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Towards Capabilities and Desistance?

Scottish Prisoners' Experiences of Education

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For my parents, to whom I owe everything.

Stories are the most important thing in the world.

Without stories, we wouldn't be human beings at all.

- Philip Pullman

Abstract

Previous research has considered the role of education in the development of capabilities separately from the desistance process and there is a limited evidential base that has combined these theoretical areas. This thesis focuses on the biographical accounts of a group of Scottish prisoners in order to consider the factors that create a fluctuating state of capabilities throughout a life-time. The study utilised qualitative interpretivist research design in the form of semi-structured interviews to gain rich and detailed accounts of lives spent both within and outside of the modern criminal justice system. Participants were recruited from two adult prisons in central Scotland. They discussed their life experiences of disadvantage, marginalisation and socio-economic restrictions and so provided insights into the ways in which capability constraints can contribute to offending behaviours. The ebb and flow of education within their lives was also examined to ascertain the role this plays in upholding or improving these states of being. Experiences of imprisonment were discussed so the realities of what is lost and gained through incarceration could be determined. The position that learning can have within prison in supporting capability development and desistance was a particular focus. An interpretive paradigm was applied so that participants and I could extract significance from their life experiences, social worlds and beliefs that were discussed during interview. By using capabilities and desistance theory from the outset, this research paradigm allowed for other theoretical links to emerge from the data. This thesis found that disadvantage and restricted capabilities are complex, intergenerational and often compounded over a life-course. This makes engaging with support that could improve these conditions extremely challenging, thus potentially extending the ill-effects on wellbeing. The impoverished nature of choice and agency stunts flourishing, forcing individuals to select from ever-limiting options. For most participants, this became a direct catalyst to their offending behaviour and time in custody. While descriptions highlight the damage caused by imprisonment, this thesis also presents positive accounts of support and personal development within this environment. It demonstrates how learning and skills development can be utilised to affect capability improvement and take early steps towards desistance. This thesis establishes a link between the imagining of a crime-free future during custody with the formation of the hope and agency that is indicative of improved capabilities and central to robust and sustained desistance.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that, except where explicit reference is made to the contribution of others, that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of Glasgow or any other institution.

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Introduction

While there has been ongoing criminal justice reform over the past twenty years, Scotland continues to have one of the highest imprisonment rates in Western Europe (Armstrong and McNeill, 2012). Desistance, particularly for people involved in persistent offending, is a challenging and complex process, and one that is likely to involve lapses and relapses (McNeill et al., 2012). The system has a responsibility to provide practical and comprehensive rehabilitation through service provision that facilitates and assists change. Maruna and Lebel (2003, 2009) recognised that while people in prison have risks and needs that must be addressed, they also display various strengths and resources that should be utilized in their desistance journey. Education can be utilised as a place to support and develop these capacities. How this translates for individuals who engage with it will be a focus within this research.

This shift towards addressing an individual's strengths as well as risks has been taking place in Scottish prisons for the past decade, if not before. The Scottish Prison Service (SPS) Organisational Review in 2013 embedded these developments in desistance research by changing their stance on prisoner care to an 'assets-based approach'. This identifies the strengths and potential of individuals and works to develop these to support a crime-free future. They also claim to work to cultivate the value found within social networks, families and communities to support and sustain change. This is a distinct advancement from their past approach to reducing reoffending which focused on the identification and management of social and psychological deficits within the individual. To help support this 'assets-based approach', they have placed education at the centre in identifying and developing these strengths. A more detailed description of prison education in Scotland along with its underpinning theories and policies will be presented in the following chapter. Individual experiences of engagement will be presented and discussed in chapters seven and eight.

This move towards an assets-based approach has led SPS to invest heavily in education programmes in recent years (SPS, 2013). Indeed, criminological research has long since advocated the role of education as a reliable and significant predictor of reduced reoffending (Farrington, et al., 1986). But, much of the success of current or past rehabilitation services (such as education) is measured by this reduction in re-offending and little else. The

connection of education to a very specific and narrowly defined outcome leaves little room to understand how it plays a role more diffusely and broadly in producing active citizens. Research regarding education in Canadian prisons noted:

> Reduced recidivism, as one end-point index that some change has occurred, is clearly inadequate in revealing either the nature or the source of that change. Undoubtedly, the pathways to change for offenders, as with individuals more generally, are multiply determined; change typically arises out of a chain of events, reinforced and supported by improvement in personal and social circumstance. (Porporino and Robinson, 1992, p 7)

This doctoral research project seeks to develop this line of thinking by looking specifically at how educational services support human development and desistance rather than accepting it has worked due to a decrease in re-offending rates. It also aims to understand education within prison in a way not constrained by institutional or governmental performance measures, showing that it is not just an essential tool within desistance, but also that it supports human development and flourishing, both individually and socially. This will expand understanding of how education matters to identity, citizenship and change that engages with desistance and rehabilitative theories, but also critically confronts and advances these. I will also look at the role that education has played in participants' life narratives to establish some of the consequences of its presence and absence. These will be presented and discussed in chapters five through eight.

I became engaged with this area of research whilst working as a prison-based educator. Over my six years I worked across four prisons with students from different backgrounds. Through teaching and discussion, many shared their life stories with me. What inter-connected most were the varying levels of disadvantage and severe challenges they faced, often from birth. Most told of isolation and disengagement from the mainstream school system. During teenage years, instability increased, with prison becoming a regular feature for most. Engagement with school was limited due to unstable home environments, resulting in behavioural issues in the classroom. Some described unsupported learning and emotional difficulties that led to isolation and removal from mainstream school. Understandably, these students had unfavourable memories of school that influenced disengagement (amongst

other factors). One of the challenges in prison education is providing a positive classroom experience that can help overcome previous disengagement. The curriculum and its delivery must be adaptive to suit a wide ability of learner in one classroom with differing lengths of engagement (predominantly dictated by sentence length). More positively, most students in prison develop a connection with learning they have struggled to establish when younger. My later data chapters will show that my participants' fluctuating levels of wellbeing were influenced, in part, by school engagement.

The connection between educational engagement and wellbeing has long since been a focus for both research and policy. I specifically utilise Martha Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach (CA) (2000, 2006, 2011) to effectively analyse what role education plays in developing participants' capabilities and improving their overall wellbeing. The CA is closely aligned with human rights, being premised on the belief that citizens have certain fundamental entitlements which are a matter of basic justice. The approach is about what people are able to do and be within the social, political and domestic situations they live, evaluating whether these restrict them from reaching their full potential or 'capabilities'. Nussbaum's list of ten basic human capabilities spans physical, intellectual and emotional elements, arguing that we have entitlements, as dignified human beings, to life, bodily health, integrity, emotions, practical reason, affiliation, concern for other species, the ability to play and control over one's environment (both political and material) (Nussbaum, 2000). Access to a decent standard of education is a central tool in helping achieve the capabilities and is crucial to the overall health and wellbeing of a person, to democracy and a country's development (Nussbaum, 2011). This approach is relevant to individuals in prison as it provides a framework to explore people's level of wellbeing and options, both inside prison and the community, without the rules and restrictions of the regime. It should be noted here that Nussbaum's standpoint is that capabilities alone should be what governments aim to provide for their citizens. Individuals are then free to determine their own levels of functioning and direction after that (Nussbaum, 2000). The CA will be explained more fully in chapter two with its application to my research data being explored in chapters five through eight.

By using the CA, the aim of this research was to explore the educational experiences of a group of Scottish prisoners. More specifically, it examined how these educational experiences related to their wider life histories and the state of their capability set throughout

their narratives. Connections between this and their involvement in offending was also considered. The central questions of this research asked what role and meaning education has played in participants' lives? More specifically, how have their educational and life experiences affected the development of their capabilities, both historically and more recently? Finally, what role has education played in helping them imagine, plan and prepare for the future, including in relation to potential desistance from crime? Houchin (2005) argues that a person's capabilities and an improvement in their access to services can make a significant change in their social positions and roles and reduce their social exclusion. The high re-offending rate in Scotland indicates there is still a long way to go in developing services, both in and outside the prison walls that achieves this. This ongoing change in direction for the SPS makes it a pertinent time for this research to be carried out and the recent provision of education in Scottish prisons will be fully outlined in the following chapter.

Focusing on capabilities, a cursory look at some of the issues that presently affect individuals in custody in the UK indicates at what level these are being met. The Bromley Briefings (Prison Reform Trust, 2019) reported that the mental health of the prison population is at particular disadvantage – 49 per cent of female and 23 per cent of male prisoners were deemed as suffering from anxiety and depression: this is compared to 16 per cent in the general population. Levels of drug use are also increased amongst individuals in prison, with the highest levels from those involved in the most prolific offending. 64 per cent admit to having used a class A drug compared to 13 per cent in the general population[1]. 22 per cent stated that they drank alcohol daily in the four weeks before custody. The average in the general population is lower at 13 per cent. Looking specifically at education, 42 per cent had been permanently excluded from school, compared to one per cent in the general population. 47 per cent of individuals in prison have no qualifications compared to 15 per cent of the working age general population (Bromley Briefings, 2019). These figures provide a bleak picture of individuals in prison who are inclined to suffer with poor mental health, drug and alcohol problems, with little educational background or attainment. It would be fair to state, even at this introductory stage, that many individuals in custody are struggling to attain Nussbaum's ten capabilities. While rehabilitation is focused on reducing a person's

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[1] Class A drugs include heroin, cocaine, crack-cocaine and methamphetamine. Many (although not all) of this category of drug have a higher likelihood of dependency development in the user. They also carry the highest sentence if found guilty of possession (up to seven years, an unlimited fine or both) or possession with intent to supply (up to life in prison, an unlimited fine or both) (Police Scotland, 2019).

likelihood of anti-social behaviour, capabilities theory offers a broader chance to explore how education expands a person's positive potential, including the promotion of law-abiding behaviour. This study sought to analyse the experience of people in prison to ascertain whether their individual circumstances have contributed to this ideal of personal and social development through education or constrained it. How participants fared in their attainment of Nussbaum's list of capabilities throughout their life narratives is an overarching focus of this research and will be discussed more fully in chapters five through eight.

The aforementioned statistics indicate the high level of complex issues that much of the prison population have to face. Maruna (2001) explained that these complexities (among others) contribute to the highly fatalistic mindset of those in prison, particularly those who persistently return to custody. This means they display low self-efficacy and an external locus of control. They do not feel that they determine the direction of their lives but rather, life happens to them. Yet his research has also indicated that those who desist managed to acquire a sense of agency or control over their lives (Maruna, 2001). Imprisonment tends to reconfirm marginalised identities (such as criminal and prisoner) rather than nurture positive ones (such as employee or student). Since desistance should put emphasis on developing positivity for the future, rehabilitative interventions need to nurture this hope and motivation. Hope is connected to developing a sense of 'agency' or rather the ability to manage one's own life, so the services provided need to identify and develop personal strengths and skills and encourage the user to develop their own sense of agency (McNeill and Schinkel, 2007). Basic autonomy (or agency)[2] is directly connected to the CA as a certain (culture-related) level of competence and achievement in human capabilities is needed so that people can effectively participate in social life (Castillo, 2009). Achieving these capabilities means gaining an acceptable standard of living that allows an individual the freedom to function in ways valuable to realising their goals and plans for the future. So even at a cursory glance, education, agency and the development of capabilities all appear to be inextricably linked.

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[2] The term autonomy is more aligned to the philosophical concept of freedom and choice. Nussbaum's CA is premised on political rather than a 'comprehensive' view of autonomy. She does assert that autonomy 'makes lives go better in general' (Nussbaum, 2011a, p. 36)

Agency is a sociological term that refers to humans as social actors and more specifically, an individual's capacity to act. Restrictions to agency would be social and cultural structures that acted upon individuals (Emirbayer and Mische, A, 1998).

These terms are often used interchangeably as I have done in this research thesis. However, I adhere more closely to the sociological concept of agency when discussing participants' abilities to act in their own lives.

This makes it an optimal theoretical standpoint from which to gauge the educational services capacity to encourage desistance.

