heard and you know, that I am listening,..." (Jai)

Pat was honest enough to describe a situation in which anger at the man's behaviour and his unwillingness to see or accept the damage he was causing led her to erupt in a supervision session. She describes a mixture of regret at her outburst coupled with a self-justification on the basis of his offence, his intractability and his denial:

"...he had an eight year old step-grand-daughter and … she would come to his house and then he'd let her walk around in the nude and ... then she brought a friend and then he started taking photographs and in the end he did literally penetrate her, she was eight, and so he was … denying and then he said she was being physically abused by her parents, mum and step-dad, they were hitting her and … so she'd come to me and … to get away from all that and I couldn't help so I said, 'so she's being abused by her parents and she comes to you for a break and you know, for a rest and you've sexually abused her', and he stood up, END OF INTERVIEW, and he wanted me to say 'stay', and I said 'yes, go, leave', and I put in my report that he had stormed out of the interview, but I knew I shouldn't have said that, you know ..." (Pat)

Hannah offered a good example of how disclosure can come when we least expect it, and she described her discomfort at hearing it, and what she subsequently did, which was to log it with the offender manager and agree to return to it at a future date:

"… for example I did a post-treatment report on a sex offender … and I had to review and … there was just me and him and the offender manager and there was quite a lot of stuff in the report that he wasn't happy about … but he came out with new stuff that he had never really, sort of about fantasy that needed to explored further and because he had never really gone there and he came out with all this risk, with terrible conflicting stories of fantasies and misconceptions about it...." (Hannah)

6.5.6 Enforcement and transparency

In addition to working with an offender to encourage change and manage risk, workers have to operate within an enforcement policy that determines how and when the offender should respond to the conditions of their community order (Ministry of Justice 2011). Having to build a strong relationship with an offender and sometimes act to enforce an order can, as described earlier, generate powerful feelings of ambivalence in a worker. Sometimes the issue relates to how to confront the offender with the implications of their behaviour in terms of a breach of the order and a return to court for re-sentencing. The risk is that because of the discomfort aroused by holding conflicting feelings simultaneously, workers will resolve these tensions by opting for one approach over another rather than being supported and enabled to hold the balance. Two research participants highlighted the difficulties they felt in hearing or receiving information that related to risky behaviour and how this would affect their assessment of the offender's risk (Pat and Tess). They recognised this would have an impact on the offender:

> *"... you get a lot, of information at that stage and you just feel a little bit bad when you write the pre-sentence report and you know, then you quote them …you know and basically, because then, when they go to prison..."*
> (Pat)

The sharing of this assessment with an offender can be a minimal process, undertaken in an official, bureaucratic manner that meets the requirements and rules of National Standards (Ministry of Justice 2011), or it can be undertaken as a much more interactive process that builds on the trust and integrity developed within the relationship and enables the offender to understand and 'own' the significance of their behaviour and its impact on others. These skills are a largely invisible, unquantifiable and rarely quality assured process. Several research participants (Amy, Indira, John, Lynn and Maggie), gave clear examples of how crucial they believed this 'transparency' of process was in building relationships, in gaining the trust and co-operation of the offender and

in enabling change, enhancing legitimacy and increasing compliance (Chapman and Hough 1998):

> *"The quality of the relationship is to be able to say to them 'I hear and I understand your perspective and your current take' but my take is this…"* (Indira)

> *"The other thing I've learnt much more is to be upfront with people …and what I've been asked to do … e.g. risk assessments ...be upfront about the implications and the processes involved. Ultimately that's a much better way of working with people I think you have to be transparent …"* (John)

One worker expressed quite graphically the frustrations she experienced, having built a relationship and established trust, at having to follow enforcement procedures and destroy that trust in the process:

> *"...so the fact that you had to keep taking people back to court when you know that it was farcical but somehow if they could build this relationship, that it was working and that they could really feel that there was a chance that you could get some work in alongside them and help them change, and then you've suddenly got to take them back to court because they'd breached or something, because life was just too chaotic. So that was very exasperating..."* (Lynn)

The evaluation of the use of mandatory polygraph testing highlighted that some practitioners acknowledged the importance of an accepting attitude in encouraging disclosure but that this:

> *"...sometimes conflicted with their duty to act on information disclosed in a way that appears to punish the offender (e.g. by recalling an offender where a disclosure reveals an escalation of risk)..."* (*Wood, Kemshall et al 2010:3)*.

6.5.7 Challenging or enabling?

As suggested at the beginning of this section, the emotional 'approach' that workers take to offenders can have a significant bearing on their responsiveness to learning. As Day et al argue the therapist skills and style are central to the development of a therapeutic alliance (Day, Casey et al. 2010). They cite Marshall and Serran's (Marshall and Serran 2004), research on work

with sex offenders which suggests that promoting approach goals rather than avoidance goals is likely to increase programme effectiveness, and that the focus should be on promoting pro-social behaviour rather than the ceasing of anti-social behaviour (Day, Casey et al. 2010). The first key element of Core Correctional Practice is the effective use of authority and this includes the avoidance of negative responses such as arguing, blaming, criticising (Dowden and Andrews 2004), and 'interpersonal domination', confrontational enforcement or abuse (Andrews and Bonta 2010).

However, one of the key expectations of 'addressing offending behaviour' is to challenge distorted thinking and to use 'Socratic' questioning to highlight discrepancies and inconsistencies between what offenders think and how they actually behave (Farrow, Kelly et al. 2007). Within the learning context of an accredited programme a programme tutor is expected to identify and clarify the information that the offender brings to the session, and then to engage with this information in a way that encourages the offender to view it differently. In terms of risk management and intervention, research participants talked about the significance of adopting an enabling as opposed to a confrontational approach in their work with offenders. Whilst the behaviour under discussion could be very problematic they knew that to show disapproval and condemnation by adopting a very challenging style of communication was likely to be ineffective. Jai provides an example of this and stresses the importance of not humiliating the offender in the process:

> *"The manner in which people are challenged shouldn't be confrontational , so for me, challenge is about exploring what they have said more, and it is about … looking for things that don't support what they are saying and … using the group to get different perspectives, that might question where they are coming from, so for me it is a bit of a drip-drip effect and yeh, it's not, it's about challenging in a way that doesn't humiliate and … using people's own experiences, ..."* (Jai)

Workers are advised to encourage the offender to place himself in his victim's position (which ironically is a position many offenders may already have been in), and begin to reflect on the likely impact on her of his behaviour. This is

seen to constitute a 'challenge' to his perceptions and beliefs but not in a condemnatory manner. What the worker is encouraged to achieve is to teach the offender to be more empathic (Cherry 2010). The research participants in this study provided evidence of practice that accorded with this view. Whilst many were keen to explain that their work inevitably involved a 'challenge' to a piece of behaviour or 'distorted thinking' in an offender, how this challenge was managed and processed was seen by them as crucial. Thus a 'challenge' that simply rehearsed a disapproval or disapprobation was seen as unlikely to elicit anything other than a defensive reaction from the offender. Whereas a challenge that required the offender to think and reflect, was seen as a positive process. They considered that the negative aspects of any overt or 'aggressive' form of challenge would invariably result in the men clamming up, or being 'backed into a corner'.

Janet considered that the effectiveness of the challenge was determined by the quality of the relationship that had already been established as well as the actual timing:

> *"I think sometimes with these men, you've got to know them to be able to challenge them well, I think at the start of the programme they come on, or any programme, they come on very embittered, they don't want to be there…. and it is the same when they are on probation supervision or on license, you know, they've done their time for the crime, why should you interfere with their lives, why should you tell them what to do... I think it's - know when it is right, when it is safe, sometimes you need to challenge straight away if it is something that is completely not acceptable, but it's the way that you do it, you know some people can be from there to there in three seconds and … it's not only putting yourself in danger but it's bringing out the worst of them as well you know..."* (Janet)

Some commented on their observations of colleagues who challenged more strongly than they would have done. Nick reflected his experience of seeing challenging being done aggressively and leading inevitability to sanctions for the offender:

> *"So I would say that challenging is... I wouldn't say difficult but it is an essential element of what we are doing I think. We challenge people's perceptions, we challenge people's attitudes and such like, but I think that*

sometimes we can… and I reflect on this sometimes, we can sort of bulldoze our way into those sorts of situations (laughs), but again you know, I know some people that would have said again that they had terminated that…given him a verbal or other warning on license for using that word you know...” (Nick)

Kim expressed discomfort about what she perceived to be unhelpfully aggressive challenging by one of her colleagues and went on to explain how she tried to repair the 'damage' caused by an aggressive challenge from another colleague. She makes clear the distinction between holding authority and acting inappropriately:

"And we get feedback from offenders and if they don't like their offender managers, and it might be the offenders not the offender managers, but … we have a situation where we had someone who came into group the other day and he was furious, he had just seen his offender manager, he was absolutely furious, almost on the ceiling and … the session was spent calming him down, and then when he had calmed down, what he said was 'look, I know that what he was saying was right but it was the way that he said it, he wagged his finger at me' and it made … this fifty-year old man feel, really insulted and … so it's that, it's how you are with people. There is a way of challenging people you don't have to wag fingers at them. You have the authority you don't have to show it always...” (Karen)

Victoria was able to reflect on her own response to being challenged and make the connection with how this might make offenders feel:

"I don't really like the word confrontational because I don't like confrontations they kind of make me feel a bit on edge so I can only imagine how they might feel...” (Victoria)

Some, (Damien, Mary, Gill and Hannah) described in detail how to 'challenge' really meant to try and 'unpick' or sort through the explanations that offenders were giving them of their behaviour in order to clarify the inconsistencies or lack of congruence between thoughts and behaviours, in a context where the behaviour under question carries a great deal of stigma and public shame.

"….and then I suppose just try to unpick things so try to… build up a relationship for them to try and spill everything out…” (Damien)

Sometimes the challenge was such that the offender could not contain his reactions to it, but nevertheless the strength of the relationship appears to be what 'held' him and enabled him eventually, once his feelings had subsided a little, to come back and continue to talk it through. The worker recognised that he could have misinterpreted the man's initial departure:

"I thought, he's not going to come back in again in five minutes. I actually … felt that if I had continued to challenge him, because he was going round in circles and you could see the rage in his face and..., he said to me, 'five minutes, I just need five minutes' and ... I said to him afterwards that I wasn't going to be critical of you because you used that five minutes so constructively. The easy thing to say would have been; well he walked out." (Nick)

Research participants also talked about the use of humour as a way of tackling difficult or embarrassing issues, and/or of lifting the otherwise rather flat mood (Tony, Howard, Kim, Geoff, Hannah & Karen). Geoff gave an example of how he had used humour to challenge a man to reflect both on his honesty about and responsibility for his own sexual offending behaviour.

A significant issue in relation to how these research participants chose to challenge the offenders they work with is the emotional subtext. A worker operating with a punitive credo (Rutherford 1993), as explored in Section 4.2, might seek to challenge more aggressively or with more confrontation, taking justification from the nature of the offending behaviour, whilst a worker with a 'caring' credo, as the research participants to this study largely demonstrated, would aim to temper their negative feelings.

6.5.8 Conclusion

This section has covered elements of managing the process of a community order, as outlined in the Offender Management Model and National Standards. I have endeavoured to illuminate some of the emotional components of working towards change with offenders, including helping them to disclose important, and often very personal information, that can inform risk assessment and risk management. The implications of being honest and 'transparent' in the way in

which this information is to be subsequently handled particularly when it may have a negative impact on the offender's liberty, have been explored. Also explored are some of the tensions and ambivalences held and felt by the worker in managing these processes. Research participants were keen to build supportive relationships in order to enable disclosure but expressed some discomfort when this, or other events, resulted in them having to take enforcement action against the offender.

Given that the primary aim of a community order is to reduce the level of risk an offender poses, the core task of probation is to enable the offender to learn different ways of managing their lives. This requires the offender to be motivated and ready to learn and change. Research participants to this study recognised the importance of addressing this 'responsivity' principle, but overall insufficient attention has been paid to the issue of learning and the need to ensure that offenders as 'learners' are in the best place to benefit from the 'treatment' or intervention being provided. An unexpected finding was that some research participants were resistant to the idea that offenders may also be victims, and need attention given to their own sense of 'victimhood'. Historically, this would have been a significant focus of probation practice, quite possibly at the expense of challenging the offending behaviour. It seems this balance has shifted to the other end of the continuum where offenders are not encouraged to allow any trauma from their own past and present experiences to interfere with taking responsibility for their current behaviour. There may be a distinction to be drawn between genuine distress and confusion at past abuse, and a mere 'rehearsal' or dramatising of past and present grievances that get in the way of current work. However, the distinction between these two may not always be clear cut.

Also explored in this section is the extent to which a 'confrontational' or challenging approach to offenders, at one end of a continuum, and a therapeutic 'enabling' or empowering approach at the other end, affects the responsivity of the offender and any subsequent work undertaken with them in both assessing and managing risk. Research participants demonstrated a

preference for 'soft skills' over 'hard skills'. Whilst they were mostly concerned to use their emotional skills in a productive and enabling manner, there is scope for the emotionally illiterate or unaware worker to use the authority in their role to 'challenge' in a negative way; to berate the offender for unacceptable behaviour or ideas and to not openly share any negative consequences of disclosures, including breach action, with them.

This section has illustrated the benefits and strengths of emotional literacy, the use of 'soft skills', but also the potential for the misuse of the emotional power of the worker in increasing the amount of control, surveillance and punishment experienced by the offender; the degree to which either benign or repressive emotional control might emerge within these relationships (Layder 2004). Whatever the intentions of the workers, the impact felt by the offender may be different; e.g. benign intent may not be experienced as such by the offender.

6.6: Organisations and Emotions

6.6.1 Introduction

The probation service has moved from the relatively non-hierarchical and laissez-faire culture of the 1970s to a performance management culture in which bureaucracy and managerialism have become the drivers through which the service aims to meet its targets of reducing offending and protecting the public (Whitehead 2010). These recent developments have focused on the measurable, 'hard' facts of processes and outcomes with a concomitant squeezing out of the 'softer' realm of feelings and emotions. Yet there continue to be significant emotional issues and trauma related to crime and offending behaviour that can challenge workers in the probation service in powerful, subtle and often contradictory ways, as explored in the earlier sections of Chapter Six. Using Bolton's four typologies of emotion management in the workplace (Bolton 2005), this section explores the use and potential exploitation by, the organisation of emotions in the workforce. This analysis is located within the domain of 'social settings' in Layder's domain theory (Layder 2006). These settings are identified as the:

*"The reproduced outcomes of past activities that influence behaviour in the present..." (*Layder 2006:280*)*

Layder suggests that interactions within this setting are defined through the hierarchy of the organisation and that a commitment to them by workers is maintained through inducements such as pay and promotion. With reference to Lukes' analysis of power this commitment is also maintained by workers' own complicity or unawareness of the influence of organisational constraints (Lukes 2005). The research participants to this study identified concepts of 'professional rules' and organisational constraints as being significant in defining their occupational world and their personal regulation of emotion. They described how their sense of the correct 'professional' way to behave influenced how they controlled and used their feelings.

'Professionalism' as a concept is promoted by the organisation but also has a separate social reality; it is defined through membership of a 'profession' which imposes certain expectations and requirements on its members, as, for example, the profession of medicine expects its members to abide by the Hippocratic oath regardless of where they practice. This section reflects on how the research participants employed 'technologies of self' (Foucault 1990); seeing the need to remain 'professional' in their role and with an internalisation of surveillance and 'self-monitoring' of their emotional lives (McKinlay and Starkey 1998). It also reflects on the extent to which the changing ethos of the service, associated with its closer alignment with the prison service within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), and the evolution of a 'managerial' culture, has created some unspoken 'feeling rules' that expect emotional detachment in the workforce. It reflects on the resulting 'silencing' of any substantial discourse on emotions that might have enabled these research participants to understand and question both the 'professional rules' and the 'feeling rules'; the manner in which certain discourses have been privileged over others (Gilligan, Ward et al. 1988). In this instance the managerial, 'tough' and, often perceived as, 'male voice' is seen to be favoured over the softer, more emotional and, often perceived as, 'female voice'.

6.6.2 Emotion management or emotional labour?

In order to function effectively and smoothly, organisations are seen to need a calm and orderly workforce, where emotions are largely under control and subservient to the needs of the business (Du Gay 2003). Du Gay argues that such a 'culture' is the means by which organisations achieve success; workers conduct themselves in ways that maximise their involvement in and contribution to, the organisation (Du Gay 2003). Fineman argues, however, that it is naïve to assume that emotions have been 'eliminated' in this new organisational world and that in fact they are deeply woven into the fabric of all organisations and define and shape all manner of practices (Fineman 2001). Within the wider emotion theory literature the term used to identify the controlling of emotions in a working context is 'emotion management' and is linked to the idea of individual emotional self-regulation (Section 6.3). Crawley's work in prisons, relates mostly to the management of emotion in prisons. She suggests that when prison officers, working in the emotionally painful environment of a prison, express emotion, they need to do so in a structured way; she refers to this as the emotion management undertaken by them in order to perform their job in an 'appropriate manner' (Crawley 2009).

The organisation will, inevitably, concentrate on the large-scale and official frontage of its business and in this process an understanding or analysis of interpersonal relations and emotional regulation can be obscured (Layder 2004). Goffman's work on 'display rules' and 'emotion management', refers to how people manage their feelings in a working context (Goffman 1959/1990). He describes this as 'front-stage' business whilst the emotional discourse takes place 'back-stage' (Goffman 1959/1990).

More recently it has been acknowledged that emotion makes an important contribution to organisational life (Bolton 2005) and as resource to be exploited by the organisation (Hochschild 1983). This utilisation or exploitation of emotion in the workplace is generally defined as 'emotion work' or 'emotional labour', although these terms have tended to lack clarity and definition (Bolton 2005).

As explained in Section 2.3, whilst this concept of emotional labour has some utility in explaining how an organisation might regulate or control the emotional expressions of its workforce, it does not fully conceptualise the positive and freely offered 'gift' of emotion that occurs in organisations with a 'welfare' rather than 'business' orientation.

Both prison staff and probation staff work through the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), but how these different staff groups perceive their role and their deployment of emotion management or emotional labour within their working practices is, apart from Crawley's and Tait's work with prison officers (Crawley 2004; Tait 2011), largely under theorised. Some of the strategies of interpersonal emotional control employed by prison staff could be viewed as falling legitimately into the 'repressive positional' in order to control recalcitrant prisoners (Layder 2004:61), but this could hardly be described as 'emotional labour'. The strategies employed by probation staff, given its history of care for offenders, might be seen to fall within the normal/healthy range, involving benign emotional control and 'soft' manipulation, which could be viewed as emotional labour (Layder 2004:61). However, the absence of contemporary research, literature, or education on the subject means there is little empirical evidence to indicate whether benign interpersonal emotional control by staff towards offenders is in fact the norm within probation practice. The research for this thesis is unable to directly answer this question as no observations of actual practice were undertaken. An interrogation of the data and some of the wider literature offers some insight into what the organisation might expect from its workforce; what unspoken 'rules', pressures or constraints may be impacting on these probation staff and how their emotional practice might be described.

6.6.3 Emotion management in the workplace

Bolton's four typologies of emotion work within organisations are:

1.   '*Presentational*' (emotion management according to general social rules)

2.   '*Philanthropic*' (emotion management given as a gift)

3.   '*Prescriptive*' (emotion management according to organisational/

     professional rules of conduct

4.   '*Pecuniary*' (emotion management for monetary gain)

 (Bolton 2005:91)

Evidence provided by research participants to the study suggests that their emotion management skills were largely illustrative of the first three of the above four typologies; presentational, philanthropic and prescriptive or professional.

i)   **<u>Presentational</u>**

Presentational is the general and common type of emotion management in most organisations which require their staff to follow accepted social rules about emotions; to be polite, helpful, friendly etc. at all times and to conceal expressions of negative emotion. This is fairly closely associated with Hochschild's concept of emotional labour (Hochschild 1983) although does not necessarily include the 'pecuniary' element where emotional labour is specifically required to meet the objectives of the organisation. It also has a relationship with Goffman's 'display rules' (Goffman 1959/1990). There was some evidence in the data of research participants endeavouring to present an emotionally positive 'front'. For example, John demonstrates some ambivalence about the appropriateness of showing negative feelings in particular, which indicates a form of 'presentational' emotion work, albeit it is sincerely offered:

"…the difference is that as a practitioner your role is much more to be a constant and be supportive and warm...you are not supposed to

show you are frustrated with them or are feeling angry or frustrated...though some researchers would say that that's not necessarily a bad thing..." (John)

Hannah is careful to choose which emotions to show, favouring the positive ones over the negative ones:

"I try never to forget and keep it there … but I do not want to show my emotions… to the offender how I feel about what they have done, but on the other hand I do show my emotions … when I am really pleased with how they are working and I will tell them that and also show that in the way that I behave or, likewise when I am unhappy with the way things are going I will also say. There are different levels I suppose." (Hannah)

These research participants were working hard to present a positive emotional front to their service users; with the belief that expressing negative emotion would be counter-productive (Goffman 1959/1990).

ii)   <u>Philanthropic</u>

'Philanthropic' emotion management describes the context in which the worker decides to give more of 'themselves' during a social exchange in the workplace (Bolton 2005). This has resonance with Layder's view of the 'inner heart' of the organisation (Layder 2004). 'Philanthropy' is generally associated with organisations where staff, (quite frequently women), engage in various forms of personal care work (Smith 1992; Theodosius 2008), and can occur in both paid and unpaid (voluntary) occupations. Emotion work in this context is seen as a 'gift' rather than an organisational requirement (Bolton 2005:140). There were plenty of examples of the research participants' willingness to offer their emotional skills as a 'gift' to the offender, and a number of these are provided in Section 6.4 with reference to the use of empathy which is seen to provide the foundation of the relationship building process.

Nick's description highlights the presence in him, and absence in his prison officer colleague (both employed by NOMS), of philanthropic emotion management. Nick is describing his view of how some staff are unable to manage the emotional expressions of legitimately angry prisoners. In this example the male prison officer working with him, is described as being in some discomfort:

"But sometimes they (prison staff or other probation colleagues) don't listen and are sometimes too quick to jump on that behaviour and the problem in terms of … doing that, you set a precedent … because next time they (prisoner) will feel … that they can't ever express their emotions because that is a taboo thing to do with you and that it can't be had, and your reaction to it is so extreme that it will either result in you terminating the interview immediately or just not being willing to hear it. And I think sometimes it has been founded … on negative experiences and …a case in point, on Monday where a prison officer sat next to me and he was sort of dumbfounded by what this offender was saying and he clearly did not know how to deal with him and he was fidgeting and feeling uncomfortable sat next to me because his means of dealing with it would have been a far more 'right back to your cell'..." (Nick)

This example demonstrates the 'emotion work' being undertaken by Nick which is not understood by his colleague prison officer. As Bolton argues, this goes beyond any notion of 'emotional labour' on behalf of an organisation for commercial gain (Bolton 2005). Nick is offering his emotional skills as a 'gift' to the prisoner because he understands the reasons for his anger and feels the prisoner has a legitimate need to be heard. The emotion is 'subjective'; the prisoner experiencing anger and Nick's feelings of concern for him, 'external' in that it is being witnessed and judged differently by Nick and the prison officer, 'situated' within the relationship between the three of them, and in a social context; i.e. strongly influenced by the prison environment as the context for the prisoner's anger (Layder 2004).

iii) **Prescriptive**

Prescriptive emotion management refers to the ways in which an employee's emotion work can be controlled through the process of 'professionalisation' (Bolton 2005). In this typology emotions may be seen as risky, untrustworthy and unpredictable so a mantle of 'professionalism' is needed to keep them under control. This concept of professionalism may be closely prescribed; it is not necessarily for commercial gain, but it can be associated with issues of power and control (Lukes 2005), and linked to professional codes of conduct such as for doctors and lawyers. As introduced in Section 6.3 many of the research participants gave examples of how they endeavoured to manage their emotions in what they thought was the 'right' or 'correct' way within the workplace, and that this was influenced by their belief in the importance of being 'professional'. In becoming a teacher, GP, lawyer, psychiatrist, probation officer or social worker the staff member is inculcated into codes of conduct and ways of looking, sounding and 'being' professional when dealing with others, a form of 'technologies of self' (Foucault 1990). Fineman describes how this state of 'being' is often reached through a range of different and imitative learning experiences and reinforced in a variety of organisational settings, for example, through professional training establishments, fieldwork and consulting rooms. In many cases the expectations of the clients of these 'professionals' adds to this process of emotion shaping and both are complicit in defining boundaries of each other's appropriate emotional display (Fineman 2001). For example, a patient's tears could be considered acceptable but a weeping doctor either in sympathy or in revealing his/her own anxieties is likely to compromise or strain the relationship (Fineman 2001:226).

Lacey defines 'professionalism' as responding to difficult issues without prejudice, and meriting the trust of the public (Lacey 1995). This conveys an image of confidence, fairness and trustworthiness. However,

Mathiesen refers to a 'professionalisation' which silences dispute or contention (Mathiesen 2004). He argues that for individuals to become professionals in a particular setting they need to be inculcated with a particular way of thinking and introduced to a 'series of conceptualisations' within which they must operate if they are to be successful (Matheisen 2004: x). Crawley refers to the way in which prison officers engage in 'impression management' (Goffman 1959/1990), in order to appear authoritative and confident in their dealings with prisoners, whilst remaining emotionally detached (Crawley 2004:147).

A number of research participants felt that being 'professional' meant keeping their own feelings and needs in check; not allowing their 'hearts to rule their heads' to coin a metaphor. They considered that whatever they might 'feel' about a particular issue or a particular piece of behaviour, they should not allow these feelings to influence their judgments or their responses.

"…and actually having to be professional when you have got to handle and manage somebody else's emotions but keep your own… tied down, without letting them know..." (Mary)

Victoria felt that only certain people were able to exercise professionalism and she clearly views being professional as being about the concealment of feelings:

"I think it just takes a particular kind of person who can, keep their, in a professional way, can kind of keep those…feelings…under cover maybe …definitely when we're with offenders, it's very professional..." (Victoria)

This next research participant, Sandy, was clear about the need to operate within specific guidelines or 'feeling rules';

"I think, for me it always about professionalism because I came from a profession that if you squeaked in the wrong place you were rapped over the knuckles..." (Sandy)

Hannah sees her 'professionalism' as taking over from her emotional responses and enabling her to take charge of the situation in a positive manner. She is, however, also offering philanthropic emotion management:

"…but if they are genuinely distressed and upset about what they, the effect they've had on the other people and their family, then yes, I suppose it does upset me in some way but then again the professional side kicks in and you need to find a way to go forward and how you can change those emotions and turn them into something more positive..." (Hannah)

What appears evident here in the manner in which the research participants embedded the 'rules' of professionalism' and monitored themselves in terms of their own emotional behaviour; what Foucault referred to as 'technologies of self' and 'scrutinising surveillance' (Foucault 1990). Foucault described it as a mode of behaviour which becomes instilled in ways of living and is evolved into procedures, practices and formulas that people develop and perfect, in order to be able to 'control, transform and purify' the self (Foucault 1990).

Alongside their need to control their feelings and remain professional, a large number of research participants held negative views about their perception of a culture of 'managerialism' within the organisation. Managerialism is defined as:

"...the ascendancy of business management values and priorities within the public sector, and the corresponding decline in the influence and value base of the professions..." (Raine 2007:160*).*

New styles of management were imported from the private sector to the running of the probation service in the 1980s including greater emphasis on outputs rather than processes, and the measurement of performance through the setting of specific targets and standards for practice; sometimes referred to as the New Public Management (Canton 2011). In the probation context it was seen to place emphasis on a quantitative approach to the management of offenders in the community through the

setting and monitoring of targets, and within a culture of control and public protection over and above a more qualitative process of helping and enabling change (Vanstone 2007). Whilst these aspirations may be aimed at improving the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the service they can fail to capture the quality of practice and can sometimes lead to inappropriate practice in the pursuit of specific targets. Twenty-two of the 28 research participants made reference to what they perceived to be the 'managerialist' culture of the probation service which they considered was hampering their efforts to develop high quality and emotionally literate practice. The following offer a flavour of the strength of feelings expressed by research participants on this subject:

Targets and through-put

The largest number of comments related to the imposition of targets that set particular goals and expectations that the research participants felt dominated their practice to the exclusion of any of the more creative or qualitative processes that they saw as essential.

"That's what I don't like...this feeling of you have to perform...bums on seats...through put...that annoys me." (Michael)

"...it's targets, targets, targets, get this done, this needs to be done, you're not doing this quick enough, this is not…, you know and so it's kind of a battle really in terms of that..." (Damien)

"I feel angry because I feel that…I suppose angry at what they have done, what the men have done, but angry at the service for not allowing us to work more efficiently because it is all about tick boxes rather than allowing us to do the work, so that's what it elicits in me." (Sandy)

"…having to cover your back all the time for safety, doing things just because in case it gets audited or it gets looked at …the targets set by management hierarchy in Home Office that aren't necessarily related to the actual piece of work or actual job." (Mary)

'Jumping through hoops' - micro-management

Associated with the target drive culture was the sense of being overly scrutinised about the detail; made to respond to quantitative demands at the expense of professional practice:

"…but I do have a problem with being so micro managed and scrutinised...there's been a real narrowing... What matters is programme completions, targets being met...running programmes is what matters..." (Amy)

"..the thing I least like the most which is management...politics...basically all the fucking about and the hoops that you have to jump through and the ill informed...in my opinion...changes, the pace of change in probation..." (Howard)

Structures, rules and regulations

Some were concerned about the wider organisational frameworks for practice that inhibited their ability to be emotionally literate:

"…but sometimes it's the management, the organisational issues...the structures don't lend themselves to doing this kind of work..." (Indira)

"I think there is a lot of bureaucracy … in an organisation like this, I think that … the workers are not empowered to do… enough, I think they should have more power to do what they think is right…. there's a lot of rules and regulations and we are told to comply with certain things..." (Robert)

Paperwork

There were also some very strong views about the overwhelming amount of paperwork needed to maintain the managerial ethos of the service, again at the expense of creative and emotionally literate practice:

"…what I don't like is … the paperwork really… I know what risks somebody poses but then having to spell it out to the point that it's almost… covering my back almost, that's the bit I don't like." (Victoria)

The above extracts identify an anger and frustration at the managerialism and bureaucracy of the organisation which, in the views of the research participants demonstrates a lack of interest by the organisation in emotional discourse and in some instances an actual blocking of their ability to work effectively. Whilst the need to abide by 'professional' rules of conduct seemed to support a presentational typology of emotion management, to which the research participants largely subscribed, the impact of the managerialist culture seemed to be more of a 'deadening' or 'silencing' of emotional discourse and expression. Further examples of the research participants' frustrations about this perceived managerial culture are included in Section 6.8 when they acknowledge the lack of support from their organisation for emotional literacy and find their own strategies for surviving the 'silence' on emotional matters.

iv)   Pecuniary

The fourth type, emotion management for pecuniary advantage, describes an exploitative use of emotion work more generally found in the commercial or service industries. Whilst this may be a less obvious form of emotion management within the probation service, there is a sense in which an organisation striving to meet targets and be 'efficient' and 'economic' does indeed exploit the emotional literacy of its workforce to meet these aims. It could also be argued that 'professionalism' can be motivated by pecuniary incentives such as higher salaries and recognition.

"It's very much performance, targets, you know, cases in through the door, are we meeting this, are we getting the money, is your high risk review done, you know I feel that we are very much on our own with the emotional literacy side..." (Angela)

Maggie's frustration with the paperwork associated with the constant setting of targets also implies a perception of an organisation that has instrumental, rather than humanitarian ends:

"I don't like the amount of paperwork involved in the job because…. and the fact that we've got to meet targets, I don't like that…. I think they just see us as people who meet targets and that's that." (Maggie)

Amy sees the probation service as operating as a production line, which again implies the production of a commodity rather than a human process;

"...the rise of managerialism, and target driven practice and office based practice...and practice that...looks at people, well it's a production line. Henry Ford would recognise the process..." (Amy)

It could be argued that the lack of support to staff who offer their emotion literacy as a 'gift' to offenders, is in itself a form of exploitation. Also, the exploitation of 'emotional labour' may become increasingly evident with the drive towards the contracting out of significant areas of probation work to the private sector and the increasing emphasis on 'payment by results' (Ministry of Justice 2010).

6.6.4 Feeling rules for the probation service?

Hochschild first defined the idea of 'feeling rules' in relation to her research on airline staff when describing the work undertaken by these staff as 'emotional labour' on behalf of the company and in pursuit of economic gain. However, Bolton argues that there is a misuse of these terms which arises when there is a lack of clarity about the extent to which the individual worker has choice and autonomy or is directed by their organisation, in their 'emotion work'. Bolton also believes that the emotion work carried out by staff in a range of different settings, including the public care setting, is varied and infinitely more complex than that described by Hochschild. Unspoken, invisible but nonetheless powerful 'feeling rules' can identify the kind of emotions it is appropriate to express or conceal within the work place. From the evidence presented above it seems that the research participants were affected both by 'professional' rules and by a managerialist culture, in their management of emotions. Historically, the probation service was identified as a welfare-based service for offenders and the philosophy of the organisation, from the early days of the Police Court

Missionaries, was grounded on the humanitarian principles of 'advise, assist and befriend' (Whitehead 2010). These principles gave staff a clear, if tacit message that the unspoken 'feeling rules' of the organisation would support them in caring for offenders as a core requirement of the job. Such 'feelings rules' would seem to fit most closely with Bolton's typology of 'philanthropic' (Bolton 2005).