Statistical research that explores reduced re-offending can overlook the complex processes as outlined in maturational, sociogenic and narrative theories (Maruna, 1999). As mentioned previously, reduced recidivism, as one end-point indicates that some change has occurred but reveals little about either the nature or the source of that change (Porporino and Robinson, 1992). A qualitative study such as this tells the personal stories of those involved while exploring individual interactions with educational services. This study details these narratives, exploring experiences of education before and during imprisonment, and the relationship of education to potential desistance. McNeill and Whyte (2007) argue that desistance research based on narrative methodologies offers more nuanced insight compared to randomised control trials. This is because the latter often casts the subjects as simply objects on which programmes aim to work, rather than acknowledging that humans are complex and active subjects whose fates are also shaped by their environments. Exploring these rich narratives using the CA hopes to provide a more comprehensive overview on how people experience educational processes and how these relate to desistance. Furthermore, this thesis aims to offer the criminal justice system important insights into how the development of capabilities and desistance from crime might be better supported within prisons.

To determine the importance of research in this area it is crucial to discuss the impact of educational achievement on our identities. A lack of school attainment in childhood and adolescence has been recognised as one of the most consistent precursors of later adult criminality (Loeber, 1991). Those who display limited written and spoken capacities are often at a profound disadvantage with regard to social status, creating acute isolation that an educated person may never fully appreciate. People denied education are cut off in various ways from society and those in prison are further isolated and punished (Palfrey, 1974). The effect of this is that conviction and imprisonment can have profound implications for the individual's future life chances such as the types of jobs they can hold (Garland, 2001). The likelihood of employment in the first place is reduced when a person has been incarcerated (Huebner, 2005) meaning that the stigma and reduced opportunities that come with being in prison can themselves hinder the individual's ability to desist after release.

The disadvantage that a lack of formal education brings to those in the criminal justice system makes it clear that its provision is both a human right (Article 26, The United Nations, 1948) and an essential means of supporting desistance. Its role is being increasingly mentioned in academic research and government policy, but how and why it helps to change life trajectories and reduce reoffending is still largely un-explored in Scotland. A restricted education leads to limited options, especially with regard to employment, often leading to a decreased income and standard of living. The prison population contains disproportionate numbers of people who live in the most socially deprived areas with high unemployment (Houchin, 2005). The employment options open to people are mainly limited to manual labour and minimum wage jobs, but the increase of criminal background checks in even these fields of work, further restricts an individual's options and the ability to desist (Farrall et al., 2010).

Desistance is a complex process, unique to the individual involved. Studies have indicated that imprisonment can sometimes provide the 'hook for change' needed for people to desist (Giordano et al., 2002). Securing long-term change depends not just on how the person sees themselves but also how others view them, and how they view their place in society (McNeill and Schinkel, 2007). A large factor in desistance focuses on working towards social inclusion in the mainstream (Maruna, 1999). However, most desistance researchers argue that prison itself creates an inherently problematic context in which to seek support for this process as it deprives people of responsibility and weakens social bonds (Liebling and Maruna, 2005). Against this background, this research explores ways in which prison learning can nonetheless develop a student's social identity and functioning. It aims to offer a rich, in-depth study seeking to understand whether and how an expansive exercise such as learning can contribute towards desistance, even within a challenging context.

To gather narrative accounts of the challenges faced in prison and life before custody, I conducted research interviews over two prisons in the west of Scotland. My primary site was my main teaching location and is based on the outskirts of Glasgow in a suburban area with a mix of working and middle-class households. It is an adult male prison with sentences spanning from remand (untried) to life imprisonment. My secondary site was based outside greater Glasgow in an historically industrial, working-class area with a variety of socio-

economic challenges. This is an adult male and female prison with individuals serving a mix of short-term (up to four years) and long-term (four years to life imprisonment). This prison also contains a 'top-end facility' where life-term prisoners are moved to for approximately two years to begin community work placements and supervised home visits before transferring to open conditions. Utilising this prison as a research site granted me access to a wider variety of participant demographic as I wanted to include both males and females in the interview process as well as a broad spectrum of sentence lengths. I hoped this would ensure a richness of experiences in the research data. I engaged ten interview participants in each location (twenty in total) and interviewed them twice for approximately forty-five minutes to one hour each time. As will be more fully discussed in chapter four, the interviews were semi-structured: the first focused on the participants' life narratives; the second had more structured questions that were intended to expand areas of interest that had been discussed in the first interview. I underpinned my early stages with previous capabilities and desistance research, an overview of which is discussed in chapters two and three. All other themes emerged from the interview data and are discussed throughout this thesis. This research development reflects an adaptive methodology as outlined by Derek Layder (1998), discussed more fully in chapter four. The existing theoretical scaffolds that I used as a framework from the outset have been the CA and desistance theory. This has placed me within the areas of wellbeing, justice and criminological research. These scaffolds accommodated new theoretical framings as themes emerged from the data. These focused-on areas of sociology, psychology and education.

Chapters five through eight cover data presentation and discussion where I outline the emerging themes from participants' narratives. The data has been organised chronologically in line with the life narrative structure of the interviews. This provided a logical order for the data while at the same time helping to demonstrate the cumulative nature of participants' issues and challenges. I selected a case study participant as a focus in each chapter which allowed me to explain the emergent themes with detailed example whilst connecting to other participants' narratives. The four data chapters are arranged into the following time periods: childhood (encompassing birth to the end of primary school); adolescence (spanning from early to later teenage years to the end of secondary school); earlier adulthood (covering from later teens and/or first sentence experiences – whichever occurred first); finally, participants' most recent experiences of prison, predominantly covering the previous three to five years and this final data chapter also looks at their projections for the future.

This thesis argues that disadvantage is intergenerational and inherited. This makes it challenging for those born into high levels of disadvantage to overcome this to any great degree, often worsening over their life span. Adversity and trauma during childhood can also be inherited as well as experienced, creating life-long emotional issues that are often impossible to overcome. Early experiences such as these directly affected participants' abilities to engage and settle in other environments, particularly school. Data at this stage suggests that a central support structure in developing capabilities and improving wellbeing was damaged, disadvantaging the individual further. This research also argues that agency and options are directly affected by participants' capability sets. Powerlessness was established in participants' early lives and remained as they aged, often compounding in a similar manner to inherited disadvantage. The institutional structures in their lives that could and should have intervened as support (such as school and social work) often left individuals more isolated.

This thesis acknowledges that prison can and does bring relief in the form of basic provisions such as food and shelter. However, the data here suggests that in the long-term prison damages and constrains capabilities more than it improves them. During interview, participants described feeling more marginalised and powerless as their time in prison lengthened and sentence numbers increased, particularly when they struggled to gain any support after release. That being said, there is evidence of robust and comprehensive support in prisons. Participants explained that accessing services such as education, work training, mental health and addiction support during their sentences have helped to address issues and develop their skills for the future. This has provided individuals with hope and ambition for a new life free from offending. Yet, it must be stressed that prison should be a last resort that might have been avoided had earlier interventions in participants' lives been more robust and meaningful. Re-engagement with learning (both classroom and work-based) has brought an improvement in both agency and capability set to participants. This research shows evidence of primary, secondary and imagined desistance occurring during incarceration but this is often in spite of prison and not because of it. The identity shift essential to secondary desistance was touched upon by many participants when describing a switch to roles that are perceived as more positive than their previous spoiled identities. For many, learning and skills-development has been central to this change, indicating the potentially powerful role it can play in the desistance process. This is discussed more fully in chapter seven and eight.

Chapter one will discuss the theoretical underpinnings of my research. I will begin by providing an overview of prison education in Scotland (at the time of this research) and its wider pedagogical aims. From this I will move on to provide an overview of the CA in chapter two, looking briefly at Amartya Sen's work in this area and then moving on to discuss Nussbaum's CA and her list of capabilities in more detail. I will also discuss the role of agency both in context of the approach and its wider implications within this research along with the nature of adaption to personal preferences. This section will close with a discussion of the connections between education and capability development. Chapter three will focus on desistance theory, firstly providing a general overview of the main approaches and secondly, discussing the role of identity and varying levels (primary, secondary and imagined) of successful desistance.

Chapter four will present the methodological framework for this research. I will discuss both adaptive theory and the reflexivity involved in my dual role as researcher and teacher. I will explain both sites of research in more detail and my reasons for selecting these. A detailed overview of my participants will be provided as will the rationale for my participant selection process. I will then discuss the semi-structured format of my interviews and details of the data collection process. The final part of this chapter will focus on how I analysed my data with the use of NVivo 11, including an explanation of how my themes emerged, developed and were eventually consolidated into the main research findings.

Chapter five is the first research findings chapter covering childhood up to the completion of primary school with a discussion of capability restriction present throughout. It opens with a brief background to the case study participant Carol and then moves to discuss early experiences of school. This will include a focus on behavioural, learning and emotional issues which are then set into a wider context of participants' home environments, with a discussion of the impact of childhood trauma and adversity. The emergent theme of agency will follow on from this as participants described the feelings of powerlessness they experienced from the earliest stages of their lives. The chapter will conclude with a short focus on those participants who experienced the care system during their childhood and the negative impact this had on their wellbeing.

Chapter six considers participants' adolescence and experiences of secondary school. The case study participant is Conor and the chapter opens with an overview of his story. School will again be the early focus as participants discussed the change from primary to secondary school and the catalysts to their eventual disengagement. This follows on to consider boundaries and guidance and the main influences that participants sourced outside of their familial units. The bonds that they established with these peers will also be discussed along with the influence this had on their identity development as teenagers. Most of the participants began to use drugs and alcohol during these years and the often-catastrophic effects this had on their capabilities and wellbeing will be examined. Early offending behaviour began to play a central role in participants' lives during adolescence and the chapter will close by studying the build up to and consequences of this.

Chapter seven moves to early adult life with Joe's story as the case study focus. The ongoing and compounded capability restrictions that participants suffered will be discussed, particularly in relation to increased offending and substance misuse. This will follow on to experiences of state intervention, including how participants adapted to early prison sentences. The chapter will conclude by moving forward in time to contrast with more recent experiences of incarceration. I will discuss how utilisation of time in prison has developed for participants and why many now approach their time in custody with a different attitude.

Chapter eight is the final data findings chapter and will again utilise Joe as the case study. The focuses of this chapter are the main research themes of prison education, capability development and desistance. I will firstly consider participants' experiences of prison-based learning and what they have gained from this, particularly in connection to capability development. This will be linked to desistance and I focus on both past experiences of reduced recidivism and the connections being made between education and a crime free future. Identity development will be reintroduced at this point as I discuss how and why this has become more positive for participants than in descriptions of earlier selves. The chapter and data findings will close with a detailed consideration of participants' hopes and projections of a desisted future.

In the final chapter, conclusions and recommendations from this research will be drawn and outlined. I will look to the future of criminal justice and the prison system in Scotland with

regard to theory, policy and practice. The limitations of and next steps for this research will also be discussed.

Chapter One

Prison Education

1.1   Introduction

Education and learning serve a variety of purposes throughout our lives. Our first experiences come in childhood and for some, can extend well in adulthood. It is a structure that can be returned to throughout life for personal and professional development. Our relationship with classrooms and learning environments can sometimes be complex and our experience negative. As later discussion will reflect, formal education can be associated with isolation rather than development. Returning to education as an adult can often be a more engaging experience due to improved inclusion, readiness and different approaches employed by educators.

This chapter will look at adult education in the prison context. I will firstly explore theoretical underpinnings of provision starting with access to education as a right. From there I will move on to discuss the transformative nature of learning and then consider the ways in which education can improve human and social capital. How education can support the desistance process will be discussed before closing the chapter with an outline of the educational provision in Scottish prisons when this research was undertaken.

1.2   Prison Education as a Right

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states the provision of and access to education as a basic human right (Article 26, UN, 1948). By 1955 this right was officially extended to individuals in custody under the UN Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners (Article 77, UN). Later recommendations outlined that member states should aim to design a provision of prison education that includes literacy programmes, basic education, social education, access to higher education, vocational training and the provision of library facilities. It should be an essential part of the prison regime and should develop the whole person, being sensitive to the individual's social, economic and cultural background (Section

20; Paragraph 3, Resolutions and Decisions of the Economic and Social Council, UN, 1990). Education is therefore a right within the modern prison regime.

In connection to education as a right, the Council of Europe set out the three main support functions of prison education.