Some research participants demonstrated a sense of nostalgia for their recollection of a largely benevolent organisation that in previous years would have acknowledged a demonstration of care and concern for offenders and in which emotional difficulties for both offenders and staff would have been openly discussed:

> *"I know it's not that long ago but, when I first joined and you used supervision it was all about talking through your cases, reflecting about what happened, offloading, talking about practice, it was very much emotionally literate, it was very much about your emotions and how that reflected on you as an individual. Now it's like, 'how many Think First's have you had start', 'how many have you got in employment', you know, 'why was this review late?' … do you know what I mean, it's almost like they're not really bothered anymore about how we feel..."* (Victoria)

In contrast, 'managerialism' and 'professionalism' both seem to define a culture of tight regulation and control of emotions. In looking for evidence for any 'feeling rules' determined for staff working in this modern, business orientated and more punitive corrections agency (NOMS), Crawley's research provides some signposts. She was able to demonstrate how emotional detachment was prized amongst prison officers (Crawley 2004). She describes the way prison officers learn to conform to an occupational culture that expects them to disengage from their feelings and adopt the 'strategies of depersonalisation' and that this is a core part of their training (Crawley 2004). Crawley argues that it is imperative that prison officers learn these rules and that those who transgress these rules risk presenting themselves as unreliable and untrustworthy. Crawley refers to Goffman's ideas that those who transgress the rules or express the wrong emotions acquire a 'spoiled identity' and this is the price paid for ineffective impression management (Crawley 2004). Prisons are

places where strategies of depersonalisation are strongly in place. Crawley gives examples of depersonalised language such as 'bodies' rather than people, the use of a 'body book' and the use of negative language to describe the prisoners such as 'scum', 'cons', 'toe-rags' and 'nonces' which *'create spaces in which inhumane treatment can occur'* (Crawley 2004:153*)*. Crawley understood how prison officers, within an occupational culture of 'machismo', engaged in degrees of humour, depersonalisation and detachment to avoid this spoiled identity.

Although employed primarily in the community, probation staff within NOMs work with the same offender group and are governed by the same organisational structures as these prison officers. Whilst probation staff are generally much more careful about their use of language; (Knight, Dominey et al. 2008), nevertheless the common use of the word 'offender' across both services in itself has a strong depersonalising element. This term was widely used by research participants in the study although some made a conscious decision to use the word 'client' in defiance, it seemed, of the prevailing linguistic norm. This depersonalised approach is also sustained by a media that additionally uses terms such as 'feral', 'alien' and 'predator' in relation to offenders, which enhances this aura of detachment from the humanity of the offender (Hayles 2006).

Research participants had plenty to say about the lack of understanding of their managers of the significance of the emotional world of the job. They believed that their managers, to a large extent, saw the task of the probation officer to 'feed the computer' and 'meet the targets' (Sandy, Heather, Amy). The preoccupation with 'counting' and data collection militated against the valuing of any of the more qualitative and emotional processes that they associated with good practice:

> *"…there is no comprehension of whether I am a good facilitator, whether I am emotionally able to manage what comes round, I don't think they care as long as they've ticked all the boxes."* (Sandy)

"I am saddened that … at how (emotionally) illiterate an organisation such as this is, where if we are not much at the forefront of how things are going to be I don't know who is going to be." (Heather)

"I don't think that they do invest in their staff at all. I don't think they particularly care how … it impacts on staff as long as they hit their targets and they get their money, and there's no, the amount of SFO's is as low as possible, that's what they're bothered about, that's just my honest opinion about it." (Maggie)

"I'd put it a bit stronger,...I think not only are they buried and not valued I think there is hostility toward those (skills of emotional literacy)...that would be my feeling." (Amy)

The responses that research participants received from their line managers was perceived to be crucial to the way that they were then able to manage the emotional impact of the job. Some research participants expressed quite disparaging views about the ability of either their direct line manager, or managers in general to understand the emotional context of their work or to recognise the level of stress that was being experienced:

"...if you've got four child protection cases and three ICPC's to go to in one week and you expect us to go so that you hit your target, but if we don't go because we are too stressed out, then we get a bollocking for it, they don't look at the fact of 'why are they stressed out?' so I think they are just not interested at all. Not all managers, but specific ones, it has just been my experience of current managers..." (Maggie)

"…and I think that when you consider the emotional aspect of the work that we do, our supervision agenda that we have or not had for that long, you know, 'how are you feeling?' and 'how's your work load?' and that's it, it's almost straight back to work again, not you know, 'how are you feeling in yourself?... maybe if they spent more time looking at things on that kind of level then they might not have some of the problems with sickness that they have, because there are so many people who are struggling and who are stressed but it is almost like some of these people have to scream as loud as they can to management but they are not being listened to and then the only way they are going to get heard is to go off sick." (Gill)

"…And sometimes I think that although you opt for it, I think that the work that we do is not always recognised by senior management in terms of the say, the stress, and the very nature of how a lot of these cases work is that they bring a lot of change, a lot of constant change and when you

manage a case like this you understand the responsibilities that come with it…" (Nick)

These research participants are reflecting the difficulties they find in communicating their concerns to senior colleagues. The organisation does not actually regulate the emotional and vulnerable underside of the working culture it just succeeds in cutting off the channels through which they can be expressed. Tony expresses quite powerful negative feelings of mistrust of management but by contrast highlights the importance of peer support and help in working through the emotional impact:

> *"I have to concede that really it's not the work we do and it's not the guys we work with...they do have an impact on us, and we club together and share that with each other, and its where we get our sustenance...but gnawing away at those highs and lows all the time is a distrust of management or a feeling that management don't trust us...we're not valued. That's all we want rather than just 'we've met the targets'... oh and by the way you just need to work a bit harder next year...oh great..."* (Tony)

Linked to this lack of understanding from their managers was a concern that the quality of the work, which was equated with emotional processes, was of less importance to their line managers than the quantitative measurements;

> *"it's… people, managers who may make decisions without understanding what the work is about and not kind of like, keeping themselves informed about it, so ..., that I find frustrating …one of the frustrations for me is when the quality of the work gets compromised for quantity..."* (Jai)

> *"...everything is prescriptive ...the quality aspect is irrelevant really, it is how many people have you got through treatment?... not how effective treatment is, that really doesn't count for an awful lot… so in terms of the manualised, prescriptive approach, the extra bits that we sort of put in … aren't necessary…"* (Geoff)

> *"I think the problem is that when you do actually come into practice, the offender becomes less of a focus if that makes sense. Because practice, targets, structures, policies become more important."* (Nick)

These research participants are expressing considerable resentment at the target culture imposed by managerialism that they viewed as limiting and

controlling their professional discretion. Heather sees the constraints of the OASys assessment scoring, which she sees as placing people in boxes as very depersonalising; a lack of a fit between the interpersonal processes and the scoring systems:

> *"I find that the amount of time spent on recording and …, the repetition of certain bits of recording which aren't about anything dynamically having changed, I think that is, is a waste of time….. I think that the whole way we are looking at probation now and objectifying people and giving them scores of nought to two, and I am not knocking the whole of OASYS at all, I am really not, I am happy to have a focus on stuff, but this system of numerically scoring people, I find in some ways, very depersonalising and often we are in danger of boxing people and not allowing them to change as a system."* (Heather)

Similarly Lynn is concerned that not only are offenders being placed in boxes but so too are the workers, when they are judged according to some very specific criteria rather than to any of the worker's more emotionally literate skills:

> *"...what you are judged on in your appraisals is as a group worker, is whether you are reaching the score level because the treatment manager will look at a video and then he will, he will score you against particular criteria. Which is group management skills, use of open questions and …anti-discriminatory practice and …whether you stuck to the time, timings of the session and the gender of the session..."* (Lynn)

These responses illustrate a perception by these research participants of an organisation that was not concerned about their 'feelings' or their emotional worlds. If 'feeling rules' apply to the probation service they seem to be those of emotional detachment or disinterest; the organisation would prefer an absence rather than a presence of feeling.

6.6.5 Feeling 'out of step'

If the unspoken 'feeling rules' of the modern probation service are primarily those of emotional detachment, these rules seem to be accepted by some of the research participants, as described in Section 6.3 who demonstrated strategies of emotional detachment in their work. However, for those workers who wish to abide by 'professional' rules of engagement, but also see the

benefits of engaging emotionally with offenders, there are likely to be tensions. A total of 11 research participants made references to how they felt 'out of step' or 'at odds with' the organisation (Amy, Tony, Howard, Sandy, Damien, Aruna, Sophie, Gill, Nick and Karen). For example:

> *"…when I had supervision last week, I was told that I have got to put a bit more whizz into the domestic violence work, and … I … said 'look that is not how I work, I don't work with whizz'..."* (Karen)

Karen is resisting the depersonalisation that she believes 'working with whizz' implies, in preference for working therapeutically with people. Amy goes further and conveys a powerful image of a career that was a vocation and a commitment:

> *"No matter how well you try and paint the picture...you can't really convey how different it was. They have absolutely no idea …. of what life was like. How much we lived, breathed, ate, and slept the job."* (Amy)

These workers all seem to view their job as a vocation, as working with people and as significantly different from the target-driven and confrontational drive of the modern service, and of the more punitive and emotionally detached work of prison staff. These research participants consider that they are doing something special, as 'technologists of the soul' rather than merely the control and surveillance of people (Foucault 1990).

6.6.6 Conclusion

As explored in Section 6.3 the research participants in the study acquired a degree of personal emotional regulation through the processes of 'growing up', 'learning on the job' and general maturation. However, as employees they have also been exposed to the 'professional rules' of practice and the emotion regulation required by an organisation of its staff, the 'feeling rules' which appeared to be those of 'emotional detachment'. They demonstrated an acceptance of the former and some resistance to the latter. The probation service clearly benefits from the emotion work undertaken by its staff (Ministry of Justice 2010), but it appears to be largely initiated by the staff themselves

rather than being specifically required by the organisation. Not only did the research participants feel they must curb the expression of emotion in the workplace they also felt silenced from talking about it. Unlike the research participants in Crawley's study of prisons, however, there was no evidence that they had been directly taught to be emotionally detached.

The combination or accumulation of these 'rules', some more acceptable to the workers than others, all seem to deny the significance of emotions in general and to expect a 'front' of only positive emotional expression (Goffman 1959/1990). The workers in this study have been left to find their own way through a turmoil of emotions; both those of the offenders they supervise and their own. The feeling rules of the organisation appear to be largely prescriptive, they determine what should not be expressed but do not offer any guidance or help in achieving this 'detachment' or in controlling the feelings when they do arise. Neither do they acknowledge the reality of the emotional content of much of the work undertaken, sometimes surreptitiously, by workers who understand very well the importance of philanthropy to their work; of offering their emotional skills as a gift. The discursive frameworks of managerialism and 'punishment in the community' have ordered reality in a certain way; a belief that the probation service can be seen to 'protect the community' and 'reduce the risk of reoffending, by the largely instrumental means of target setting, monitoring, surveillance and controlling of certain activities. These frameworks can influence who speaks, when and with what authority and who cannot. Foucault argued that what counts as knowledge is only possible because other sorts of knowledge have been suppressed or silenced; in this instance the knowledge of the significance of the emotional in the narratives and motivations of offenders and the responses to this by workers (Foucault 1990).

6.7 Gender and emotions

6.7.1 Introduction

An aim of this study was:

"To examine the gendered nature of these skills (of emotional literacy) and the implications for staffing within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS)."

This section explores the association between gender and emotions in workers. Modernity; the focus on 'hard' technical issues at the expense of the 'softer' philosophical and ethical ones (Dyson and Brown 2006), has tended to afford a greater superiority to reason and rational thinking than to emotional expression. It has also favoured a male model of being 'grown-up' in preference to a female one (Steiner 1997). As Steiner argues, in modern society power is afforded to those in control of people and finance, who are generally men; the model of a powerful person is generally a male one. Whilst it could be argued that emotional literacy is a vital component of personal power (Steiner 1997:3), it is not yet valued in the same way as other forms of autonomy and power in the workplace. Indeed, as illustrated in the previous section (6.6), emotions and emotional discourse are actively repressed and concealed within the probation workplace in pursuit of 'professionalism' and the management of targets and objectives. It is suggested in Section 6.6 that the voices of practitioners, who might wish to talk about emotions, are largely silenced. It is further proposed in this section that gender stereotypes may also impact on the opportunities for both genders in the workplace, to articulate and express their emotions (Cherniss and Goleman 2001). This section examines the views of the research participants on the relationship between emotional literacy and gender; how they perceived any gendered differences in working practices between male and female staff.

6.7.2 Crime, gender and emotion

The three broad conceptual frameworks of gender, emotion and crime and their inter-relationship, that set the context for this inquiry, have been theorised through different academic disciplines (philosophy, sociology, psychology, criminology, feminist research etc). However, apart from some contributions emerging from the second wave of feminist writings, in particular on gender and crime, e.g. (Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008), they have rarely been brought

together in one place. Section 2.2.7 of the literature review identifies some of the gendered ways in which both crime and emotion, in separate fields, have been researched and the ways in which power and gender are inter-related within the criminal justice system. The question to be addressed in this section is what gender means for practitioners who aspire to be emotionally literate, in terms of the offender population, the staffing and the decision-making within the criminal justice system, (and by association within the probation service).

As just one example, Amy, expresses a view about how her gender has made her feel through more than 30 years of working for the probation service in relation to her identity:

"…invisibility is a road that women travel down..." (Amy)

and in relation to her sexuality:

"I remember a middle-aged officer told me to 'be careful what you wear when you go into prisons' there will be 250 eyes trained on you when you go on the wing...masturbation fodder for those men..." (Amy)

Amy felt she had to contend with a lack of recognition or status compared with her male colleagues, whilst also be the recipient of unwelcome sexual attention in certain contexts, in particular prisons. Other research participants also made reference to the way they considered that women working in specific areas of probation practice, including prison work, and with sex and domestic violence offenders in the community, faced particular challenges that were different from their male colleagues.

The research participants to the study largely reflected the gender balance within the probation service, with 19 women and nine men in the individual interviews (67% female) (Ministry of Justice 2007; Silvestri and Crowther-Dowey 2008). This was a fortuitous but not planned outcome; the research participants were all volunteers for the study. The balance was more even in the focus group with three men and four women (57% female). Nineteen of the 28 research participants interviewed thought that gender was a significant factor

in emotional literacy. Section 6.2 identified some small gender differences in relation to perceptions of, and feelings about, their work by male and female research participants, and their use of emotion vocabularies, with women deploying a slightly wider range of emotion words than their male colleagues. However, in their more general responses, there was little obvious difference in the way the male and female research participants related to the concept of emotional literacy. Some made reference to the importance of understanding gender differences between themselves and the offenders they worked with, and several made reference to gender differences between themselves and their co-workers.

6.7.3 Men and emotion

The majority of the comments that related to gender were framed as women understanding the importance of emotion; the inter-connectedness between people, and of men tending to struggle more with these concepts. There was some frustration felt predominantly, but not solely, by female research participants at their male colleagues, with examples provided of male staff failing to understand the emotional content of a situation and also compounding difficulties for female staff endeavouring to deal with emotional issues. Others (both male and female research participants) considered that in a general sense men (both staff and offenders), had more difficulty in understanding or expressing their emotions.

> *"...he can't let you know that he is at breaking point..."* (Mary)

> *"They're men so they're not awfully good on the emotional front..."* (Amy)

Some of the frustrations expressed by female research participants included male colleagues being unable to do more than one task at a time, being egocentric, and not being good team players. There is some research evidence that suggests women are generally better at multi-tasking e.g. (Paton and Dempster 2002). One research participant, Karen, gave a number of examples

of how she found some of her male colleagues to be both unaware and lacking in emotional sensitivity:

> "...some of my male colleagues …. that I have got at the moment, I find very difficult sometimes. …. there seems to be an ego in some people and there seems to be …an inability to actually to do more than one task at once, they really seem to struggle with thinking and planning ahead, all that sort of thing, you know, 'I can do one thing at a time and I can do it at this pace and I won't or can't do it any other way'..." (Karen)

Her use of the word 'ego', (reflected by another research participant later in this section), suggests a sense of self-esteem and self-importance in relation to their own abilities at the expense of working co-operatively with others. Karen extends her concerns to identifying that one of her male colleagues seemed unaware of the impact of his choice of language on the offender and the resultant impact on the offender's mood:

> "...my colleague has used language that he (the offender) can't accept like, 'dissonance' and stuff like that. I mean I work with a very able colleague... he is brilliant but sometimes he forgets that there are people that are not getting it and you can see that that person's self-esteem is just going lower and lower, and he will never say that he doesn't understand." (Karen)

and another example:

> "… I've had this experience recently … that a co-worker may be labouring a point, just that little too much and then repeating that point and then the men get disengaged and yes …I'm looking at the men and I can see that they are thinking this and that, and then I get anxious and then … frustrated and annoyed and … then there is the anxiety of how I am going to feed that back to my co-worker after that." (Karen)

Karen's description suggests she is reading the non-verbal indicators, and recognising that some of the men in the group are becoming bored with what the male facilitator is saying and as a consequence are ceasing to engage or learn. She becomes increasingly annoyed as she witnesses the impact of her colleague's apparent insensitivity. Her concern in both these examples is that the male facilitators have failed to notice the impact of their teaching style on

the group members and also, in the latter example, of how she will subsequently have to give one of them feedback about this.

Karen gives a further example of a difficult piece of behaviour from an offender that was subsequently compounded by the lack of awareness and support from her male co-worker:

> "*So often…men just do not see it the way we see it. I…came out of this debriefing session furious, at the break. I did the opening round and the guy (male colleague) said 'how're you feeling about being in this session today' and he (the offender) started going on about 'that bitch, my probation officer, she's a bitch' and I thought 'oh'…and my male colleague didn't do a thing, he just sort of stood there… (afterwards) I said to him, what did you think of that? And he said 'oh well he's an idiot isn't he?' But he didn't realise the impact that was having on me, and he said 'oh well didn't you feel supported?' and I said well actually 'no, I didn't feel supported'...*" (Karen)

The next research participant, Michael also makes reference to some male colleagues having 'egos' which again seems to mean being overly confident about their own abilities to the detriment of being able to hear the perspective of others:

> "*...about me...my persona. I don't get on very well with men... It's egos with men...bloody egos...that get in the way and I'm aware of it...and I suppose it makes it more difficult for me to work with men...*" (Michael)

This experience was mirrored by Sandy, a female research participant, who was looking for emotional support from a male colleague after a particularly draining session with an offender. She eventually recognised that only a female colleague could provide the support she needed:

> "*Recently I had a guy who was exposed to abuse, it was over a long period of time, but it was about an hour and he was telling me… it was really horrendous and afterwards I was exhausted and I said to my (male) colleague that I wanted to talk about what had gone on and… about how it made me feel, and I knew the next day that I needed to talk to one of the women in the team, … because I think that it impacted on me differently … and I think my female colleagues would hear me differently … overnight, ... I went home and I had a shower and I know that's indicative of washing it away and I wanted to come back in and talk about what I felt and*

actually my male colleague came in and said, 'well actually I don't think I got it right with you last night' ...and we talked about that and I said 'no I don't think you did' and I said this is what I would have liked and so we're on that level..." (Sandy)

The positive in this example is that Sandy was able to gain the support she needed from a female colleague and to subsequently talk with her male colleague about his failure to support her at the time. These examples illustrate a certain lack of emotional literacy in some male workers but also a lack of understanding of diversity issues in order to challenge the sexism of the male offender, and the likely impact of this on the female co-worker. In the first example, had the male worker been adequately alert to issues of sexism he might have picked up on the need to intervene or respond to the situation as it unfolded in the group. The female worker would have appreciated some acknowledgement of and support in response to, what was taking place. The second incident reflected a lack of awareness on the part of the male worker of the emotional impact of a difficult session on his female colleague. There was no evidence of male research participants identifying a similar absence of emotional support from female colleagues.

A slightly different issue, also highlighted by Karen relates to discomfort in a male worker about discussion in a group on emotional matters:

"I was working with another … sex offender facilitator on domestic violence programme and one of the men said something, 'that's too deep' because we had gone a little too... because we had started talking about insecurities..." (Karen)

This suggests that the male colleague was anxious about exploring some emotionally painful and difficult issues arising from domestic violence. However, it is not necessarily just the male workers who find this emotional work difficult, particularly with the most serious violent offences:

"Another officer told me she was out of her depth (a date rape offence)...you need a lot of support, you have to learn through mistakes..." (Tess)

Sophie highlighted a different pressure that this culture could place on male staff. The idea of criminal justice work being 'tough' and 'hard' and therefore 'men's' work, also promotes a view that men have 'thicker skins' and are unlikely to be as distressed by emotionally painful situations as their female colleagues:

"I think the other thing is sometimes, another thing I want to say is, it's different for our male colleagues, … there are generally speaking more women than men and I think sometimes there is a tendency to think, we'll give it to a bloke, we'll give it somebody that hasn't got, do you know what I mean? because they're not going to be as affected by that, so I think there would be that guilt for all of us..." (Sophie)

To some extent this is supported by the emotion language used by the male and female research participants in which, marginally, the men provided less evidence of feeling distressed or affected by the work than their female colleagues (Section 6.2). However, Michael expresses the view that as a male worker he is able to identify with some of the men he works with; demonstrating empathy and feeling comfortable with this:

"...it needs people … to know it's alright to get alongside a criminal...someone who's committed horrible things...giving people permission to be empathic and also for men...to be able to identify with some of the thinking that these people have...often as a man I can identify with the thinking but to be okay with that..." (Michael)

Michael's comments suggest a more complex picture than just that of a gender divide around emotional literacy. They identify a more fluid or postmodern position, with the potential for both men and women to be emotionally literate or illiterate. Karen, despite her frustrations exemplified earlier, with some of her male colleagues, also understands the need for male workers particularly in the group work programmes:

"...yes, but I'm not saying that all women should do this work because we need the men..." (Karen)

Jack and Jack, in their research with lawyers, identified that most boys through childhood learning, gain a vision suited for a world of advocacy, stoic

detachment, autonomy and suspension of emotional judgment (Jack and Jack 1996). There may be a risk that even the most emotionally literate men in the probation service will still, because of their gender, be stereotyped as more able to undertake the 'tough' work of controlling and managing high risk offenders than the 'soft' work of emotional literacy.

David offers some analysis of why he thinks that men might struggle in the emotional arena. Whilst he is referring here specifically to men as perpetrators of domestic violence, he is also expressing it as an issue that he believes is common for men in general:

> *"Men have a fear of expressing their own vulnerability. They may show violence outside the home and within...it is gender connected..."* (David)

Whilst much of the research on domestic violence indicates that men use their anger very effectively to gain and maintain power and control over women, David is suggesting that to change this requires a much more in-depth exploration of their emotional world than merely addressing the anger and control (Dobash, Dobash et al. 2000).

As demonstrated earlier, whilst some of the female research participants expressed some anger with 'unaware' or emotionally illiterate male colleges, two research participants were keen to state that in their experience there was no significant difference between the emotional literacy of probation staff (male and female), and that in their view it was not an innate quality specific to women (Geoff and Heather). This to some degree accords with earlier research that suggested that whilst men as a group might be deterred from joining the probation service because of its perceived 'helping and enabling' role, once particular men had made the decision to choose this career, they are as likely as women to have and to value these skills (Knight 2007). Some of this is clearly influenced by the view of these staff that they were in a 'helping' profession, where emotional literacy was of significance:

> *"I think one of my male colleagues who… is absolutely spot on emotionally, because... the stereotype that women might be more, …might*

be better, at emotions or safer with emotions, I really do think that that is a socialised process, I don't think that is an innate process at all ..." (Heather)

Many of the female research participants described their appreciation at being able to talk about feelings with their colleagues and friends and saw their male colleagues as less able to do this. A number commented that male workers might be willing to express some emotion in a one-to-one situation with a colleague but not in a group (Tony, Angela, Sandy, Janet, Maggie, Jai and Heather). The prevailing culture of masculinity seems to inhibit men, in particular, from viewing emotional discussions as appropriate in a work context (Cordery and Whitehead 1992). Some of the female workers also recognised the importance of trying to maintain a perspective that did not lead them to generalise about all men, from having worked with a few who had very deviant thinking and behaviour patterns:

"There is a tendency to tar all men with the same brush..." (Indira)

"... but I do try and sort of keep it in perspective, not all men are like that..." (Maggie)

6.7.4 Women and emotion

As highlighted in Section 6.3, the issue of emotion regulation was seen by a number of research participants as carrying a gender stereotype. A number of both male and female research participants identified 'being emotional' as a negative female stereotype, and as having sexist connotations. Those who spoke about such female stereotypes identified that negative labelling had sometimes had the effect of making the woman (worker) feel that she had been 'over-reacting' or could make her feel 'put down' or considered to be less knowledgeable. This negativity sits alongside the view that women in general are more emotionally literate than men (Ciarrochi, Hynes et al. 2005). There is evidence that because of gender socialisation women have a greater tendency than men to see the potential of growth in connection with others and to have

the personal and interpersonal skills to engage in such relational learning (Jack and Jack 1996; Cherniss and Goleman 2001). Associated with this is seen to be the willingness of women, more often than men, to express their vulnerability, to express a range of feelings, to actively listen, to nurture and to collaborate which is behaviour that is more often reinforced in girls and women than in boys and men (Cherniss and Goleman 2001:273).

A number of research participants expressed views about women in general being more emotionally literate than men. The following from a male research participant:

> *"I think women are far more in touch, kind of in-tune with their emotions, and they deal with them so much… more appropriately than men do, well that's how I feel, as men we are told, as my Father would say, you know, boys don't cry, and my Father was very much a man's man and… so was his Dad and so on I suppose, but for me and I've got a son myself and I'm very different with my son and actually I'm very affectionate with him and he is with me and if he is upset, I can tell when he is upset and he will talk about what's going on, but we were unable to do that so much as kids and stuff …, well, I think over time that will change, men are becoming more in-tune with their emotions and stuff…. again when I talk to a lot of offenders I would say that, you know I try to understand, you know…"* (Damien)

Damien's comments resonate with other research (Cherniss and Goleman 2001), and in particular the work of Hochschild, and subsequent writers building on her work, which has exposed the role of women in undertaking the majority of the emotion work in both the home and the workplace (Hochschild 1983, Ciarrochi, Forgas et al. 2001, Bunting 2005, Garey and Hansen 2011). There is a continuing association of women with a 'caring' role, both within the home and in the workplace; women are thought to be natural care givers (Rivas 2011) and Damien is reflecting this in his recall of his family life as a child. His description of his father as a 'man's man' implies someone who is strong, tough, in control and probably silent on emotional matters. He is also describing how he has made the decision to interrupt this generational pattern and behave in a different way towards his son and also towards the offenders he works with.

Pat demonstrates some ambivalence and again reflects a more fluid picture:

"I suppose society views women as much better listeners, there are more women in probation nowadays than men... I would say that women are better listeners, maybe not quite so judgmental as men, you know, but then there are men that can listen and men that can't..." (Pat)

Only one female research participant expressed some negative views about her own ability to recognise or value emotions:

S. *"…it gets in the way, this is an awful thing to say isn't it, and it takes time up..."*

C: *"...so for you it is a negative thing?"*

S: *"...yes it is I'm afraid."*

(Sophie)

Another research participant, Sandy, expressed a slightly cautious view that maybe emotional literacy could be taught but concluded that those workers, who had had to address powerlessness and identity issues for themselves related to being members of oppressed or marginalised groups, were more likely to have acquired these skills. This does suggest a view of emotional literacy as a learnt skill as much, if not more than, an innate skill based on gender:

"I think they could be if they got the training, I think most of the men come in and they haven't had the training and I think… I don't know, not all women have either, but I think somewhere along the line, because the world isn't constructed for us, we have to learn how to manage it differently and all those rights that I think some men have, albeit they don't know it, they come up against it when they are dealing with emotions. I also think that, because in our team there are two Asian women and myself, who is a lesbian, we come with other packages really, so what we come with is a difference that allows us to engage differently again now, that's not to say that everyone, lesbian or Asian will be able to do that but it does seem to be..." (Sandy)

6.7.5 Impact of the work on male and female staff

Here Tony, as a male treatment manager, explains his awareness of the impact of undertaking sexual offending work, on women in his team:

"...let me see if I can give you an example. When we work with the men …we ask them to describe their target or who might be a target for them and they would describe people in particular way...might be boys, other men, girls, or maybe women...they will say...the object of my fantasy or who've I've offended against...or abnormally sort of fitted this sort of image...petite or cherubic or large breasted or whatever it might be...or wearing particular clothes etc. And in supervision and as a team, we have team supervisions and team meetings...that's a clear point that must be difficult for...particularly the women in the team...because most of the men have offended against girls or women, not all of them but the majority have offended against women… two thirds..." (Tony)

Tony is suggesting that the impact of, in particular, working with sex offenders and domestic violence abusers is disproportionately felt by female workers who he considered were more likely to be the target of the often misogynistic beliefs, attitudes and fantasies of these men. For some staff, particularly women, in working with domestic violence perpetrators, there was a sense of feeling 'attacked' or 'targeted' because of their gender. Six of the research participants, (five women and one man) made reference to the particular issues associated with working with domestic violence perpetrators (Howard, Kim, Angela, Sophie, Gill, Karen), with a number identifying this form of work as more difficult than work with sex offenders because of the particularly powerful misogyny attached to this crime. For some research participants this issue increased the strength of their emotional response to this work:

"I find it more frustrating working with other groups e.g. domestic violence. Surprise I suppose...in terms of some people's kind of like schemas...really entrenched..." (Kim)

"I find domestic violence the most challenging very, much, much harder..." (Sophie)

"...yes, the other thing that I'm not so keen on in my role is the impact that I feel working with domestic violence men. … they are not my chosen area to work with and it is like … I have to do that because of the needs of the service, and I… personally I find it, I feel quite attacked, I find it, in the group, in a way that doesn't seem to happen with sex offenders..." (Karen)

For others the gendered nature of crimes such as domestic violence and sexual offending linked to their own or others' experiences and made this work too

difficult to contemplate without shutting down their emotions in some way. Research participants who identified themselves or someone close to them as former victims of, in this case, domestic violence, indicated how hard they found working with male perpetrators of this crime:

> *"If you had to work with some of the offenders we have, it is very, very hard to separate, you know, if you are working with a sex offender and you've been sexually abused or you know somebody who has, it can be difficult, domestic violence, it is absolutely massive, you know, it is very difficult to kind of you know how you do that, I think you become immune."* (Gill)

Sophie views domestic violence offenders as more 'entrenched' in their views and therefore more difficult to work with, she also acknowledges her own victim status:

> *"I think it's because generally speaking, most domestic violence perpetrators are men and I am a woman … and I'm a victim…. so I'd rather supervise a sex-offender any day than a domestic violence person… only because I think … I think I'm going to have less impact on very, very entrenched attitudes, I'm not suggesting that sex offenders don't have entrenched attitudes, however, I've got things that I can do to sex-offenders, you know what I mean…I've got constraints on them, if I can't change their thinking, I can certainly monitor their behaviour … that's what I feel anyway."* (Sophie)

The potential for this group of men to provoke very strong feelings of anger, particularly in the female workers was highlighted by Karen who, despite these feelings demonstrates a degree of self-regulation such that she maintained communication with the group and challenged the man concerned:

> *"… I do a domestic violence group…, less so with sex offenders, but I had an experience with a domestic violence group last week and frankly I could have, ... marched that man out of that room and said, go outside, you are a pig, and that was because he was behaving in the session like he behaves in his life generally ..., he was, he was, everything, very, very rigid thinking, very misogynistic... 'I tell her, I tell her, I tell her, I tell her' so that made me really angry, so I said to him, ... where's the discussion and just posed that and then brought in the group and they were saying, 'you've got to listen to her man, you've got to listen to her'..."* (Karen)

Janet expresses a great deal of anger about their misogyny:

"...*yes, sometimes I can really hate the way they actually use women as sex symbols, pieces of meat and talk about them in such a derogatory way … you know, it makes you angry...*" (Janet)

She goes on to give examples of this:

"*A lot of the time, very minimising, denial and blaming the woman, 'it's all her fault, she just goes on and on… I earn the money, her job is to look after the kids, it's nothing, it's not hard work' and … think a lot of the time people use them like, you know, they talk to you as if you were a piece of ... material object, it is theirs to be owned...*" (Janet)

The targeting of the female staff in particular is undoubtedly one way in which male offenders try to regain some power and control in a relatively uncomfortable and powerless situation for them. Sandy expresses similar concerns about being targeted as a female worker by male offenders but describes her strategy for dealing with this:

"*I mean I used to find it in prison, when I ran groups there, you were often the lone female worker so you'd have two male colleagues and eight to ten offenders, and you always get the men who, where there are issues about women, you represent them all so there is all that really subtle putting you down and that used to drive me mad and I used to say to them, 'what is it you're doing?' and then they get really irritable, really angry with you and I say 'this isn't okay' and then they get … I used to think that, they're not going to put me down and they're doing what they've always done and trying to take control over me and that's the one bit I won't let happen in a group...*" (Sandy)

Howard, rather than finding the work intimidating was just clear that he thoroughly disliked men who had committed domestic violence offence:

"*I hate men who commit domestic violence...I'd rather concentrate on sex offenders but I'm available in emergency...always willing to help if I possibly can…I just don't like overbearing misogynistic bullies and that's what the majority of men who perpetrate DV are …fundamentally I just don't like them – nasty unpleasant people. If I can avoid them I will.*" (Howard)

The female staff were endeavouring to hold onto their emotional literacy whilst under attack, and on occasions feeling unsupported by their male facilitator

colleague(s). Karen identifies a further gender difference in the way members of the group respond to the male and female facilitators:

"I think if you're, if the woman in the group, if the female facilitator says something, not all men, but …you will get one, it is usually one in the group who challenges you, and says 'no that's not right, I don't agree with that' whereas they will be very accepting from a male colleague, I feel it is much easier for the men working with men who have done domestic violence to.. not become confrontational, but to try and get them to think in a different way, and I,… I've really, sometimes it affects my mood and I... if I didn't have to do domestic violence work I wouldn't do." (Karen)

She expresses concern that in some group work situations the male offenders were more inclined to accept a challenge from a male worker than they were from a female worker and she was unhappy that her male colleagues were not always sensitive to this or willing to 'back-up' the female worker's position. Karen saw that on occasions the ability of the male workers to build 'rapport' with the male offenders, for example by wearing a Man U football scarf, left the female worker feeling marginalised. These examples from Karen highlight not just the limitations, as she perceives them, of the emotional literacy of some of her colleagues, but also the direct impact it has on her in terms of her own working practices.

Indira explains the particular issues for female staff when subtle forms of sexism are expressed by offenders in the group, in deciding whether to respond and how. None of this is part of the formal protocol for the programme; it requires judgment, emotional clarity and an unpacking of the sexism:

"Just challenging them...behaviours that might not be as overt...they are covert and subtle. It made me feel uncomfortable when J said 'so and so will be joining us soon'...the men quickly said 'women are always on the phone nattering'. You can ignore that or you can have a five minute digression from the manual and open it up. As it stands it's quite a light hearted thing but underneath there are attitudes...to victims...it addresses a range of issues...also for the female staff. Sometimes we make a judgement call about innuendos and subtle statements - sometimes you ignore it and other times...if it's going to be helpful in an overall way...you address it..." (Indira)

Of particular significance to some research participants was the co-working relationship between male and female workers in group work situation. Here Karen is describing the skills she believes she has in building rapport with sex offenders in the group work programmes she runs but she is also clear that her relationship with her male co-worker is very important in this process:

> *"I am very good with building rapport with men and I think it does depend on your male co-worker. A lot depends on your male co-worker..."* (Karen)

Some research participants identified benefits of being female in the workplace; enabling them to gain emotional support from colleagues more freely than their male counterparts:

> *"I mean in our office we're quite … chatty, it's mostly women … the majority of women have children so we do the whole juggling thing, so it's understood, and you know it does fall into sort of, we are quite touchy feely and understanding …."* (Sophie)

> *"I do feel that as females, as women, we do have the luxury of talking more about, with our friends about things and ..."* (Jai)

An older female research participant considered that her age and her gender were an asset in breaking through certain barriers erected by offenders (Heather). She felt able to voice emotional issues and be respected for this in way she suspected would be harder for younger and/or less experienced workers.

6.7.6 Conclusion

All of research participants in this study recognised the importance of emotional literacy, in terms of relationship building and an ability to 'read' situations, but views were expressed about women generally being more able in this respect than their male colleagues. There was no evidence of male staff complaining about a lack of emotional literacy in female staff but there was evidence that some of the female research participants found their male colleagues to be less aware of the emotional impact of the work, and sometimes actually obstructive when it came to understanding and responding to emotions in offenders and in

colleagues. There was little evidence within the data of formalised protocols to support staff in this way; they managed these experiences through personal judgment and discussion with colleagues. Female staff were generally seen as using these networks, or emotional resources, more than their male colleagues. The discourse of emotion appeared to be ad hoc and informal rather than built into any of the more formalised agendas of the working environment.

6.8   Strategies for 'managing the silence'

6.8.1 Introduction

Evidence from the preceding sections illustrates the manner in which research participants to this study have felt that their expression and articulation of feelings have been suppressed or silenced in a range of ways within the organisational context of their practice.   Some of this is an internal, or psychobiographic process; their desire to be seen as 'professional' which they interpreted as requiring a calm and controlled outward appearance whatever feelings they might have under the surface (the 'paddling duck', Section 6.2) (Layder 2006).   Some is related to the situated activity of their actual practice, in which they recognise that the emotional needs of the offender should take priority and precedence over their own feelings.   However, significant elements of this suppression and silencing of feelings relates to the social and contextual resources domains within which they operate (Layder 2006).   They related some of this 'silencing' of any significant discourse on emotions to the culture of managerialism within their organisation and the lack of permission or indeed interest from their managers to reveal their 'underground emotion work' (Layder 2006). The initial hesitancy of a number of them in talking about their feelings in the research interview appeared to reflect a level of unfamiliarity with such conversations in their normal working routine. However, they also felt 'silenced' by wider contextual resource issues related to gender and to concepts of mental health and unwellness.   For example, Karen in Section 6.3 talked of 'masking' her emotions to such an extent that no one realised how stressed she was until she went on sick leave.   The data contains a great deal of evidence of research

participants experiencing high levels of stress, which many related to an inability to express feelings in the workplace. This is briefly touched on in Section 6.3 but not developed as a separate theme in its own right given that the main focus of this thesis is the illustration of emotional literacy in practice. Research participants gave examples of their fear that excess emotional expression would be interpreted by unspecified others as a sign of (often female) weakness, an excess of emotion that needed to be controlled or indeed mental ill-health.

This section examines the strategies that the research participants employed to deal with their feelings in the workplace to try and counteract the silence that the organisational feeling rules of 'emotional detachment' (Section 6.6) imposed on them. These include both formal and informal strategies and a mixture of both;

Formal:

I.   Line or treatment manager supervision

II.   Formal de-briefing after group work programmes

III.   Counselling – provided by the agency or undertaken on a private basis

Informal:

iv.   'Letting off steam' with colleagues

v.   Support at home/with family

A mixture of formal and informal:

vi.   Team work

vii.   Reflective practice

6.8.2 Where do the feelings go?

If the feeling rules of the probation service are 'emotional detachment' (Section 6.6) or 'silence' on the subject, how do workers learn to manage their emotions appropriately for the work that they do? Unlike counsellors and psychotherapists, who are trained to identify, understand and use their emotions in order to offer a constructive and empathic service to their clients, and who are offered 'clinical' supervision in which their feelings are centre stage (Mearns 1997, Rogers 2004)(Mearns 1997; Rogers 2004), probation staff have neither training nor formal supervision that relates specifically to their own emotions unless they choose to seek this out for themselves through external courses or counselling. In the context of this study only two of the research participants, both employed as psychologists to work with a sex offender team, had formal, clinical supervision in which they identified opportunities to express and talk about the feelings generated by their work with offenders. For the remainder of the research participants, in the absence of any organisational or theoretical context for understanding their emotional lives, they described a variety of personal approaches and professional experiences that had aided this process.

i) **<u>Line or treatment management supervision</u>**

As the Section 6.6 on organisations and emotions highlighted, a considerable number of research participants saw their line manager as actively blocking or disinterested in their emotional lives. However, approximately one third of the research participants (nine in total) either had been, or was currently, able to use their line management supervision as a place to take some of their feelings about their work. This was clearly a significant emotional resource to them. Lynn, in her observation below, reflects the historical place of supervision in the probation service which was about personal development and casework

practice and included a strong focus on the emotional well being of the practitioner (Monger 1972):

> *"…yes… I had some wonderful supervisors early on. Because …you know, it was so important in those days, it was part of the job, you know, you must be having some uncomfortable feelings, how are you managing them, it seemed to be a regular part of the job..."* (Lynn)

These next quotes also demonstrate very positive examples of contemporary line management supervision that research participants found helpful:

> *"...and then I went to see my manager and he is really nice and he put a smile back on my face and I went,* (exhales…) *things are really better now, I sort of like reflected on it for a while because I thought I'm not going to get wound up about it and take it home with me…"* (Maggie)

> *"...to be honest, my manager at the moment is absolutely fantastic… the previous manager wasn't, but this one is absolutely brilliant, very supportive, I mean really good, ... I can go to him about anything..."* (Damien)

Pat and John similarly had very positive experiences but expressed some regret about the quantity of such available supervision and also a sense of the individual rather than institutional component of good supervision:

> *"There is supervision and X is the treatment manager...we are certainly encouraged by X to consider...and he is very very good...how you managed that situation...someone who is difficult. It probably doesn't happen as much as it should..."* (John)

> *"… Y who unfortunately is leaving, she's brilliant, the senior, I know I can talk to her about anything anytime..."* (Pat)

However, some research participants highlighted the difficulties in talking in any depth in formal supervision about their feelings or the significance of particular cases because of the demands of the sheer volume of work

and the priority afforded to the need to hit targets. They felt they would need to specifically request a session to talk about their feelings:

"… scheduled time is once a month with a senior probation officer in your supervision, but if I'm working between 30 and 40 cases, I've got an hour to talk through all their targets to make sure that I am hitting them and then …right let's discuss your cases for the last twenty minutes so you have to pick which cases that you want to and it is normally your high risk cases that you monitor..." (Mary)

The implication of Mary's statement is that she has to make prioritised choices about the 'riskiest' cases to discuss with her line manager, rather than those that are causing her the most emotional concern.

Hannah identified feelings of distress after a particular offender session. She recognised the importance of letting her line manager know of the severity of the impact on her, but had to wait a week, which is a long time to have to 'hold onto' such strong feelings. It appears that it would not have come up in supervision without her initiating it:

"…because I was still crying when I got home, and then I had supervision I think the following week, and I did bring it up again. Because I wanted my manager to be aware of the fact… how much it had affected me and I wanted her to know how I had dealt with it and I had dealt with it fine, but they wouldn't normally routinely ask, how you are dealing with it?" (Hannah)

Aruna identifies a difference between serious and less serious issues; seeing the outlet of feelings of frustrations best managed through colleagues. The 'boiler room' notion of emotions first proposed by Descartes (Evans 2003), in which steam has to be 'let out' in order to prevent the 'system' boiling over:

"… but if it was something serious then I would arrange supervision talk to my manager, if it was just generally... letting go of frustrations so I could carry on for the rest of the day, that is something that colleagues would be best for…" (Aruna)

As further illustrated in Section 6.6 there were a number who were not confident that their line managers could or would support them by listening to their expressions of emotion and so would not choose to go to them in times of emotional excess:

"…. (managers) that have been replaced by senior probation officers that have no real knowledge or expertise of public protection work and therefore they are on a very steep learning curve and I think they are, I would be probably quite sort of reluctant to discuss that with them …" (Nick)

This next comment relates to a worker newly involved in group work with sex offenders who felt unsupported and isolated in the work she was being expected to carry out:

"…for both of us we didn't have anybody here that managed us so nobody actually said after the sessions 'how did that go?' ...I feel that we were both at sea with it..." (Hannah)

For some, line management was the last place they looked for this level of emotional support:

"My immediate line management supervision...is like out of a Kafka novel...an instance of being elitist and arrogant and over intellectual..." (Amy)

ii)   Formal 'de-briefing'

In addition to line or treatment management supervision as a potential place to take feelings some research participants referred to planned 'de-briefing' after particular group work sessions with offenders. The term 'de-briefing' refers to situations where staff have been exposed to particularly stressful or traumatic incidents at work and the debriefing is designed to enable them to talk through the incident and deal with feelings arising from it (Mackie 2009). This term has been transferred to the more routine, but nevertheless important role of talking through

events arising from group work programmes with offenders. It implies a structured and timetabled space created for the purpose of allowing workers to express their views and feelings collectively or individually on a particular piece of work (usually, but not always, group work) and to reflect on their practice. This is different from the more routine allocation of time by the line manager to discuss targets, cases, progress etc. A significant proportion of the research participants (seven) looked for 'debriefing' particularly after group sessions.   This was seen as an accepted part of their routine and a sign of good practice although it might not always involve talking about the worker's feelings:

> *"After the groups we try and debrief and talk about the challenging cases together. Sometimes in terms of the focus of the work must bring about the man and managing the risk of the man. You will have feelings and biases in terms of some men..."* (Indira)

Kim articulates this as a slightly more random, although nevertheless important process:

> *"Yes...we always have an opportunity to talk...we work to the very last minute...we get thrown out of the building at 9.30...or in the break if something is relevant...we could talk about it as appropriate. Always an opportunity...in supervision also..."* (Kim)

However, a number articulated the time pressures and constraints on this, and how it could fall by the wayside in the light of other external pressures on them.

> *"… we used to have a sex-offenders support group because it was acknowledged that obviously we have all these feelings to deal with, we may have to go home and have small children that we have to bath, and … I found it quite useful particularly when I was a fairly new officer, but however, the will to keep that going went, I mean, I was… I'm not boasting but I was a bit of a leading light to keep that going, but in the end I thought crikey, that if nobody else wants it then… we don't have that..."* (Sophie)

iii)   Counselling

Most probation trusts offer access to counselling services to their staff and some make specific provision for staff working with high risk offenders which may be referred to as 'counselling' or as 'clinical supervision'[2].   Some research participants had had experience of counselling external to the service either through choosing to go into therapy for themselves and/or learning how to become counsellors:

> *"I started doing a counselling course in college to try and understand more about that … and I've been to see counsellors myself, for my own kind of stuff …. To look at… my kind of thoughts, feelings and behaviours … it helped me … move on and, it was good, it was such a big change in my life … Massive..."* (Damien)

Damien was also able to benefit from supervision by a psychologist external to the probation service in increasing his understanding and subsequent management of his feelings provoked by the process of transference and counter-transference between himself and an offender who reminded him of his brother:

> *"I was being supervised by a psychologist at the time as well and we kind of talked about transference and that kind of stuff ... and again, I didn't realise at the time what was going on, ... and I saw this person as kind of like my brother … and I think he reflected that back and ... I think … that was the disappointing bit, this was my brother that had let me down rather than this was an offender, … I am much more aware of that now..."* (Damien)

However, of the research participants who made reference to the availability of some form of formal counselling within the service, none was particularly impressed either through direct experience of such a service or because they perceived it to be aimed at dealing with problems when a staff member was not coping. Tony saw the provision of counselling as patronising and something of a sticking plaster being

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[2] Lavender Psychotherapy offers 'clinical supervision' to staff in three Probation Trusts. This scheme is referred to as 'keeping staff well'

offered by management in the absence of any real understanding of what the practitioners had to deal with. Whilst he acknowledged that some of this may reflect his own resistance, as a man, to exploring his feelings, he felt that genuine support came from other colleagues who were around when he most needed an outlet:

"Fundamentally most of the support or acknowledgement would come from other members of the team and still does. I don't think that is acknowledged really, except in the formal sense that 'yes we understand that that is happening and therefore you need counselling twice a year'...it's that sort of thing, but actually you don't understand and actually I'm not always sure that I do want that counselling...sometimes I feel that I'm being patronised to some extent and there's a paternalistic view that because I'm doing this hard work...go away and have a good cry and you'll feel a lot better. I try to examine that in myself and tried to see whether it's me being...whether it's a really masculine trait in me...gender learned, or whatever, and there may be some of that there. But at the same time I do actually I do feel ...I don't really need...there are times when I want to offload but it won't be to order...you can only offload on the 23rd July...(laugh…) *(feelings don't work like that...book an appointment to have a feeling)..."* (Tony)

Lynn also identified a negative association with counselling that implied the problem lay within the worker rather than within the nature of the work:

"… oh yes, yes, and it's you know, you've got to say to yourself, 'oh I've got a problem' first and… Yes..." (Lynn)

Geoff saw counselling as relevant to him when he was new in role, but no longer necessary, and that for him the support come from his colleagues, debriefing opportunities and supervision:

"Early on in the process… because there is an opportunity for counselling services… then I would have sought that … but it has been years since anybody at this team has had any kind of formal counselling and that's not because we are unhealthy in that respect or keeping all this sort of stuff under the surface because this stuff is not an issue, but on the rare occasions when it does … we've got peer supervision, debriefing after the end of every session, we've got treatment manager supervision, which is also part of my role, for

the other treatment managers… and then we've got sort of line-manager supervision from the programme manager and that really does. seem to cover all bases..." (Geoff)

iv)   <u>Team work</u>

The largest group (Michael, Amy, John, Lynn, Heather, Tess, Nick, Janet, Damien, Jai, Aruna, Maggie, Sandy and Robert), looked to their team colleagues for peer support, to discuss their work and give vent to feelings arising from the work as this was available more spontaneously than the formal avenues of either line management supervision, debriefing or counselling and was also more 'trusted' to meet the need. Team work offered intellectual stimulation, support, advice and encouragement. It was also in the context of supportive team colleagues that they felt able to be themselves, expressing feelings without feeling judged. These research participants saw their colleagues as providing a constant source of support, stimulation and resource.

> *"The other thing I like about this specific job...because it's a specialist job. I've never ever been so close to a team ever...it's really like a marriage if you like. I've discussed it with members of the team..."* (Michael)

> *"… tremendous feelings of sort of comradeship and companionship in teams when you were working well..."* (Lynn)

> *"And I like working as part of a team, I really enjoy it … I mean whatever role I am in, whether it is offender management, but in a programmes team you really do have to work together because you know, you've got co-worker responsibility."* (Karen)

> *"The team, again are fantastic, I am able to talk to them,..."* (Damien)

> *"I think there is something really powerful about being part of a team, I mean we are seen as experts a bit because we are in a small team, but actually within a team we all have different skills and what I like is when I feel vulnerable, I can go to one of my colleagues and say, this is how I feel, or X and Y is going on and I can tell them…. and it feels much more therapeutic so I suppose I have a sense of being more valued [by the team] yes and I probably*

value my colleagues more in this team than I might if I was in another team..." (Sandy)

"...the team are part of my sanity...I value my colleagues enormously. Team work is great..." (Amy)

v) **'Letting off steam'**

Although it has been proposed (Section 6.6) that there are unspoken feeling rules of emotional detachment within the modern probation service, Hochschild suggests that in all organisational settings there are circumstances or physical zones where different emotion rules may prevail (Hochschild 1983). These may be places where the organisation's direct control and surveillance is less obvious but where informal norms of what feelings can (and cannot) be expressed will come to the surface. Hochschild believes that the physical architecture shapes, to an extent, the emotional architecture where meanings of privacy, confidentiality, secrecy and honesty are differentially shaped and defined. For example, in the relative privacy of the galley area of an aircraft she suggests that the niceties of customer care can be suspended and 'real' feelings can be expressed, including the derision or mocking of certain passengers (Hochschild 1983). In a different context Crawley identifies 'emotional zones' within a prison which she argues constitute places and settings with which particular emotions are associated and legitimated, and she links this with the feeling rules of the organisation (Crawley 2004). There are certain zones in which 'blowing off steam' may be legitimate, (for example the gym) and others, (for example the chapel or probation office), where it is acceptable for a prisoner to express sadness or grief. In other, more formal places in the prison, for example the gatehouse, emotional reticence is the norm (Crawley 2004:148). The metaphor 'letting off steam' seems an appropriate one as it captures the immediacy of the feeling and the need for a safe place to discharge it, without the fear of negative judgement or misunderstanding.

"Debriefing...letting off steam...I do it in the office and I do it at home as well..." (Howard)

In the following exchange I asked Aruna to say a bit more about the metaphor she had used earlier:

C. *"…and you mentioned about, you didn't call it debriefing, you called it 'letting off steam' … you can do that in this setting? You can go to someone who will listen to you?"*

A. *"….in probation it happens often, I don't know anyone who doesn't do it, I think you have to really, you will get frustrated, especially if you have put a lot of time and effort into a piece of work and it isn't making any difference or you've spent a lot of time with an agency and they've not done what they're supposed to do, I mean we all do it, we all sit there and have a moan… "*

This form of support, whilst sometimes referred to as 'de-briefing' was more generally expressed as a place to take feelings when they arose unexpectedly in relation to the work. They described the relief at being able to give vent to feelings and that what they were seeking was a sympathetic ear not necessarily advice or guidance on what to do next:

"…you can go to your SPO, but I find I go to my work colleagues more than anything else because they are the ones more likely to have had the same experience and I know SPO's would have done but they are a bit more removed from it because they're not case managers anymore, but I do tend to go to colleagues about it..." (Maggie)

Victoria considered her colleagues to be sufficiently tuned in to her emotional state to actually check her out when she had had a particularly difficult interview:

"... when you say about reading peoples feeling and because if someone comes back up stairs, you kind of know if there's something wrong… I've come up the stairs several times when I've had quite a heavy session with somebody and straight away somebody'll say, oh are you okay?, how was it? what went on? and you kind of use your colleagues in that way for support." (Victoria)

Angela provided a good example of her need for attention and recognition when distressed, and how when this was made available it helped her to regain their thinking capacities:

"Yes because I find both professional and personally in my head it gets like muddy … do you know what I mean and then I like to, this is where the talking comes in, just sit and listen, then I splurge it all out and I can see the wood for trees again, if that makes sense and it clears and I can think more rationally about it …" (Angela)

Research participants also expressed views about emotional zones or the emotional architecture (Hochschild 1983), where feelings could be safely discharged or ventilated and through which research participants could manage the sometimes confusing and muddled feelings generated by the work. For Mary the safe place was created both physically, by the door shutting thus creating a barrier between her and others who might judge her, and by empathic colleagues:

"…I'll… walk through and …, if it has been very stressful or very emotional I'll quite often be quiet for about a minute and then one of my colleagues will say 'what's been happening', 'what's gone on?' I suppose you would call it debriefing… and I would, apart from just talk about what has just happened, they'll give feedback and I'll give feedback and I'll go out for a cigarette and get some fresh air …I think I feel safe to go back into the office and swear and not have somebody say 'what's the matter with you?', 'don't say those words' or something, they'll shut the door so no one else hears, (laughs) and go 'what's the matter?' and I feel able and I don't feel closeted to keep my mouth shut or 'behave professionally, that's not very good' or..." (Mary)

Gill described herself as someone able to keep her feelings on hold while with an offender, but needing to let them out as soon as possible afterwards:

"I'm one of these people whereby I don't keep things to themselves, you know, straight out of an interview room and go into another room and go 'aaarrrggghhh' I do that, I'm quite an expressive person and I go 'oh my god he's just done my head in'..." (Mary)

One of the most valued aspects of this informal support was the sense that they would not be judged by the language or expressions they might use in this process of 'letting off steam'. This might be emotional distress that they would not want others to witness or it might come out in the form of 'risky' humour. Some commented specifically on the use of humour and occasionally 'disrespectful language' in the process of letting off steam. This was seen as a necessary safety valve after a difficult session, and as a coping mechanism. However, it was feared that this could be judged negatively if over heard by the 'wrong' people. This was similar to the experience of airline staff in Hochschild's study who let off steam about passengers in the galley area (Hochschild 1983). Pat offers an illustration of the use of illicit humour and also describes how she is able to continue to work with an offender she dislikes, by using this humour in a 'safe' place, i.e. the staff room which offenders are not allowed to enter:

"I've shared an office with three different people now and you can say anything, you know you can talk to them, you sound off them, if you listen to people, you know like we often joke, like if you've got a Daily Mail journalist in there if you know what I mean, because you're in the staff room, and you are laughing because you're allowed to laugh at certain things..." (Pat)

Hannah gives another example of risky humour, and whilst expressing some shame at the need for it sees it as a necessary release:

"We do debrief but it is really tempting to be really... un-PC and just … and I think we do sometimes do that or when I am reading something and I go, 'Oh My God!' or I say to someone, 'Look At That', it is actually but sometimes I am embarrassed, a bit ashamed at how we talk about the men afterwards, because if they heard us they would be mortified… yes, it is, and it does help because we laugh about it … yes I suppose it is necessary because if I didn't have it would be fairly difficult..." (Hannah)

Sophie also sees it as a coping mechanism and as a way of discharging feelings at work, in order not to take them home with her:

"I work in an open plan office and we talk to each other about our cases and … I think sometimes …some of the words that we use are very disrespectful and very non-P.C. and you know... but that is a coping mechanism… I always try to ..., have... if I can, to have talked about stuff like that before I go home..." (Sophie)

This 'off-loading' of feelings is clearly a very important release mechanism for workers but it does not necessarily provide them with sufficient opportunity to also engage in reflection and appraisal of the feelings.

vi)   <u>Being selective about who to talk to</u>

Of the twelve research participants who looked for support mainly from their colleagues, three felt they needed to be careful about who they chose to talk to about their feelings.

"...and also you talk to your colleagues and you've got the colleagues you talk to about certain things because there's a girl here who won't do anything with sex offenders at all, won't even go on the training, so I just assume something has happened to her …in her life, because .. you have to do this training and I've noticed that she doesn't go, so I wouldn't talk to her..." (Pat*)*

Pat is acknowledging her understanding that one of her colleagues must have difficulties in dealing with sex offenders, and therefore would be unlikely to be able to hear any revelations from Pat about how they made her feel. Whereas for Jai, it's a combination of pragmatism (sharing a car) and choice:

"...yes, if I do evening groups then I generally, a colleague drops me off because she lives near me and …, we'll talk in the car, if there is a daytime group there is room to talk about it, there is one colleague that I work with who is, usually zooms off after it is finished, but … I, wouldn't choose to talk with her necessarily because I, … I think,, that there would be other colleagues that would understand it at a deeper level, so … it is not that I am left stranded..." (Jai)

vii) Support at home

Research participants were mixed in their views about taking their feelings home with them. Some made reference to the importance of having a stable home life as prerequisite for doing the job:

> *"My private life is very stable and supportive a real biggy for me - I'm fairly impervious because of the strength from that...I don't know how it would be if I didn't have a happy and contented and secure home life..."* (Michael)

Tess and Heather used, or had used, their partners to help her with this process:

> *"Speaking out about things does help to clarify my thinking (particularly with my partner)..."* (Tess)

> *"I suppose I was lucky for years … you know, my partner did the same job and he was the one who got it actually and because he had a different way of dealing with..."* (Heather)

Janet actively held onto her feelings until she got home, where her partner or friends would help her:

> *"...no, mine come out when I get home, with my partner, if anything has happened, I can tend to turn to my friends or I turn to my partner, he is very, very supportive, I am very lucky really..."* (Janet)

Whilst for others this was more problematic. Sophie was keen not to take her work home with her and had a particular reason for wishing to separate out her professional work with domestic violence abusers from her family life:

> *"… I think I find it more difficult in terms of working with my cases of domestic violence that I work with that I show how I feel, because… and it doesn't just apply if you've got children of your own at all, you might know children, but because I have children… I have to separate myself and … I do separate myself from my offenders and my offenders don't know anything about my personal life and that's how, that's how I want it…."* (Sophie)

Some research participants found alternative ways of letting go of their feelings:

"... I was conscious that I found my own ways of… I didn't often express them to the person concerned, wouldn't often express anything otherwise, but that it was sort of through other things, through things like sport …" (Lynn)

6.8.3 Building emotional resources

Research within the field of psychotherapy identifies the suppression of overwhelming feelings arising from abusive and damaging behaviour, particularly in young children, as a survival strategy in adulthood (Diamant 2001, McLeod 2001). The process of psychotherapy is focused on the task of uncovering and re-examining these feelings in a safe environment. Probation workers may or may not have had similar early experiences. However, if they have to suppress feelings that are triggered by a combination of their earlier life experiences and their current work they may find themselves ambushed by these feelings in present situations. Issues of transference and counter transference, between counsellor and client (offender and worker), as explained in the psychotherapeutic literature, can have significant implications for staff who are unaware of the potential for these processes to occur (Murdin 2010). The strategies employed by these research participants suggest the potential for the building of emotional 'capital' or resource, as identified by a number of writers (Reay 2004, Gillies 2006, Zembylas 2007). The joint efforts of family, people in the past, social support networks, team networks and sometimes line managers may produce a resource that is sustaining for these staff. It is identified as a collective activity that forms a supportive network from which the skills of emotional literacy can be fostered and sustained.

6.8.4 Conclusion

Research participants used a range of strategies to manage and express the feelings that arose from work. What seemed to help them the most was the opportunity to 'let off steam' i.e. to express their feelings in an immediate and

uncensored way with colleagues that they trusted and in places in which they felt safe and un-judged. Whilst there was an appreciation of good line management supervision this was not routinely available and some were actively cautious about revealing too much vulnerability in front of a line manager for fear of being negatively judged. It was clear that research participants were making decisions about 'safety' and 'appropriate places' in which to be 'emotional'; and that the agency as a whole did not routinely provide these emotional places for letting off steam; they arose through informal networks and most significantly 'team work' in which strong and mutually beneficial relationships were built. Some of them appeared to be able to develop a 'helping relationship with themselves' (Rogers 2004), and had learnt to 'self-soothe' (Gerhardt 2004), by understanding where their feelings came from, taking care of themselves and seeking the support of family and friends to sustain them (Herman 1997). Whilst all of this is an important resource to workers it does not necessarily provide them with the additional guidance and support needed to reflect on and appraise their emotional expressions and to move on to consider the best way forward with a particular offender or work situation. Also, given the evidence of impact issues on staff working with high risk offenders, from both the literature (Schauben and Frazier 1995, Dwyer 2007, Knight and Clow 2010, Schaible and Gecas 2010), and the data in this research project, it is all the more surprising that the systems in place to offer support, debriefing and advice seem to be piecemeal and arbitrary.

6.9: Emotional literacy in practice

6.9.1 What is emotional literacy?

The previous sections have illustrated the way in which some probation practitioners have learnt to identify, regulate and use their emotions in their practice with offenders. This section summarises the key themes arising from this data and evidence from the focus group (Appendix 14) that seems to best identify emotionally literate practice in the probation service. The thesis began with a definition of emotional literacy:

"The capacity to register our emotional responses to the situations we are in and to acknowledge those responses to ourselves so that we recognise the ways in which they influence our thoughts and actions." (Orbach 2001:2).

It then used the five key criteria of 'motivation, self-awareness, self-regulation, social competence and empathy' (Section 2.4.1), to frame the responses from the research participants on a range of questions related to how they understood their emotions and their ability to regulate and use their emotions in their practice. Evidence from the data extended these criteria and highlighted the impact of the social setting (the organisation of the probation service), and of particular contextual resources (gender) on the exercising of this skill (Layder 2006). In a bullet point format, this section summarises the evidence that supports the existing criteria on emotional literacy within a probation context, shows how it has been enhanced and then identifies new criteria.

6.9.2 Motivation

- Probation workers are motivated to work with offenders from the pleasure they gain in building relationships with them and seeing them work towards positive change in their lives. They are also motivated by strong peer and team relationships and by supportive managers.

  Enhancement of criteria

- Probation workers deal with a predominance of 'negative' emotions. In order to 'manage' and contain this in offenders and in themselves they need sufficient levels of positive emotional resource to offset and balance this negativity. The ability to work with offenders in an emotionally literate manner is motivated and enhanced by the emotional resources that build as a result of positive relationships with offenders, with contemporaries in the work-place and with an organisation that offers appropriate and safe outlets for emotional expression and opportunities for reflection and appraisal.

6.9.3 Self-awareness

- Also referred to as 'use of self' in a probation context, this combines an understanding of one's own emotions and what triggers them, with an offering of one's 'emotional' self to the offender as a 'gift'. This concept accords with Bolton's category of emotion management as 'philanthropic' (Bolton 2005).

Enhancement of criteria

- This 'use of self' differs from Hochschild's concept of 'emotional labour' (Hochschild 1984), in that while such emotion management benefits the work of the service it is not (yet) deliberately taught or exploited for commercial gain.
- Research participants struggled to articulate their emotions which indicated a lack of practice in this in the work setting. The use of metaphor was significant in explaining feelings and an understanding of metaphor could enhance sensitivity towards and awareness of, another's feelings.

6.9.4 Self-regulation

- 'Controlling' emotions in the interests of 'professionalism' is seen as necessary in order to maintain the focus on the needs of the offender. This involves the holding back of one's own emotions and enabling the emotional needs of the offender to take priority.

Enhancement of criteria

- In addition to the need to remain 'professional' and control feelings for the benefit of the offender, workers also feel constrained by the 'feeling rules' of the organisation which expect emotional neutrality or detachment. This can result in strategies of control, or detachment which can have negative consequences for both the worker and the offender,

including the risk of mental ill-health and/or inauthenticity or insincerity in the worker.

6.9.5 Empathy

- Demonstrating empathy, referred to as 'standing in their shoes', even and particularly with offenders who have committed very serious and unpleasant crimes, is seen as crucial in building their motivation to engage and change.

   Enhancement of criteria

- The data highlights the significance of a value-base of respect, positive regard and a non-judgmental approach to offenders/service users in the exercising of emotional literacy. These values inform an understanding of the potential for making judgments based on emotions, and the need to withhold such judgments in face-to-face work with offenders. It recognises that a benign and 'soft' approach to interpersonal emotional control rather than repressive, manipulative or punitive emotional control is more conducive to offender learning and development (Layder 2004).

- The ability to 'hold' or contain the tensions between potentially conflicting emotional states in self as well as in others without being rejecting of, or collusive with, any of these states. For example; building positive relationships whilst having to carry out enforcement procedures, and liking offenders whilst also being cross with them about their behaviour.

6.9.6 Social competence

- Building relationships with offenders, including the use of empathy, the use of intuition, the reading and interpretation of non-verbal signs and the building of trust.

   Enhancement of criteria

- The importance of building trust within the relationship, from which disclosures that inform risk assessments, and the motivation to change, can potentially emerge. Awareness of, and transparency about, the potentially negative consequences for the offender of these disclosures (e.g. increased risk assessment and levels of surveillance and control).

- Recognising that offenders may also be victims and that in order to enhance their ability to learn from offending behaviour programmes some attention and validation needs to be afforded this aspect of their identity.

- Negotiating and holding the emotional boundaries between worker and offender. Demonstrating empathy and becoming close to offenders is seen as important in building their motivation and enabling change, but boundaries are needed to protect the worker and to ensure that awareness of 'risk' and of enforcement procedures is not lost. It also refers to holding boundaries in group work when offenders can challenge the authority and role of the worker(s), particularly the female workers.

- The ability to learn is significantly affected by emotions. In order to take responsibility for their own learning and development, offenders gain most from an environment in which they feel valued and encouraged rather than negatively challenged or humiliated.

6.9.7 New criteria

Organisational (domain of social settings)

- The silencing of a discourse on emotion is likely to inhibit the exercising of emotional literacy. Additionally it may add to the risk of negative emotional impact, and resulting stress on the worker who has no release for their feelings, and whose mental health may suffer as a result. The organisation can assume that staff working with sex offenders, in particular, should somehow be immune to any strong reactions to these

offenders and that if they are affected this renders them less objective and professional (Moulden and Firestone 2010).

- Building emotional resource within the organisation such that the expression and discussion of feelings is seen as legitimate and essential to the maintenance of a healthy workforce; making visible currently invisible emotional processes. The 'feeling rules' of the organisation should change from those of 'emotional detachment' to 'emotional engagement'. The 'philanthropic emotion management' (Bolton 2005), of the probation workforce should be valued, supported, and enhanced with some oversight in order to ensure that the interpersonal emotional control exercised by its workers towards offenders remains on the 'normal/healthy' end of Layder's model of interpersonal control (Layder 2004:61). This includes the recognition of the need for safe 'emotional spaces' and opportunities in which staff can express their feelings, and be enabled to subsequently appraise and reflect on the implications of these feelings for their practice.