> Firstly, prison is by its very nature abnormal, and destructive of the personality in a number of ways. Education has, among other elements in the prison system, the capacity to render this situation less abnormal, to limit somewhat the damage done to men and women through imprisonment. Secondly, there is an argument based on justice: a high proportion of prisoners have had very limited and negative past educational experience, so that, on the basis of equality of opportunity, they are now entitled to special support to allow their educational disadvantage to be redressed. A third argument that can be put forward is a rehabilitative one: education has the capacity to encourage and help those who try to turn away from crime. (Council of Europe Recommendations on Education in Prison, 1989, p 15)

The SPS responded to these recommendations and developments in human rights law by making Learning Centres part of their organisational structure from the early nineties onwards (although educational provision had existed in prisons in looser formats before this). Every person in their care has the right to access the Learning Centre but attendance is not mandatory. Access varies from one session per week up to daily attendance and some prisons provide a limited number of sessions per week (usually two) for individuals on remand awaiting trial. Every level of learning is offered from basic literacy and numeracy up to degree level. Individuals in prison generally have an unequal footing compared to many in the general population with regard to the consistency and quality of educational backgrounds. The provision of education up to degree level in Scottish prisons upholds this human right whilst going some way to address the inequalities in learning that many individuals have fallen victim to.

However, there are limitations with the rights-based model. It has been criticized for being overtly rhetorical. While some governments have granted this educational right to every child (and adult), many still do not have access to education, may be enrolled in schools but not present, or present when there are no teaching staff (Tomasevski, 2003). In this instance, the governments are executing this provision in precise terms, but not beyond that. There is also the danger of reducing rights to a legal basis. Legal human rights (not moral) can be whatever a government agrees them to be, making the legal right to education open to manipulation (Pogge, 2002). However, if the right to education is viewed as a moral rather than a legal right it can, in theory, make governments more obligated to comply with its provision. Nussbaum (2011b) explains the CA is a species of a human rights approach that focuses on entitlements that are inherent in the idea of basic social justice. Capabilities can add clarity by emphasizing the material and social aspects of all rights, grounding this in the lives of ordinary individuals rather than restricting them to a cultural context. Human rights can also work in conjunction with the language of capabilities by making clear that entitlements are not optional but rather an urgent demand that should not be ignored in the pursuit of other objectives (such as the expansion of aggregate wealth). Nussbaum states that education is the central tool in supporting healthy capability development. If a government is to focus on capability development for its citizens then access to and engagement with education becomes an inherent right.

1.3   Education for Individual Change

Moving from the macro rights aspect of prison education, research has also argued its ability to incite individual change. This focuses on the power of education to develop the whole person through the process of self-actualisation (Costelloe and Warner, 2003). Philosopher Jurgen Habermas (1972) identified three domains of learning that support individual change: instrumental, interpretive and critical. The instrumental part of learning allows us to have control over our immediate and personal environment. For example, the knowledge and training acquired through learning supports the type of employment gained and thus our location in a particular economic bracket and status at different stages of our lives. This domain of learning also teaches the student about cause and effect and encourages the solving of problems with general logic. The interpretive domain of learning teaches the student about the human condition. It focuses on how we are as people and the ways in which we relate to each other. It looks at how we communicate and create meaning in our social

identities. The critical domain is inward and encourages the student to focus on themselves. It teaches self-reflection to increase awareness, thoughts and feelings, supporting greater interaction and empathy with others. Habermas encouraged these levels of engagement to develop questioning of and resistance to unwanted social control and enact societal structural change (although my research focuses on personal rather than wider political transformation). Utilising education as a platform for individual change is pertinent to individuals in prison as they strive to move away from negative behaviours and identities towards a more positive, socially inclusive future. Education can also encourage an increased sense of agency and control over one's life that is important to both capability functioning and desistance. These links shall be outlined in more detail in the following two chapters and discussed in relation to my research in chapters five through eight.

These ideals of transformative learning were further developed by sociologist Jack Mezirow. His theories (1990, 1991, 2000, 2009) focused on how adult learners can utilise education to make sense of their life experiences. The transformation through learning occurs when there is a shift in our attitudes and/or beliefs (a meaning scheme) or our entire perspective (habit of mind). These adapt to become more inclusive, open and capable of change (both in how we view ourselves and others). If transformation is to be nurtured, adult educators should encourage students to move from an argumentative mindset to an empathetic one to engage with and understand others' points of view. Trust and support must exist within the learning process from educator to student and student to student for reflective discourse to occur (Mezirow, 2000). For those in prison, transformative education can be filled with hope and promise. It can encourage students to engage with the meaning of the world around them and their lives within it. From this a person can determine and examine their conduct and behaviours, possibly finding a path forward that supports desistance (Morin, 1981). My final data chapter will discuss this behavioural and identity shift in connection to participants' experiences of education in prison.

In their research on adult education in prisons, Costelloe and Warner (2003) explain that transformative learning acknowledges the past experiences of learners, enveloping them into the construction of new knowledge and skills. It is critical in nature and involves the process of assessing presuppositions and assumptions whilst also understanding personal development. It focuses on making things happen rather than things happening to the student.

If transformative learning occurs, it can directly connect and help those in prison to move away from the high fatalism that Maruna (2001) found incarcerated individuals generally display. Duguid (2000) explains that by focusing on the development of agency in the student rather than imposing criminal justice agendas, it enables the development of the whole person rather than trying to get the student to adopt the understanding of the self that has been prescribed by the facilitator. Due to its potential to transform preconceptions, prejudices and indoctrinations, prison education may have the ability to facilitate a greater degree of change in students than programmes that are solely focused on addressing offending behaviours (Costelloe and Warner, 2003). These challenges to thinking patterns and beliefs connect to the social-psychological development theory of learner which suggests that new behaviours can be evoked through exposure to both academic and educational programmes (see Bandura, 1977; Orpinas et al., 1995). Through the development of cognitive and physical abilities, those engaging with education can improve their psychological wellbeing. This can advance communication skills and increase self-esteem and agency that can help individuals work towards a crime-free life (see Reagen and Stoughton, 1976; Gendrau and Ross, 1979; Warner, 1999). On a daily basis, education and learning can make time in prison more bearable and the increased stimulation can foster improved wellbeing. As well as individual change, education can also contribute to our economic output and social inclusion which I shall now look at.

1.4   Education, Human and Social Capital

Becker and Schultz's (1963, 1994) human capital approach to education considers its central role as supporting the creation of skills and knowledge that serves as an investment in the productivity of the human being as a worker. Learning allows workers to be more productive and therefore become more economically solvent. By recognising that education produces a more developed knowledge and skill-set and is therefore an investment in the labour market, economists have used this theory to estimate the economic returns from the provision of education and training (Robeyns, 2006).

Education in prison can contribute to the development of human capital. This is influenced by Merton's (1938) Strain Theory and connects to opportunity theory which suggests that most crimes (especially those on the street) are usually carried out by lower income,

undereducated and disenfranchised members of society (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960). This can be explained by the lack of legitimate economic opportunities, making crime a more viable option (Warner, 1999). Research indicates a correlation between the level of qualification a person holds and their earning potential throughout their lifetime. At the highest end of the scale, a person with a university degree will, on average, earn more than twice that of a person who left secondary school with few or no qualifications. For those who leave school with qualifications and go straight into work, they will generally still earn more than those leaving school with none (Ferrer et al., 2006). As nearly half of the UK prison population hold no qualifications, their earning potential will remain generally low throughout their lifetime (Bromley Briefings, 2019). The more training, qualifications and skills-development that a person can access should result in increased human capital as wider and better job opportunities open up (see Bays, 1999; Becker, 1993; Pendleton, 1988; Tootoonchi, 1990). However, human capital theory focuses only on the productivity and economic end of a person rather than their overall wellbeing and happiness. This conflicts with Nussbaum's CA (2000) as she argues for each person being an end in themselves rather than a means of production for the gain of others. While increased skills and earning potential hold significance for individuals as it can help to improve quality of life, it should not be viewed as a robust wholesale approach to education as it overlooks individual wellbeing.

From a social capital viewpoint, education can play a central role in the development of social skills. Psychologist and educational reformer John Dewey (1916) asserted that the human condition is based on social interactions and we develop our sense of self through social relationships. As well as advancing our skills of communication and interaction, our intellectual tools are socially developed through learning which includes a person's morals, ideals, customs and values. The role of education in early socialisation can also act as induction into a society's norms and values (Bartlett et al., 2001). These are reference points to the individual as they navigate life's challenges while encouraging engagement in personal and community relationships. The hope is that these types of social bonds that are weakened through imprisonment can be someway strengthened through learning.

Research by educationalist James Coleman (1994) indicated that school attainment increases social capital which becomes a productive resource for marginalised individuals (and not just the privileged as Bourdieu argued). The social relationships developed through this

pursuit of social capital connect the self to wider collective interests. Areas such as communication and shared norms and ideologies make up these social relationships, allowing us to both rely on and develop from each other. In connection to this, even when other factors such as social class were taken into account, children still demonstrated improved educational attainment if their families had greater access to social capital. Through engagement with education while in custody, it is hoped that individuals can experience an increase in their attainment and social capital that may have been missed out on when they were younger. This can create an important advantage in the development of human capital (see Field, 2003; McNeill and Whyte, 2013), increasing employability and social inclusion which, in turn, can support desistance. How education factors into this process will now be considered.

1.5   Education and Desistance

The links between education and desistance will be discussed at length throughout the participants' narratives in chapter five through eight but at this point I will initially consider the ways in which learning can encourage the desistance process.

A central aim of prison education is to develop assets that help individuals to move away from offending. Research has shown that involvement in education and skills-development can increase the likelihood of securing a job after release, reducing recidivism in turn (Ellison et al., 2017). It can also promote the discovery and development of a new identity that is central to successful desistance, linking with the possible transformative nature of learning as already explained (see Paternoster and Bushway, 2009; Farrall and Maruna, 2004; Maruna, 2001). Prison education is not simply about knowledge exchange, it can also help teach individuals to analyse and problem-solve, change and develop their thinking patterns and ultimately see the world differently. Overall, it assumes that students can be taught and influenced by the process, changing as a result of it and moving away from their offending past (Ripley, 1993).

Maruna (2010) found that education in prison can also build confidence and help students to discover previously undiscovered talents and skills. By utilising learning to explore new

talents and abilities, self-confidence and a more positive self-image is nurtured, both of which are integral to successful desistance. While this connects to the current SPS assets-based approach to rehabilitation, education holds a unique perspective in that it does not necessarily seek to directly address offending behaviours upon which prison-led rehabilitation focuses. Rather, the person is able to change their persona to student once within the Learning Centre, moving away from their prisoner identity and focusing on them as a person (Duguid et al., 1996; Costelloe and Warner, 2008).

Identity development also connects to moral development theory and the idea that individual internal change can occur through interaction with rehabilitative services. Duguid (1992) stressed that education can play a central role in unlocking the latent humanity in all of us as learning can encourage us to explore what it means to be human. This supports our ability to engage and identify with the situation of others, increasing our capacity to be empathetic. In turn, this can direct decision-making towards moral reasoning and away from self-satisfaction, suggesting that if prison-based students are taught in this manner then behaviours should adjust accordingly (Hobler, 1999). This, of course, fits well with Nussbaum's CA with regard to personhood and respect for all in addition to treating others as ends not means. In a wider sense, education cultivates the whole person, developing our empathy, increasing socialisation, developing the skills of self-reflection and mutual engagement that help to develop active citizenship. In short, it can provide the participant with a sense of belonging and nurture pro-social engagement (Nussbaum, 1997; Waller, 2000). These skills can play a role in helping an individual look to the future in a manner that is hopeful, agentic and crime free (Szifris, 2016).

Links between the theories outlined in this section and participants' experiences will be discussed in chapters five through eight. In order to give direct context to my research sites, an overview of prison education in Scotland will now be outlined.