- Recognition by the organisation of the need to offer training and education in the role of emotions in practice; in particular help in building emotional vocabularies and fostering a climate in which articulating feelings and thinking about feelings is valued, facilitated and included on policy agendas.

Gender (domain of contextual resource)

- Gender is a significant 'identity' factor in the expression of emotional literacy. Women are more likely than men to evolve these skills but both genders can become emotionally literate. Female workers can feel unsupported by unaware male colleagues, particularly in the context of group work programmes with male offenders. If the skills of emotional literacy are valued equally by men and women, the opportunities for both to develop these skills, and be supportive of colleagues, will be

enhanced. Within the wider criminal justice arena the (predominately male) ideology of 'tough', 'hard', 'punitive' and measurable strategies as appropriate for work with offenders needs to be challenged by the (predominately female) 'softer', emotional realities of social life and the evidence that ultimately, whilst the control of dangerous and undesirable behaviour has to be managed, the process of 'change' in offenders is only likely to occur when emotions as well as cognitions are recognised, valued and engaged.

6.9.8 A new definition

A new definition is proposed which takes account of the interactive nature of emotional literacy and its ethical base:

> *"Emotional literacy as a skill in probation practice requires knowledge of our own emotions and the ability to recognise and respond empathically to the emotions of others. It includes an awareness of the causes, triggers and expression of emotions in ourselves and in others, and requires an underpinning value base of respect, positive regard and a non-judgmental approach towards offenders."*

6.9.9 Conclusion

This chapter has summarised the evidence within the data that supports existing criteria for understanding the concept of emotional literacy within probation practice. It has also highlighted ways in which the criteria have been extended and developed, including two new areas of the 'organisation' and 'gender', that impact on the development and expression of emotional literacy. Whilst it might be undertaken at an individual and subjective level its success or failure will be significantly influenced by the organisational culture and the contextual resources within which it operates. The chapter concludes with a suggested new definition of emotional literacy within probation practice.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Evaluation of aims

The aims of the research were:

1. *To identify and examine the extent to which the skills of emotional literacy are core to productive work with high risk offenders, with particular reference to sex offenders*

2. *To examine the gendered nature of these skills and the implications for staffing within The National Offender Management Service (NOMS)*

3. *To consider the extent to which these skills are taught, valued and measured within NOMS in the context of the current 'managerialism' and 'new punitiveness.'* (Nellis 2005)

With hindsight these aims assumed an existing and contemporary knowledge base of emotional literacy in probation practice, which did not exist. As a result, significant sections of this research project have focused on examining the reflections of research participants on what might constitute emotional literacy. The existing literature on emotional literacy and emotional intelligence in other arenas (see Section 2.4), provided a framework for collating and analysing the views of the research participants on their emotional lives and their self-regulation of emotions in a practice setting. There was, however, a dearth of literature on the particular issues facing probation workers including those of 'values', judgments, duality of role (care and control), the potential for the exercising of benign or repressive emotional control, emotions and learning, and awareness of an offender's potential 'victimisation'.

Probation workers, by the nature of their practice, hold different and sometimes conflicting emotional tensions that are largely hidden from the view of the organisational management structures. The literature on emotional intelligence highlights its usefulness for business and leadership success, which associates it largely with a 'pecuniary' form of emotion management in which emotions are deployed for the commercial benefit of the organisation (Bolton 2005).

Emotional literacy is more closely associated with learning and personal development (Killick 2006 and Sharp 2001), although Orbach makes links with political decision-making (Orbach 2001). The use of emotional literacy within the probation service potentially has associations with all of these arenas although evidence from the research participants in this study suggest it is largely offered as a 'philanthropic' form of emotion management; as a gift from the worker to the offender (Bolton 2005). However, the research participants felt constrained by the 'prescriptive' rules of emotion management, including the 'professional rules' of conduct which controlled their display of emotion and the 'feeling rules' of the organisation which seemed to inhibit emotions and prescribe emotional detachment.

Through an evolving familiarity with the subject it was recognised that the aims for the research potentially encompassed all four of Layder's domains of social reality;

• Individual or subjective experiences - psychobiography

• Inter-personal or situated activity

• Located within a social setting and

• Located within a cultural resource context

(Layder 2006)

Objectives were therefore set that reflected these dimensions.

7.1.1 Emotional literacy in the individual

From the first aim two objectives evolved, the first being:

• *To examine the research participants' understanding of 'self as object of its own control'; their experiences of emotion in themselves and the processes by which they have learnt self-regulation. The achievement of*

this objective will be through a focus on the perceptions of the research participants and within the domain of psychobiography (Layder 2006)

The individual qualities considered necessary for the exercising of the skills of emotional literacy; motivation, self-awareness and self-regulation, are illustrated in Sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3. In Section 6.1 I sought to examine motivation and values in relation to choice of a career in the probation service. I identified 'motivation' as a feature of emotional literacy but considered 'values' to be under-theorised in the literature on either emotional intelligence or literacy. I reflected that probation was a challenging career, or vocation, to choose, but that the motivation to undertake work with offenders was enhanced by the pleasure research participants described themselves as taking in building relationships with them and seeing them change. This introduced the idea of building 'emotional capital' or resource (Reay 2004) that sustained them in their work. Emotional resource as an intangible and largely unquantifiable concept that can be built up by and for the benefit of the workers has become a significant theme for the thesis. It has proved a helpful construct to explain a positive emotional ambience within an organisation.

In Section 6.1 I planned to examine the value issues raised by the research participants within the data, including issues of diversity, although the only diversity issue of any relevance to emerge was that of gender (see Sections 6.2 and 6.7). Whilst age, 'race' and sexuality were discussed in individual interviews they did not form significant themes or patterns within the data. The most significant 'value' expressed by research participants was the importance they attached to treating offenders with respect and maintaining a non-judgmental attitude and approach towards them. This value was a significant factor in their endeavours to contain the negative and sometimes judgmental feelings that arose in the course of their work. There was acknowledgment, albeit sometimes through 'gritted teeth' (Aruna), that demonstrating respect and a non-judgmental approach was more conducive to change in offenders than expressing negative feelings directly. The association between emotions and values was explored and the suggestion made that the issue was not so much

about denying or suppressing negative feelings and judgments but acknowledging and processing them in an appropriate place away from the offender(s). How, or if, this occurs seems to determine the quality of the work and whether emotional resources are supported and sustained or undermined. Some research participants contrasted accounts of their own practice with descriptions of the work of colleagues who they saw as expressing unprocessed negative or indeed punitive emotions and values towards offenders. The struggle that some research participants had in managing their negative feelings raised a question of what happens to these feelings.

The issue of negative feelings and their regulation became a focus for the following two sections. In Section 6.2 I explored in more detail the ways in which research participants articulated and thought about their emotions and included an examination of their emotional vocabularies; the language and metaphors used to describe their 'inner' world. Two conclusions from the evidence presented were the preponderance of negative feelings and the struggle many had to be articulate in this area. In particular, the use of metaphor was a significant feature in this articulation. This raised questions about how 'emotion talk' could be influenced by who held power in the organisation (Lukes 2005), how emotional resources could be sustained and the implications of these for the overall mental health of the workforce. Reference was made to data that highlighted mental health issues for the research participants but this was not included in the thesis as it was not core to its aims.

In Section 6.3 examples were given of how research participants had learned to regulate their emotions at work. For most of them this was through a process of life and work experience, a form of 'apprenticeship' in emotion regulation, but with none identifying any specific pre-qualifying or in-service probation training that had helped them. There was an identification of a certain fear of emotions in some research participants; their sense that it was risky to express feelings. Three broad-based strategies for managing emotions at work were identified in Section 6.3; controlling, detaching and integrating, and a commentary offered

on the relative effectiveness of these strategies in practice with offenders. Again, metaphor featured in these articulations of strategies. The conclusion of this section was that the choice of strategy was a subjective and individual decision, unaided by any organisational guidance or processes. It was suggested that a strategy of 'masking' or 'controlling' feelings might carry some mental health risks for workers and that a strategy of 'detachment' risked not understanding sufficiently well the perspectives and inner world of the offender (Chamberlayne 2004).

7.1.2 Emotional literacy in the situated activity

The second objective for the first aim was:

- *To examine the ways in which research participants use their emotional skills to build relationships with 'other people' (offenders); to influence and control them benignly. This objective will focus on the domain of situated activity and with reference to the theory of interpersonal control (Layder 2004)*

This objective was the focus of Sections 6.4 and 6.5, which shifted attention away from the individual psychobiographies of the research participants to the situated activity of the relationships they built with offenders (Layder 2006). In Section 6.4 I examined the views of research participants on the emotional processes involved in building relationships with offenders. This included the recognition and understanding of emotions in offenders, and not allowing their ('the workers') own emotions to intervene too powerfully; referring to the need to remain 'professional' as a significant part of this process. They also described showing empathy, getting close, building trust and recognising non-verbal cues, whilst negotiating and maintaining emotional boundaries within the relationship. Of significance was the variability of emotional processes, with research participants endeavouring to find their own, individual and subjective routes through these processes. The research participants generally saw these emotional processes as positive and constructive, whilst recognising their power to be used in a negative or punitive way. They offered further evidence of

colleagues they had seen to act in a negative way. Given the legal framework of community orders within a penal context, and the power of their role to enforce compliance, the research participants demonstrated a degree of subtlety and complexity in the way they negotiated the tension between building empathic relationships and maintaining the role of enforcer. The line was drawn differentially by research participants; with some providing evidence of considerable emotional closeness with offenders and others choosing to maintain a degree of distance. Whilst the focus of this thesis is probation workers not offenders; nevertheless the idea of offenders as learners, and the need to build emotional resource in group work programmes to assist offender learning is touched on in Sections 6.4 and 6.5.

What is not evident from the data is the extent to which any offender had a choice to resist such emotional relationships without incurring formal sanctions or at least indications that their lack of engagement with the programme was inappropriate. On the one hand is an organisation that, through its array of protocols and management processes, denies the significance of emotions in practice, and on the other hand the interior world of the probation worker and offender where, because they are not officially sanctioned, emotions are very personal, private and individual. The distinctions between structure and individual agency; between the objective and subjective, are highlighted. Of relevance is Schon's view of the difference between the 'high hard ground' of organisational policy and the 'swampy lowlands' of inner emotional worlds (Schon 2003), and Layder's description of the 'underground' world of emotion and the lack of interest by the organisation in this 'concealed heart' (Layder 2004).

In Section 6.5 I moved on to examine the emotional components involved in working towards change with offenders and managing the enforcement requirements of community orders. This included helping offenders to disclose important and often very personal information, particularly in the case of sex offenders, that could inform risk assessment and risk management. I explored the potential impact on workers of hearing some of these disclosures with the

suggestion that for some this was just too difficult. I also explored the implications of being honest and 'transparent' in the way in which this information was subsequently handled, particularly when it could have a negative impact on the offender's liberty by raising the level of risk assessment and subsequent monitoring required. I examined the tensions and ambivalences held and felt by research participants in managing these processes. This revealed some of the benefits and strengths of emotional literacy; the use of 'soft skills', but also the potential for the misuse of the emotional power of the worker in increasing the amount of control, surveillance and punishment experienced by the offender; the degree to which manipulative or even repressive emotional control might emerge within these relationships (Layder 2004).

Research participants highlighted the importance of addressing the 'responsivity' principle in their work with offenders and considered that an 'enabling' or empowering approach was more likely to achieve positive results in terms of offender learning than a 'confrontational' or challenging approach. They demonstrated a preference for 'soft skills' over 'hard skills'. However, the opportunities for more subtle and coercive forms of 'beration' to occur and remain unchallenged, or the temptation to show disapproval under the guise of legitimate 'punishment' of the offender were also highlighted. Again, research participants provided examples of colleagues who they believed behaved in this way. There was evidence that research participants were keen to build supportive relationships in order to enable disclosure but they also expressed some discomfort when this, or other events, resulted in them having to take enforcement action against the offender.

An unexpected finding was the number of research participants who expressed some resistance to the idea that offenders may also be victims, and need some attention given to their own sense of 'victimhood'. They were supported in this stance by agency policy on accredited programmes which highlights offender responsibility and 'cognitive distortions' as the focus of the work and actively discourages a change of focus to the offender's past life experiences. With

reference to the psychotherapeutic literature and attachment theory in particular, it was hypothesised that a failure to recognise the potential abuse or disadvantage experienced by offenders is likely to inhibit their ability to learn from these accredited programmes. As Gerhardt explains, people's whose own pain and trauma is denied or invalidated, are unlikely to be able to empathise with, or even begin to recognise, the harm they may have caused to others (Gerhardt 2004). Despite the resistance of some research participants, a number of others (Michael, Amy, Indira, Mary, Jai and Geoff), talked about the relevance of attachment theory, and attachment styles to their work, recognising that early failures in attachment by offenders to their care-givers, and early experiences of disadvantage or abuse had a significant impact on their subsequent offending behaviour. A number of the sex offender workers had attended workshops run by Pat Crittenden (Crittenden and Claussen 2000), in which she developed her 'dynamic-maturational model of patterns of attachment in infancy'. These research participants were quite familiar with this model which emphasises the patterns of attachment relationships and strategies for self-protection that carry a risk of psychopathology, including sex offending in later life.

In Section 6.9, using additional data gathered from the focus group, I summarised the themes of emotional literacy that had arisen in earlier sections. The focus group had also explored a number of 'boundary' issues that had arisen for them in their delivery of accredited programmes for sex offenders. It considered the gender implications of offenders challenging boundaries, the emotional responses of the group workers and a range of potential approaches that might foster a positive learning environment as opposed to a negative, shaming environment. The focus group provided good evidence of articulate and reflective 'emotional' practice and of the building of emotional resources in a team that enabled individual members to explore difficult emotional issues in a safe environment.

7.1.3 Emotional literacy and gender

The second aim of the research was

> 2.   To examine the gendered nature of these skills and the implications for staffing within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS)

And the associated objective was:

- *To consider the individual's current life situation and the inter-relationship between the domain of interpersonal control and the domains of social settings and contextual resources* (Layder 2004)*. This will include reference to the organisation (the probation service), to gender as a construct and to hegemonic masculinity as an ideology. Consideration will be given to the links between situated activity, the social setting and the contextual resources domain; how the research participants' skills of emotional literacy are enhanced or constrained by these broader structures* (Layder 2004).

As set out in Chapter Four, a significant element of the contextual resources layer of social reality impacting on emotional literacy was seen to be gender. Gender is a feature in offending behaviour, and in the demographics of management, leadership and practice within the criminal justice system. Some gender implications began to emerge in Section 6.2 when research participants were asked to describe their emotional world.   There was some, limited, evidence that the female research participants used more emotion words to describe themselves than the male research participants (an average of 5.4 words for the females and 4.6 for the males). Also there were some differences in the expressions of positive and negative emotions, which, it is suggested, has implications for the recruitment, training and ongoing support of staff.   There was some evidence that female research participants carried a greater burden of anxiety and concern about their work than their male counterparts, or, alternatively, that they were more open to expressing this in the research

interview than their male counterparts. An unresolved question is whether the ability to articulate emotions indicates a deeper cognition or just a facility with language or both (Crawford 2009).

The main findings that made connections between gender and emotional literacy were explored in Section 6.7. All of the research participants in this study acknowledged the importance of emotional literacy in terms of relationship building and an ability to 'read' situations, but views were expressed about women generally being more able in this regard than their male colleagues. Additionally, some female research participants felt inadequately supported by their male colleagues around the emotional impact caused by aspects of their work with male offenders. They found certain male colleagues to be less aware and sometimes actually obstructive when it came to understanding and responding to emotions in offenders and in colleagues. However, there was also evidence of considerable emotional awareness and emotional literacy in the male research participants, from the language deployed and the reflections and appraisal in which they engaged. This suggests that whilst there may be a socialised tendency for women to be more emotionally aware this is largely a learnt skill and that men who choose to undertake this work have an equal capacity to evolve these skills if they, and their organisation, consider them important.

Running in parallel with this gendered notion of emotional literacy in staff was the evidence from a number of research participants about the particular difficulties that they believed many male offenders face in expressing and articulating their emotional lives. Both male and female research participants talked of the importance of developing the emotional vocabularies of the offenders they worked with in order to help them recognise and address the source of their difficulties. This again appeared to be a rather ad hoc element of working with certain groups of men rather than supported by the formal curricula of the programmes. It may be that the conceptualising of a deficiency or an emotional illiteracy in male offenders offers the workers who identify it, a more therapeutic route into challenging the violence of these men, than the structured

'cognitive' change process. It could also be viewed as a strategy that some male offenders employ to avoid facing or managing the consequences of their behaviour.

7.1.4 Emotional literacy in the organisation

The third aim of the research was:

> *3. To consider the extent to which these skills are taught, valued and measured within NOMS in the context of the current 'managerialism' and 'new punitiveness'* (Nellis 2005)

with the same associated objective:

- *To consider the individual's current life situation and the inter-relationship between the domain of interpersonal control and the domains of social settings and contextual resources* (Layder 2004). *This will include reference to the organisation (the probation service), to gender as a construct and to hegemonic masculinity as an ideology. Consideration will be given to the links between situated activity, the social setting and the contextual resources domain; how the research participants' skills of emotional literacy are enhanced or constrained by these broader structures* (Layder 2004).

As explained in Chapter Five the aim of examining any potential for measurement of emotional literacy was abandoned early in the project. Section 2.4 describes work being undertaken on the measurement of emotional intelligence but this was:

a) considered to be beyond the scope of this project in relation to probation workers and

b) something of a contradictory position to adopt given the overall ethos of managerialism and measurement in the probation service that was

seen to inhibit and repress emotional expression and emotional discourse (Section 6.8).

It was concluded that attempting to measure a quality such as emotional literacy, risked subjecting it to the same positivistic outcomes that stultify its expression and comprehension.

In examining the value that the probation service might place on the emotional life of its employees, in Section 6.6 I looked at how practitioners are exposed to the 'professional rules' of practice and also to the emotion regulation required by an organisation of its staff, the 'feeling rules'. I speculated that, like the prison service in Crawley's work (Crawley 2004), the feeling rules of the probation service were those of 'emotional detachment'. Whilst the research participants felt it was important to be guided by rules of 'professional conduct', which required a degree of regulation and control of their emotions, they felt inhibited by the managerial culture of the organisation that conveyed rules of emotional detachment. They demonstrated an acceptance of the former and considerable resistance to the latter. This illustrates some of the tensions and dilemmas between 'agency' and 'structure'; between the research participants' inner emotional and value-driven worlds, their psychobiography, and the outer constraints and impositions of the domains of social settings and contextual resources (Layder 2006). The received current theoretical position for both emotional intelligence and emotional literacy has very little to say about this sort of tension; which suggests this finding is an example of Layder's concept of 'adaptive' theory (2006).

Despite the apparent indifference implied by such feeling rules, the probation service clearly benefits from the emotion work undertaken by its staff (Knight and Clow 2010). However, this work appears to be largely initiated by the staff themselves, and not only did the research participants feel they must curb the expression of emotion in the workplace they also felt silenced from talking about it. The combination or accumulation of these 'rules', some more acceptable to the workers than others, seems to deny the significance of emotions in general

and to expect a 'front' or surface of only superficial and positive emotional expression (Goffman 1959/1990). The workers in this study have been left to find their own way through a turmoil of emotions; both those of the offenders they supervise and their own. The feeling rules may determine what should not be expressed but they do not offer any guidance or help in achieving this 'detachment' or in controlling the feelings when they do arise. Neither do they acknowledge the reality of the emotion management undertaken, sometimes surreptitiously, by workers who understand very well the importance of philanthropy to their work; of offering their emotional skills as a 'gift' (Bolton 2005). The discursive frameworks of managerialism and 'punishment in the community' have ordered reality in a certain way; a belief that the probation service can be seen to 'protect the community' and 'reduce the risk of reoffending', by the largely instrumental means of target setting, monitoring, surveillance and controlling of certain activities. The 'soft skills' of emotional literacy remain largely 'underground' and invisible.

There is evidence that how people talk about emotions is bound up in power (Coupland, Brown et al. 2009), and that the choice of what gets discussed or included on the agendas in terms of policy is determined by the powerful. This was seen as one of the potential explanations for why emotions, which were viewed by some research participants as unpredictable, sometimes rather frightening, and with some negative gender stereotypes (Langford 1997; Ciarrochi, Hynes et al. 2005), were kept off the organisational agenda. It was speculated that this 'silencing' of a discourse on emotions had limited the opportunities available to the research participants to learn to talk about and 'appraise' the emotions that arose for them in the workplace. A number felt it was an unsafe environment in which to be vulnerable and two (Sandy and Janet) talked of feeling bullied by the organisation. This is another example of how the data generated by this project has extended and developed the current theoretical knowledge base for emotional literacy. The organisational context; the social setting, within which emotional literacy is being instantiated, could

inhibit or enhance this skill depending on the type of organisational climate that managers and policy makers foster (Menzies 1959).

Research participants identified a range of ways in which they managed their feelings, despite this failure to value or offer training in, their emotional literacy. In Section 6.8 I described the range of resources and strategies used by research participants to manage their feelings. The organisational disinterest was overcome, to some extent, by the research participants building their own sources of emotional resource through team work, in particular, but also through relationships with certain trusted colleagues, with some line managers seen to be sympathetic and supportive, and through support at home. Whilst there was evidence of formalised debriefing opportunities for staff after group work programmes and some line managers who clearly saw it as part of their role, there was no evidence overall of an organisational commitment to understanding the emotional demands of work with high risk offenders or of valuing the emotional processes employed by their workforce to respond to these demands and to create positive emotional learning environments for offenders.

In relation to training, it was fairly clear from the evidence presented by the research participants to the study that emotional literacy was not included in any probation pre-qualifying training that they had experienced or through any subsequent in-service training programme. The most useful learning experiences for some research participants was attendance on external counselling courses, whilst a few others had benefited from the theoretical content of some training manuals for accredited programmes for offenders in which emotions had been referenced.

7.1.5 Summary

This study has provided illustration of the core components of emotional literacy as described by research participants, including self-awareness, self-regulation, building relationships and expressing empathy, as well as examining a number of additional factors relevant to the exercising of emotional literacy in a

probation context. Research participants formulated their interventions with offenders as a learning process rather than a coercive and didactic process. There appeared to be a sense of an evolving alignment between offenders and staff, in the way they talked about their offences, their victims and their emotions; Layder's view of benign emotional control proving useful in understanding this process (Layder 2004). There were some accounts offered by research participants of colleagues who appeared to exercise more manipulative or aggressive forms of emotional control, but this is clearly 'hearsay' evidence and would require a much wider study involving a random sample of staff, rather than volunteers with an interest in the subject area, to examine this. Probation work is seen to involve the private terrain of feelings, thoughts, fantasies and interpersonal perceptions as opposed to the hard-edged business of surveillance, monitoring, and regulation of behaviour that is the public face of the organisation. This is in contrast to Foucault's description of the panopticon; of self-imposed learning that follows from surveillance; the internalised scrutiny that individuals apply (Foucault 1977). The shift for the probation service from a predominately welfare orientated organisation to a primarily corrections-based, managerial organisation has, through the exercise of 'webs of power' (Foucault 1977), appeared to favour certain different forms of knowledge production and the repression of others; a favouring of 'hard' facts or statistics over 'soft' emotions. This could equally apply to the favouring of 'hard' practices, for example community payback and electronic monitoring, over 'softer' interpersonal relationships.

The findings highlight the preponderance of negative emotions in staff, their individual and subjective attempts to control and manage this in the interests of 'professionalism' and of being 'non-judgmental, of doing the best for the offender and in response to feeling rules of 'emotional detachment' encouraged by the managerial ethos of the service. This ethos was seen to inhibit and suppress both the expression and the discourse of emotions in a practice arena suffused with emotion. The gender associations of emotions as 'soft' and 'irrational' in the context of a criminal justice system needing to be viewed as

'tough', and 'rational', continue to hold this silencing and suppression in place. The discourse of being 'tough' on crime, restricts the space for more subtle and nuanced explorations of the 'soft' emotional skills that actively engage with, motivate, and provide positive learning experiences for enabling offenders to make changes in their lives. It also creates space for the potential misuse of emotional control through coercive, manipulative or repressive means, in staff who may have less emotional awareness, less skill in emotion regulation and/or lacking the values to support the therapeutic, and 'legitimate' exercise of controls.   The resistance of some research participants to identifying the potential 'victim' status of offenders is a cause of concern, restricting as it does, the opportunities for such offenders to benefit fully from the learning opportunities provided.

The building of emotional resources for staff within the organisation, offering support, a space for the expressions of emotions and the subsequent appraisal and reflections on emotions, like emotional literacy itself, remains a largely invisible quality.   Its characteristics seem to include; positive emotions generated within individual staff members by rewarding and productive encounters with offenders; a positive set of peer relationships in which there is a commitment to mutual sharing of feelings and ideas, and managers who understand the significance of the emotional components of the work and can either offer empathy themselves and/or provide the space and resources where this can be offered.

7.1.6 Extending the theoretical frameworks

The most significant extension of understanding and knowledge about emotional literacy in probation practice is that contrary to most of the current literature which locates this skill primarily in the individual and in mediated activities (psychobiographic and situated activity), the social settings and contextual resources layers of social reality (Layder 2006), have a profound impact on the way that this skill is or is not valued, taught and supported in an organisation such as the probation service. Below is a summary of the manner

in which the current theoretical framework for both emotional intelligence and emotional literacy operating within a probation context has been extended by this research in terms of practice, theory and management:

Practice

1. The association between emotions and values highlights a complicated relationship, with implications for the exercising of emotional control in the workplace. Values, and in this case 'judgements' based on values, about the behaviour of offenders can be held in place by strong emotions and emotional reactions which, if denied expression and access to appraisal and rational debate, can lead to a range of punitive, repressive or manipulative emotional processes taking place in the guise of legitimate 'punishment' (Layder 2004).

2. Layder's theory of interpersonal control provides a helpful framework for understanding the exercise of emotional literacy, but does not identify sufficiently the simultaneous holding of conflicting and ambivalent positions on the continuum from benign to repressive; normal/healthy to pathological (Layder 2004). Research participants to the study gave examples of both liking and being cross with the offenders they worked with; of offering empathy but also having to exercise enforcement policy. These tensions and the ambivalence felt by workers are frequently concealed and unavailable for either support or scrutiny by the organisation. There is potential for interpersonal emotional control to move too far towards the manipulative and repressive or, conversely, too far into the benign and potentially collusive arena. Layder's model also does not adequately acknowledge the use of 'legitimate' repressive control in a criminal justice context, e.g. prison or hostel work.

3. The use of emotional literacy can aid disclosure of sensitive and personal information that may lead to an increased level of risk assessment and subsequently more controlling risk management strategies. The worker may be able to contain the tensions generated by this process or may resort to cutting off from the emotional discomfort and anxiety generated

(Menzies 1959), and fail to support the offender sufficiently well, particularly in their need for transparency and honesty. This remains a largely invisible process that falls below the radar of the organisation.

4. The different strategies that workers use to manage their emotions in the work-place; controlling, detaching and integrating, have implications for their practice with offenders and for their own mental health

5. The creation of a 'learning' environment in which offenders are encouraged to develop their own self-control and understanding through supportive emotional relationships with workers is different from an 'instructional' and potentially manipulative or coercive programme of interventions. Which environment is created seems to be based more on the subjectivity of the workers than directed through organisational policy.

6. An understanding of the potential 'victim' status of offenders in order to help them progress, and the use of attachment theory to aid knowledge of deficient attachment styles caused by early abuse and disadvantage, is currently under-valued in practice. This has implications for building relationships with offenders and in victim empathy work which should model this awareness.

Theory

1. The need to locate an understanding of emotional literacy within the wider social and contextual settings in which it is practiced.

2. The significance of gender; women are more likely to value and practice the skills of emotional literacy than men although both genders are capable of exercising it. This has implications for recruitment and training (see Section 7.3.3).

3. Tensions between 'agency' and 'structure' (Layder 2006), are illustrated by accounts of the external pressures imposed on research participants to control and regulate their emotions, some of which they accept as legitimate (professional rules), and some of which they feel inhibits them (the feeling rules of detachment). It is hypothesised that:

a) many of these 'rules' have been internalised by them (Foucault's technologies of self 1984:51) and

b) because of the silencing of the discourse on emotions some of them lack the resources or tools to be able to consciously articulate, reflect on and be assisted in, the processing of these emotions (Dwyer 2007).

<u>Management</u>

1. The enhancement and development of sufficient emotional resource within the organisation to enable staff to safely express, process and appraise their emotional reactions to a range of offender behaviour and situations. Enabling staff to learn how to develop a 'helping relationship with self' (Rogers 2004), and to 'self-soothe' (Gerhardt 2004), may be an important component in reducing the levels of mental ill-health and sickness absence in the service.

2. Emotional literacy deployed for the benefit of the offender may cease to be a 'gift' offered by the worker and become a 'pecuniary' advantage to the organisation (Bolton 2005). The expansion of contracting out of elements of probation practice to the private sector for profit, may see the use of the skills of emotional literacy to secure the contracts and bring in the 'clientele'. Most writers seem to share Hochschild's pessimistic concerns about the negative consequences of an organisation that aims to shape and control the feelings of its employees (Bolton 2005).

These findings all have relevance to the work of the service. However, the task of raising their profile in an organisation that is largely dismissive of their substance and relevance is a significant challenge. It may be that the sheer ubiquity and ordinariness of emotions has afforded them a certain 'irrelevance' or invisibility in the study of contemporary probation practice. However, it seems ironic that the majority of offending behaviour is committed by men, the majority of leaders and decision-makers in criminal justice are male, and yet the majority of staff undertaking the front-line work with offenders are female. The

gender dynamics remain complex; but at the very least it seems important that the 'soft' 'emotional' and often perceived as 'female voice', should be accorded a more equal place at the table of decision-making and resource provision for practice with offenders.

7.2 Implications of the findings

Assuming generalisability of these findings, (some confirmation of which was provided by the workshop/seminar series; see Appendix 11), it is suggested that many probation staff, working with some of the most complex and highly-charged emotional situations with offenders are receiving very little acknowledgement of the emotional demands on them or support in managing this, and are having to chart their own course through this difficult territory. Whilst this study has predominantly focused on work with high risk offenders, there is scope for these issues to apply to work with all offenders. The staff in this study were all qualified (26 as probation officers and 2 as psychologists), but with increasing numbers of probation staff employed as 'unqualified' or partially qualified (Knight and Stout 2009), the opportunities for them to learn and discuss these skills may be even less than those of the research participants. The choice of strategy by the research participants to manage their feelings (controlling, detaching or integrating), may be appropriate to their needs and those of offenders but there is a significant risk that they may not, and that offenders may not always be offered a positive and 'benign' learning environment within which to change their behaviour. There is research evidence from other sources and particularly from the evolving work in schools that people learn best in a supportive and enabling environment, not a coercive, bullying or intimidating one (Chamberlayne 2004).

The opportunities for staff to behave in more repressive and manipulative ways with offenders are clearly present, may be subtly encouraged through the continuing emphasis on enforcement and compliance with orders and go largely unmonitored by the organisation. This study has not sought to prove that such behaviour exists or that it is automatically ineffective, counterproductive or

harmful to offenders. However, there appear to be sufficient warnings from the data that some staff might be behaving in this manner.

The silencing of the discourse on emotions has a number of implications; the most important of which relate to:

a) the risk of staff experiencing mental ill-health as a result of suppressing or denying feelings and

b) of staff, lacking opportunities and support for expressing, identifying and appraising their feelings, charting individual and idiosyncratic routes through their emotional experiences in relation to their practice

7.3 Critique and evaluation of the study

7.3.1 Dissemination of findings

A chapter has been written in a book on work with sex offenders (Knight 2012), to be published this year which will be available to staff working with sex offenders (Appendix 16). A research bulletin has been written for the Offender Engagement Programme (Appendix 15). Some of the materials have been used in teaching undergraduate students on the criminology degree at De Montfort University (Appendix 17). A contract has been secured from Palgrave Macmillan Publishers to write a book on emotional literacy in criminal justice, for completion in 2013. There are also plans to co-author an article, potentially for Probation Journal, with one of the research participants to the study who currently works with sex offenders

7.3.2 Contribution to policy

Elements of these findings have already been linked to the evolving Offender Engagement Programme (OEP), and the renewed interest in the quality of relationships between probation practitioners and offenders (Offender

Engagement Team 2011). It is hoped that the OEP and its accompanying research programmes will continue to highlight the significance of relationships and that this small piece of research can be influential in supporting these developments. However, it is acknowledged that this focus conflicts with other, seemingly irresistible statistical and auditable demands arising from the current managerial focus which may continue to outweigh these 'softer' demands. Nevertheless, as the Munro Report on Child Protection highlights, judgments made about risk should be based on a careful weighing up of all relevant factors and including the use of emotional intelligence and empathy (Munro 2011).

Probation areas should be required to identify the sources of building and maintaining emotional resource within their organisation and to provide a commitment to its enhancement. Munro suggests that in order to fully assess risk and protect children staff need skills to 'explore the deeper reaches and inner lives of service users' (Munro 2011:105). There are similarities for staff working with sex offenders in particular. Munro states that:

> *"...they (workers) can only really take risks if they feel they will be emotionally held and supported on returning to the office, that their feelings and struggles will be listened to. Workers' state of mind and the quality of attention they can give to children is directly related to the quality of support, care and attention they themselves receive from supervisors, managers and peers..."* (Munro 2011:163)

As an organisation the probation service has become enmeshed in a culture of managerialism and performance management. Changing such a culture is likely to be a slow and uneven process. However, with reference to the workshops undertaken (Appendix 11), it seems likely that practitioners would commit to supporting a change in emphasis with targets set to raise the profile of emotional literacy, by increasing the provision of emotional support to practitioners, the building of emotional resources within the agency and the inclusion of all these factors on policy and practice agendas. If the full implications of the findings are to be addressed by probation trusts then a number of issues need to be considered that relate to the building and sustaining of emotional resources:

I. Debriefing opportunities that include space for sharing of emotional experiences; provided and monitored for all group work programmes

II. Provision of a mentoring or 'keeping staff healthy' scheme. Routine availability of counselling opportunities

III. Recruitment and selection of staff with the appropriate potential to learn or enhance these skills

IV. Inclusion of 'emotion' issues on a wide range of agendas

(I)   Debriefing

Research participants referred to debriefing opportunities after group work programmes and had generally found them to be helpful. However, there was an indication that sometimes these were rushed or squeezed out by other work priorities. It is suggested that adequate time for debriefing should be automatically built into programme schedules and that these should be facilitated in a manner that allows for the expression, sharing and reflection on, emotions generated by the work.

(II)   Mentoring/'keeping staff healthy'

Whilst line managers continue to hold responsibility for the overall performance of their teams and the meeting of targets and standards, it is unlikely that they can routinely be expected to additionally offer emotional support and supervision to their team members. Also it may not always be appropriate for staff to go to their line manager with difficult feelings that they have not yet had the opportunity to process. As research has indicated (Aiyegbusi and Clarke-Moore 2009), staff may well have negative feelings about some of the offenders they work with. They may feel degrees of embarrassment, disgust or even shame at some disclosures by offenders, and fear censure or negative judgment if they admit these feelings to a line manager. The provision of

mentoring, or 'clinical supervision' such as the scheme described in Section 6.8, offers support and debriefing that sits somewhere between informal networks of colleagues and the more formal counselling or debriefing sessions. There are resource implications for providing such mentoring. If it is 'in-house' then experienced staff need to be given workload relief to offer time to colleagues. If it is provided by an external consultant, it needs to be resourced.

(III)   Counselling

The formal provision of counselling may not always be what workers need to 'let off steam' immediately after a challenging event (see Section 6.8), which is why mentoring or 'clinical supervision' may be a more flexible and available resource. Although many services do already offer a counselling service it may not be highly visible, and as some research participants indicated, carries with it the stigma of emotional 'problems' or difficulties lying within the worker rather than in the nature of the work. However, a routine and visible provision of counselling opportunities, offered regularly and supportively to staff, may help to create an organisational atmosphere in which the expression and discussion of emotions is seen as appropriate and indeed welcomed. If re-labelled 'clinical supervision' or 'mentoring' as above, and minimum attendance required by staff, if may be more appropriately used.

(IV)   Recruitment, selection and promotion of staff

If, as suggested, female staff are more likely to have or develop the skills of emotional literacy, then the continuing preponderance of female staff at practice level is to be welcomed. However, the encouragement and support of male staff to develop these skills is also part of this process, and an inclusion in the promotional

literature for the service of the importance of these skills, might help to legitimise the skill in both genders. The slow progress of women into leadership and management roles may also help with this process although a major shift in the masculine ethos of the criminal justice system is unlikely to happen in the near future.

(V) **Emotion on agendas**

The aim of building emotional resources in an organisation from which staff can take sustenance and support would be enhanced by the provision of routine mentoring or clinical supervision, but overall building emotional resource is a nebulous and diffuse process. As has been identified from this project, emotional resource is built through positive experiences of developing relationships with offenders, through positive experiences of team work and through strong peer relationships. It can be damaged and eroded by a preponderance of negative experiences with offenders, with a lack of opportunity to process and manage the feelings generated, and with workloads that pay no heed to the inherent and variable emotional demands of the job. It is also eroded by staff feeling silenced and unable or restricted in how they share feelings and have them acknowledged and validated. For the service to begin to move back towards a 'softer' ambience will not be an easy task particularly given its current association with the prison service. Nevertheless, it is not incompatible with the work already being undertaken and the examples set by some of the empathic line managers described by research participants (Section 6.8.2). For example, a more routine inclusion of 'emotional' issues and processes on a wide range of agendas may help to enhance this process.

7.3.3 Contribution to training

Pre and post-qualifying training should be adapted to include opportunities for staff to 'rehearse' their emotional literacy in a range of different settings and be offered guidance and opportunities for reflection on this. As highlighted in the literature, drama or role-play can provide a context in which feelings, and language can be rehearsed and experienced at a safe distance (Evans 2003). Further input on the emotional component of offending behaviour and penal policy (Karstedt et al 2011), and with particular reference to attachment theory (Bowlby 1978), and to principles informed by the counselling and psychotherapy literature (Rogers 2004; Gerhardt 2004 etc), should be included in the training curricula.   De Montfort University has already incorporated some of the messages from this research in one of the modules linked to responsivity, on the probation qualifying training programme run for students in the Midlands and East of England.   It is not yet incorporated within the national training curriculum as a whole, but ideally should form part of the skills based training for probation service officers as well as probation officers.   Staff who are introduced to these ideas and given opportunities to rehearse them by role play are more likely to then expect these opportunities to be available to them in the workplace.

7.4 Future Research

The significance of building an understanding of emotion into research undertaken on probation practice has been highlighted by this study. Even when the studies are primarily quantitative it is likely that there will be elements of the research process and certainly of the findings that will trigger feelings in the researcher that should be acknowledged, appraised and viewed as legitimate research data (Jewkes 2011).   There are already some ongoing studies (OEP), that are exploring the views of service users about the quality of their relationship with staff, and previous studies, referred to in the literature review, which have highlighted the importance that offenders attach to this. However, there is a need for further research in the area of emotional literacy

and illiteracy in which a wider range of staff are interviewed and the views of service users sought. This should also include, where possible, methods of participant observation.

7.5 Personal evaluation of the study

7.5.1 Reflections on conducting the study

This study has, in many respects, been a continuous process since my first job as a probation officer in 1973 and my evolving interest in the emotional lives of offenders. The actual study commenced at a time when I had just stepped down from my role as Head of Division and was programme leader of a Masters degree at DMU. My work load was still very demanding and the time available for this research was limited. However, the post-graduate module I undertook on research strategies and dilemmas assisted greatly in enhancing my knowledge of research paradigms and methodologies, as did ongoing discussion with colleagues. My retirement from a permanent post in the summer of 2011 gave more time for the writing up stage of the project.

7.5.2 Personal contacts

I was greatly assisted in the undertaking of the research by contacts and friendships already established in the Midlands region and I doubt if I would have gained such good access to the research participants without the help and support of the Consortium Director at a number of different stages of the project. I was also given considerable support by colleagues from the local probation area with whom I had previously worked who offered me access to individuals for interview, the focus group and a number of staff workshops for dissemination and validation purposes.

7.5.3 Response rates

I had hoped to interview 30 people and in the end was able to secure 28 interviews. I had hoped to run three or four focus groups and in the event was able to run only one. However, in total I gained extensive and rich data, much of which I have not been able to include in this thesis, for example evidence of the impact of stress on the research participants' mental health, and further information on the impact of different emotional states on learning.

7.5.4 Reflections on the data collected by interviews

<u>Strengths</u>

The use of mixed methods provided a useful range of data and the subsequent seminars and workshops highlighted the value that most of the practitioners who attended, placed on being able to talk about their feelings and have them acknowledged and validated within the workplace. My experience as an interviewer in probation practice and subsequently of students and staff at the university meant I had skills in this area and was able to approach the research participants with care and sensitivity. My knowledge of their world gave me 'insider researcher' status and afforded me both practical and emotional access to issues that might have been hidden from an 'outsider' perspective (Humphries 2000). The idea of a feminist 'conscious partiality' cuts across the ideas of neutrality and value-free research and is achieved through partial identification with the research subjects (Humphries 2000). I adopted this 'conscious partiality' and expressed empathy and connection with the research participants which enabled and encouraged emotional disclosure in a number of instances, although I was also aware of the risk of collusion, and the need to be both reflective and critical. However, I also acknowledge there can be a fine line, in such instances, between empathy and intrusion, and that whilst I was offering a 'safe' space for research participants to express a range of emotions, I was also using their data for my own purposes and needed to be clear with them about this. I was aware of the importance of not passing judgment on any of the views expressed to me, particularly when research participants were

sharing examples of what they considered to be poor emotional practice in themselves or others.

Rapport and reflexivity in interviewing are crucial factors but potentially if rapport goes too far then any kind of professional detachment by the researcher can become compromised. It is generally important, as in all 'helping' occupations, for the researcher to contain and store up any feelings arising from the interaction and share them later with supportive colleagues or trained mentors. During the process of this research I was fortunate to be in counselling with a qualified psychotherapist and was enabled to explore my own feelings arising from the research in a separate therapeutic environment. Some of this 'reflection' has become incorporated within the write-up.

My agenda for this research included a wish to influence the future content of probation training and I shared this aim with the research participants potentially as a way of legitimising and empowering them. Emancipatory research describes how researchers not only find out about the world but also want to change it (Humphries 2000). I was, therefore, keen to identify some ways in which their experiences and knowledge might influence and change the current context within which they worked.

Limitations

I worked to keep my personal views and opinions out of the responses I gave in interviews and the focus group but I was often unsuccessful and indeed there were times where my genuine expressions of concern at what the research participants were describing to me, led them to further revelations. I aimed to not ask biased or leading questions but again recognise that in the course of some of the interviews bias crept in, particularly when discussing the managerialism of the service, the focus on targets rather than quality and the lack of focus on the significance of relationships, all of which I have strong feelings about (the 'passionate enquirer' (Humphries 2000). The dilemmas of 'going native' or 'over-rapport' were not easily resolved for me.

I had anticipated that the research participants would be cross with the organisation for a range of things but not necessarily for failing to support their emotional literacy. I have reflected on whether I have simply added to their list of things to be cross about or whether my attempts to validate a skill they knew they had when I asked them to explain it to me, were in fact appreciated. I did wonder to what extent I should view my research participants as being 'oppressed' by the managerialism of their organisation, given that most of them were highly experienced professionals.

All research participants to the study were 'volunteers' i.e. interested in the concept of emotional literacy in practice. I did not seek to interview people who might have held an opposing view, i.e. denied or minimised the relevance of emotion in practice. I did not interview any senior managers to ascertain their views.

The data was rich and complex and took many readings and many siftings to bring together in codes and themes. There is considerable data that, for reasons of space, is not adequately reflected in the analysis, in particular evidence of the impact on the mental health of staff of both the pressures of the work and the lack of support from 'management' of emotional issues.

7.5.5 Reflections on the data collected by focus group

Whilst only one focus group took place for the reasons provided in Chapter Five, and it was not in ideal circumstances, squeezed in during the lunch break of a busy 'away day' for the team, nevertheless it provided some very rich data of a team undertaking reflection on their practice and sharing their ideas, feelings and knowledge. I felt very fortunate to have been offered this glimpse into their practice world and to be shown an example of emotional resources being built and used. There were some limitations in the use of the one focus group undertaken. Staff in organisations can feel saturated by the focus group approach used so extensively in inspection processes and therefore be less

inclined to contribute their time for other forms of research. I was keen not to take up too much time on what was, for the staff group, an important 'away day' to discuss team policy, and I am conscious that the process felt a bit rushed. The risk of bias from myself, as moderator, was present (Burrows and Kendall 1997), and the presence of the senior probation officer for the team may have had some inhibitory effect on the manner in which staff shared their views on emotions in terms of existing power relations in the group (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999). This was not strongly obvious to me, as all participants spoke with energy and interest, but it cannot be ruled out. Small numbers in the group can make confidentiality an issue (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999), although I have not identified the probation area and do not anticipate any identification being possible.

7.5.6 Reflections on alternative approaches

Interviews with a cross-section of staff in different settings and with different views on the legitimacy of emotional literacy as a practice skill would have offered more comparison and more opportunity to consider Layder's model of interpersonal control across the full spectrum. Also interviews with managers might have revealed different perceptions to that attributed to them by research participants in this study. Observations of actual practice, had this been authorised, could also have been revealing. Co-working this research would have provided an opportunity to build in more checks and balances in the process. I did consult with a range of colleagues during the interview process and I have asked colleagues at DMU (De Montfort University) to read sections of the final thesis and offer me feedback.

7.5.7 Issues about analysing the data

This was the first time I had used a thematic analysis approach and although the process of manual coding proved useful it was very slow. With more time I would have liked to have learned how to use the NVivo software and ideally co-worked the analysis with another colleague.

7.5.8 Reflections on disappointments and achievements

I have learnt a huge amount about emotions and emotional expressions, and about research paradigms. Much of this could not be included in the thesis because of word limits. I am pleased that the seminars and workshops at which I presented themes from this research almost without exception proved positive, dynamic and validating. I am disappointed that the current political climate is such that a 'softer' approach to criminal justice is unlikely to prevail in the foreseeable future although the Offender Engagement Programme continues to hold out some hope for future changes of direction.

7.5.9. Reflections on communicating the findings

I am pleased to have secured a contract to write a book on emotional literacy in criminal justice and consider that this will be the best way to disseminate the findings. However, in the short term I know a retired colleague who held a senior management position in the Midlands who has offered to help me disseminate the findings within the service and I intend to take him up on this with reference to the article I propose to write in the near future.

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Appendix 1

Types Strategies and Examples of Interpersonal Control (Layder 2004:61)

Control Types	Normal/Healthy		Pathological		
	Mutual Benign / Mutuality Soft Manipulation / Benign	Legitimate Position	Manipulative Exploitative	Repressive Positional	Exploitative Dominative
Strategies	Seduction – mutuality Enrolment – displaced by Complicity mild self interest magnetism	Organisational discipline: inducement, rewards, pay steps, status, career steps	Deception, psychological + emotional. Manipulation or terrorism. Total self-interest	Organised repressive power and control. Hierarchical bureaucratic authoritarian	Coercion, violence, intimidation, blackmail, ransom
Settings Examples	Informal, intimate relationships, friendships, family, sexual, romantic	Work settings, diverse organisational forms	Friendships + family relationships based on emotional blackmail or psychological manipulation. Addictive love, control freaks	Armed forces, state bureaucracies, command economies, politically repressive regimes	Women abuse Violent crime Serial murder

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Types Strategies and Examples of Interpersonal Control (Layder 2004:61)

Control Types	Mutual Benign — Mutuality Soft — Manipulation — Benign	Legitimate Position	Manipulative Exploitative	Repressive Positional	Exploitative Dominative
	Normal/Healthy		**Pathological**		
Strategies	Seduction – mutuality Enrolment – displaced by Complicity mild self interest magnetism	Organisational discipline: inducement, rewards, pay steps, status, career steps	Deception, psychological + emotional. Manipulation or terrorism. Total self-interest	Organised repressive power and control. Hierarchical bureaucratic authoritarian	Coercion, violence, intimidation, blackmail, ransom
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Appendix 2

The Compton School: Monday 17th November 2008

I was invited by Denise Beardshaw, Associate Head, to visit The Compton School in Barnet, North London, to see how the concept of 'emotional intelligence' (EI) had been introduced within the school and the impact this had had on the learning environment.

The School, which was closed in 1992 and reopened in 1993, is located in North Finchley and has a catchment area of approximately two thirds council housing and one third private housing. The school takes all children aged 11 to 16 within a specified geographical area surrounding the school, and is therefore in every sense a community based school. The school has higher than the national average of children with learning difficulties. The School was redesignated as a Specialist Technology College in December 2006 and it has Leading Edge and Training School status. It has achieved excellence in Ofsted Inspections:

> *"The achievement of pupils is exceptional because they are inspired by their teachers, and their personal, social and emotional skills are nurtured well. They are mature young people who are rightly proud of their school, who obviously enjoy coming to school and who always behave impeccably" (OFSTED report 2006).*

Denise had planned a full programme of activities for me that included meeting individual members of staff to talk about aspects of the teaching and learning strategy of the School, observing the morning staff briefing, sitting in on the School Assembly for year 7, observing two different classroom sessions (a Science lesson for year 7 and a French lesson for year 9), being show how EI is taught to students within a tutor group, how new staff are inducted and how the Schools 'positive behaviour policy' works. I was also able to observe the process of lunch-time in the school canteen; I was shown round the school to see the display of art work, posters and photographs, and I was encouraged to observe staff working with a student whose behaviour was challenging. I was given a range of literature and hand-outs showing how students, staff and parents were taught about EI.

I was treated with enormous courtesy and helpfulness by everyone I met. The enthusiasm of the staff was strongly apparent and they were very willing to spend time explaining things to me. I was also able to talk with three different students who escorted me between events.

Introducing EI to the Compton School

The 2002/03 School Improvement Plan had a single focus: to maximise the achievement of all students concentrating on teaching and learning. The School adopted a whole school commitment to this objective using extensive class room observations to discover what teachers were doing that was effective. The commitment included the introduction of seating plans; proximal learning; belief that the ratios of positive teacher talk should be far higher than sanctions; pace in lessons, with short tasks, tightly timed to suit a range of learning styles and using a range of activities throughout a lesson. The plan was seen to be 'back to basics' – to consider what would make a difference. The plan to observe lessons made a huge impact; staff became aware of their practice and wanted to share what they were doing. It was relatively easy to see the formal aspects of teaching but observation also enabled the evidence of the more implicit work in terms of 'managing' behaviour that was more difficult to quantify. Staff were clear that it was not about checking up on them but looking at examples of good practice.

The next step was to consider how to take this a stage further and to ensure that achievement and behaviour was as good as it could be. A whole day 'Inset' at the start of the 2003 year had the focus of EI and this set the scene for its launch. They looked at Goleman (2002) but did not rely on a lot of reading, focusing more on what it might mean in practice. The Head had seen it used in other schools and considered that EI approaches to teaching and learning offered opportunities to capitalise on achievements gained by the previous year's objective. EI was include in all staff performance management targets for the year– e.g. for staff to look at their own EI and reflect on one aspect of it that they might improve or change, depending on their role. There were regular staff meetings throughout the year at which they could share good practice. They used a training video showing staff using emotionally unintelligent approaches as one way of reflecting on good practice. They asked staff to identify phrases they used; for example 'I'm really pleased you are…..but your…is not so good as it could be….'

This use of particular phrases and language was agreed in a staff meeting, with no real resistance. Staff welcomed the opportunity to reflect on their own practice. Some concern was identified for new members of staff who were keen to take onboard advice, but in the acknowledgement that there is always a fine line between being 'respectful' to students and establishing authority. Staff need to learn how to show they are in control, and in the early stages of their teaching career too much 'deferral' to the student might not be helpful. For staff who were established it was an easy thing to think about and develop.

Involving students

The next step was to consider how to involve students in the development of an EI approach. They ran assemblies with students to introduce them to it and asked staff to act out an emotionally unintelligent approach e.g. just shouting – and then asked the students to consider the best way to resolve a difficult situation. Students were invited to consider how they could behave to manage a situation better, and to think about their feelings and how they come across to others. Tutor time was made more explicitly about positive behaviour.

Students were invited to identify phrases that they thought were EI – 'I'm trying to work really hard today it doesn't help when you keep tapping the table'.

Involving parents

The next step was to look at how to get parents onboard. The School had completed an evaluation of year one using questionnaires based on self-reflection, in which staff were asked to identify how they felt it had impacted on students; where they had used a particular approach and thought it had improved the situation and how. The results were extremely positive and with almost no negatives bar a few staff who may have felt it was too student centred. They then started to run sessions with parents, identifying in the first instance those parents of students they had some concerns about and for whom more effective engagement with school was important. They talked through with groups of parents the concepts around EI – getting them to think about their own emotions and how they might put them on hold in order to deal with situations concerning their children and to reflect on their responses. Rather than very specific definitions of EI they focused on practical examples of how to deal with particular situations. Parents were encouraged to talk about strategies they used at home. Parents went away and did their homework; e.g. considering how to present a united front as parents; being clear about boundaries, choosing their battles etc.

In the early stages it was a fairly informal system but since then the concept of 'positive behaviour' has become an established aspect of the School's policy.

Positive Behaviour: policy and practice

After two outstanding Ofsteds it was nevertheless discovered that 43% of students said their learning was being disrupted by behaviour in lessons. The School decided to examine, through classroom observations, what was going on. At that stage there was no 'whole school' approach to dealing with behaviour; there were different sanctions being used and students were not getting clear messages. Staff visited other schools to see what they were doing. They identified two things; – apart from sanctions, what was crucially wrong was the reward system. They realised that recognising only *academic*

achievement was not reaching the critical mass of students; the majority who try their best. They also reviewed the use of the school premises; for example the fact that children taken out of a classroom because of their behaviour were often left in the corridor or at reception which gave them a high (and unhelpful) profile.

It was decided that the new model should have rewards at the front. The School considered its responsibility to teach positive behaviour, particularly in the light of the fact that numbers of the students go home to families where parents aren't equipped to manage behaviour in this way. The School considered it had a responsibility to model good behaviour and that children can learn to behave differently, with some needing more help than others. If from within the home they have been taught to scream and shout; that aggression and violence is way to get a point across – then at school they need to learn that they can make choices about their behaviour.

The policy provides a clear framework for sanctions and rewards. Central to the rewards philosophy is the expectation that all teachers will praise students, including contacting parents as a matter of routine. Such spontaneous day to day praise is seen as a key factor in motivating students and establishing a positive climate for learning. The key mantra of the positive behaviour policy is that the School will reward the student that always tries and does their best. They identify two kinds of students – the 'mars bar' students, - staff are so happy that they have sat quietly for 2 minutes they will throw them a mars bar as a reward, and the 'ghost' children who sit quietly and don't get noticed. They decided they had to turn this approach on its head and reward the majority. Very clear guidelines are provided on what constitutes poor behaviour and the appropriate sanctions, in order to enhance consistency across the school.

If a student does what they should do in lesson and tries their best they receive a credit stamp (lots of different designs) in their personal record. All members of staff, teachers, admin, caretakers, aim to build positive relationships in this way. Staff send post cards to the home if student does really well. Corridor displays are renewed each term to show the work of 8 to 12 students in each department who have been recognised for their achievement. Many students are being rewarded and the school has a culture of achievement rather than one of individuals being singled out. If a student is maybe not doing well in one subject but is in another, then the corridor displays might highlight this for all to see. Credit scores are counted up weekly and the top 5 meet with the Head teacher for tea and cakes. Every term the School runs a lottery with the chance to win some vouchers. Credits are awarded for both the wearing of the correct uniform and for behaviour.

Crucially rewards are not about ability but about keenness. Everyone gets a certificate at the Award Ceremony and these are professionally printed.

The second aspect of the policy looks at sanctions. In a pressurised environment, it is often difficult to find the right things to say to students, and to identify what they should be doing. The policy identifies a pyramid of sanctions that do not take away from teachers using their individual skills; for example the use of non verbal communication, pauses etc. However, if none of these work then staff use the concept of a 'rule reminder' to make it clear to a student that they are making a choice about their behaviour. All teachers use it and all students know what it means. In most instances the problematic behaviour will stop. If it doesn't then staff issue a verbal warning that if the behaviour continues it will be recorded, with the emphasis on the fact that it is the choices the *student i*s making. This approach is seen to be flexible because behaviour is complex, but also acknowledges that some form of action is needed e.g. a move to a different seat, detention etc and it is recorded. Then the next steps up include removal from class, and the School has a timetable of where students can go in this instance e.g. into another class so that they are not left out in corridor.

Students were asked to identify 'what a good teacher is' and this was fed into the policy. An evaluation of the policy has shown that 90% of students said it had made a positive difference and 80% said they could learn without disruption.

Core values:

- o We are an <u>inclusive</u> community
- o We focus on the <u>positive</u> – our role is to promote the best in every student
- o We believe all behaviour is <u>learnt</u> behaviour and our role is to model positive behaviour to create mutual respect between adult and student
- o We believe it is essential to separate the behaviour from the individual – every mistake offers the <u>choice</u> to put things right

Core principles

- o Every member of staff has to manage students whose behaviour can disrupt learning. The more we share common practices, the more likely we are to reach common solutions to poor behaviour
- o Every member of staff needs support with behaviour management and every member of staff is responsible for behaviour management
- o There is menu of effective practices and strategies which will promote positive behavior

Core Strategies

Students are more likely to engage in learning and not engage in off-task activity if staff use a range of strategies and have:

- o High personal expectations of every student and make these expectations the focus for learning
- o Apply rules, routines, sanctions and rewards consistently
- o Fairly deploy a range of techniques and strategies to deal with behaviour – verbal and non verbal
- o Use the language of mutual respect
- o Avoid over-reaction and confrontation
- o Adopt a positive approach to problem solving – group dynamics and individual behaviour can be changed

(The Compton School Positive Behaviour Policy and Practice 2008-2009)

Teaching EI to pupils

It is currently taught to year 9 pupils as 'citizenship lessons' on 'how we understand ourselves and how to plan for future goals'. All students in year 9 know what it means and are aware of it even if they don't always act in an EI way. The lessons recap the features of EI and look at how it is important in the workplace and relevant in school. Students are given scenarios to enable them to see why it is important. They are encouraged to be optimistic, and persevering. They examine different skills such as empathy, motivation, social skills, how your behave can effect others. Students keep points for having correct uniform and learn that their behaviour is not just effecting them but others also. They learn strategies on how to cope in school when things are difficult, with reminders of procedures, who they can talk to, having time out if they are feeling angry and the significance of deferred gratification; that gratification may not be what you expect, it can result in other things.

The marshmallow experiment in the 1950's identified that some children had good tactics to distract themselves and this was followed up their later lives. There was found to be a link between those who could distract themselves from instant gratification as children and their success in later life through deferred gratification (although this did not take account of their social and economic environments).

Teaching EI to new staff

Material used in inducting new staff is based on Goleman's concept of Primal Leadership:

> "The fundamental task of leaders is to prime good feeling in those they lead. That occurs when a leader creates resonance – a reservoir of positivity that frees the best in people' Goleman's (2002)

The teaching is based on a business model but has found it's way into educational mainstream through NCSL and the revised standards for Head teachers. It examines:

- o self-awareness
- o self-management
- o social awareness
- o relationship management

There is a focus on building emotionally intelligent teams, and a recognition that emotions are contagious and the effective team leader generally sets the tone and helps create the group's emotional reality – how it feels to be part of the team. They also look at building emotionally intelligent organisations and creating sustainable change.

> *"The key is to foster EI leadership widely and deeply at every level; to systematically create norms and a culture that support transparency, integrity, empathy and healthy relationships   This kind of development begins with leaders who are open to the truth, who can discern the emotional reality and mood of the organisation and who can engage others in a compelling vision of the future".*

(Notes from Goleman 2002)

If a teacher is not being EI in their classroom practice they are encouraged to talk through the situation and to consider how they might have handled it differently. Concerns about teaching styles are often picked up from observations; particularly any concerns about shouting or being confrontational in discussions with students. Students are very likely to 'report' staff who are not teaching in an EI manner. Giving 'negative' feedback to a teacher needs careful phrasing and an invitation to self-reflection. A good starting point is to reflect on your own behaviour first – in order to see how it is relevant to everyone.

Physical Environment

As a result of its technology status the school was able to acquire sums of money to improve the school's physical environment. Denise was responsible for the re-development of the school building design that included the wide concourse, the use of robust seats, art work and photographs on all the walls and a modern and welcoming reception area. She studied the architects' plans and then negotiated changes in many areas to better reflect the needs of pupils moving around the school and feeling positive about themselves. Other aspects of improving the school environment included changes to the lunch time system to avoid 900 pupils all queuing for lunch at the same time, leading to boredom, disruptive behaviour and arguments with the catering

staff. Year groups now come to lunch in shifts and have only half an hour for lunch. This means they do not leave the school premises, they have their lunch delivered speedily and disruption is minimised.

The visual displays all around the school include photographs of students undertaking various activities – these are all of a very high quality and professionally presented. Also displayed is a wide range of art work, of school results, pupils' achievements and Ofsted results. The strong image is of a highly successful and achieving school.

All pupils wear a uniform and the policy is enforced regularly and consistently.

Key learning points – summary of EI embedded within a school

1. When the Compton School was re-opened in 1992, the opportunity for a radical re-think of all aspects of school policy and the school environment was seized upon.
2. It is a whole school policy that impacts on all aspects of teaching and learning including assembly, classroom sessions, behaviour in all areas of the school and the physical environment, particularly the emphasis on space, posters and pictures on walls, seating plans for classrooms, rota for taking lunch etc.
3. The pupils I observed in the two classroom sessions were attentive, polite and focused. They were lively and engaged. There was no sense of them being 'squashed' or intimidated; their enthusiasm for learning was apparent. The seating plan means they do not just sit with friends but with a range of pupils, which enhances their co-operative and supportive learning.
4. The staff I observed in teaching and negotiation with students were calm, measured and authoritative. Discipline in the classroom was maintained by regular and appropriate reminders of the need for, e.g. silence, but interspersed with a lot of positive comments about the pupils' behaviour and rewards such as credits in the student's planners.
5. Many of the children contributed to classroom discussion and quizzes. When called on by name they all responded.
6. All staff, including kitchen staff, teaching assistants, caretaker, admin staff can award credits for positive behaviour thus building relationships across all staff and student groups.
7. Success is celebrated – all children are encouraged to be positive, optimistic and strive to do better. Turning on its head the negative culture that says its not cool to be clever – particularly among boys
8. Briefing for staff at the beginning of each day gives a chance to provide and share information and to thank staff for their endeavours in the preceding week. Staff also receive cards of support, and are given a lot of positive feedback particularly after a difficult day
9. Working with parents on EI has been challenging but has led to greater consistency of approach and an understanding of the philosophy of the school

10. The importance of consistency – the sanctions are the same, the positive rewards are the same…

I wonder if the concept of emotional *literacy* is a better way of describing what the staff do when they demonstrate their emotional intelligence? I found the visit to the School to be inspiring; giving me a blueprint of how embedding the concept of emotional intelligence within an organisation, in this instance the school environment and culture, can maximise the achievements of all.

My particular thanks to the following staff:

Denise Beardshaw (Associate Head)

Karen Hand (Key Stage Leader)

Jane Telot (Year 9 Manager)

Emma Hazelgreaves (HoD Modern Foreign Languages)

Louise Taylor (Deputy Head)

Alison McCrory (Year 9 Form Tutor)

Noah Turner (Assistant Head)

Charlotte Gormley (Deputy Head)

References

The Compton School Brochure

DVD of The Compton School – Open Evening 2008

The Compton School Policy and Practice on Positive Behaviour 2008-2009

Presentation: A Suggested route to Implementing EI

Presentation 'Is your Lesson Worth Behaving For'Paper: The Compton Presentation: Citizenship Lesson: Emotional Intelligence 2

Presentation: EI Assembly January 2007

Presentation: EI training session 08

School Emotional Intelligence Approaches

The New Leaders: notes from Goleman (2002)

Paper: Language in the classroom

Paper: Student feedback year one

Goleman (2002) *The New Leaders: Transforming the Art of Leadership into the Science of Results*. Time Warner Paperbacks

Charlotte Knight

26th November 2008

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Letter to Chief Officers

12th August 2008

Dear ………..

Re: 'Soft Skills for Hard Work'

I am currently pursuing a post-graduate research degree which is exploring the skills of 'emotional literacy' in practitioners who work with high risk offenders. I attach a brief information sheet that outlines the main aims and objectives of the study. I also attach a letter from Ian Macnair, Director of the Midlands Probation Consortium who raised the idea of this project with the Consortium Executive Board in July this year.

I am writing to seek your permission to contact members of staff in your Area who currently work with high risk offenders; primarily sex offenders, but potentially also those working with domestic violence perpetrators, either through group work programmes and/or PSR writing and one-to-one work. My request to such staff would be for two things:

a) an interview of approximately one hour duration and/or

b) a willingness to join a focus group of staff for a group discussion of approximately one and a half hours.

I would send the staff concerned information about the project, which would confirm confidentiality, the right to withdraw at any stage, and include a consent form.

If you consider that this is a project you could support I would be most grateful for a contact name of someone with whom I could liaise in order to identify relevant staff to approach.

Many thanks for your consideration

Yours sincerely

Charlotte Knight

Principal Lecturer

Title: Soft skills for hard work: an exploration of the efficacy of the emotional literacy of practitioners working within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) with high risk offenders

Aims of the Study

1. To identify and examine the extent to which the skills of 'emotional literacy' are core to productive work with high risk offenders, with particular reference to sex offenders
2. To examine the gendered nature of these skills and the implications for staffing within NOMS
3. To consider the extent to which these skills are taught, valued and measured within NOMS

'Emotional Literacy' is defined as:

"*The capacity to register our emotional responses to the situations we are in and to acknowledge those responses to ourselves so that we recognise the ways in which they influence our thoughts and actions*" *(Orbach 2001 p.2)*

Successful probation work with high risk, challenging offenders demands a complex repertoire of emotional skills from the practitioner. Yet so far we know relatively little about how this is accomplished. This project is designed to start from practitioners own expertise and build on the strengths of the newly emerging field of emotional literacy and the significance of relationships in constructive work with offenders.

I would like to explore the skills of 'emotional literacy' that I understand many workers, and particularly those working with high risk/sex offenders use to great effect. I aim to develop and build on knowledge that challenges the ideology of 'tough' sentencing and 'tough' treatment of offenders dominating current discourse both in government and the media. The concept of 'soft skills' for 'hard work' requires an understanding of the nature of these 'emotional' skills, which are significantly associated with an ability to build and maintain relationships. There have been recent research studies that have reinstated the importance of the relationship in motivating offenders to change and desist from crime (Dowden & Andrew 2004, McNeill 2006 etc). In an evidence-based, target driven culture it is vital that we have a strong grasp of the elements of effective practice to inform future education and training activities. My research will look at how these skills are applied in practice with the aim of raising their profile, creating a tool for measurement and identifying training needs.

I have undertaken a pilot study in one Probation Area in which I interviewed seven members of staff and gained data on which to build the main research

study. I would like to request permission to conduct further interviews with staff working with high risk offenders, and also arrange for one or two focus groups of staff willing to debate the issues with me.