1.6   Prison Education in Scotland

At the time of this research, prison education was provided by two further education colleges. Carnegie College (now Fife College) covered prison Learning Centres in the east

of Scotland while Motherwell College (now New College Lanarkshire) covered prison Learning Centres in the west. Both colleges held clear aims and objectives about the delivery and outcomes within their provision of prison education. Carnegie College stated:

> Our work focuses on literacies and essential skills. Our approach reflects a modern style of learning and skills provision, that provides a quality learning experience underpinned by CfE. (Carnegie College, 2013)

Motherwell College outlined a similar provision:

> The college aims to provide a learning and skills service which offers individuals a second chance and equips them with skills and knowledge required to reintegrate into society and move into employment and training. (Motherwell College, 2013)

Both providers placed a clear focus on the development of core skills that is underpinned by Curriculum for Excellence (CfE). CfE is the Scottish three to eighteen curriculum mandate outlined by the government which aims to promote learning as a multi-disciplinary and lifelong process. It places an emphasis on inter-disciplinary learning to support students who embody the four capacities of 'successful learners, confident individuals, responsible adults and effective contributors' (Education Scotland, 2008). Within their 2013 Organisational Review, SPS placed education and skills development as a core focus for rehabilitation, moving towards an approach that recognises the assets of prisoners rather than their deficits. Linking with CfE policy, activities support the development of learning and employability; wellbeing, resilience and self-esteem; volunteering and reparation; and citizenship. The intention from the SPS is that everyone in their care will have a person-centred, asset-based plan that through development, will support the desistance journey (SPS, 2013). Within educational provision, students would be screened in literacy and numeracy during induction to ascertain their appropriate level of study on the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) framework. This was indicative rather than binding and the student could be moved up or down a level depending on their comfort in the classroom. Each student serving a long-term

sentence had an individual learning plan which established the subjects they were initially interested in and a timetable would be drawn up from that.

Following initial engagement, education staff had to remain aware that returning to education as adults could be intimidating due to negative experiences when individuals were younger (this will be discussed further in chapter five). If engagement was not solidified in their early visits then students were at risk of disengaging again. Individuals attended education for a variety of reasons, often primarily to get out of their rooms and mix with others. This should not and was not viewed as a negative reason for attending. While qualification attainment is the central focus in mainstream education, it was important to explain to students in prison they could attend as much as they wanted without having to work towards modules. As a learning preference, some students only selected classes that had no formal qualifications such as art and philosophy. What was often underneath student concerns about qualification attainment was a lack of self-confidence in being able to achieve. What I continually witnessed was a move on to module work once individuals became comfortable in class and their self-esteem increased. Equally as important were the 'soft-skills' that are developed through time in the classroom. An improvement in self-confidence and self-esteem has already been mentioned, while enhanced communication skills were also important as many students struggled not just with literacy, but also verbalisation of their needs and wants. This is often an ability that can be taken for granted by those who possess it while those who struggle with communication can be crippled by its effects. For example, for a student who suffered from mental health problems, developing their communication skills could help them to verbalise to staff exactly how they felt, assisting the process of treatment and support.

Another focus in education is self-reflection and an increased sense of agency. As mentioned in my introduction, individuals in prison generally feel they have little control over their own lives (Maruna, 2000). The challenges often faced, such as addiction, make it difficult to be governed much beyond the fulfilment of basic needs. If these can be met, and many participants described how they were met during incarceration, this can provide the sort of support needed to engage with services that aim to develop agency. As will be discussed later, many participants attested to an improvement in agency as they were able to think and plan for their future, utilising their time in education and the work sheds to develop the skills

to hopefully support their aspirations. For many participants, the development of agency also included engagement with offending catalysts, acceptance of their previous criminal identities and, most importantly, an increased ability to decide and engineer who they wanted to be. This journey is not without enormous pitfalls and restrictions, but what many participants attested to was an improved sense of agency over their lives for the first time.

1.7 Conclusion

Assets from education take many forms, as educational theories suggest. This chapter has detailed the provision of and access to education as a human right and how this is adapted within prison. I then provided an overview of the types of transformation that can be harnessed through learning. Personal change and the acquisition of social and human capital through education were all briefly considered. The role that education can play in the desistance journey was then touched upon although this will be discussed more fully later in this thesis. An overview of adult learning in prison at the time of my research closed the chapter. Within the CA, education is a support structure to increase an individual's ability to attain and function within Nussbaum's list of ten (2000). A detailed overview of the approach and the ways in which it measures wellbeing is the focus of my next chapter.

Chapter Two

The Capabilities Approach

2.1 Introduction

The CA emerged in the 1980s as a new strand of welfare economics. It focuses on the distribution of goods within a society with an emphasis on the wellbeing of citizens and the opportunities available to them (Nussbaum, 2011). The original theory was outlined by economist Amartya Sen and developed by philosopher Martha Nussbaum. While this research will focus primarily on Nussbaum's approach, comparing this to Sen's theoretical stance will provide a broad overview of both. Hence, in this section I will firstly provide a very brief overview of the CA's influences and oppositions. From this I will provide a short account of Sen's CA and then move on to a more detailed description of Nussbaum's CA along with her list of ten central capabilities. The role of functioning, agency and adaptive preferences will also be outlined, with the chapter concluding with a discussion of the pivotal role that education plays within capability development.

2.2 Other Measurements of Development

For many years the most popular method for measuring the development of a country was the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) approach. GDP relied on the 'trickle-down theory' popular in the 80s and 90s, which suggested that economic growth was bound to indirectly improve the lot of those at the bottom of the social scale. However, this often does not happen in practice. Nussbaum (2011) explains that this approach does have its advantages as GDP is easy to measure, since the monetary value of goods and services makes it possible to compare quantities of various types. It is also relatively transparent as it is difficult for countries to alter their numbers to make a better impression. However, through his research Sen has shown that an increase in a country's economic growth does not necessarily denote an improvement in quality of living for people (Sen and Dreze, 1996). Sen suggests that it is more fruitful to instead use the CA, via the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) when trying to ascertain quality of life. The HDI index, (utilising Sen as a consultant)

was created to emphasise that people's capabilities should be the most important criteria for analysing the development of a country or region, rather than simply economic growth (as the GDP scale dictates). The data from the HDI reports, which factor in education and longevity, often highlights the shortcomings of the GDP system for tracing human development and living standards. For example, in 2019 the United States was at number one in the GDP scale but number thirteen in the HDI. This indicates that the more nuanced details of wellbeing that are indicated in the HDI are beneficial to ascertaining the standard of living for citizens rather than judging that on economic 'health' alone. The CA provides further detail in this area and I shall now consider both Sen and Nussbaum's versions of the approach in that order.

2.3 Sen and the Capabilities Approach

Sen's initial work around the measurement of citizen's capabilities centred on what people are able to do and what is of intrinsic value in life rather than on the use of material goods or economic measures to assess value or utility. He states that capabilities comprise of what a person is able to do or be, namely:

> '…the ability to be well nourished, to avoid escapable morbidity or mortality, to read, write and communicate, to take part in the life of the community, to appear in public without shame.' (Sen, 1999, p 126)

Sen's main concern has been to identify capability as the most important tool of comparison to assess quality of life. Through this he changed the direction of the global development debate. However, his version of the approach, unlike Nussbaum's, does not propose a definite list of capabilities, although the two theorists do agree in their central focus on certain capabilities such as health and education. Sen's approach does not propose a definite account of basic justice, although it does clearly concern itself with issues in this area, for example, in his focus on instances of capability shortfalls or failures that result from racial or gender discrimination (Saito, 2003).

Like Nussbaum, Sen makes it clear that the role of education in the approach is multiple and complex. Being educated has been described by Sen as a basic capability that is centrally important to the beings and doings crucial to wellbeing (Sen, 1992). Through education one can develop and promote a concrete set of basic learning outcomes, such as the ability to read and write (Unterhalter, 2003). But, for both Sen and Nussbaum education goes beyond simply developing basic capacities through learning. For example, education is an essential tool in the advancement of social skills and not just for knowledge and qualification acquisition. Sen also outlined that education improves human capital. While higher educational attainment can increase a person's earning potential across their lifetime, it can also expand their ability to 'lead the lives they have reason to value and to enhance the real choices they have' (Sen, 1999, p 293). This standpoint parallels that of Nussbaum and I now turn to her CA.

2.4 Nussbaum and the Capabilities Approach

For both Sen and Nussbaum, the CA is closely aligned with human rights. The approach is premised on the belief that citizens have certain fundamental entitlements which may be demanded as a matter of basic justice. In contrast to human rights approaches, however, Nussbaum's CA is deeper and more definite, specifying clearly that a threshold level of capabilities should be viewed as entitlements which are deeper than rights (Nussbaum, 2000).

The basic 'intuitive idea' of the CA emerges from 'a conception of the dignity of the human being', and of a life that is worthy of that dignity from which a basic social minimum is provided in the form of 'human capabilities' – that is what people are actually able to do and to be (Nussbaum, 2006, p 74). The capabilities entail a minimum threshold level beneath which the person is not able to live in a truly human way. Here, for both Nussbaum and Sen, each person is seen as an 'end', as a distinct individual, not a means or instrument for some other person's gain, so that the capabilities sought are sought for each and every person and not, in the first instance, for groups or families or states or other corporate bodies. The ultimate political goal should be the promotion of the capabilities of each individual. Taken together, these concepts are what makes the approach a more enriching tool to measure quality of human life compared to the GDP approach (Nussbaum, 2000).

Nussbaum's CA is about what people are able to do and be within the social, political and domestic situations in which they live, and it can afford an evaluation of whether these situations are restricting them from reaching their full potential or 'capabilities'. Nussbaum constructed a list of the capabilities she believes should be present for every person to achieve a threshold standard of living. To have access to all the capabilities means one has the capacity to lead a fulfilling life within an acceptable standard of living. Nussbaum's list of ten defines the areas of wellbeing that governments as well as publicly funded institutions should aim to develop for their citizens (Nussbaum, 2000).

The human capabilities list as compiled by Nussbaum (2000) is as follows:

1. Life. Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely.

2. Bodily health. Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; being adequately nourished; being able to have adequate shelter.

3. Bodily integrity. Being able to move freely from place to place; being able to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.

4. Senses, imagination, thought. Being able to use the senses; being able to imagine, to think, and to reason and to do these things in a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education; being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing, and producing expressive works and events of one's own choice; being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech and freedom of religious exercise; being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain

5. Emotions. Being able to have attachments to things and persons outside ourselves; being able to love those who love and care for us; being able to grieve at their absence, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger; not having one's emotional developing blighted by fear or anxiety.

6. Practical reason. Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's own life.

7. Affiliation. Being able to live for and in relation to others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; being able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; having the capability for both justice and friendship. Being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others.

8. Other species. Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.

9. Play. Being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities.

10. Control over one's environment. (A) Political: being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the rights of political participation, free speech and freedom of association. **(B) Material:** being able to hold property (both land and movable goods); having the right to seek employment on an equal basis with others

As outlined in my introduction, the prisoner population suffer poorer mental health, physical and social problems compared to that of the general population (see Bromley Briefings, 2019). Such malign states of wellbeing demonstrate individuals' severely restricted capabilities both leading up to and after receiving a custodial sentence. Furthermore, imprisonment, by its very nature restricts a person's capabilities. For example, while in custody, individuals have no control over their political environment as they are exempt from the electoral vote. The capability of bodily integrity is damaged as those in prison cannot move around freely and are often victim to various forms of assault. These are brief examples of how custody restricts an individual's capabilities but this will be returned to in more detail in chapters seven and eight where participants describe their experiences of prison. Once a person has attained capabilities, it is their decision how to function within them. The role of functioning with the CA will now be discussed.

2.5 The Role of Functioning

While Nussbaum's (2000) aim is primarily for the attainment of capabilities for individuals, she also places an emphasis on functioning within capabilities. To function is to realise, employ or enact a capability, and it can be active or passive. For example, a person in prison may have the capability for senses, imagination and thought and may wish to develop this

through using the education facilities provided. However, individuals may remain apathetic or doubtful about the value of education, and so choose not to attend classes even though it could be an essential tool in helping them realise capabilities and flourishing. Capabilities therefore stand for the extent of freedom that a person has in order to achieve different functionings (Alexander, 2008). However, once capabilities are open to people, their right to choose how to function within should not be overridden (such as choosing to attend or not attend classes). Forcing or pressurising people to convert their capabilities into achieved functionings would amount to unwarranted paternalism and injustice (Alexander, 2008). Young children and cognitively impaired adults are cited as exceptions to this rule of paternalism with the provision of good care being provided by their guardians as well as wider public policies (Nussbaum, 2006). However, as shall be discussed within the data chapters, this provision of care was often not present for participants when they were children. Whether they choose to or not, once in prison, individuals have guardians in the form of officers and staff will, at varying levels, work to ensure the wellbeing of those in their care. But this is a stretched type of guardianship because individuals in prison are only able to make personal choices (and enact agency) in a curtailed manner as their daily life is largely dictated within the restrictions of the regime.

Nussbaum (2011) explains that to promote capabilities is really to promote areas of freedom. This is not the same as making people function in a certain way. In this respect the CA moves away from the tradition within economics that measures the value of a set of options by the use that can be made of them. By contrast, within the CA, options translate into freedoms, and freedom has intrinsic value. This freedom, argues Dreze and Sen (1995) is the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead. For individuals in custody, it can be questioned how much a reduced capability set on the outside led them into offending and away from the freedom to pursue a crime-free life. For example, an addict who has turned to selling drugs to fund their dependency, eventually being incarcerated for that crime would likely display a diminished capability set as they are driven by their basic need to feed their addiction. Limited options are more likely to lead a person down the path of criminal activity and eventually prison, which curtails their options and capability set further as they become subsumed in a restrictive regime. Thus, one cannot best function if the capabilities have been denied, supressed or interfered with for any reason. The capabilities themselves must be in a healthy state of development before an individual can realize functioning within them. As

well as functioning, Nussbaum's capabilities are in three formats which will now be discussed.

2.6 Basic, Internal and Combined Capabilities

Nussbaum (2000) differentiates the capabilities by categorising them as 'internal', 'basic' or 'combined'. The 'basic capabilities' are defined as the 'innate equipment' of individuals that create the necessary basis for developing more advanced capabilities (Nussbaum, 2010). Basic capabilities are innate talents and skills, such as the capacity to learn, to be fearless and so on. Internal capabilities are trained and developed traits of character and personality such as literacy, emotional capacity, reasoning skills, musical aplomb, physical fitness, and so on. Nussbaum (2011) argues that one role of a responsible society that wants (and should) support the most important human capabilities is to promote the development of internal capabilities. This can be done primarily through providing and giving access to a comprehensive system of education, resources to enhance physical and emotional wellbeing and support for family care and love. Finally, there are the 'combined capabilities' which are internal capabilities connected to suitable external conditions for the exercise of functioning. For example, citizens of a repressive non-democratic regime may have the internal but not the combined capability to exercise free thought and speech in accordance with their conscience. The very experience of being 'locked up' in prison restricts an individual's freedom and prospects to choose and to act. Once back in the community, a basic level of education combined with the often restricted economic and domestic situations that individuals in the prison system characteristically come from again limits these freedoms. In short, to secure a capability to a person, it is not sufficient to produce good internal states of readiness to act in some way: the enthusiasm to learn; the desire to lead a healthy life. It is also necessary to prepare the material and institutional environment so that people are actually able to function, such as access to a decent standard of education and health and wellbeing support services.

Substance abuse issues among the prisoner population are likely to negatively affect capability attainment. If an individual suffers from an alcohol or drug dependency then their choices and opportunities are restricted in favour of satiating their cravings. Should this immediate need fail to be addressed then capability attainment (and possible functioning)

will be reduced further due to challenging withdrawal symptoms. At the same time, many of those in prison also display underdeveloped internal capabilities: they generally display lower than average levels of educational attainment. This can create or compound a reduced capability. Combined with economic (unemployment, limited income households) and social (poor housing, negative personal relationships) environments that further limit freedoms and choice, this makes both capability attainment and any resulting functioning more challenging to achieve.

An individual can also function at varying levels within a capability at different points of their lives. They may retain the capability throughout this but function at higher or lower levels for various reasons. For example, an individual who has carer responsibilities can still possess the capability of practical reason but be at a lesser level of previous functioning due to these responsibilities. Being a carer means the individual has to assume responsibility for another person's wellbeing, often with higher priority to their own. This could result in their capability of practical reason being reduced because both their short and long-term life plans are primarily centred around the individual(s) they care for and not themselves. Conversely, their functioning may increase again in the future should their circumstances allow it. Likewise, an individual in prison may wish to voice their criticism of governmental and institutional policies but may lack the internal capabilities of being articulate or to reason enough to construct or deliver a confident argument. This is coupled with the lack of combined capabilities of being informed about how to participate politically. This indicates an example of internal and combined capability failure. Conversely, some will have the internal capabilities of being educated and politically active enough to want to participate but they lack the combined capacity to see this to fruition as incarceration blocks this right. The prison system does, however, offer opportunities for individuals to develop their internal capabilities (education, health and addiction support) so they can exercise more freely their combined capabilities. Many individuals, however, either fail to take up these opportunities because their sentences are too short, or because they are too disengaged or traumatised to fully interact with the services available. Once a person enjoys a minimum threshold within the capabilities, they may then have the capacity to function as they wish within this set. The eventual goal is that they have the ability to be an agent in their own lives and decide on their own path and future. I shall now discuss the role of agency within the CA.

2.7 The Role of Agency

It is important to provide a more detailed discussion of agency before considering its role within the CA. The debate surrounding the interpretation and meaning of this term has existed since the Enlightenment. Although embedded in the religious morality of that time period, this movement allowed for the philosophical and theoretical creation of the individual as a free agent. Part of this freedom was a person's ability to make their own rational choices on behalf of his or herself and wider society. Before this point humans were viewed as being subject to the will of various higher powers such as the church and state (Lukes, 1974). Various philosophers and sociologists throughout and after this period have debated the role of agency. However, I shall focus only on that which directly connects to my research, particularly its role within the CA and how it can be restricted by societal structures.

Sen and Nussbaum agree on how they view the role of agency within the CA:

> The freedom to lead different types of life is reflected in the person's capability set. The capability of the person depends on a variety of factors, including personal characteristics and social arrangements. A full accounting of individual freedom must, or course, go beyond the capabilities of personal living and pay attention to the person's other objectives (eg, social goods not directly related to one's own life), but human capabilities constitute an important part of the individual freedom. (Nussbaum and Sen, 1993, p 32)

The capabilities, in other words, means freedom to function in ways valuable to realising a person's goals and plans.

As outlined in my introduction, the term autonomy aligns to the philosophical concept of freedom and choice. Agency is a sociological perspective that refers to humans as social actors and specifically, an individual's capacity to act (Erimbayer and Mische, 1998). Nussbaum uses the term autonomy politically rather than comprehensively (Nussbaum,

2011a) and instead utilises the term freedoms to align to the concept of agency. While these terms are often used interchangeably both in research and throughout this thesis, I adhere more closely to the sociological concept of agency when discussing participants' abilities to act within their own lives. Nussbaum (2000) refers to the exercise of autonomy within the CA in two senses. Firstly, she outlines it as a suitable threshold level of each central capability that is reached for every person (Nussbaum, 2000, 2003). The list of capabilities affirms that human life ought to be heterogeneous: each component such as health, education, political liberties and self-respect, is qualitatively distinct and important in its own right. Or, put more simply, one capability cannot be substituted for another: they are non-fungible (Nussbaum, 2000). Once attained, individuals can choose how to function within them, for example, to pursue education. This is the second sense of agency. Critical to the exercise of autonomy, and indeed to all the capabilities, is 'practical reason' understood as 'being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life' (Nussbaum, 2000). Nussbaum's list of capabilities, therefore, has to be constantly accompanied and supported by critical reflection, public discussion and democratic deliberation (Alexander, 2008). Regardless of a person's access to the capabilities, without the faculty of reasoning, they would not be acting as a fully autonomous individual, and thus, would not be considered 'fully functioning' in this approach.

As Nussbaum formulates it: 'capability, not functionings, is the appropriate political goal' (2000, p 87). The government should provide a threshold level of capabilities and citizens should decide their chosen level of functioning. By equalising people's capability set rather than their functioning, this allows the space for personal responsibility. We should not force people to achieve a particular level of functioning as this would mean we were trying to control their manner of 'doing and being'. This would be a paternalistic interference from the state and society that Nussbaum does not recommend (Alexander, 2008). As a partial theory of justice, the CA aims to see persons as 'agents' who can take responsibility for not only their actions but also the choices they make. They should not be mere 'patients' for whom welfare should be provided irrespective of whether or not they have assumed responsibility for their lives. However, both Sen and Nussbaum argue it objectionable that some individuals are worse off than others simply due to a lack of good fortune. As already discussed, Sen and Nussbaum argue that when a person's standing is worse off than others in terms of crucial functioning, (such as levels of education, health or employment), because

of factors and circumstances beyond their control, society has some obligation to make good these shortfalls (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 2009). However, provided the opportunities for education and health are available, the way in which individuals make use of these facilities is up to the person's autonomous functioning (Nussbaum, 2006).

But how much freedom do individuals in prison have to realise capabilities or enact agency? Houchin (2005) found that the prisoner population in Scotland is characterised by poor educational attainment, limited employment experience and extensive health problems. In this situation, the CA argues that society has some obligations to make good the shortfalls in some form. Nussbaum (and Sen) assert that there should be state provision in order to equalise citizens' capabilities to those with more income. While it is central to uphold the ideal that the outcome of people's lives should be moulded around the choices they have made, it should also be upheld that society should view it as a duty to create and provide certain conditions and institutions that can enable individuals to make worthwhile choices (Alexander, 2008). As the prison estate is predominantly working with a societal group with a limited capability set, if Nussbaum and Sen's theory is to be upheld, it is the institution's (and ergo the government's) responsibility to provide a threshold level of capabilities for this group as well as supporting developed levels of functioning.

The structural restrictions of imprisonment make capability attainment and functioning even more problematic. Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) bounded agency theory explains that while individuals may have been afforded agency, this can be restricted to varying degrees depending on the environment(s) they inhabit.

> We might therefore speak of the double constitution of agency and structure: temporal-relational contexts support particular agentic orientations, which in turn constitute different structuring relationships of actors toward their environments. It is the constitution of such orientations within particular structural contexts that gives form to effort and allows actors to assume greater or lesser degrees of transformative leverage in relation to the structuring contexts of action. (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998, p 1004)

This 'double constitution' means that individuals' attempts to follow established or planned paths are often blocked by the social, political or economic conditions they exist within. This results in a retreat back into (or remaining within) familiar and conventional roles (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998). In the case of those in the prison system, even if the motivation to enact agency is present (such as will be seen in my final data chapter), the restrictions of the regime and a lack of societal acceptance post-release, may obstruct an individual's pursual of a new identity. While the CA argues that shortfalls in capability set should be upheld by the state, this does not necessarily create a societal shift significant enough for individuals to enact agentic functioning within them. Structural restrictions can limit the options open to a person and therefore confine their sense of agency to existing within these restrained conditions (Rubenson and Desjardins, 2009). For example, the capability of bodily health can be afforded to individuals through state provided healthcare (as we have in the UK). However, individuals can have problems accessing this (particularly a GP) if they do not have stable accommodation. An individual leaving prison may wish to secure employment and have been working on their skill-set to support this while in custody. However, pre-employment checks and general societal attitudes to those who have been incarcerated may block their capacity to obtain a job. Consequentially, a lack of regular income and general disillusionment from not being able to achieve the goals they had set for themselves could be a catalyst for individuals to return to offending and their previous role of 'criminal' and 'prisoner'. The discovery and enactment of agency is then, a central state in both the CA and desistance and I shall return to this throughout my thesis. As well as societal restrictions on agency, research in disciplines such as psychology, sociology and philosophy have examined the possibility that a person's assessment of their situation is not always fixed by current objective circumstances but rather influenced by expectations, aspirations, previous experiences and their social reference groups (Burchardt, 2004). I shall now discuss this idea in connection to the CA.

2.8 Adaptive Preferences

How much do people become accustomed to the situations they find themselves in and subsequently set their aspirations and expectations in line with this? This is a pertinent question for capability theorists as the existence of 'adaptive preferences' is one of the

principal arguments used to demonstrate the advantages of a capabilities framework over other similar theories, such as welfarism (Burchardt, 2004).