The main themes, arising from the pilot, that I would like to explore are:

- An understanding of the meaning of 'emotion' and its expression within a practice setting
- An exploration of the range of emotional responses that workers' experience, and the extent to which this is gendered
- An examination of the training implications for 'emotional literacy'

I will be pleased to report back to the Consortium Executive on the results of my research. I can to offer a copy of my findings for comments, offer feedback sessions to participants and other interested parties to take forward the emotional literacy agenda in the probation service

Charlotte Knight

De Montfort University, July 2008

Appendix 4

Dear Chief Officer,

Research Proposal from Charlotte Knight
Principal Lecturer at De Montfort University

From the outset of the then new Diploma in Probation Studies programme in the Midlands in 1998, the Consortium has been keen to promote research activity to enhance our understanding about the training and development needs of practitioners.

The first 5 intakes of the Midland Diploma programme were the subject of a longitudinal research project led by Tina Eadie (Nottingham/De Montfort Universities) supported by Sarah Winwin Sein and Avril Aust, two of our then joint SPO/Lecturer Appointments. Elements of that research continue to be published and to form the basis for workshops at Conferences.

This latest research proposal is from Charlotte Knight, a Principal Lecturer at De Montfort University, who has been involved with the Diploma programme since its outset and also with the Masters level modules and PSO Certificate developments of that programme.

The proposal was reported to the Executive Board of this Consortium in July and board members expressed their "enthusiastic support" for the proposal to which they gave their formal endorsement.

We would anticipate that the outcome from the research will be available to the Service and Charlotte would be pleased to arrange feedback and opportunities to reflect upon her findings in due course.

On behalf of the Executive Board of MRPTC, I would commend this research to you and ask that you respond positively to Charlottes request for access to some of your staff.

If you wish to discuss this with me further then I would be pleased to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Macnair
Director

cc Josephine Palmer

Appendix 5

"Soft Skills for Hard Work"

Semi-structured Interview schedule for pilot study

Number assigned…………………………………………

Date of interview………………………………………….

Place of interview…………………………………………..

Check reply slip has been signed and retained and no. attached to it.

Check understanding of research brief and agreement to tape record the interview

Explain that the purpose of the pilot is two fold:

- To build data for the overall project
- To test out the research tools – so feedback on this interview process will be part of today's interview

Questions

1. Total length of employment within the Probation Service

2. Range of roles occupied before current role

3. Current role within organisation and brief overview of what this entails

4. What do you like and dislike about your work? Can you give me three best things and three worst things?

5. How would you describe the way you engage with the offenders you work with? What skills do you think you employ to build a relationship with them?

6. What does the word 'emotion' conjure up for you? What do you think it means both in a general sense and in the context of the work that you do?

7. Have you hear of the terms 'Emotional Intelligence' or 'Emotional Literacy' before? What do they mean for you?

8. Can you describe the sorts of feelings the work you do with offenders arouses in you? Either at the time you are engaged in face to face work or later, when you come to reflect – or both?
9. What sorts of feelings and emotions do you most commonly see portrayed by offenders?
10. Do you sometimes find yourself being drawn into their expressions of emotion either positively or negatively? For example how do you feel if they are being
    a. Angry
    b. Upset
    c. Sarcastic
    d. Abusive
    e. Flirtatious
    f. Manipulative
    g. Kind
    h. Humorous
    i. Sad/depressed
    j. Other….
11. How do you 'manage' your feelings when this happens? For example do you:
    a. Conceal them …..(successfully or not?)
    b. Show them through non-verbal means but not speak about them
    c. Articulate how you feel
    d. A mixture
12. Do you have a view about what is the most appropriate thing to do with your own feelings (whether or not you are successful in this)?
13. Have you had experience of a time when you showed your emotions and it had a particular effect on the offender? If so what?
14. Do you have the opportunity to debrief with anyone after a particularly 'emotional' or challenging session with an offender or group of offenders?
15. If so how do you use this session and what helps you the most?
16. Has anyone acknowledged with you the role of 'emotions' in your work?
17. Would you like to have (more) training/education in this area?
18. Do you have a sense that some people are 'better' at managing their feelings appropriately than others? Is this acknowledged within the service in any way? How do you recognize this?
19. Do you think that the skills of 'emotional literacy' are more or less important to work with high risk offenders? And/or are there particular methods of intervention where the use of emotional literacy might be considered more or less important?
20. What do you think is the significance of building relationships with offenders, in the process of addressing their offending behaviour?
21. Accredited Sex Offender Programmes: Assessment Centre
    Have you bee assessed against the Person Specification for Sex Offender Treatment Facilitator?

    Section 3 is headed 'Interpersonal and Therapeutic Skills. It lists 12 indicators under this heading:

Sets a positive and purposeful tone for the interview
Uses motivational interviewing techniques
Uses mainly open questions
Challenges distortions and 'distancing' from offending
Challenges constructively, avoiding collusion and digression
while also avoiding confrontation or aggression
Uses language appropriate to offender's ability and level of understanding
Checks understanding, feeds back and uses praise and encouragement appropriately
Interprets answers and follows up with further questions
Uses sexual terms appropriately and confidently, avoiding euphemism
Listens carefully
Uses tone of voice, eye contact, body posture, non-verbal responses and gestures appropriately

Do you think this captures the significance of emotion in the work? Are their things you would include or omit?

22. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group at a future date?
23. How did you find the process of this interview?

Was it:

a) too long
b) too short
c) about right

Were the questions

a) helpful
b) too directive
c) Too loose or ambiguous?
24. What do you think would be a good question to ask?
25. Any other suggestions as to how I might go about researching this question?

Thank you very much for your time

Appendix 6

"Soft Skills for Hard Work"

Semi-structured Interview schedule for study

Number assigned………………………………………………

Date of interview………………………………………………….

Place of interview…………………………………………..

- o Check consent form has been signed and retained and no. attached to it.
- o Check understanding of research brief and agreement to tape record the interview
- o Explain that the purpose of the study is to build data and analysis for the project and to seek recruits for a focus group to be held at a later date

Questions

1. Identity questions: - give out slip and explain the purpose of looking for connections between personal identity – race, gender, cultural background etc and emotional literacy

2. Total length of employment within the Probation Service (current service and/or any other service)

3. Range of roles occupied before current role

4. Current role within organisation and brief overview of what this entails

5. What do you like and dislike about your work? Can you give me three best things and three worst things?

6. What does the word 'emotion' conjure up for you? What do you think it means in both a general sense and in the context of the work that you do?

7. What does 'being emotional' signify for you?

8.   If we consider 'emotions' to mean primarily 'feelings', what sorts of

   a. positive feelings and
   b. negative feelings

would you list as being the most likely to arise for **you** in your work as a
practitioner?

1.   9.   What sorts of feelings and emotions do you most commonly see
portrayed by offenders?

2.   10.   Do you sometimes find yourself being drawn into their
expressions of emotion either positively or negatively? For example
how do you feel if they are being

   a. Angry

   b. Upset

   c. Sarcastic

   d. Abusive

   e. Flirtatious

   f. Manipulative

   g. Kind

   h. Humorous

   i. Sad/depressed
   j. other

3.   11.   How do you 'manage' your feelings when this happens? For example do you:

      a. Conceal them – (successfully or not?)

      b. Show them through non-verbal means but not speak about them

      c. Articulate how you are feeling

      d. A mixture

4.   12.   Do you have a view about what is the most appropriate thing to do with your own feelings (whether or not you are successful in this)?

5.   13.   Have you had experience of a time when you showed your emotions and it had a particular effect on the offender? If so what?

14.   What do you think about de-briefing after a particularly 'emotional' or challenging session with an offender or group of offenders?

15.   Has anyone acknowledged with you the role of 'emotions' in your work with offenders? Have you ever had any training or education in this area?

16.   What do you think about the potential links between emotions and the ability to learn?

17.   Would you like to have (more) training/education in this area?

18.   What do you think about the use of the skills of 'emotional literacy' in work with high risk offenders? And/or are there particular methods of intervention where the use of 'emotional literacy' might be considered more or less important?

19. What is the significance for you of offenders being 'challenged' about their behaviour? How do you rate the concept of a 'confrontational' style of practice?

20. What sort of probation officer do you think you are? Can you describe the qualities you bring to the job – in your work with offenders?

21. On a scale of 0 to 10 how would you rate the Probation Service as an emotionally literate organisation? 0 – not at all and 10 equals completely?

22. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group at a future date?

6. 23. How did you find the process of this interview?

7. 24. And other suggestions as to how I might go about researching this question?

Thank you very much for your time

Appendix 9

Amy's metaphor analysis

The following comment from Amy came in response to a statement related to the hope that this research might have some influence on elements of future training arrangements for probation officers. Some of the more obvious metaphors are underlined in the following extracts. Here Amy is expressing an opinion about the changes to probation training:

> *Once this whole direction became clear - I'm quite surprised really that – from <u>the point where POs were being swapped whole sale</u> for PSOs - as soon as you say this people <u>jump on you from a great height</u> and accuse you of elitism.*

There are a number of metaphors within this phrase, but the most powerful one is '*people jump on you from a great height'* – which graphically conveys a sense of powerlessness and vulnerability on the part of the speaker in which she feels squashed and defeated by people 'above' her i.e. her managers. She is painting a picture (Cameron 2009) of a hierarchical organisation in which the more powerful individuals misuse their power. She also feels that she is being '*accused'*; with its accompanying inference of being on trial for committing some 'crime' or 'misdemeanour'. This would constitute Luke's third dimension of power, in which the organisation is seen to be controlling the decision-making process through ideological processes (Lukes 2005). Whilst Amy does not refer directly to herself as being 'bullied', metaphor analysis can reveal a great deal of the emotional pain of workplace bullying (Tracy 2006). There is also evidence of how Amy uses her language as a way of resisting control of her identity by 'management' (Fleming 2005) by referring to 'people' rather than 'managers', and 'swapped wholesale' implying a crude and generalised activity.

In this next extract Amy is responding to a question about how she managed her emotions when working on a group work programme for sex offenders; she is reflecting back on her earliest experiences of this work:

> *But as woman I feel very definitely now, from when I did my first sex offender group, when I was about 32/33, something like that – my emotions <u>must have been running really high</u> – though I wasn't aware of it at the time. We used to run huge groups - 20 odd sex offenders. I remember that <u>my knees gave way</u> – <u>literally</u> – interesting – <u>huge levels</u> of anxiety – some of that was to do with being a young, reasonably attractive, very young looking woman. Now as a middle aged woman I don't feel any of that. I'm <u>kind of invisible as a woman</u> – although there's this other stereotype I talked about earlier - I'm also quite a <u>reassuring figure</u> by virtue of my experience. So its much easier for me to be <u>in role</u> now – <u>to lose those</u> - to just to be there doing my job, its much easier than it would have been years ago. And age and the <u>loss of the label 'woman'</u> – <u>invisibility is a road that women travel</u> <u>down</u>…..not many advantages to that in this job…….I remember a middle aged officer told me to 'be careful what you wear when you go into prisons'*

there will be 250 eyes trained on you when you go on the wing…..<u>masturbation fodder for those men</u> – all of that <u>has been lost</u>.

This lengthier quote is full of different sorts of metaphors but a careful examination of the language identifies a pattern related to how Amy views a physical sense of herself and her appearance in relation to the men she is working with and the underlying emotional and sexual tensions of working with them on the subject of sex and their sexual deviance:

> <u>*'my knees gave way – literally'*</u>: is a powerful illustration of her fear, the idea of the physical body collapsing under the weight of the fear. Although she uses the word 'literally', which means 'without metaphor'(Allen 1992), it is unlikely that she actually collapsed in front of the men, particularly give her earlier statement that she wasn't aware of how 'high' her feelings were running then. She uses the word as a metaphor to convey how strong her feelings were at that time. In another context she might have used the metaphor 'low' to imply a diminishing of feeling. This reflects Cameron's identification of metaphor as representing spatial position (Cameron 2009).

> '<u>*I'm kind of invisible as a woman'*</u>; conveys a sense of loss of a physical presence or impact; that her physical identity goes unnoticed now that she has grown older. This is both a personal indication of loss and a political statement of how society views older women (Weedon 1997; Oakley 2005).

> <u>*'invisibility is a road women travel down';*</u> this is a journey metaphor (Cameron 1999; 2011) in which Amy is explaining the process by which she has felt less and less physically impactive as a woman in her work situation and indeed probably her life situation. It also confirms her earlier political understanding of the role of women in society.

> '<u>*masturbation fodder for those men'*</u>: another very graphic and disturbing metaphor to convey the realities of young female professionals as vulnerable in a male prison context to the sexual fantasies and desires of men deprived of normal human sexual relationships. The use of the word 'fodder' conveys the idea of these vulnerable women being *consumed* or *used* by the prisoners in the way that an animal eats its food. Feelings of powerlessness, vulnerability and the sense of being of little value and disposable in front of these men, are all conveyed in this image. It is more than likely that this is how she has felt in the past.

Amy's language is striking and powerful and on closer scrutiny reveals some of her feelings about having been an attractive younger woman working with men whose offending behaviour was, in itself, a challenge to her sexuality and how, through the passage of time, she sees herself as being viewed differently, with both positive ('reassuring figure') and negative ('invisible as a woman') effects. The 'reassuring figure' identity neutralises her gender and the 'invisible woman' identity renders her a

lesser person. The intersectionality of her different 'identities' over her life span demonstrates her understanding of how the levels of power afforded to her by her identity and role has come and gone over the years (Bagihole 2009).

Metaphor analysis of Amy's words reveals the multi-layered use of language particularly with regard to her emotional states and the importance of paying attention to hidden or concealed meanings that may be of great significance to the worker's ability to do their job, and also to a full assessment of an offender's culpability and needs. Whilst metaphor analysis is currently theorised mostly in relation to research methods it has significance in offering an understanding of emotional expression in both workers and offenders, as the extract from Amy's interview above highlights. The use of metaphor discourse analysis might enable a worker to gain a better understanding of what lies beneath the surface; the hidden emotion or archaeology of feelings.

Appendix 10

Metaphors

Metaphor	Interview No.
By trying to stand in the person's shoes Put myself in their shoes	1,3
Flying by the seat of your pants Scared the pants off me	7 24
– It's egos with men – bloody egos (*talking of colleagues)*	1
you are just like the man in the street - the sun reader	1
people jump on you from a great height and accuse you of elitism Jumping through hoops	2
I think the probation service is well and truly a sick organisation	2
Playing the game (*offenders*)	2
I'm kind of invisible now (*as a woman*)	2
but maybe the place where it's hit home for me is with my own children.	2
My emotions were sky high	2
he's successfully run rings round everybody so far (*offender)*	2
it is all about tick boxes	14
just venting my spleen	2,5
It's wall papering over the cracks (*the organisation…*)	3
Gut feeling, gut instinct	14,26
'gutted' (used by offenders)	23
Press your button or press someone elses	14, 22
Your own house needs to be in order	5
so that seems to be my baby	14
so I tend to be the one who does, who goes outside the box	14
I suppose just off the top of my head	14
you are on a journey	14
I felt I was under siege	14
but I suppose those things catch you when you least expect it	14
and I had a shower and I know that's indicative of washing it away	14
I don't think I got it right with you last night	14
,,,,, I think most people come into this job cos they have something to fix	14
we have a lot of rescuers in the Service	14
that if you squeaked in the wrong place you were wrapped over the knuckles	14
thought this is all a bit laid back	14
Put them (*feelings)* on the back boiler	15
I wanted to stay on the ground with offenders	15

Thinking of a woman as a piece of meat	15
..so I think it was the icing on the cake. (*gaining confidence from doing group work*)	15
– management has lost the plot	15
It's alright when they want to move the goal posts but when we want to…	15
feel like I've got something off my chest	15,18,27
We are not allowed a life	15
We put them on the spot (*offenders asked to articulate their feelings in a group*)	16
.. I mean we left him for a bit sort of huffing and puffing in the corner	16
And he went ballistic	16
(*checked my notes*) just in case something did sort of kick off,	16
cos if I take it home I will go insane and I will end up, you know what I mean,	16
the main road to get out and my heart was just going: dooff, dooff, dooff, doff - Then when he turned up the next day, my heart was in my mouth	16
she's not a complete fruitcake (*the worker's view of the offender's opinion of the worker*)	16
you don't want to look like a knight on a horse and go steaming in,(*to challenge in a group situation*)	16
Start to unpick that stuff	17
Start to draw them out Try to spill everything out	17
It's as cut and dried as that sometimes (*some officers will say this in relation to sending someone to prison for non compliance*)	17
Lets try and change tack	18
Find yourself gritting your teeth	18
What are you playing at?	18
Letting off steam	18
Water off a duck's back	18
People will kick off	18
Love is blind	18
When you are clicking with someone	19
Bit like pulling teeth (getting responses from men	19
Keeping them (emotions) tied down	20
Put them (emotions) on hold	20
I'm a soft touch	20
Don't expect them to make eyes at you	21

you have to be careful that you don't kind of cross that line with offenders	21
'oh my god he's just done my head in'	21
I may stew over it afterwards	21
She was fantastic – kept her foot on the shop floor (supervisor)	21
that we are not just emotionally dead inside and that we don't really give a monkeys,	21
if you go in there with all guns blazing with somebody, you don't know how they're gonna react	21
they drop the bombshell and you wonder how you are going to deal with that	21
the next minute you are ripping your hair out thinking, 'I've got to this' and 'I've got to that' and 'I've got to do the other'	21
When you see the light bulb moment it's really rewarding	22,23
it didn't rest well that I did… (get angry with an offender and be more challenging than usual)	22
Being in the moment – of what the person is saying	22
One size fits all	23
Don't put a spanner in the works for someone else – we'll try and throw a spanner in the works – give us a thought – what were you thinking when you came into the room….	23
Bums on seats	23
Wears their heart on their sleeve	24
Pulling the wool over everyone's eyes	24
Pussyfooting around	24
I did feel we were both at sea with it	24
You have to bring someone down before you can do anything meaningful with them	24

We've lost our voice…	26
I can't sit on my feelings	26
I'm rubbish, I haven't done that very well,	27
he almost had that road to Damascus experience	27
Giving them the benefit of the doubt	27
I mean I actually broke my neck to make it possible for him to do it, like	27
he wagged his finger at me'	27
The male co-worker was off with the fairies.	
Going over the top (being out of control emotionally)	28
Standing back	28
Taking the temperature (of the feelings of the worker)	28
no use going in with your eyes shut	28
no, it's difficult to switch off permanently	10
you're like a duck on the water, underneath you're paddling like mad but you're calm, on the surface	11
I don't go overboard (in my emotions)	9
go through the pain barrier	9
A knee jerk reaction (emotions affecting behaviour)	10
Feel like a conveyor belt	21
On the back foot	24

Appendix 11

Summary of issues raised at workshops on: 'Soft Skills for Hard Work'

Between December 2009 and December 2011 a series of 8 presentations on the preliminary findings of the research were presented to a number of different audiences:

- 2nd December 2009: Community and Criminal Justice Division at DMU; lunchtime seminar series
- April 2010: The Newport Centre for Criminal Justice Conference on working with sex offenders
- 21st June 2010: 'Responsivity in Supervision; Enlisting Offenders as Agents of Change'. One of a series of workshops organised by the Midlands Probation Consortium, Birmingham University, De Montfort University and KWP for managers and practitioners in the region.
- 22nd June 2010: Midlands Region PDA network meeting
- 7th July 2010: Offender Engagement Programme; research seminar organised by NOMS and held in London
- 14th July 2010: BSC Annual Conference at Leicester University
- 28th October 2010: Leicestershire Sex Offender Forum
- 6th December 2011: Community and Criminal Justice Division ; lunchtime seminar series

2nd December 2009: Presentation to the Community and Criminal Justice Division; lunchtime seminar series

I gave a paper on the definitions of emotional literacy, its current theory base and use in a range of business/leadership/schools settings. I explored its relevance to probation practice and value implications; the potential for positive or negative emotional responses to offenders. I introduced the potential research paradigms for the study. This was the first time I had presented any ideas on my research and the response was extremely positive and engaged. Colleagues wanted to share their own experiences of emotions in practice and the complex ways in which emotions are revealed or concealed. There was no difficulty in generating debate and at the end of the seminar one colleague asked if I would present these ideas to the PDA network.

April 2010: Presentation to the Newport Centre for Criminal Justice Conference on working with sex offenders

I had submitted a proposal for a paper on the use of emotional literacy in work with sex offenders, which was accepted by the conference organisers. I was one of the key note speakers at this conference and subsequently was asked to contribute a chapter to a

book that the organisers intended to write on working with sex offenders entitled 'Sex Offenders Punish, Help Change or Control? Theory, Policy and Practice Explored'. The chapter was entitled: 'Emotional Literacy in Working with Sex Offenders' and the book is due for publication in 2012.

I presented ideas about emotional literacy within probation practice, with particular reference to work with sex offenders. This included definitions and theoretical perspectives on emotional literacy, issues in practice, management constraints and including the particularly punitive context in relation to sex offending and within which these skills were practiced. There was considerable interest in these ideas and themes and a lot of questions were generated.

21st June 2010: Presentation to workshop; 'Responsivity in Supervision; Enlisting Offenders as Agents of Change.

This was one of a series of workshops organised by the Midlands Probation Consortium, Birmingham University, De Montfort University and KWP for managers and practitioners. The focus of my presentation was more generally about probation practice rather than specifically work with sex offenders. Again there was a lot of interest from the audience with a wide range of questions. I was approached by a number of delegates afterwards who wished to continue the discussions started in the main workshop

22nd June 2010: Presentation to the Midlands region PDA network meeting

This was a small gathering of PDAs so I presented the ideas from my research as discussion points rather than a formal address. The PDAs were keen to explain to me that they believed they already operated in this way with their clients and with their students. They were interested, but also very despondent about the lack of support given to them by their 'managers' in pursuit of best practice with offenders. They were mostly keen to know how I would disseminate my findings, as they considered them to be supportive of their work

7th July 2010: Offender Engagement Programme; seminar organised by NOMS and held in London

I had been invited by Sue Rex to present a paper along with a number of other academics and practitioners on the subject of offender engagement. This was a formal round table series of presentations followed by brief discussion. I did not feel my ideas were received with any great enthusiasm and there was a limited response. I was, however, subsequently asked by Sue Rex to write the first bulletin for the Offender Engagement Research Bulletin, jointly with Deborah Clow, entitled ''Supporting

Practitioners in Dealing with the Emotional Impact of their Work' which was circulated to Probation Areas nationally.

14th July 2010: BSC Conference held at Leicester University

I presented a paper entitled 'Teaching and Learning about Diversity: An Emotional Process' in which I reflected on the emotional processes involved in working with students on the diversity agenda; how strong emotions could be invoked by the subject matter and could inhibit learning. With hindsight, I believe it was a mistake to try and combine so many different and complex themes in one paper and I should have stayed with the main focus of my research, which was practice with offenders. The seminar was small and the responses muted. Whilst I continue to believe there are some important themes around emotions and learning, particular in relation to accredited offending behaviour programmes, this is not the central argument of my research.

28th October 2011: Leicestershire Sex Offender Forum meeting

This was a relatively large one-day meeting of staff working on sex offender programmes and offender managers with particular responsibilities for work with sex offenders. I presented the theme that effective work with sex offenders requires the context of a productive working relationship and that emotional literacy is a key means of achieving this. I also argued that the 'managerial' context of current probation practice, the focus on risk assessment and management and the punitive media-driven agenda, particularly in relation to sex offenders, all mitigate against this. This provoked a very enthusiastic debate with many people giving examples of when they had felt silenced from talking about emotional issues and how important they felt it was to have them acknowledged. They were keen to know how I planned to disseminate my findings.

December 2011: Community and Criminal Justice Division lunch-time seminar series

As this was the second seminar I had presented for the Division on my research I decided to test out the evolving ideas I had about potential 'feeling rules' for the Probation Service being about 'emotional detachment'. This generated a lot of discussion, with examples given from probation, the police service and the university, of how people felt that emotional expression had been inhibited or concealed and the consequences of this on practice/teaching.

CHK April 2012

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY
LEICESTER · BEDFORD

**De Montfort University, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Research and Commercial Office**

APPLICATION FORM FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF A RESEARCH PROJECT (INCLUDES GUIDANCE NOTES)

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETING AN APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL APPROVAL OF A RESEARCH PROJECT

The Faculty Ethics Committee requires those partaking in research activities to consider the ethical and safety implications of their work and where necessary apply for necessary ethical clearance from within our Faculty and from external bodies.

Safety aspects relate to specific issues in addition to the normal H and S and COSSH requirements (eg: use of radioactive sources, lasers, biohazards, including microorganisms, tissue culture etc). Researchers (staff and students) should contact their line manager, project supervisor, research centre manager for guidance. The Faculty Ethics Committee Chair is Professor Paul Whiting, H.25I, extension 8283.

The ethical approval form is essential to planning a piece of research activity. Application forms completed by UG, PGT students must be returned to the relevant administrative or academic staff involved with the particular module. Application forms completed by PG Research students or staff should be returned to the Faculty Research and Commercial Office, room H2.25e, e-mail HLFSRO@dmu.ac.uk.

FORMS MUST BE SIGNED
PLEASE USE ORDINARY LANGUAGE AND AVOID JARGON

Title of proposed project/research activity – include module title where appropriate

"Soft skills for hard work: an exploration of the efficacy of the emotional literacy of practitioners working in the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) with high risk offenders" (MPhil/PhD

Start date for the project: 01/10/06 Expected end date for the project... 30/09/2010

Researcher's/Student's Name and contact details
Charlotte Knight: chknight@dmu.ac.uk

Module Leader's, Supervisor's Name or Project Director's contact details.
Dr. Brown & Professor Ward

Brief Description of proposed activity and its objectives

This study will examine the 'soft skills' of 'emotional literacy' in the work that probation officers undertake with high risk offenders. The study will be located within a research philosophy of post-modernism (Dyson & Brown 2006). I am interested in examining the concept of emotional intelligence through a Foucauldian framework of power relationships and the hidden discourses that can be partially or wholly suppressed

	about it. However, they make it clear they do not need to see this before I approach chief officers in my region. Approval to approach probation staff will be made, with the support of the Midlands Probation Consortium (ref: letter from Ian Macnair, Director, dated….) to the nine Probation Areas in the Midlands Region.

To which ethical code of conduct have you referred?
For example British Sociological Association, ESRC, British Psychological Association

Central Office for Research Ethics Committees (COREC)
British Sociological Association
Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

How have the requirements of those involved with the research whose first language may not be English been addressed?
It is a requirement of the National Probation Service/National Offender Management Service, that all staff working within the service should be full conversant with the English language both verbal and written

List of accompanying documentation to support the application:

(1) A copy of the Research proposal — **Yes X**□ No □

(2) The details of arrangements for participation of human or animal subjects or material, (including recruitment, consent and confidentiality procedures and documentation as appropriate) — **Yes X**□ No □

(3) A copy of all the documentation provided to the volunteer to ensure the clarity of information provided — **Yes X** □ No □

(4) Copies of appropriate other ethical committee permissions (internal or external) or supporting documentation — **Yes X**□ No □

(5) A list of proprietary drugs or commercial drugs to be used in the proposed investigation including formulation, dosage and route of administration and known adverse side effects — Yes □ **No X**

(6) A brief one page curriculum vitae for each applicant, including recent publications — **Yes X** No □

(7) Other Documentation:

Signature of researcher/student   date

Signature of project director /supervisor(s)   date

within the dominant discourse of 'modern' probation practice.

A qualitative methodology will be followed using a strategy of grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967). This aims to build up theory "based on the concepts and internal constructs of subjects of the research" (Dyson & Brown 2006:24). In-depth interviews and/or focus groups will be conducted with experienced workers (working with sexual and/or violent offenders). Analysis of the interview and focus group material will be informed by the investigative traditions of grounded theory. Case vignettes may be used within the focus groups as a means of exploring the potential responses to a range of complex and significant interactions.

The aims of the study are:

1. To identify and examine the extent to which the skills of emotional literacy are core to productive work with high risk offenders, with particular reference to sex offenders
2. To examine the gendered nature of these skills and the implications for staffing within NOMS
3. To consider the extent to which these skills are taught, valued and measured within NOMS in the context of 'managerialism' and the 'new punitiveness' (Nellis 2005)

Ethical Issues Identified	How these will be addressed
Participation	Written information about the purpose of the research, and the uses to which the data will be put, will be provided to all participants. They will be assured that participation is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any stage of the process and that they may choose to withdraw their data at any stage before the final write-up. They will be advised that a combination of audio recordings and note-taking will be used. They will sign a consent form to indicate that they have understood their rights and agree to participate (see enclosed participant information sheet, consent form and letter of invitation to participate in the study).
Anonymity and confidentiality	No information which could identify the participants will be stored with the tapes or transcripts of the interviews and focus group(s). Tapes will be numbered and stored in a locked filing cabinet. All transcripts will be stored electronically and password protected, accessed only by the researcher. Where material is quoted in the thesis or in any future published work all efforts will be made to ensure that individuals cannot be identified. Tapes and transcripts will be destroyed when the study is completed
Potential risks to participants	Participants will be interviewed, and/or join a focus group at a time and place convenient to them. It is acknowledged that this study is examining highly complex and emotionally charged work and that it can be emotionally draining and stressful. I would wish to offer space and support for any expressions of feelings that the discussions may invoke, and to ensure that all respondents have alternative forms of support and counselling available to them (Knight, C. (1996) 'Who Supports the Workers?' Probation Journal Sept. 1996 Vol. 43 No 3 pp 132-136)
Respect for the organisation's research processes	I have read Probation Circular (PC59/2005) 'Quality Assurance for Research' and the National Offender Management Service 'What Works' Briefing 3/05 'Understanding research methods and findings' and I have made contact with Chloe Chitty, the nominated person within the RDS NOMs to seek advise about approaching chief officers of probation for permission to undertake this study. I have received confirmation (email 05/02/07) that my proposal does not need to be submitted to the RDS Project Quality Approval Board, although they would find it helpful to have sight of the proposal, with details of my plans so that they are aware of my research should a probation area ask

9th March 2007

Charlotte Knight
Health and Life Sciences

Dear Charlotte,

Re: Ethics application – "Soft skills for hard work: an exploration of the efficacy of the emotional literacy of practitioners working within the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) with high-risk offenders" (ref: 194)

I am writing regarding your application for ethical approval for a research project titled to the above project. This project has been reviewed in accordance with the Operational Procedures for De Montfort University Faculty of Health and Life Sciences Research Ethics Committee. These procedures are available from the Faculty Research and Commercial Office upon your request.

I am pleased to inform you that ethical approval has been granted by Chair's Action for your application. This will be reported at the next Faculty Research Committee, which is being held on 04/04/07.

Should there be any amendments to the research methods or persons involved with this project you must notify the Chair of the Faculty Research Ethics Committee immediately in writing. Serious or adverse events related to the conduct of the study need to be reported immediately to your Supervisor and the Chair of this Committee. Also, The Faculty Research Ethics Committee should be notified by e-mail to HLSFRO@dmu.ac.uk when your research project has been completed.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Paul Whiting
Chair
Faculty of Health and Life Sciences
Research Ethics Committee

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Appendix 13

Qualities expected of probation service officers and probation officers on first day of qualification

Probation service officers are expected to be able to demonstrate, on their first day of qualification, the ability to:

- Assess risk of harm to others and need for interventions

- Value diversity

- Communicate effectively with people

- Support offenders to change

- Work effectively with others

- Develop own knowledge and skills

- Work towards performance outcomes in one of the specialist pathways

Probation officers on their first day of appointment are additionally expected to demonstrate the ability to:

- Protect the public and manage offenders who represent a high risk of harm to others

- Influence offenders to change harmful behaviour

- Continuously develop professionally

- Promote equality and diversity

- Work to the principles of evidence based practice

(Ministry of Justice 2011)

Appendix 14

Focus group notes

The group comprised the senior of the team (male) and three male and three female team members, (seven in total) and myself as facilitator. The men are identified as M1, M2, M3 and M4 and the women as F1, F2, and F3. As the facilitator I am identified as C. In the early stages of the discussion the conversation was initiated by the asking of questions and the offering of prompts, and team members in turn, expressing their views. However, as the discussion developed it became a dynamic inter-change between them around issues of boundaries and judgements in which they discussed three particular incidents that had occurred in recent group work programmes. One incident 'the wink' involved a judgment made by a female facilitator about exposing a piece of non-verbal communication from an offender to the wider group, the second involved an offender making a 'joke', and the third related to the nature of 'complements' from offenders to facilitators. All three incidents raised the issue of how to manage potentially problematic behaviour whilst maintaining a learning environment for the individual in question and for the group as a whole, and the feelings of the workers as they made these judgment calls. The levels of social reality included the psychobiography of the individual workers, the situated activity of the group work programmes and of the subsequent focus group discussion, the social setting of both the programme and the group, located within a Midlands Probation Area and the contextual resources with particular reference to the gender identity of the offenders and the workers (Layder 2006).