Sen explains why those who have suffered deprivation throughout life may not be dissatisfied with their circumstances:

> The battered slave, the broken unemployed, the hopeless destitute, the tamed housewife, may have the courage to desire little, but the fulfilment of those disciplined desires is not a sign of great success and cannot be treated in the same way as the fulfilment of the confident and demanding desires of the better placed. (Sen, 1987, p 11).

Nussbaum's research offers a similar argument when she discusses the experiences of a woman who had been a victim of prolonged domestic violence. The individual explained that this was simply a woman's lot in life and it was only after leaving the violent relationship that she realised her rights had been violated (Nussbaum, 2001). Nussbaum uses cases such as this to question when the individual's contemporary subjective assessment is the relevant metric to assess the justice or injustice of the situation (Burchardt, 2004). Likewise, when assessing an incarcerated person's capability development and functioning, their adaptive preferences must be taken into consideration. For many of those in the prison system, growing up and still living within unstable and economically challenged home environments means they may not personally view their capability set as underdeveloped. The benefit of utilising Nussbaum's list is that it offers a normative analytical framework to measure individual wellbeing and adaptive preferences throughout participants' lives. I will discuss the issue of adaptive preferences throughout participants' narratives in chapters five through eight. As previously noted, access to a decent standard of education is one of the main tools in helping people to achieve the capabilities (Nussbaum, 2006) and I shall now give more detailed consideration to the role of education in the CA.

2.9 Capabilities and Education

Being educated has been described by Sen (1992) as a basic capability and integral to the important beings and doings that are crucial to wellbeing. He argues that education plays a role not only in accumulating human capital but also in broadening human capability. Nussbaum (2000) does not outline education as one of her ten capabilities but instead argues that education permeates both the approach itself and her list. For both, education is referred to as foundational to other capabilities through providing access to learning and promoting a concrete set of basic outcomes, such as the abilities to read and write (Unterhalter, 2003). Nussbaum, while centralising education as essential to capability development, also identifies three capabilities associated with learning (in her list of ten): practical reason (which involves critical thinking); affiliation (for example, the ideal of being a global citizen); and senses, imagination and thought (within the development of the narrative imagination) (Nussbaum, 1997, 2002, 2006). Further to this, both she and Sen view education as a precondition for capabilities not to be constrained in the future. Rather capabilities, and an individual's ability to function within them, are gained and developed through access to and interaction with learning, inseparably linking together capability attainment and functioning (Fegter and Richter, 2014). In order to fully expand the substantive freedom of people to live the life they value and to enhance their real choices, education can and should be seen as more than only foundational to other capabilities. A more complete perspective would be the concept of equitable access to an education that specifically enhances capability (Nussbaum, 2011; Hoffman, 2006). A democratic and responsible society (such as we claim to have in Scotland) ought to provide a comprehensive system of rehabilitation (including access to education, counselling and addiction services) within, and after release from, prison to ensure that individuals have more constructive and plural options in life other than being forced to return to deprivation, abuse or criminal activity.

As discussed in chapter one, the human capital approach to education argues that it can open-up more varied employment, making individuals less vulnerable on the labour market. This makes it crucial to people's standard of living and their ability to protect themselves and those around them from varying degrees of poverty (Robeyns, 2006). While this research does not restrict itself to an application of the human capital approach to learning, it does

recognise its pertinence to those from lower income areas (as is prevalent among the prison population), as achieving a basic level of skills and a comprehensive level of education can make all the difference between merely surviving and having a decent life with capability achievement (Robeyns, 2006). Stable employment, and the economic security this can provide, is a contributing factor to successful desistance, demonstrating a direct connection between the positives of the human capital approach and prison education. However, as touched upon in chapter one, the personal and collective social roles developed within education are overlooked in the human capital approach in favour of increased economic output (Robeyns, 2006). It places less emphasis on the soft-skills and self-efficacy that is developed through learning. Often these aspects can be the most transformative for prison-based students and so should not be overlooked. While this research acknowledges the importance of economic growth as a positive of increased educational development, to focus solely on this approach would not provide a comprehensive enough analysis or one focused on social justice.

Robeyns (2006) discusses the various purposes of education and how these can translate and be developed as relevant and appropriate choices for individuals. A person may simply value knowing something simply for the sake of developing knowledge (Dreze and Sen, 2002). While this may be part of the motivation for individuals to attend the prison Learning Centres, its role as a rehabilitative service indicates a wider transformative function, both individually and systemically. On an individual level, learning does not simply have to be related to a development in economic capital. If learning brings about developed literacy skills then this will translate into wider access to information for individuals, for example, by being able to read daily news or books of their choosing. This can raise awareness of issues relating to politics, health, economics, and so on. Communication, at every level, becomes more accessible and an individual's personal and collective voice can become more powerful. It provides the possibility of looking beyond the lives of those who came before and provides the capacity to shape a future instilled with options. From an early age it can helps us learn to live in a society where people have differing views on what constitutes a 'good life', in the hope that this contributes to a more tolerant society in general (Robeyns, 2006).

Given the centrality of education to a person's life opportunities, unfortunately the low level of uptake of this service in prison shows that many individuals are choosing not to extend their capabilities or function in education during their sentence. Our choices may be diminished or constrained not only by the resources available to us, but also by the ways in which our preferences and ambitions are formed (Alexander, 2008). Previous negative experiences in the classroom and low aspiration can adversely affect how much value one places on education, lessening the possibility of engagement. As well as trying to address capability and attainment disadvantages within the student group, prison education attempts to rectify previous negative experiences. The intention is to shift attitudes towards a more positive perception of learning so the cyclical issue of low importance and self-efficacy within education is not then passed on to the next generation.

By developing a capability set through learning, individuals in prison are being equipped with the skills and abilities to expand their options in regard to future learning and employment (although, as mentioned, criminal record checks for many jobs still make this a challenging hurdle to overcome). The development of a pro-social identity and re-immersion into community participation is essential to reducing the chance of reoffending. Since identity is socially constructed and negotiated, securing long-term change depends not just on how one sees oneself but also on how one is seen by others, and on how one sees one's place in society. Putting it more simply, desistance is a social and political process as much as a personal one (McNeill and Schinkel, 2007). Both transformative learning and the development of capabilities such as senses, imagination and thought along with practical reason can support a person in prison to develop a sense of agency within their own lives while beginning to see themselves in a different context. Engaging with learning or work can support an individual to move away from their previous identities associated with offending and towards ones (such as student or employee) that are more positively accepted by themselves and others. It is within these areas of transformation that education, capability development and the desistance journey all begin to intersect. The following chapter will consider desistance in more detail.

2.10 Conclusion

The CA provides a framework to measure wellbeing in a more detailed manner than the traditionally utilised GDP and HDI approaches. It can indicate what a person is able to do and be within their society and the level at which their shortfalls should be met as a matter of basic justice (Nussbaum, 2000, 2006, 2011). This framework will be applied both to my research participants and to the wider prisoner demographic throughout this thesis to ascertain in what ways their capabilities are being met (or not). This chapter has provided a brief overview of other contemporary measurements of development before touching on Sen's stance on the CA. I then moved on to a more detailed focus on Nussbaum's CA including her list of ten central capabilities. The role of functioning was then discussed along with a description of basic, internal and combined capabilities. From there I considered the central role of agency within the approach and its connections to adaptive preferences and the issue of restricted choices. This will also be considered alongside the desistance journey throughout this thesis. Finally, I examined the central role that education has to play in the attainment of and functioning within capabilities. This will also be discussed in more detail throughout the data presentation chapters. The other overarching theoretical background to this thesis is desistance theory which shall be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Three

Desistance

3.1 Introduction

While this research, broadly speaking, focuses on the role that education and learning plays in desistance, it is advantageous to look at the wider influences that affect this process. This research recognises that education is only one factor that can encourage desistance and is not a singular or complete answer.

There are many influences that explain both the root causes of offending and the eventual move away from it. Social, domestic, psychological and socio-political factors can all contribute to the development of criminal behaviour. The further marginalisation from community and loved ones that prolonged offending and incarceration brings can make the challenge of desistance even larger. Many desistance studies have focused on the significance of maturation, of various social bonds or on related narrative changes in the individual's sense of self (Maruna, 2001). This section will open with a discussion of the role that aging and social bonds can play in the desistance process. From there, I will consider the development of personal identity as well as agency and the structures that can restrict this. The links between education and desistance will then be discussed as this is a pertinent focus of my research. Finally, the chapter will conclude by examining the idea of imagined desistance and how this links to participants' desistance journeys at the time of interview.

3.2 Age and Maturation

Maturational reform theory is the oldest and most influential of desistance theories, arguing a correlation between age and criminal activity. This theory can usually explain when desistance is most likely to take place but explains little of why and how (Maruna, 2000). Commonly known as the 'age crime curve' (McNeill et al., 2012), early studies in this area likened this to a biological process similar to puberty which Goring (1919 cited McNeill et al., 2012) named 'maturational reform'. The evidence suggests that the majority of

individuals will desist from crime upon reaching their mid-20s or early 30s. A highly consistent finding of longitudinal studies is that offending begins in early adolescence, peaks during the late teens and tapers off in young adulthood (Sapouna et al., 2011). Much of this work saw individuals split into two groups: firstly, those who begin offending for a short period of time; referred to as 'adolescence-limited offenders'; secondly, those termed 'life-course persistent offenders' who begin committing crime earlier than adolescence and continue well into adult life (Moffit, 1993). However, the relationship between age and offending mainly reflects underlying changes in biology, social contexts, attitudes and life circumstances that influence individual motivation to desist rather than a unitary maturation process (Sapouna et al., 2011). It is a thinner strand within the large influences that encourage desistance and these will now be discussed in turn.

3.3 Social Bonds

Social bonds theory argues that varying ties to relationship, family, learning and employment can explain changes in criminal behaviour (Maruna, 2000). Theorists have distinguished 'bonding social capital' which is ties to family and friends from 'bridging social capital' which refers to wider ties with community and colleagues (see McNeill and Whyte 2007; McNeill, 2009). Both will be discussed in this section.

Time inside means time spent away from family and loved ones. While many individuals in prison come from disruptive home lives, a custodial sentence can weaken these relationships further. In her comparative study of desisters and non-desisters in Ireland, Healy (2012) discovered that the desire to live up to family expectations and responsibilities was one of the largest triggers to encourage an individual to abstain from further offending. The strong attachments found in these relationships motivated change because they provided the person with emotional support. They also helped develop social roles and provided improved models of pro-social behaviour. Some of Healy's participants stated that having children gave them a more positive outlook, making them want to fulfil family responsibilities and facilitated a change in their offending behaviour. However, having children does not necessarily lead to desistance as other studies have found that this life event can have varying degrees of impact on an individual's offending (see Liebrich, 1993; Giordano et al., 2011; Abel, 2018; Schinkel, 2019).

As well as personal social bonds, bridging social capital can also play a significant role in supporting desistance. This refers to more distant ties with wider networks of colleagues and acquaintances. As well as financial gain, work provides such bridging relationships that can encourage a break from offending. When analysing social structures and how they encourage desistance from crime, Farrall et al. (2010) argued that the difficulties encountered in sourcing stable employment may have a detrimental effect on individual desistance. Firstly, they found the type of employment favoured by most male prisoners after release is manual labour. However, in post-industrial economies, this type of work (like many others) is on the decrease, instead being replaced by posts that often require qualifications or by lower-status jobs often viewed as 'feminised work' (service industries) which might not be considered an option by some men. More pressing is the recent tendency to request criminal record checks for most employment which can drastically limit job choices post release. A lack of formal qualifications can further restrict options. However, employment should not be viewed as a stand-alone reason to cease offending. Like imprisonment, chronic unemployment is both a contributor to social exclusion and a consequence of it. Improving people's potential to compete in the job market can contribute to growing participation in their communities. It is not by itself, however, a remedy to the problem (Houchin, 2005).

Having stable and safe accommodation is also known to support desistance as it increases the chances of finding employment (Harper and Chitty, 2005). But, an individual's links to where they live can often cause more harm than good. Houchin (2005) explains the influence that communities can have on offending behaviours:

> Individuals in communities all have membership of a large range of networks open to them: family, locality peer groups, juvenile gangs, regular drug users, students... Some of these networks will reward adherence to behaviours in conformity with the dominant norms of the wider society. Some will reward behaviours in such direct contravention of those dominant norms that they are sanctioned by criminal law. (Houchin, 2005, p 58)

Various groups will contribute to the person's understanding and relationship with their social environment with regard to how they organise and structure their lives, and often whether they adhere to the law or not. Each network is in competition with the others for the individual's affiliation and the ties to these negative groups can act as both a catalyst to commit crime but also a hindrance in their ability to desist. 'Legitimate society', as Houchin (2005) explains, offers rewards in the forms of employment, income, housing, academic achievement, health and personal security. But for those who affiliate with networks outside this distinction, such as gangs and fellow drug users, it can lead to social exclusion which is often systemically connected to imprisonment.

The Owers Review of the Northern Irish Prison Service (2011) recognised that desistance is a social process as much as a personal one. It outlined that no amount of support within the prison estate can secure desistance without a multi-level community, social and political commitment to prisoner reintegration. Thus families, communities, societal institutions and the state need to be effectively engaged in the process of garnering change. The individual's bond with society has been weakened or broken (depending on how prolific their offending history and prison sentence is). The extent of this bond that exists in the first place depends on the person's attachment to societal goals and how much they are involved in the realisation of these goals. Engagement in offending is more frequent when this bond is at its weakest (Sampson and Laub, 1993). If reintegration post-release is not supported at every level then the amount of legitimate opportunities, such as employment, will not be as readily available. The individual may then return to offending, thus hampering the desistance process (McNeill and Schinkel, 2007). Alongside social bonds, strong evidence has emerged about the importance of self-identity in the desistance process which I shall now discuss.

3.4 Personal Identity

Maruna (2001, p 7) identified that 'to desist from crime, ex-offenders need to develop a coherent, pro-social identity for themselves'. He compared the life narratives of sixty-five men and women with extensive criminal pasts. Those who desisted expressed higher self-efficacy and the belief that they could control their own future, whereas those who persisted in offending displayed a more fatalistic outlook both in the present and the future. He discovered that desisters were more like to see themselves as generally good people and

avoided taking much responsibility for their criminal behaviour. This meant that they possessed a positive self-image that helped them moved away from offending.

Would be desisters often experience a period of self-reflection and reassessment of what is important wherein the individual reflects on their own life, where they have been and where they see themselves in the future (McNeill, et al., 2012). The 'biographical continuity' that a person can achieve from this type of reflection can help to connect those life events that have played a role in their development up to this point (Giddens, 1989). From this comes the ability to construct a new identity, retaining desired parts and discarding others (Giordano et al., 2002). This new self is combined with a future desired identity that the individual can aim to achieve (Bottoms and Shapland, 2016; Szifris, 2018). This conversation with and analysis of the self can have 'the potential of influencing future action' (Friestad, 2012, p 473).

It is here that the distinction between primary and secondary desistance becomes prominent. Primary desistance relates to the ceasing of criminal behaviour, while secondary implies a related shift in identity which matters when trying to secure a longer term and sustained changed. It is about the individual ceasing to see themselves as a criminal and replacing this with a more positive identity (Maruna and Farrall, 2004). Both self-efficacy and agency need to be developed for this change to take hold, moving individuals in prison away from the high levels of fatalism they generally display (McNeill, 2016). From here the hope is that tertiary desistance can also be achieved as another contributor to long-term change. This involves the perception in others that change has occurred in an individual. This can support a sense of belonging and social reintegration that is essential to the process (McNeill, 2016). Education and learning can play a key role in developing some of the skills that are central to this identity exploration and expansion. The development of good communication skills – vocal, verbal and visual – can support an individual to begin the process of analysing themselves and their lives. What educational practitioners must nurture is a student's ability to tap into communication and self-reflection in its various forms and connect it to their histories (Albertson, 2015). This reconciling of a person's past, present and future is essential to creating a starting point from which to move towards a new identity (Vaughn, 2007). As well as the role of interventions such as education, wider social structures must replicate this

support for desistance to be achieved (Vaughn, 2007). It is this step of the process than can be the most challenging and which I shall now consider.

3.5 Agency and Structure

The interplay between personal agency and societal structures has been much debated within desistance literature. Farrall and Bowling (1999) argued that 'the process of desistance is one that is produced through an interplay between individual choices, and a range of wider social forces, institutional and societal practices which are beyond the control of the individual' (1999, p 261) Anthony Gidden's (1984) structuration theory argued that an individual has choices even if these are within the most constrained and desperate circumstances. This correlates with research that has provided examples of successful desistance in the most restricted of outlooks (Farrall et al., 2010). This theory can provide would be desisters with the motivation that the severe restrictions placed upon them by both the prison regime and the societal restrictions post-release can be overcome.

Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice (1977, 1990) explained the interplay between an individual's habits or dispositions (habitus) and the structuring influences of their social world. He argued insight could be gained into the relationship between individual and group behaviours and wider societal structures. For example, a number of the participants identified as being part of a gang during teenage years. While they describe gaining some security and support from these groups, societally they are often viewed as troublesome and not law-abiding. A Bourdieusian reading of these histories might suggest that this anti-social view of these groups, once internalised by members, reinforced their dispositions and further secured their marginalised social positions. In this model, structure is integrated into agency; an individual's actions and behaviours are influenced and restricted within the social frameworks that are imposed upon them (Farrall et al., 2010). Again, using the example of pre-employment criminal conviction checks, for many individuals released from prison, these further restrict access to employment. This reimposes the structure of social marginalisation and punishment that custody imposes upon individuals. In effect, the sentence continues outside the prison walls, restricting a person's ability to resettle and desist. Thus, both agency and choice are restricted by the societal structures that work against those who have been in prison (Bauman, 2004).

With regard to the CA, a person's capability set reflects their (real) opportunities and freedom in life (Alkire, 2008) meaning that if these are restricted then their options and agency (functioning) are also hampered. Due to the type of social restrictions mentioned, potential desisters do not always possess the capability to function in a manner that they value or that supports the process of social inclusion (Crocker and Robeyns, 2010). As the narratives in this thesis will reflect, the valued functionings (and alternative identities) that participants value all connect with social inclusion – secure relationship, family connections, being a good parent, a house, employment, normality (see also Farrall et al., 2010). However, social structures that restrict access to certain jobs, types of housing (such as private rentals and mortgaged properties) and a variety of health and wellbeing support services all contribute to diminished agency and capability functioning within the desistance process.

Desistance is an active process and one in which agency (that is, the ability to exercise choice and manage one's own life) is 'discovered'. There is also a clear interplay between internal change and the wider structural opportunities that nurture this change (Szifris, 2018). The extent to which individuals can achieve this long-term change is also dependent on more legitimate roles and identities being available to them which is so often not the case (Farrall, 2016). Opportunities should be widened by an increase in capabilities, again indicating the role it has to play in the desistance process. One of the most powerful tools in capability development is education and the interplay between this and desistance shall now be discussed.

3.6 Education and Desistance

People with histories of repeat offending have frequently left school with no qualifications and been excluded at least once (Farrall et al., 2010). Houchin (2005) explains that social exclusion is an identity and the behaviours demonstrated in this identity are what exclude the holders from the norms that are embodied in the law. These characteristics form and bond social groups and identities that more often result in offending behaviour. Part of this social exclusion may include disengagement with educational facilities. School failure in childhood and adolescence is widely accepted by researchers as one of the most consistent

precursors of later adult criminality (Loeber, 1991). Figures released by the SPS in 2012 placed approximately 80 per cent of prisoners screened as lacking functional literacy and 71 per cent as lacking functional numeracy. The manner in which participants are screened and how many agree to involvement can affect the statistical outcome. However, what these figures indicate are overall low levels of literacy and numeracy within the prisoner population. A lack of learning and qualifications can negatively affect support structures to desistance, such as gaining employment and improved social skills. The age-crime curve should not be dismissed as a numerical focus with little connection to education. Maturation could encourage individuals to be less risk-averse and instead return to facilities such as education and gain a more positive and inclusive experience than earlier in their lives. This in turn could translate into some of the skills needed to move towards desistance.

In the educational context, establishing and developing an alternative identity as student, and a more positive social network with other learners may support the desistance process even within prison. One of the wider challenges to prison education is that much of the positive work done can be damaged by imprisonment itself and influences within the regime. Overcrowded conditions, mistreatment by staff and fellow inmates, isolation from society, community and loved ones and barriers to reintegration after release can damage what was developed in the classroom (Warner, 2000). The regime contains varying degrees of inherent hierarchies and power structures but education is one of the areas in which these structures are less prevalent. While security and rules still exist, its focus is one of support and care rather than control. Interactions are based on mutual communication, respect and personal development rather than surveillance and risk management. An individual can be more emotional and exploratory, developing a different identity to that of prisoner. This can support the production of pathways that go beyond the penal-centric and move towards desistance (Warr, 2016).

In the first instance an individual must be motivated to make this change, both in behaviour and identity. Reasons may be connected to family, employment or to enjoy a normal life. As already discussed, the process of desistance is challenging, multi-faceted and can be a stop-start process and strong motivation is needed to face these challenges. Coupled with personal motivation, individuals need a requisite set of skills to support this change, for example, qualifications to gain access to a college course post release, or training in an area that would

gain them steady employment. This increase in human capital coupled with social capital, or the resources that inhere within social networks and relationships (discussed above), is arguably the most comprehensive support system to encourage desistance (McNeill, 2009). But it is not just about the development of a new narrative for the individual, it is also about the acquisition and development of new skills. The aim of the educational services within prison is to develop elements of both types of capital and help give individuals broader options and the skills to have more control over the direction of their lives after release.

Education should not be viewed as a means of addressing offending behaviours in the same manner prison designed programmes do. This narrows its perspective and overlooks central purposes of prison learning (Warner, 2005). Yet, education can allow the student to 'knife off' their past and support the identity change that is central to desistance (LeBel et al., 2008; Bushway and Paternoster, 2014; Farrall and Maruna, 2004; Maruna, 2001). Learning Centre attendees are first and foremost viewed and treated as students and they undertake college enrolment forms in an attempt to replicate the campus-based process. Attendees can adopt this non-stigmatized role that supports a movement away from being categorized as a prisoner or by offence type (Runell, 2015). Moreover, if individuals continue with this role after release, this can often be done without revealing past offences unlike the various forms of employment that require criminal conviction checks. It also opens up more normative social networks that can support a movement away from former ones that may be negative or linked to offending behaviour (LeBel, 2008).

Prison learning does not aim to 'fix' individuals but instead seeks to engage with and develop students' assets; to enable them to flourish. It supports exploration and encourages learners 'to look at their lives through some new lenses' (Porporino, 2010, p 78). It can help develop communication skills to promote emotional and reflective practice. These, in turn, can develop the building blocks of desistance such as renegotiating relationships, reconstructing personal narratives and building maturity (Warner, 2005). McNeill (2014) found that prisoners reported various benefits from educational engagement, including an increased sense of personal agency. The Learning Centre provides a unique space to develop this feeling in amongst an environment that focuses on control and disempowerment. The process of attendance and studying, particularly for prolonged periods or for qualifications can improve resilience by way of 'sticking with it' to achieve. McNeill (2014) also reported

that education attendees described improved thinking skills which supported the consideration of their own and others' problems in a deeper manner. Ability to gain employment after release can be improved through skills-development and qualification attainment. Students also reported that the sociability and structure that education attendance provided improved their mental health and wellbeing, supporting them through some more challenging aspects of imprisonment. The overall improvement in these various skills reflect a development of capabilities and options that are central to desistance. It is a foundational structure that can support this process rather than being a person specific and isolated solution (Albertson, 2015). This shall be discussed further from chapter five onwards.

Through engagement with services such as education, individuals can interact with the foundations to desistance during incarceration. Imagined or projected desistance can also play a part in helping a person to pursue change and the underpinnings of this will be now be considered.

3.7 Imagined Desistance

As already discussed, incarceration restricts individual agency and damages the social bonds and support needed to successfully desist. Traditional prison designed rehabilitation programmes focus on addressing offending behaviours. Areas of development such as self-esteem, agency and strengthening of relationships can play a secondary role in these courses (although are included to some degree) (Warner, 2005). Other areas of practical support that are necessary for successful desistance - such as secure housing and financial resources – are addressed to varying degrees while individuals are still in custody, although people often leave prison in insecure situations, in terms of both housing and benefits. Adapting back to community life can be overwhelming. Thus, prison rehabilitation services that work on individuals' cognitive and behavioural deficits but hold limited recognition of the wide-ranging restrictions placed upon them are unlikely to be successful (Costelloe and Warner, 2003).