The 'meaning' of emotional literacy

At the beginning of the group there was some general discussion about what 'emotional literacy' meant for them. For F1 it involved 'intuition' in relation to how both she and the offenders in the programme might be feeling and to reflect on how she might best engage with the people with whom she was working in order to encourage them to participate:

> *'I think it's about being intuitive….to people's experience when they are coming in to the group….there might be anger,…..underlying that some fear about being judged or…some hostility…'I shouldn't be here'…so some resentment…things that could not just be about fear….it could be feelings of superiority, grandiosity,…..it's trying to tap into what is going on with that person, how that makes me feel….how am I going to respond in a way that is going to help that person engage and to participate and not walk out the door….' (F1)*

In some similar ways F2 considered that it was about knowing both herself and the people she is working with:

> *' for me….trying to make sense of self, like my own sense of self, that person's sense of self, whoever it is, working with or engaging them…..issues of identity…morality….and maybe the emotion would come on the back of that' (F2)*

So too, F3 identified the need to know herself, but she brought in the additional dimension of remembering her role; of the need to use her personal strengths but within the accountability inherent in the role:

'….it's also about knowing myself as a worker…knowing my strengths and limitations…being in tune with the work we are doing but also mindful of our responsibility and authority in the workplace, so whilst I want to be…in tune with the man's emotions and meet him half-way I also know about my responsibility and authority…(F3)

M2 introduced his beliefs as important, and acknowledged the challenge involved in engaging with people whose beliefs may or probably will, differ from his own and handling these contradictions or ambivalences. Although he does not spell it out he appears to be endeavouring to withhold judgment on the offenders. He also refers to the need to be prepared to deal with the emotional 'fall-out' from offenders when their belief systems are challenged:

'…its…challenging for us, even though we are encouraged to be reflective about our practice, and emotional literacy is about, I guess…how you perceive yourself, how your belief systems impact on the work you do, how you manage your own belief systems…how you manage those contradictory elements of your own beliefs…against someone else's actions……to engage with people that we know won't have the same beliefs as us….however, over and above that we are wanting them to do certain things that maybe they won't want to do….it's having the skills to manage the frustrations that that involves…(M2)

M3 identifies his starting point when faced with these contradictions which is to look for the emotional common ground:

….when I am faced with a guy who does horrible things to children how can I identify with this bloke? To what length can I go to identify with him? ..well, yes I have the same emotions…I can identify and start at that level safely, so for me it's very important….(M3)

M2 takes this to refer to beliefs; looking for common ground around certain belief systems;

…we would centre more on the belief system and in a sense we would start on the basis that the people we work with share a lot of our values and beliefs but there are certain ones we don't share and we want to use the ones we do share so that we can develop a positive working relationship with them and then try and find a way to work out whether the issues that are leading them to offend are core beliefs or around emotional management' (M2)

M3 challenges this and indicates that for him there is distinction to be drawn:

…I'm not on about beliefs I mean emotions… (M3)

Which M2 understands but identifies the close links between emotions and beliefs (section 3). The agreement between M2 and M3 is their belief in the importance of finding common ground with offenders as an entry route into work with them:

'yes, but in some men it may well be emotions and for others is may be belief systems….but what we do across all programmes is stress what we have in common…so you might talk on any programme about fairness….get people to discuss it…..then we might take it somewhere where we might develop some discrepancy…in the men's thinking and be able to work with that to develop it, to replace the belief that maybe leads them to offend (M2)

These respondents identify emotional literacy as knowing themselves and knowing the offenders they work with; being ready to respond to whatever may arise in a session and looking for the common ground. M3 also identifies emotional literacy as being able to see and respond to strong feelings in the men:

'For me….being emotionally literate is tapping into the main emotion that is going to be felt by our guys, which is fear…; (M3)

M1 follows this up with the suggestion that there are other emotions that need to be identified:

Sometimes the emotions around fear, especially working with guys who have committed sexual offences, they are quite difficult to unpick and obviously fear is quite a core emotion but even wound up within that is guilt and shame …sort of linked. Guilt is more productive to work with than shame, because guilt is a starting point to moving on, whereas shame can be something that is all about closing down…..being able to read and try and get on a level so you can work out where people are ….(M1)

As facilitator I asked him to expand on this:

C. how do you work with shame?

'I think that's the power of the group work setting…being able to manage a group so that they are able to be supportive…a style of facilitation that things aren't judgmental….when they are in an environment where they are not being judged any more…is something that seems to be very important to them in terms of how they then feel able to be open…' (M1)

Again M1 provides an example of how a supportive learning environment is necessary to begin to tackle some of these entrenched feelings and introduces the concept of non-judgmentalism, explored in 5.1. F4 agrees with this approach and sees the importance of validating feelings in order to enhance learning and progress:

'…it's the recognition of them knowing that's alright, they are not on their own with that emotion, you understand it as a facilitator and it's all accepted so they can move on…'(F4)

M1 continues with the same theme:

'…probably the majority of people have done things they are not proud of doing or feel that they could have done better in the past…..'I work with men, especially on the domestic violence front and lack of emotional vocabulary is a very notable trait isn't' it? (M1)

The importance of developing emotional vocabularies is raised here (5.7) and the theme of detecting 'hidden' feelings is further elaborated by F4, who sees the suppression of emotion as causing dissonance in the person:

'yes, a desire to hide that emotion, to hide the fear, to hide the insecurity, you know that sense of identity…they are not in tune with themselves because they are constantly trying to hid it…they don't want to face up to what is actually down there, what the emotion is and that it takes a lot of unpicking to get to core deep rooted emotion, which is often the fear, their insecurity…(F4)

M3 continues with the theme and identifies the emotional illiteracy or limitations on what the (male) offenders are able to express emotionally:

'their emotional literacy is anger and humour, that is all they want to show….'(M3)

This theme of understanding that more complex emotions lie beneath the surface but have to be 'managed' with sensitivity and care, continues:

…one golden rule that you mustn't do is show up anyone in a group or embarrass or shame them because we know they have an anxiety,….there are real fears that men and women have on coming onto group work programmes, because of the nature of what we are going to talk about….they are quite rightly going to be anxious about that and we expect them to do that in a group….we have our antennae up if someone says they want to do one-to-one work and we are suspicious if that is one of the reasons…(M2)

F1 develops this by introducing the difficult of balancing this empathic and non-judgmental approach with how some of the men might actually make you feel, and using psychotherapeutic concepts to help her make sense of this:

'When you are working with guys it's not always easy to be this empathic, understanding and facilitative as a professional person and sometimes actually you just want to really tell it like it is ….how you manage that….it's about managing your own feelings with certain men….and looking at what might be happening…about the psychodynamics tradition ….looking at issues of transference and countertransference and projecting things onto people and the group would be doing the same to you…and its helpful that we have some

understanding about how those issues work and might come into play in all this (F1).

As facilitator I decided to move the discussion on a little to explore how the respondents considered they managed the feelings generated for them by the work:

C what do you do with your own feelings?

F4 acknowledges the processes involved; that it is not always possible to know or understand your own feelings at the time, and how it takes time and a supportive place or environment to be able to do the necessary reflection. For F4 this is home rather than work:

'sometimes you are not always fully aware ….in a session how something has affected you…I've ploughed through and ploughed through, not necessarily with sex offenders but with other groups, then the realization that this is getting to me….you're not always walking out and thinking 'I need to talk about this, this is really getting to me, doing my head in'…or it's a slow process and I think we are not always great at talking about our feelings in a team which we say that's a way of managing it,…but I think I tend to do that away from this environment…at home…in a confidential way….but managing how something has made me feel….I do that at home…it's difficult, …talking about feelings….(F4)

I went on to give them some feedback from the individual interviews to check whether this accorded with their own perceptions:

C. people have said to me…throughout the interviews that in a way they haven't felt particularly safe about talking about things at work, or they have had to be very selective about what they talk about. It felt risky to be emotional in a work place…

All seven members of the group indicated verbally or by nodding their heads that this finding had resonance for them.

'The Wink'

The following extract relates to a description of an incident that occurred in a group programme; the feelings of the worker, (F3) involved and the subsequent discussion by the group, some of whom had had some prior discussion about this and some who had not. This extract then flows into references to two more incidents, one related to a DVD and one about a complement.

F3. ….a very resistant man…...he gave us his account of the group….(at the end of the group we always ask them how did they feel doing the work)…when he was giving me his feedback he actually winked at me and….nobody was aware except him and …everyone was just listening…so in my feedback…I just said 'you've done very well…and thank you for the work, we've now got two flip charts…and thank you for the wink….(laughs).

F3. …'at that point he said 'that was private, nobody else was supposed to know about that'…um…it felt really difficult for me to do, but I just did it…it just opened it up for the group and his credibility to be a big bully went down as well….and he worked better thereafter….I (had) just felt that there were times when he was just too pally pally with us….the style in which he was friendly with the main facilitator…was different when he was with the female facilitators…and I always thought he was different with me than he was with the other female facilitators and I just thought….I'm just going to table it and take my chance….

M2 – it's good that you did that….I mean a challenge for us as facilitators is that question' have I compromised myself too much here by being empathic by rolling with stuff…because then am I making myself uncomfortable…by colluding with stuff?....not pleased with myself for letting things go….feel uncomfortable with my own emotions.

F3…..I knew that others…hadn't seen the wink....and I thought he's probably going to deny it as well…'it was a nervous twitch'….but I thought I'm going to run with it and the group had worked really hard with us and obviously no complaint from my other co-workers…everything pulled together and I thought, yes, sometimes you can expose yourself to the group..and then you can never recover that ground and then you are out on a limb on your own).

The judgment for F3 was that A) she saw the wink from an offender in the group known to be difficult and for whom she had some reservations about his commitment to learning and participation. B) She felt uncomfortable about the wink, realising he was communicating a message of conspiracy to her alone; that somehow they shared some secret information. C) She felt targeted by him and had very little time to judge how to handle it. D) She could have chosen to ignore it, or she could have spoken to him on his own. In the event her judgment was to open it up to the group process by thanking him for it. She acknowledged the risk she took but the subsequent discussion which is not recorded above, indicated that her co-worker saw it to be the right thing and that the man in question had been unsuccessful in his attempt to 'separate' F3 from her co-worker and develop a 'special' relationship with her. The subsequent discussion suggested that in part this was a strategy he employed in his sexual offending. The finely nuanced emotional literacy demonstrated by F3 was to be exposed to some non-verbal communication, to have an emotional response, to appraise this response very speedily and determine that her discomfort meant something was wrong in the man's communication, and to open it up for her co-worker and other group members in order to explore it further. She remained outwardly calm and courteous to the offender in question but his behaviour was being very effectively 'challenged' by her. In Layder's terms she chose a benign form of emotional interpersonal control, where a different worker might have either entered into a collusive interaction or potentially a more manipulative and repressive form of control (Layder 2004).

The DVD

F1…the wink was a boundary issues…another one was where an offender, when we were putting the DVD in to record the session..said 'oh are we going to watch

some porn then?'…so you don't know what you are going to deal with that….I don't think we dealt with it particularly effectively….but because they feel comfortable with you, their guard goes down and they think they can start saying whatever, and if you shut them down in a disrespectful way then that can be damaging to the whole group dynamic…

(All agree….)

M1…emotionally dealing with an unmotivated group is difficult – you need a good co-facilitator...you need to work quite well together……

M3 'we are going to look at some porn'…well that's inappropriate but it is probably the emotion underneath that is the desire to be accepted, he wanted people to like him,…that's a very basic emotion isn't it?....it comes out in behaviour….

F1...to be one of the boys?

M3..yes that acceptance..

F3..to be popular…

M3..he doesn't want to look at porn, it's not sexual, it's what he thinks he needs to say to be accepted as one of the boys and get respect…

F4...you are trying to create that atmosphere, because you want them to feel comfortable and you want them to feel relaxed and open up and talk about how they feel,….

F1…but he said L are we going to look at some porn…he didn't say it generally…

M1 he didn't ask me

F1..so you know, he didn't ask you, and as the only female in the group….

M1..so there are two dynamics, in with the lads and one up on the female facilitator in a power dynamic

F1 ..but that is how he did see it? I did a passive –aggressive response…sarcasm….you know 'course we are, what do you think?'…..

(all laugh)

M1 that's fogging….

M1..so the emotion is anger?

F1…yes, irritated, anger…

M3..yes 'you little shit'…(laughs) 'what do you think we're going to do'?

(All laugh)

C….that's interesting stuff…what exactly do you say? You don't want to shut them down completely but you got cross ….

This extract highlights how F1 felt put on the spot by an offender who asked if they would be watching porn on the DVD she was about to play. His comment provoked anger in her and she acknowledges that this anger came out in her sarcastic retort to him. However, she was willing to open up this incident for group discussion on how it had made her, as a female facilitator feel, and enable a discussion in which further reflection led to some analysis of the potential reasons for his behaviour. This exemplified the willingness of these staff to do some 'archeology' or digging below the surface of what could have been dismissed as 'sexist', aggressive, attention seeking behaviour that deserved to be slapped down. This extract provides an example of reflective practice undertaken by a group, in which an individual is supported in her emotional reactions, but alternative responses and analysis are considered and debated for future practice.

The complement

F3…sometimes it's very subtle undermining isn't it...a compliment might be 'oh a nice hair cut'. Or 'a pretty face'….you just think what should I do? Because they wouldn't say it to a bloke….

F3 getting complements…there are many genuine complements….you had a complement about your hair and I think it was very genuine

F1…that was from a man….

F3 ..but I just he is not complex…usually there is an underlying agenda…

C. so you can't have rules can you?...

F3...no because it's a judgment….it's interesting how we processed that…we both said it was genuine, knowing the person as we have known him for many years, whereas the other complement was clearly an undermining one…so you can have identical complements from men and one can be really…and the other can be genuine…

M1…mmm that's some of the difficulty around this area of work though isn't it? …when that comment happens we read it in a certain way ..so it was about a female facilitator/male facilitator…say this, get in with the lads, so what was it really about? …because you will read it in a certain way…it's about being aware of what you are walking into…putting that DVD in the player…are we ready yet to deal with what's going on? …we've finished a difficult piece of work, are we ready for…what's our feelings going on at that point, when you have just tried to be on those levels of professionalism in dealing with your feelings and their feelings and the group's feelings and sometimes it is on those little more unguarded moments, its far more uncomfortable…

F1...that's right….why is it okay when one man says it and not another man? What's going on there? So is the man where it doesn't feel okay, who is that reminding you of? The slimy uncle from when you were 15, all those sorts of things…

F1…it's how they come over, or perceive their victim, you know the boundaries they've pushed with their victim, they are pushing the same boundaries with their female facilitator in the group quite often and how that makes you feel….

M3…yes…this particular guy was unusual because he offended from high mood, so the more comfortably you make him feel…the more likely he is going to go into parallel behaviour….it's quite unusual to offend from high mood….but all the evidence suggests that's what it was about for him

F1…feeling like 'jack the lad' was a risk factor..

These extracts relate to a judgment made about an offender who had given a complement to a female worker about her hair. For reasons explored in section 5.7 women practitioners often feel targeted in group work sessions particularly by men accused of domestic violence. They indicate the need to be on their guard against such targeting and complements can sometimes be 'backhanded' in that they are designed to undermine or wrong-foot the person concerned. In this instance the workers are judging that the complement was sincerely meant and therefore did not need to be picked up as an indicator of problematic behaviour. The discussion led back to the 'DVD' incident in which the offender in this instance was judged to be pushing boundaries and that this behaviour did need to be challenged because it resonated with aspects of his offending behaviour.

Empathy

This final extracts relate to a discussion about demonstrating empathy within a group setting:

F3….'mirroring is about empathy, being able to pick up where they are at all times….and scan the group and lend focus to your lead worker (F3)

M3…its quite a high level of professional discipline of awareness of where you are when you come in the room but also awareness of all the people in the group and where they are at, because sometimes if you want to engage about something that is about emotions and feelings and non-verbal communications and other times you don't want to….'

M3 – your co-worker – antennae up about what is going on here….

These final extracts refer to the importance of 'scanning' for non-verbal indicators of feelings and being able to empathise with where the group members might be emotionally.

Conclusion

A number of issues were raised by members of the focus group as important in understanding emotional literacy. In terms of their own personal psychobiography (Layder 2006), they made reference to the use of intuition, and their use of self (knowing self). In relation to the situated activity of the relationships (Layder 2006) they considered it important to 'know' the offender(s) and to remember the importance of their role; their responsibility and authority in the situation such that boundaries were maintained. This echoes findings in sections 5.3 and 5.4 in which respondents reflected on the importance of empathy but that it was conditional i.e. there were some boundaries to the degree of closeness that could be maintained and the need to challenge unacceptable behaviour. Also within the realm of situated activity there were comments on the importance of looking for the common ground in beliefs and emotions as a starting point for work with offenders who might hold very different beliefs from their own; which had resonance with the non-judgmentalism discussed in 5.1; the holding back on negative judgments and on managing ambivalence. There was also some discussion about the importance of responding to strong feelings in offenders, particularly fear and shame, and in this instance it was suggested that the power of the group was harnessed to help the men within a non-judgmental atmosphere. These 'mediated' activities were seen as crucial in creating a learning as opposed to a punishing environment. The significance of developing emotional vocabularies in these men, in order to enable them to begin to recognise and articulate them was highlighted. The hidden or suppressed nature of some of their feelings was seen as holding these men back from a process of change.

The members of the focus group were very exercised by the issue of boundaries and how these should be managed. All three of the 'boundary' issues that were referred to; the wink, the dvd and the complement were related to female facilitators with an acknowledgment that they had been chosen, or targeted over their male co-workers to be the recipients. This suggests that the contextual resource issue of gender was a feature in these dynamics; relatively powerless male offenders choosing to exert what power they could over the female facilitators. The struggles identified through the discussions related to the manner in which problematic behaviour might be challenged without interrupting the overall learning environment of the group; balancing the need for positive emotions in order to learn, with the negative feelings likely to be provoked by a 'put down' or 'telling off' within the group. The 'guard going down' in a group member may be a good indicator of openness to learning but can also, e.g. with the dvd incident, lead to inappropriate behaviour. In terms of interpersonal control these workers were endeavouring to maintain benign interpersonal control and to resist the temptation of responding in a repressive or manipulative manner to such challenges, although F1 conceded she had used sarcasm as her initial response to the dvd issue (Layder 2004).

Questions were also raised as to whether the facilitators were emotionally and mentally prepared for the challenges of the programme; or whether their 'guard' might also be down. A 'guard' implying a shield or mask on their feelings in order to remain in control. Holding on to a sense of 'professionalism' was considered very important, as was an understanding of what else might provoke feelings e.g. transference; 'the slimy uncle' from the past, and how offenders might deliberately 'push the boundaries'; this being a key feature of their offending behaviour. Perhaps the most important component of all

three incidents was the willingness of the team members to collectively share and discuss the impact of these incidents on the workers concerned, the reasons for the behaviour and the range of possible methods of responding to it. These are all elements of good practice and of good team work. However, the incorporation of a feelings agenda into the discussion is what marks it out as emotionally literate practice. The overall 'feeling' of this focus group was of a team that had built strong emotional capital through a routine of this sort of reflective discussion; and that individual members could look to use and take from this emotional capital when they were struggling with their own feelings.

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Issue 1

SUPPORTING PRACTITIONERS IN DEALING WITH THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF THEIR WORK

A key component in building effective relationships with offenders is the skill of emotional literacy, defined as *'the ability to recognise, understand, handle and appropriately express emotions....using your emotions to help yourself and others succeed"* (Sharp 2001). This is associated with the concept of emotional intelligence used increasingly in business and education to improve relationships and enhance learning[1].

The literature on emotional literacy builds on this framework and includes the issue of how emotions are also key in motivating (or de-motivating) us in all aspects of our lives and work.

Research undertaken in the Midlands region with probation staff working with high risk offenders examined their use of emotional literacy in engaging, motivating and enabling offenders to change. It also asked questions about the emotional impact of the work and the support systems and resources available to staff.

All of the workers interviewed were able to provide clear evidence of emotional engagement with some extremely difficult and damaged individuals; building trust, hearing their stories, withholding judgement in order to maximise the potential for honest disclosure, and supporting the change and learning that needed to take place. Alongside the evidence of this ability was the workers' view that they had to keep their own emotions

under control, or 'masked' and what they felt was lacking within the organisation was a recognition of the need for a safe emotional space to 'let off steam' and express the feelings they had contained whilst with the offender.

Some felt able to do this with understanding line managers, or through formal debriefing sessions. However, most sought other more informal routes such as chosen colleagues, friends and family. All would have welcomed a greater acknowledgement of the emotional content of their work and permission to talk about and examine the significance of emotion in their work as well as the emotional impact on them of dealing with some very complex cases.

Whilst counselling opportunities were generally available to staff undertaking group work with sex offenders, this was not routinely available to all, and interestingly, some felt it was not so much counselling they needed or wanted, as a 'safe' and immediate space to give vent to feelings without being judged as 'unprofessional'.

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[1]Research refers to:
Intrapersonal:
- Self awareness - recognising one's own emotions and how they are affecting your behaviour and using this to inform decisions
- Self management - having control over how you express your emotions, according to the situation

Interpersonal:
- Social awareness - observing and understanding others' emotions, using empathy
- Relationship management - being able to build and maintain effective relationships, managing conflict as necessary

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Many felt that that the current culture of target driven practice left little space for the articulation of the feelings surrounding the work, particularly the negative ones. Because of the perceived lack of permission to express their feelings in the work environment, they also struggled with the vocabulary to explain their feelings. Significantly, some, particularly those working with domestic violence offenders, were able to identify the importance of teaching these offenders an emotional vocabulary in order to help them better manage and understand their emotions.

The impact on practice outcomes of ignoring the emotional

There is a danger that practitioners who feel the emotional impact of the work is ignored may become de-motivated and less likely to want to engage in the sometimes messy worlds that offenders inhabit. Alternatively, they may continue to engage unsupported, but at risk of exhaustion and burn-out. In the longer term, either of these ways of managing can lead to a reduction in performance and increased sickness absence.

Adult learning theory (Kolb 1988) describes reflective practice as a pre-requisite of ongoing professional development and this includes reflecting on one's emotional experience. This in turn informs practice decisions – when to challenge, when to support, when to probe, as well as when to make use of more structured tools and techniques.

Emotional data informs risk assessment: noticing the 'music behind the words' and using gut reactions to prompt further enquiry about an offender's situation can lead to revision of risk levels. Relying on completing the processes alone cannot be enough!

The role of managers in maintaining emotional health and emotional literacy

Practitioners value reflective supervision, either within line management or facilitated by others in groups and teams. The Enabling Culture Change Project within the Offender Engagement Programme is looking at the kinds of activities that organisations can put in place to support practitioners in this way. Creating a team culture where practitioners feel they have permission to acknowledge and work with their feelings requires everyone to see why this matters.

Some questions:

How much do you use your emotional 'antennae' to inform your practice with individual offenders?

How are you enabled to develop your emotional literacy?

Is your team a place where it is safe to share your feelings about the work you are engaged in?

Email OEP@justice.gov.uk for further information.

All of the workers interviewed in the Midlands sample were able to provide clear evidence of emotional engagement with some extremely difficult and damaged individuals; building trust, hearing their stories, withholding judgement in order to maximise the potential for honest disclosure, and supporting the change and learning that needed to take place.

All would have welcomed a greater acknowledgement of the emotional content of their work and permission to talk about and examine the significance of emotion in their work as well as the emotional impact on them of dealing with some very complex cases.

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SUPPORTING PRACTITIONERS IN DEALING WITH THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF THEIR WORK

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Appendix 16

Words: 8281

Chapter Thirteen: 'Soft Skills for Hard Work': Using Emotional Literacy to Work Effectively with Sex Offenders

Author: Charlotte Knight

This chapter explores how probation staff work with sex offenders using skills of emotional literacy to engage, build relationships, encourage disclosure and manage risk. Despite the significance of these skills they remain largely invisible and under-valued by an organisation that prizes quantifiable procedures over qualitative processes. The chapter is based on research undertaken with probation staff working with high risk offenders, with particular reference to sex offenders.

Introduction

Serious further offence reviews have referred to a lack of adequate supervision in the management of high risk offenders (HMIP 2006a, HMIP 2006b) and subsequent inspection reports identify failures in *procedures* required for assessing and managing high risk offenders (HMIP 2009). The public discourse that generally follows these reviews demands 'tougher', and more 'rigorous' supervision (Travis 2006) and The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) talks of 'tough' community sentences (2011). The discourse uses the language of 'toughness', 'tightening up of rules and standards' and 'undue leniency' implying that what is needed is greater punitiveness, surveillance and control, with little scope for any alternative discourse to address the potential for engagement, change, rehabilitation and reform.

The evolution of the 'What Works' movement and the development of a cognitive behavioural model at the centre of probation intervention is well documented (Chapman and Hough 1998; McGuire 2000; Hough, Allen and Padel 2006; Faulkner 2008). Whilst the theoretical basis of cognitive behavioural interventions involves reference to feelings and emotional expression (McGuire 2000), in practice much less attention has been placed on the emotional context.

My research took as its starting point the belief that despite the move towards a managerial and technocratic ethos within the modern probation service (Whitehead 2010), the relationship continues to be central to the change process within offenders and that building relationships with potentially difficult people (offenders) requires particular emotional skills and emotional maturity that I refer to as 'emotional literacy'. This belief came from earlier theories on probation practice which described the significance of building relationships based on a social work model (Foren and Bailey, 1968; Monger 1972), my own personal practice and teaching experience, and more recent developments in understanding of the significance of relationships in the change process (Dowden and Andrews 2004; McNeill 2006; Smith 2006; Farrow, Kelly and Wilkinson 2007). Links can be made back to research that had been largely discounted in the probation world, on the effectiveness of counselling and psychotherapy (Mair 2004; Smith 2006; Truax and Carkhuff 1967) which suggested that the quality of the therapeutic relationship, and the personal qualities that the therapist was perceived as having, were more important influences on therapeutic outcomes than the theory and methods the counsellor employed. Whilst the strength of the relationship in a probation context may be compromised by the coercive nature of the community order or license, there are skills that the worker can employ to engage the

'involuntary client' (Trotter 2006). This theorising is now supported by the Offender Engagement Programme (OEP) (Ministry of Justice 2010b, 2010c), recently established within the NOMS, that is undertaking research on the nature of the offender/worker relationship and reinforcing the idea that one of the central components of offender management is the relationship between the offender and their offender manager.

Emotions in Criminal Justice

Emotions pervade the penal law and the criminal justice system. Significant numbers of crimes are committed when the perpetrator is in a highly emotional state and/or wanting to achieve an emotional state or 'buzz' (Katz 1988). Offenders, victims and witnesses bring their emotions to the court and sentencing process, and judicial decisions can cause public outrage and anger. Offenders can feel shame and remorse. Offences can provoke feelings of disgust, and victims as well as some offenders can evoke both compassion and sympathy (Karstedt 2002; Loader 2005). The media plays very powerfully on emotions in its choice of graphic crime stories to grip the attention of readers and viewers. Issues of power, manipulation, coercion and shame can be very significant in the *processing* of offenders through the system (Karstedt 2002) and yet it seems that recent theorising and policy development in criminal justice has sought to set aside the question of emotions in the pursuit of a 'rational' and 'objective' system (Loader 2005).

'It is hard to see how the analysis of crime and justice can adequately proceed without some serious attention being paid to the place of emotions in social life.' (De Haan & Loader 2002: 243).

Theories of masculinity and crime that have evolved from explorations by feminist criminologists of the gendered nature of crime (Messerschmidt, 1997; Gelsthorpe, 2002; Cowburn 2005; Petrillo 2007) have identified the particular characteristics of being male in this society that lead to greater criminality amongst men (approximately 80% of all arrests and court sanctions are for men -Ministry of Justice 2010). One of these is the tendency for men to externalise problematic feelings such as anger, anxiety and fear through aggressive and controlling behaviour, where women are more likely to internalise these feelings leading to depression and ill-health (Fischer 2000; Petrillo 2007). Significant areas of impulsive offending behaviour such as violence, and more controlling forms of sexual and domestic violence, can be traced to this process of the 'acting-out' of unprocessed and unresolved feelings. In child sex offenders there is evidence that they experience high levels of emotional loneliness, fear of intimacy and isolation (Ward et al 2006:194). Marshall (1989) was the first to make links between intimacy deficits and sexual offending. Men may act out their feelings in aggressive ways and struggle with inarticulacy when it comes to a range of feelings which are not seen as 'masculine' as defined by patriarchy (Cordery & Whitehead 1992). Men benefit from and can exploit the emotional labour of women in personal, heterosexual relationships (Langford 1997; Bernard 1992) and in the workplace (Skeggs 2010; Bunting 2005). However, the links between masculinity, emotion and crime continue to be under-estimated (Cordery and Whitehead 1992; Romito 2008) and many criminological theories fail to consider that deficiencies in the understanding and management of emotions are important predictors of criminal and delinquent behaviours particularly in men (De Coster & Zito 2010).

Probation officers as graduates from the Diploma in Probation Studies programmes (1998- 2010)[1] have been taught that their practice must be evidence-based and that this evidence indicates that the most effective forms of intervention are 'cognitive-behavioural group work programmes with a strong focus on offending behaviour' (Mair 2004:26). However, what is meant by evidence is somewhat circumscribed. The preoccupation with outcomes and a quantitative approach to evaluation fails to take into account the *context* of the work, the *nature* of the processes involved or the styles of presentation by the workers (Mair 2004).   Mair argues that whilst prescriptions for effective practice typically mention the need for properly trained and supported staff and sufficient resources, they are:

> '*silent on questions of what sort of staff these should be and the kind of relationship they should have with those on the receiving end of the programme'* (Mair 2004: 43).

The role of emotional literacy in work with offenders

Salovey and Mayer were the first to define 'emotional intelligence' (EI) (1990), but Goleman, one of the leading American writers in this field, has popularised it (1995). Emotional intelligence is explained as:

> *'The capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth' (Mayer and Salovey 1997:197).*

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[1] and continuing on the new probation qualifying framework (PQF),

EI is not, therefore, just about *managing* emotions but is about the capacity to *think* and *reflect* on feelings rather than act impulsively. It has evolved in the fields of business, management, marketing, psychology, psychotherapy and education. There has been a gradual introduction to EI within social work (Morrison 2007; Howe 2008) but at yet nothing specifically related to probation practice. However, emotional *literacy* is largely a term used within education and seen as the process by which emotional intelligence is *acquired* (Sharp 2001*).*   Other writers use the term to refer to the *application* rather than the *acquisition* of emotional intelligence (Orbach 2001; Steiner 1997; Spendlove 2008,) and this latter interpretation is the one that has been used in the research on which this chapter is based.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) identified five key areas of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, affect regulation, motivation, empathy and social competence which were generally incorporated in all other evolving theories (Goleman 1995). Probation officers trained between the 1950s and early 1970s would have been familiar with the significance of 'self-awareness' as a basis for understanding others (Vanstone 2007) but this has become increasingly at odds with a managerial emphasis on behavioural 'competencies' and an adherence to procedures and national standards (Smith 2006). Similarly, we are motivated by our emotions to engage and respond in a range of different situations (Evans 2001) but this is not well recognised within a bureaucratic framework of management. The main reasons people continue to choose a career in the probation service are based on 'feelings' and 'values' rather than on instrumental or financial considerations (Knight 2007).

Empathy is a key plank of emotional literacy (Killick 2006) and is described as an interaction in which one person experiences and shares the feelings of another such

that they are able to understand and comprehend their feelings and circumstances (Feshback 1997). For workers to be able to 'get alongside' and 'stand in the shoes of' men who may have been publicly reviled, and who may experience emotional despair and hopelessness, is clearly a crucial quality and contains a group of themes outlined as core to the psychotherapeutic relationship: 'accurate empathy, respect, warmth and genuineness' (Smith 2006:371; Burnett & McNeill 2005).

Closely associated with empathy, the concept of 'non-judgmentalism' is of particular significance within probation practice given the revulsion and condemnation expressed by many towards sex offenders in particular. Workers have to tread a careful line between representing societal and legal disapproval of the behaviour whilst recognising and reaching out to the individual behind the behaviour. Much has been written about the importance of a 'non-judgemental approach' in work with offenders (Burnett & McNeill 2005; Marshall, Marshall, Serran and O'Brien 2009; Kazar 2010). This is a significant value position for all helping and counselling professions in which the worker offers to the service user a relationship in which they, as a human being, are 'heard' and not 'judged' in a negative sense. It has its roots in psychotherapy (Rogers 2004) although has been a key component of both social work and probation education and practice. In the context of probation practice it is set against the increasingly punitive and judgmental posturing of politicians and the media about sexual offending. Whipped up by a media influenced by popular punitiveness, sex offenders can, through the nature of their crimes, generate huge levels of disgust, hatred, fear, distress and anger in people. The challenge to probation staff working with these offenders is to acknowledge such feelings within themselves, recognise where they come from and their impact, and learn to regulate or control them such that productive work can nevertheless take place. In addition to the

'regulation' or control of feelings it is an active and moral decision to 'not judge' on the basis of their past behaviour. These workers are, however, *required* to make certain judgements about the level of future risk posed and about the direction in which the offender should be travelling in the rehabilitation process. They need to be cautious, indeed sceptical of much of what an offender may report to them; what is referred to as 'healthy suspicion' and identified as a key element of good risk assessment (Prins 1999). They need to be aware of the potential to be manipulated into a collusive relationship (Farrow, Kelly and Wilkinson 2007). This complex weighing up of which judgments are appropriate and which may need to be suspended make heavy emotional demands on the worker.

There are a number of other important aspects of emotional literacy that are particularly relevant to work with sex offenders and which were articulated by respondents in my study. These included the possession of particular attitudes (having an 'enabling' rather than 'confrontational' approach), following certain processes (e.g. negotiating boundaries for the relationship), and appropriate behaviour (particularly non-verbal communication and having a 'sixth sense'). In order to undertake effective offender management and intervention workers need to demonstrate transparency and honesty about the expectations and boundaries of the relationship they build with offenders which can involve further emotional processes. Whilst showing empathy and being 'non-judgemental' in approach are good *counselling* techniques, the role of the probation officer requires, additionally, and fundamentally, a recognition of the legal and policy requirements of the job; holding offenders to account for their behaviour (Farrow et al 2007). Counsellors have to hold and maintain boundaries in their relationships with their clients but, with some notable exceptions (e.g. child protection issues) they are also bound by issues of

confidentiality and the therapeutic relationship to work at the client's behest and within the confines of that relationship (Williams 1996). Probation workers, as 'law enforcers', however, have to work primarily at the behest of the courts and the public in their work with offenders, and to take steps to deal with any 'breaches' of orders for which they are responsible. This requires them to follow procedures laid down by National Standards (Home Office 2007) which may result in the offender being returned to court for breach and face re-sentencing which could involve imprisonment.

The relevance of other theoretical approaches

Attachment theory (Bowlby 1988, Ansbro 2008) was historically of significance in probation training but recent generations of probation staff have been actively discouraged from speculating too deeply on the significance of early childhood on offending. The main exception has been in the area of sexual offending where an absence of strong attachment in childhood is seen as a cause of some sexual offending (Rich 2006). Some respondents in the study were aware of the significance of attachment theory in understanding the difficulties that offenders faced and sexual offending is the one area in which workers have been encouraged to consider aspects of this approach in both assessment and intervention. Marshall and Barbaree's model (1990) makes reference to attachment theory, as does Rich (2006) in the treatment of juvenile sexual offenders. Pat Crittenden (2005) has led the field in making the links between early childhood abuse and deprivation and later sexual offending in adolescence and adulthood. A number of the respondents who were specialist sex offender workers were able to describe how they had found this knowledge of attachment theory to be helpful in understanding the causes of the offending, of why sex offenders had distorted views of relationships,

and of the significance of building strong emotional relationships with these men in order to affect change.

More recent developments in theorising around models of desistance place considerable emphasis on the role of the relationship between practitioner and offender (Rex, 1999; Farrall 2002; Maruna, Immarigeon and LeBel 2004; McNeill 2006; Faulkner 2008).   Rex suggests that people on probation are prepared to accept and even to welcome, a firmly directive style on the part of supervisors as long as it is accompanied by a demonstration of concern and respect for the person. She argues that there is every reason to believe that the quality of the relationship matters as much in group work programmes as in one to one supervision, but that regrettably: 'the managerial interpretation of the research evidence has nothing to say on this topic beyond (sometimes) a perfunctory recognition of the need to treat offenders with respect' (Rex 1999: 377).

The more recent developments of a strengths based model of rehabilitation in understanding sexual offending, in particular the Good Lives model (GLM) (Ward, Polaschek and Beech 2006) and the Better Lives Model (Day, Casey, Ward, Howells and Vess 2010) make connections with the significance of relationships and stress that individuals should be understood in a holistic, integrated manner:

   'A key assumption is that the offender is a psychological agent whose autonomy ought to be respected. This means actually working hard to establish an effective dialogue with the offender and to take his treatment –related suggestions seriously' (Ward, Polaschek and Beech 2006:312)

The next section of this chapter uses research undertaken with a group of experienced probation practitioners working with high risk offenders, many of whom were sex offenders, to explore what this 'working hard' might mean and how these workers established 'effective dialogue' to understand risk and to enable compliance and change. It demonstrates that workers are still finding ways to care about the offenders they work with; to build relationships with them and to believe in the concepts of respect, non-judgmentalism and a capacity to change.   It also describes a rich but very 'unregulated' emotional world of practice that bubbles away below the surface of an organisation that has attempted to 'tidy up' the messiness of human difficulties and distress caused by crime and victimisation.

Research

During 2007/8 I interviewed a total of 28 probation practitioners who had volunteered to participate in a study on emotional literacy in probation practice.[2] I also conducted a focus group with a team of sex offender workers and presented seminar papers to practitioners during which I sought feedback on the ideas I was presenting.   For the main field work I chose a semi-structured interview approach to allow for flexibility and focus and also provide opportunities for more in-depth responses (Robson 2002). Whilst I needed to establish some facts, such as job role and authority, I was mostly interested in the behaviour and ideas of the staff as informed by their understanding of their own emotional lives and those of offenders and I used the interview as a 'conversation' (Oakley 2005) to enhance their responsiveness. I asked a range of questions about how practitioners perceived and understood the concept of 'emotion' and then prompted them to develop their views on what emotions they experienced

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[2] I have used pseudonyms which reflect their gender and ethnicity

within the work and within offenders. What follows are selected findings from the data that have particular resonance for work with sex offenders.

As identified earlier key elements of emotional literacy include; self-awareness, affect regulation, motivation, empathy and social competence (Goleman 1995). The data highlighted the significance of motivation in providing the impetus and enthusiasm for workers to cope in difficult and complex situations; it gave details of their levels of self-awareness and self-regulation and it highlighted the importance of building relationships and in particular the use of empathy. The data also illustrated a number of other key factors that workers considered important in managing the emotional content of their work including; being non-judgmental, managing boundaries, handling disclosure, making risk assessments, and the management of risk. All of these elements required workers to weigh up *emotional* factors within a framework of evidence-based practice and defensible decision-making.

Motivation

A significant component of emotional literacy is that of motivation and a majority of respondents, when asked to nominate three things they most liked about their job either directly or indirectly expressed their pleasure in the relationships they had with offenders:

> *'....but one of the things that never fails to amaze me –even the most unlikeable men who've done the most unspeakable things – I can enjoy having a relationship with them on both a personal and professional level – in the sense that I have a genuine sense of pleasure in seeing them, in the progress they are making, in the development of the relationship I have with them – in gains they are making in trusting me' (Amy)*

Self-awareness

The question '*what does the word 'emotion' conjure up for you*?' was an attempt to ascertain the levels of self-awareness about emotion in respondents; a key element of emotional literacy. This proved a challenge for many of them. Some respondents acknowledged that they routinely expected offenders to be able to articulate their feelings, without realising how difficult this could be until confronted with the question themselves. It was clear that they were unused to being asked about their 'feelings' and unpractised at articulating in words how they conceptualised their feelings. As Aruna states:

> '*I ask these questions to offenders, it is quite different being on the other end ……….*' (Aruna)

When further prompted to comment on the term '*being emotional*' most respondents saw this as an external and visible representation of a feeling and that this *representation* quite often, but not always, carried a negative connotation; that it related to stepping outside the normal parameters of behaviour, particularly 'professional' behaviour and implied a lack of control and unpredictability that was generally unwelcome. It was also seen as carrying a negative gender stereotype; women were more likely to 'be emotional' than men.

Despite the struggle that respondents had in articulating the concept of emotion they revealed a willingness to discuss their feelings and the impact of these feelings on the work they undertook with offenders. The contrast between this and the silence of their managers on the subject (as perceived by them) is quite significant. As identified by Howe; '*We are creatures saturated with feelings*' (2008:1), and yet the professional world of probation practice has become an institution that prioritizes and

favours bureaucratic and managerial responses for working with, and evaluating, the complex tasks of assessing risk and changing offending behaviour. This silencing of the discourse of emotion was profoundly apparent to me in the way that the respondents struggled to find appropriate words to describe their feelings.

Regulating emotions

Self-regulation is the next key element in emotional literacy. As the respondents began to build on their comments around the concept of emotion and their emotional lives, they identified ways in which they felt they had learnt to *regulate* or *manage* their emotions (Oatley 2010). For many of them the general process of 'regulation' of emotions had been through life experience and learning from observation of and modeling from, family, friends and colleagues. Most respondents considered that emotions were something that could not easily be managed, but that nevertheless *had* to be managed in order to do their job, and remain 'professional'. For individuals to become professionals in a particular setting they need to conform to particular rules, standards and expectations (Mattheisen 2004). These respondents conveyed a sense that it would not be 'acceptable' or 'permissible' to the organisation to reveal too much emotion.

There appeared to be three ways in which respondents conceptualised this; 'controlling', 'masking' and 'integrating', although invariably there was overlap between these groupings. The respondents who referred to 'control', implied that the gradual development in managing their emotions was the necessary control of a messy and irrational aspect of human behaviour; they needed to prevent their feelings from spilling out into their work. For some this involved a decision to

consciously *distance* themselves from the emotional world of the offender and disengage their feelings from what they were hearing:

> *'...unfortunately I think you do become a little bit hardened to it so it only really affects you on the extreme cases and I so think you get a little bit desensitised to issues' (Mary)*

> *'...yes it was sort of a conscious decision because when I first started doing the job I realised that people can tell me quite shocking things and it can really get to you if you take them on board, the reality of it, it can be quite shocking so I kind of see myself walking through the door as if I am going to a theatre or television set and I am kind of participating in it in some kind of way' (Robert)*

A second group saw emotions as needing to be *concealed* or *masked*:

> *'I've got to put my feelings on hold...hopefully it doesn't show' (Geoff)*

> *'....you have to mask them all really, don't you, it's like what they say really, you're like a duck on the water, underneath you're paddling like mad but you're calm, on the surface...' (Pat)*

A third group, with growing confidence, welcomed an understanding and *regulation* of their emotions as an important part of their personal growth and development. They felt they had less need to *control* or *mask* their feelings and were more able to 'be themselves' and act naturally, albeit still retaining an awareness of professional boundaries. They were able to maintain a degree of congruence between their feelings, the feelings of the offender and the interaction between them such that they were able to integrate their feelings within their practice and make appropriate

judgements about how they used their emotions as part and parcel of their skill repertoire.

For example, this respondent had felt distressed by an offender's account of an abusive childhood:

'... at one point I had tears in my eyes when he was telling me and he saw them, I don't have a problem with that ... I think, because that's just about being congruent in that situation isn't it, but I wouldn't in a group necessarily because I think that is very different to managing eight, nine people .... they know when it affects us I think' (Sandy)

Some respondents were able to describe strengths of feelings at certain points in their work and an acknowledgement that they needed time, or assistance, to regain their composure and their equilibrium and return to the professional role required of them. None of the respondents felt they had received any specific training on handling their emotions although a few had gained invaluable experience from externally attended counseling courses.

Social competence - the importance of the relationship

1.   A further element of emotional literacy, 'social competence' is centrally focused on 'handling relationships' (Sharp 2001) and all respondents who spoke about relationships, saw this as highly significant, a core feature of their practice, and the cornerstone of all the subsequent work they undertook with offenders. Michael stated:

2.   'Two things that come to mind as planks of practice, - would be the use of the relationship and the use of self'.

3.   Geoff gave a graphic example of how time spent on a one-to-one basis building a relationship with a very damaged young man prior to him being referred to a group work programme, ultimately helped him to turn his life around. As indicated earlier, relationships or 'therapeutic alliances' (Dowden & Andrews 2004) are now slowly being reclaimed as core elements of effective practice.   There is evidence from my research that in some instances very strong bonds were forged between worker and offender:

> *'I asked him what was the most, what was really important for him in his life at*
>
> *the moment and he said I was….. I was shocked really and I thought, what's*
>
> *that about? and he said well you really are an important part of my life because*
>
> *I come in, we spend time together ….., and I think I was kind of, I suppose I*
>
> *almost brushed him away a bit, and took it as a, almost as joke if you like'*
>
> *(Damien)*

4.   This quote suggests that the worker found it rather hard to hear the evidence of his deep significance to the offender.

Respondents also articulated the difficulties for them in building relationships with some offenders, either because of the resistance they encountered from the offender or because the relationship had, in some way, become threatening or problematic for the worker. Amy acknowledged that her own (negative) emotional response to a particular man's sexually deviant behaviour meant that building a relationship with him was not going to happen.

Empathy- 'standing in their shoes'

Michael, Amy and Tony all described empathy as 'standing in their shoes' and saw it as at the core of what they understood to be the skill of building relationships with people, particularly sex offenders, who can present a range of obstacles and defences to such a relationship.   It also seems to reflect some deep-seated kindness on the part of many of the respondents that I interviewed. They demonstrated a willingness to forgo the easy condemnation and judgment forthcoming from most other sources and invest in the humanity of the individual before them (Phillips and Taylor 2009).

> *'People have a lot of baggage - to be aware of that…. show concern – empathy'*
> *(Michael)*

However, Kim, whilst expressing some surprise that this was the right approach with sex offenders, nevertheless was concerned that not all of her colleagues were able to demonstrate this.

Phillips and Taylor suggest that kindness is always hazardous 'because it is based on a susceptibility to others, a capacity to identify with their pleasures and sufferings' (2009:3). They suggest that putting yourself in someone else shoes can be very uncomfortable but that kindness also carries with it the capacity for great emotional satisfaction. This is reflected in the way that so many of the respondents were able to engage with the humanity of the person through the use of empathy and through their innate kindness:

> 'You're the only one who seems to value them in any way, or spends time
>
> talking to them or treats them like a human being' (Lynn)

Despite or perhaps because of these challenges a majority of the respondents highlighted the significance of adopting a 'non-judgemental' approach towards the offenders they worked with.

Boundaries, trust, disclosure and risk assessment – an emotional process

Respondents talked about how they negotiated the boundaries of the relationship and managed the inter-face between themselves, the offenders and the accountability inherent in their role. It was possible to detect some of the ambivalence felt by them in managing these tensions. Setting the 'emotional' boundaries is quite tricky territory to negotiate and may have to evolve as the relationship develops and as trust begins to build. Whilst attachment theory can point the way to the significance of relationships in the therapeutic process, there are also risks that boundaries may be over-stepped. This next worker begins to explain the dilemma he was feeling:

'I've got a couple at the moment which I feel want to….want me to be more than their probation officer in terms of you know, they almost want me to be their friend ….' (Damien)

Demonstrating empathy and offering a non-judgmental approach are crucial stages in building *trust*, and trust is seen as necessary for a person to be able to share 'risky', personal or particularly sensitive information (Rogers 2004). Whilst the general public might be justifiably sceptical of the idea of 'trusting' sex offenders, some respondents were upfront about their decision to do this:

*'We always validate the positive factors. In the first place unless they prove me wrong I'll trust them – I believe them unless they give me a reason not to………
I will receive information and also I'll have no reason to disbelieve the offender unless there are inconsistencies in their account' (Indira)*

Others identified that to build this trust required time and, for the worker, the need to offer something of themselves in the process (Amy, Gill and Karen). This use of self-disclosure is another tool in the emotional literacy repertoire that is used by counsellors and psychotherapists. Again a careful balance has to be maintained between self-disclosure for the purpose of building trust, and self-disclosure that may be about the worker's own need for attention for personal issues, which would clearly be inappropriate in this relationship.

Two further and very significant ways in which emotional literacy seems to have a direct impact in work with sex offenders are in enabling disclosure (risk assessment) and in building the motivation to change (risk management).

Disclosure is what probation workers aim for in their initial assessments of risk at the Pre-Sentence Report stage, but it can also be a key factor in all future risk assessments. Whilst the report writer should have access to the depositions and therefore have knowledge of the details of the conviction, the perceptions and beliefs of the offender about the *reasons* for their behaviour are crucial in assessing risk, judging culpability and planning the appropriate intervention (Harrison 2010). The aim of the assessor should be to enable the offender to describe and take some ownership of their offending behaviour and potentially accept responsibility for the harm they have caused. For some this may be an instantaneous process based on genuine remorse and a sense of guilt; for others this may only be gradually drawn out over a period of time. Some may never be able to accept responsibility. The depth and quality of the information about themselves that offenders are willing to share with their workers is very strongly dependent on the quality of trust that has been built up, particularly when it comes to disclosing sexual fantasies, which they may not have previously shared with anyone else.

> *'I think for change to take place, if you are exposing behaviour that you feel ashamed about then trust has to be there' (Jai)*

Disclosure in relation to sexual behaviour can be particularly complex and tricky territory to negotiate. Sex offenders have many reasons not to disclose and to be sensitive to any indications of labelling, hostility or lack of empathy from the worker (Roberts & Baim 1999; Ward et al 2006). Probation staff may have their own reasons for not wishing, or being able, to hear disclosure of this nature including; their own lack of knowledge about sexual matters, unresolved issues around their own sexuality, early and unresolved experiences of abuse and associated feelings of embarrassment, fear, anger or disgust (Wood et al 2010).

Put together these obstacles to disclosure can be insurmountable and there are risks that worker and offender enter into a *collusive* relationship of mutual denial and minimisation about the serious nature of the offending (Prins 1999) or a *conflictual* relationship of challenge and withdrawal, neither of which is helpful in the disclosure and change process (Ward et al 2006; Sheaf 1990).

> *'....it's really important, but we have got a really good professional relationship and you know since then he has disclosed lots of other things for me, not for me, but to me, which have been really useful in managing his risk' (Victoria)*

Two respondents (Pat and Tina) highlighted the difficulties they felt in hearing or receiving information that related to risky behaviour and how this would affect their assessment of the offender's risk. They recognised this would have an impact on the offender:

> *'you get … quite a lot if information at that stage and you just feel a little bit bad when you write the pre-sentence report and you know, then you quote them ….you know and basically, because then, when they go to prison….' (Pat)*

Prins describes this as 'ambivalent investment' and suggests that workers may, through a lack of resolution of their own strong feelings be blind to the realities of the case; they may have overcome their feelings but be overwhelmed by their sense of responsibility to both the offender and the community; or their strong investment in the work may lead to unrealistic optimism about the progress of the case (Prins 1999:129).

Indira understood the importance of reflecting back what she had heard in order to aid the offender's own comprehension of the seriousness of his behaviour:

> *'They are also very shocked. They've come to realise the extent of their behaviour when you reflect it back to them. In order for me to note it down I'll say to them, "so you're telling me that after a while you became sexually attracted to…." ' 'And took this and this measure"… "Have I understood you rightly?" They'll realise fully what they've done' (Indira)*

For some respondents the need to understand and enable disclosure was of crucial importance and allowed them to place their own emotional reactions almost to one side:

> *'I think it is, not being judgmental, not colluding, but not showing your horror at something that someone has done, because they are so tuned in and that would just shut the person off, so actually …. presenting as though this isn't the worst that I have heard and you know, that I am listening' (Jai)*

Feelings of ambivalence, of holding two conflicting or opposing feelings in co-existence was highlighted by a number of the respondents and is a classic example of the complexities which exist in this work. The risk is that workers will resolve these tensions by opting for one approach over another rather than being supported and enabled to hold the balance. Similarly, the sharing of the risk assessment with the offender can be a minimal process, undertaken in an official, bureaucratic manner that meets the requirements and rules of National Standards (Home Office 2007) or in a much more interactive process that builds on the trust and integrity developed within the relationship and enables the offender to understand and 'own' the significance of their behaviour and its impact on others. These skills are a largely invisible,

unquantifiable and rarely quality assured process. Several respondents gave clear examples of how crucial they believed this 'transparency' of process was in building relationships, in gaining the co-operation of the offender and in enabling change, enhancing legitimacy and increasing compliance.

> '*The quality of the relationship is to be able to say to them 'I hear and I understand your perspective and your current take but my take it this…'. (Indira)*

Risk management – an emotional process

In terms of risk management and intervention, respondents talked about the significance of adopting an enabling as opposed to a confrontational approach in their work with offenders. Whilst the behaviour under discussion could very problematic they knew that to show disapproval and condemnation by adopting a very challenging style of communication was likely to be ineffective (Sheaf 1990). They also made reference to a range of non-verbal communication skills and how reading the emotional temperature of an interaction could be a key skill in understanding the underlying tensions and difficulties that offenders needed to work on. Some respondents referred to the emotional process of using their intuition or having a 'sixth sense' or a 'hunch' particularly in a group work context, of what was actually going on under the surface (Prins 1999).

> '*I learned to trust my instincts (if a person frightened me he was probably dangerous) and to go with that knowledge until I had analysed it for what it was*

worth' (Sir Graham Smith, a former HM Chief Inspector of Probation cited in

Prins 1999:144).

Support for emotional literacy

'Feelings' are a key motivator for many to join the probation service and are a central
to building effective relationships with offenders, but they also carry risk when
'unregulated' in the sense that the worker may lack the self-knowledge and
understanding of the power of their emotions to influence their actions. Whilst it was
clear from the data that the majority of respondents interviewed saw the emotional
content of their work to be highly significant there appeared to be inadequate
mechanisms within the workplace to support staff in the management and self-
regulation of their emotions; to ensure that 'controlling' or 'masking' them was not
adversely affecting their health or to guard against the risk that their practice might be
misaligned by the effort required to suppress unresolved feelings. When asked about
opportunities for debriefing and discussion about their feelings arising from their
work most respondents considered this to be limited and ad hoc. Whilst some
referred to very good supervision by line managers, they were in the minority. Some
had access to formal debriefing particularly after group work sessions but this was
seen as expendable when other bureaucratic demands came to the fore. Interestingly
some who had access to work-based counselling considered this to be less helpful
than the more direct and informal support networks they had built up with trusted
colleagues and friends. One saw counselling as an admission of difficulties in his
work rather than helping with his perceived need for an opportunity to 'let off steam'
in a safe place, which peers and friends could offer on a more spontaneous basis.

Conclusion

Emotional literacy is likely to be of significance in work with all offenders, although as highlighted above it has particular resonance in the area of sexual offending which penetrates deeply into the emotional consciousness of all concerned. However, the lack of significance given to the emotional literacy of the workforce of the probation service or of support to staff in this area, leaves a largely unregulated and somewhat turbulent emotional world of practice that is hidden from view but very powerfully experienced by practitioners. Without open discussion about the ways in which practitioners interpret and respond to emotions in offenders and in themselves, the skills of emotional literacy and their counter part 'emotional illiteracy' remain concealed and unquantified. The extent to which respondents in the study were both self-aware and emotionally self-regulating was variable and with no control group for comparison it would be difficult to judge whether workers involved with sex offenders had a greater degree of emotional literacy than those working with lower risk offenders. The enhancement of good practice in this area requires a much stronger focus on the role of emotion in the training of practitioners, in their subsequent support and development, and in the quality assurance of their practice.

28th June 2011

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Appendix 17

Teaching materials for CRIM 1008 Preparing for Practice (year one) and ASCS 3407 Professional Practice and Interventions (year 3) undergraduate criminology students at De Montfort University

Exemplar of:

- Timetable
- Power point presentation
- Teaching hand-out and references

ASCS3407 Professional Practice & Interventions

Module Timetable 2011-12

Week 15 in H1.05
Weeks 16-25 in Q0.15
Week 26 TBC

Session	Day and Date	Workshop Topic
Week 15	Thursday 12 Jan 2012	Introduction – What is professional practice? Reflection as a means of developing professional practice.
Week 16	Thursday 19 Jan 2012	Working with diversity and difference – empowerment and Anti-Discriminatory Practice (ADP).
Week 17	Thursday 26 Jan 2012	Communication Skills 1 – active listening, body language and non-verbal communication, empathetic responses, interview techniques.
Week 18	Thursday 2 Feb 2012	Communication Skills 2 – the importance of written communication. Professional identity, social networking. Confidentiality and data protection.
Week 19	Thursday 9 Feb 2012	Groupwork and group dynamics. Theories of group formation and team development.
Week 20	Thursday 16 Feb 2012	Responsivity and Compliance - Motivational Interviewing, Cycle of Change and pro-social modelling.
Week 21	Thursday 23 Feb 2012	**Guest Speaker** – TBC – Taking the Fear out of Role Play.
Week 22	Thursday 1 Mar 2012	Working with violence, domestic abuse, anger management, instrumental and expressive violence.
Week 23	Thursday 8 Mar 2012	**Guest Speaker** – TBC – The Arts in Criminal Justice.
Week 24	Thursday 15 Mar 2012	'What Works?', evidence-based practice, cognitive-behavioural theory and accredited programmes.
Week 25	Thursday 22 Mar 2012	Counselling, person-centred and humanistic models. 'Good Lives Model' and desistance from crime.
Week 26	Thursday 29 Mar 2012	Emotional literacy – the importance of emotional literacy for people work.
Week 26	Friday 30 Mar 2012	Role Plays **10-1PM**

What does the research indicate?

"The four most important therapist characteristics that correlated with clients' positive behaviour change are empathy, warmth, rewardingness and directiveness.'
(Day et al 2010:207

What might support EL in the workplace?

What supports emotional literacy in the workplace?

- Supervision
- Sympathetic colleagues
- Counselling
- Team support
- Partners/family
- 'Emotional Capital'

Literature

- Cherry, S. (2010) Transforming behaviour: Pro-social modelling in practice.
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Emotional Literacy

- Self-awareness
- Self-regulation
- Building Relationships
- Empathy
- Social Skills

Case Example

Mike, a young offender aged 19, convicted of stealing food, is homeless following an argument with his family

He turns up late for his appointment with probation and when advised he may be in breach of his order starts shouting at his supervising officer, accusing her of being just like his mother and how he won't be told what to do by a woman

What are the emotions?

- How would you describe his emotions?
- What emotions might the probation officer be feeling?
- What would be the best way to manage this situation?
- What might make the situation worse?

Case Example

- A female offender arrives for an appointment with bruising on her face. At first she is very reticent – then she eventually tells the worker that her partner assaulted her last night and has told her that if she tells anyone else he'll take her children away from her.

What are the emotions?

- What might the female offender be feeling?
- What might she think her partner is feeling?
- What feelings might it trigger in the worker?
- How *might* the worker respond?
- How *should* the worker respond?

Empathy

- Empathy was described by three of the respondents as 'standing in their shoes' (Michael, Amy and Tony), and viewed as a process of *engagement* in which they endeavoured to 'get alongside' the offender.
- Empathic people are considered to be better at listening to each other and checking out or 'reading' the non verbal signals that can provide evidence of the emotional temperature of the other. Empathy has been promoted in recent probation literature as a significant skill within probation practice (Farrow, Kelly et al. 2007; Cherry 2010).

Too much or too little?

- However, Loewenstein argues that contrary to many accounts of the destructive effects of strong emotions, most of the serious problems facing the world are caused by a deficiency rather than an excess of emotions (Loewenstein 2010).

Decision-making as 'embodied'

The most significant thinking and decision-making involves a combination of the subjective; affect (feelings) and the objective; cognitions (thoughts) and the interchange between the two (Evans 2003)

Exercise

You are meeting with a group of friends in a bar before going on to a club for the evening. You overhear one of your friends saying to someone else that they don't like you very much because you always talk a lot in social situations and dominate proceedings, they prefer the person they are talking to who is much quieter than you

- Identify the initial feelings you might have
- How might you 'appraise' or think about these feelings?
- What might change how you feel?
- What might you do?

Why does emotional literacy matter?

- We need to recognise our emotions in order to define them
- We need to understand our emotions in order to be effective learners
- We need to handle (or manage) our emotions in order to develop positive relationships and understand the emotions of others
- We need to *appropriately* express our emotions in order to be emotionally healthy

Emotional Intelligence

- *"The capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer and Salovey 1997:197).*

What is Emotional Literacy?

Definition

"The ability to recognise, understand, handle and appropriately express emotions....using your emotions to help yourself and others succeed" (Sharp 2001)

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'Feedback'

- The higher parts of the cortex cannot operate independently of the more primitive gut responses. Cognitive processes elaborate emotional processes but could not exist without them. The brain constructs representations of internal bodily states, links them to other stored representations and then signals back to the body in a process of internal feedback, which may then trigger off further bodily feelings in a cyclical process (Gerhardt 2004)

Basic Emotions?

- What are they?

Basic emotions?

- Anger
- Fear
- Sadness/distress
- Happiness/joy
- Surprise
- Disgust
- Expectancy

(Evans 2003)

A Colour Wheel?

- Plutchik (1980) compared emotions to a colour wheel, with mixes of primary (basic) emotions at different points in the colour wheel generating varying secondary and tertiary emotions. The analogy suggests that these 'primary' colours contain a 'spectrum' of hues and shades reflecting the strength of feeling and that they also mix with each other to produce more sophisticated and subtle emotions (e.g. guilt) (Killick 2006:27).

Why is an understanding of emotion important in CJS work?

"Offenders, victims and witnesses bring their emotions to the courtroom, criminal courts deal with crimes of passion, and their decisions can occasion public outrage and anger, or feelings of vengeance among victims. Offenders can feel shame and remorse when they have transgressed the law, and offences can provoke feelings of moral disgust. Victims as well as offenders elicit our compassion and sympathy" (Karstedt 2002:300)

Emotion and Reason

The extent that emotion is understood either as in *conflict* with reason or in a *symbiotic* relationship with reason (Lakoff 1987) has been a source of debate for centuries. Western philosophical thought has tended to place emotionality and rationality on opposite ends of a continuum

The rational model argues that emotions are a dangerous threat to people and societies

At the other end of the continuum – emotion is seen to represent the subjective, the world of art and spirituality and creativity

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Emotion in Criminal Justice Practice
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health&life sciences

'Soft Skills for Hard Work'

- An examination of the emotional literacy of staff working with high risk offenders

- What it means to practitioners and how the probation service responds to it

- The contradictions of 'soft' and 'hard' work

Aims of session

- To explore the concept of 'emotion' and its significance within criminal justice practice

- To consider the meaning of emotional literacy as a practice skill

- Using case examples, to reflect on how emotions are central to the offender/worker relationship and positive and negative ways of handling this

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What is emotion?

Talk to the person next to you:
- What is an emotion?
- How might you recognise it?
- Where and how do you feel it?
- Can you change it?
- Can someone else change it for you?

Definitions

- An emotion is defined as: "a disturbance of mind; a mental sensation or state; instinctive feeling as opposed to reason" (Oxford Dictionary)
- The cultural theory of emotion argues that emotions are learned behaviours that are transmitted culturally in a similar way to language (Evans 2003)- versus 'basic' emotions (Ekman)
- Descartes identified a notion of a hydraulic theory of emotion which viewed feelings as mental fluids that circulate the mind, transmitting the pressure of 'animal spirits' from nerve endings to the brain and then to the muscles' (Evans 2003).
- Barbalet identifies it as an 'experience of involvement' (Barbalet 2002) either negatively or positively and either profoundly or slightly, or somewhere in between.

Definitions

- Most current emotion theories now seem to suggest that emotion is *simultaneously* a physical, cognitive and social/cultural experience (Hubbard, Backett-Milburn et al. 2001)

- The act of appraisal – or thinking about emotions is part and parcel of the feeling

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Hand-out to support teaching

Emotional Literacy in Criminal Justice Practice

What do you do when the person you are meeting for the first time starts to cry for no apparent reason? How do you respond if the offender you are visiting in prison becomes very agitated and begins to shout at you? How do you feel when the person you are interviewing begins to tell you about a recurring fantasy that involves serious sexual abuse of a child? What do you do when an offender you know quite well begins to tell you about the death of one of his parents when he was a child and you find yourself getting upset and feeling very sad?

Working with offenders in any setting or agency means you will encounter people whose lives have not been straightforward (and this could, of course, include yourself and your colleagues, as well as the service users for whom you have a responsibility). People coming into contact with workers in the criminal justice system are likely to be in crisis and facing major life changing events. People in crises are more likely to be 'emotional' than people whose lives are stable. Their reasons for committing an offence will be varied, complex and may not be clear to themselves or indeed anyone else. Their emotional reactions to the circumstances in which they find themselves when they come into contact with you may also be unclear to themselves and others.

You will have your own beliefs and motivations for wanting to work with offenders, but one of the likely reasons is that you want to help people to change and improve their life circumstances. Annison et al (2008) identified 'working with people' as the most frequently mentioned reason for people choosing to enter the probation service. Indeed 95% of the respondents in one of the studies described in this article agreed or strongly agreed that they wanted to help people change. This suggests that you, as a worker or potential worker in criminal justice, are likely to have a belief in the capacity of people to change and a wish to help them in this endeavour, which is inevitably going to involve building relationships with them. You will have come to this work with a range of life experiences and your own particular capacity for dealing with difficult situations. However, can you be sure that you will always be able to respond appropriately and 'professionally' when faced with the emotional distress or anger of an offender? What will you do with the feelings that some of the behaviour of offenders arouses in you?

Historically, the work undertaken in the probation service was built on the quality of what was termed a 'casework relationship' between worker and 'client'. This was modelled on psychotherapeutic principles and prescribed a relationship between worker and 'client' based on trust, respect, positive regard and a non-judgmental approach (Monger 1972). 'Clients' or 'offenders' as they are now termed, would be encouraged to change, develop and be empowered through the medium of a positive relationship in which the worker, aware of the likelihood of powerful emotions, would be on guard against the potential for transferring or 'taking on board' some of the negative emotions emanating from the client, or indeed vice versa (counter-transference). Historically, supervision of the worker's own practice often

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included a focus on how the worker was feeling about their work, and their reactions to the offending behaviour of the people they were supervising.

Since the 1990s, with the emerging emphasis on concepts such as 'public protection', 'punishment', 'surveillance' and 'correction', and with an increasing focus on targets and monitoring, the significance of the worker/offender relationship , and the 'emotional context of this, has become somewhat obscured. The Offender Management Model of the National Offender Management Service is mostly concerned with 'systems' and 'models' of practice and with measurement of quantitative 'outputs' as opposed to the qualitative processes necessary to achieve those outputs. However, in recent years there has been an emerging theme of what is now termed 'building a therapeutic alliance' with offenders and using the process of this 'alliance' to enable and help offenders engage in the change process (Dowden and Andrews 2004). Other writers have similarly begun to draw out the significance of the relationship; for example Burnett and McNeill (2005 in relation to desistance from crime, Mills et al (2007) in relation to drug interventions, Kemshall and Canton (2002) in relation to attrition; highlighting the importance of consistency, reliability and fairness within the operation of the relationship. Whilst practice methods of motivational interviewing, of pro-social modelling, and of cognitive behavioural interventions require the worker to establish a meaningful relationship with the offender, there is, as yet, little written about the quality and content of such relationships or of the emotional skills required to achieve this.

Emotional literacy is described as:

"The capacity to register our emotional responses to the situations we are in, and to acknowledge those responses to ourselves so that we recognise the ways in which they influence our thoughts and actions" (Orbach 2001:2).

Morrison, writing from a social work perspective, identifies the intra and inter-personal skills required of practitioners including:

- Listening and building empathy
- Understanding the effects of non-verbal communication, and
- Self-awareness about how working with (children) may affect you emotionally and how to seek help (Morrison 2007:246).

Howe (2008) argues that the more we understand ourselves at a level of feeling, the wiser we become:

"Certainly being intelligent about emotions and the part they play in our lives makes us socially more skilled (Howe 2008:1).

Howe suggests that, for example, illness and poverty increase anxiety; injustice, deprivation and discrimination provoke anger; and loss and rejection leave people feeling hurt and sad. We face all of these emotions in the offenders we work with, and unless we have a handle on why these emotions are provoked, where they come from and how best to respond to them, we risk misinterpreting their behaviour or responding to it inappropriately.

Research into emotional literacy with probation practitioners suggests that most experienced workers find ways of 'managing' and 'controlling' their feelings although for some this comes at a price in terms of their general mental health. Most such workers acknowledge the importance of being able to respond empathically and in a non-judgemental manner, to the offender's sometimes unexpressed and often difficult emotions that may be inhibiting them from learning and moving on. One of the most significant support systems for these workers is the opportunity to acknowledge and talk about their own feelings in a safe, emotional space, with a colleague, mentor or supervisor where they are not judged for 'letting of steam' or expressing their own emotions. Such an outlet can then allow the worker to reflect and think through how best to return to their work with the offender, taking into account, but not being dominated by, the potential bias of their own strong feelings.

For further information on emotional intelligence in practice then David Howe's book currently provides the most comprehensive account:

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March 2012

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