However, both past research and this thesis recognise that individuals can begin to desist while in prison. Soyer (2014) interviewed a small number of young people during and after

incarceration and ascertained that aspects of desistance can begin before release. The sentence itself was internalised as a turning point by some and an opportunity for change. Individuals began to think about and plan a crime-free future, beginning 'the imagination of desistance' (Soyer, 2014, p 97). This occurs when individuals feel they are utilising prison-based support and structures to begin this journey. New and productive routines are established such as employment and education. Individuals can begin to discover and develop personal agency within these routines, providing the opportunity to develop new identities. However, incarceration creates a break in a person's life course and the provided structures infer a degree of submission to institutional rules if they are to be utilised. Some of these structures can, and have proven to be supportive for those who engage with them (discussed further in chapter eight). But, rarely does the criminal justice system and the wider community replicate these in a robust enough manner for imagined desistance to be successful (Soyer, 2014). Viable alternatives to offending that can lead to long-term cognitive and behavioural change are scarce and the majority return to offending (see Katz 1988; Harcourt 2006; Giordano et al., 2007). Soyer (2014) discovered that 'the imagination of desistance was limited to the deterrent effect of incarceration and did not include visions of a future self that could sustain desistance permanently' (p 92). She argued that imprisonment creates structure and routine for individuals that often does not exist on the outside. This can frame a sentence as a turning point and help when trying to extract meaning from such a challenging and often traumatic experience (Maruna, 2001). Unfortunately, these structures are temporary and longer-term support is rarely provided for the desistance narrative to be sustained after release (Soyer, 2014).

However, this does not mean that imagined desistance has no role in a long-term move away from offending. Maruna (2001) found that viewing imprisonment as a turning point allowed some individuals to frame the event more positively and extract meaning from it. Sentences became transformative and allowed individuals time to develop facets of themselves that were not connected to crime while establishing continuity with family units and communities they would re-enter into. Halsey (2007) suggested that the optimism displayed by many of his incarcerated participants helped them to retain hope for the future and motivation to continue to strive for desistance (even though they had all experienced repeated failures in the past). A source of hope in the face of such a bleak challenge should not be overlooked.

The presence and meaning of imagined desistance within participants' narratives will be discussed in chapter eight.

3.8 Conclusion

Desistance has many threads and involves different motivations for each individual. Maturation reform can be a contributing factor but this theory predicts when rather than how desistance occurs. To gain a more comprehensive explanation, the relationship between the individual and wider society must be examined. The social bonds that can be developed from employment, familial and personal relationships as well as social reintegration can help to alter the identities marred by past offending and incarceration. Moreover, desistance rarely follows a linear pathway and a return to prison can occur many times before the individual is successful. These weak spots in the process can often have a profoundly negative effect on a person's motivation to continue and it is important that rehabilitation services within the criminal justice system recognise and support individuals when this occurs.

As discussed, education is only one part of the holistic, multi-service approach that should be offered for the desistance support network to be a comprehensive one. A successful desister not only has to develop a crime free identity but must also cement this within their community to ensure social inclusion. It is in this area that social bonds, desistance and the capabilities intertwine. Past research has indicated that the valued functionings of would-be desisters are connected to social inclusion – a steady relationship, being a good parent, secure housing and employment, being a 'good citizen' – all areas of life that capability attainment can help to realise. But, social structures, particularly for persistently incarcerated individuals, are often obstacles to the achievement of these necessary capabilities and functionings (such as restricted employment options). Hence, for those who wish to desist, capabilities, or real opportunities, often fall well short of valued functionings (Farrell et al., 2010). This is why a support service such as education has an essential role to play in trying to secure these capabilities, and a threshold level of functioning, for those who wish to cease from offending.

The imagination of desistance is a cognitive shift that can begin during incarceration. By beginning to establish a projected identity that does not commit crime, a person can extract positive meaning from their time in prison. Support can be utilised, helping to develop skills and agency that is central to sustained desistance. However, the insurmountable challenges often come when replication is sought, but not found, once back in the community. The failure of this imagined path leads back to prison where the individual can attempt the process once again.

This chapter has provided an overview of various strands in desistance theory. I firstly discussed how age and social bonds factor into this process, as well as the role of identity development within a would-be desister. The exercise of agency and the structures that restrict this was considered before moving on to explore the role education can play in the journey. I closed the chapter by examining imagined desistance and how this can work to begin the process during incarceration. The following chapter will provide an overview and discussion of my research methodology.

Chapter Four

Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

The overall aim of this study was to explore the educational experiences through the life course of a group of prisoners in Scotland. More specifically, I wanted to examine how these experiences related to their wider life narratives and their offending histories. I began with a series of questions that connected to my overall research focus whilst also utilising these as a guide when designing my first-round interview questions. These developed in detail throughout the initial design phases, but the focal points remained the same.

1. What role and meaning has education played in participants' lives?
2. How have their educational and life experiences affected the development of capabilities, both historically and more recently?
3. What role has education played in helping them imagine, plan and prepare for the future, including in relation to potential desistance from crime?

By looking at the life narratives of my participants, I was able to consider the role education has played within these, and individual experiences of it from early years until their most recent engagement. I tracked how learning ebbed and flowed through their lives and considered the wider effect this had on wellbeing and development. I examined the catalysts for participants' early and ongoing criminal behaviour and the challenges faced in pursuing successful desistance. These focuses were framed within descriptions of participants' life experiences at each stage of development. This provided a context to try and understand the myriad of challenges participants faced throughout their lives. The condition of their capability set and functionings was also examined throughout in order to explore levels of wellbeing. Finally, this research investigated the value that participants placed upon the education and skills-development received while in prison. Hence, I explored individual motivators to engagement and what, if anything, participants felt they had gained from the overall learning experience. I also focused on what meaning participants now place on education and what role this and other support could play in their desistance pathways.

The detail needed to explore these broader questions directed me towards utilising a qualitative, particularly interpretive methodology focused on interpretation and in which participants present their actions, values and viewpoints in a subjective manner (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). By using qualitative interview methodology, I explored participants' unique experiences through narrative description. Hence, this research was broadly undertaken within the interpretive paradigm which places an emphasis on social interaction as the basis for knowledge and understanding (O'Donoghue, 2007). I used my research skills to try and interpret how participants understood their worlds and the significance placed on various life experiences. My analysis aimed to construct a picture that drew from, reassembled, and rendered the subjects' lives (Charmaz, 2000), specifically in relation to the role and meaning of education for participants as well as their capability development. Further interpretive possibilities can arise from observing human interaction and social practices (Usher, 1996). Although this study was not observational, my interpretations have been shaped through my former role as prison educator (discussed later in this chapter) and in conducting my fieldwork. All of this held meaning and was important to an understanding of my subjects' social worlds and how they act in relation to their beliefs (Chenitz and Swanson, 1986), or, more precisely, how participants garnered value from education and the ways in which this improved individual wellbeing as outlined by the CA.

In this chapter I will initially provide an overview of interpretive theory within social research. I will then outline my research design and explain the ethical process to obtain access and conduct my research. My research position will then be considered, both personally and as a practitioner. From there, my research locations, participants and sampling process will be explained. An outline of the interview format I utilised will be discussed before briefly considering the use of the CA as a research framework. The chapter will conclude with an explanation of thematic organisation and analysis of my data.

4.2 Interpretive Theory

Within the interpretive paradigm, knowledge is seen as being constructed by mutual negotiation and is specific to the situation being investigated (O'Donoghue, 2007). Alfred

Schütz (1962 cited in Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) noted that individuals approach the world with a stock of knowledge made up of constructs and categories that are social in their origin. These include beliefs, values, attitudes, and images, that can be applied to different aspects of experience. This number of shared constructs and categories make it possible for individuals to account rationally for those experiences. Or in other words, such constructs organize the flow of life into a recognisable form, giving it familiarity and making it meaningful for the subject. Working within this paradigm dictates that society is understood in terms of the meaning-making process within individuals and groups, who, in turn, are understood in terms of the societies of which they are members (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Interpretivist research has contributed to the understanding that there is no clear-cut view into the window of the inner life of a subject. Any gaze is filtered through and influenced by the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity. In short, there are no objective observations, either by the participants or the researcher. Instead there are only observations situated in the worlds of – and between – the observer and observed (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). In this case, my participants were both members of the communities they came from and of the prisons they inhabited at the time my research was conducted. These contexts had an influence on how participants made sense of their lives and the role that education, and their access to it, had on their development.

How can working within an interpretive paradigm be relevant to my study researching prisoners and prison education? Broadly speaking, it can help understand how and why individuals are using education when incarcerated. It is not sufficient to merely look at Learning Centre attendance or number of achieved qualifications, as this tells little detail of reasons behind individual engagement. From my past observations, education attendance can be for a number of reasons. A percentage of students were there to regain ground on schooling they had missed out on due to disengagement and exclusion when younger. Others were motivated to attend subject specific classes such as art to make pictures for loved ones or music because they had a keen interest in it. Some individuals simply came to education to get out of their rooms and mix with friends. If encountered by an educator not familiar with this learning context, the validity of such educational experiences may be called into question. However, this is an issue that I would, and have strongly contested when defending the meaning that individuals in prison gain from their time in education. Unlike school, college or university, many are not there to gain qualifications. But this does not negate the significance or developmental potential it holds for students. The social skills and self-

efficacy that are built through learning can be as transformative to the learner as qualifications and, in many cases I witnessed the most positive changes within these areas. The complexities of this will be detailed in my data chapters. Through broadly applying an interpretive paradigm, I was able to harness the layered meaning that participants placed on education throughout their lives. From this I hoped to explore and discuss what aspects of education helped and hindered the development of capabilities and in what ways education could positively affect individual wellbeing and support the desistance process.

4.3 Research Design

As my first two research questions focused on participants' experiences through the life course, the life history narrative interview became the obvious choice. Goodey (2000) explains how this type of interview format connects with an interpretive stance:

> It is the interpretive biographical framework that recognises the subject as playing a key role in the research process. It looks for experiences in the subject's life that are connected to or deviate from socially established life course stages: for example, education, marriage, unemployment/employment. (Goodey, 2000, p 479)

During the first interviews, I took note of significant experiences in participants' lives which emerged from the emphasis they placed on them in their responses. By providing the opportunity for participants, rather than me, to indicate the important sections of their narratives, they fulfilled a key role in the research process as outlined by Goodey (above). These experiences generally focused on the types of life course stages described above and included, among others, engagement and disengagement from education, significant relationships (both family and romantic), and offending behaviour and imprisonment. The use of a biographical interview format not only represents the memory and identity of the individual, it also produces and represents that identity for both the researcher and the participant. From this, both should be able to reflect on their own lives, ultimately achieving some form of understanding of one another and of the multiple realities involved in the creation of meaning (Tierney, 2000). This is an essential tool in creating a connection and

eliciting some form of reaction (hopefully an empathetic one) from participant and researcher.

For the second-round interviews, I adopted a stricter semi-structured approach. May (2001) explains that the semi-structured format can open up the interview method to an understanding of how the interviewees generate and deploy meaning in social life, specifically the meaning they attach to learning, education and their quality of life. Some of this was partly explored in the first-round life narrative stage but, as already outlined, the focus there was to gain a general understanding of the participants' backgrounds and life courses. When certain details were returned to in the semi-structured interview this opened up the opportunity for participants to explore the meanings attached to these previously discussed areas of their lives.

The semi-structured interview questions were more specific than the first-stage interview questions but the freedom was also offered to probe beyond the questions if and when new topics emerged. Both clarification and elaboration can be gained and it enabled me to have more latitude to enquire beyond the answers and thus enter into an open dialogue with the interviewee (May, 2001). One intended result of both this and the life narrative interview is that a sustained relationship can be developed through prolonged discussion. This can allow individuals to answer more on their own terms than the standardized interview permits, and still provide a greater structure for comparability over that of the fully structured interview (May, 2000). The aim is that the more comfortable the participant became with myself as interviewer, the more open they became to discussing their experiences in more detail. The specifics of how both interview formats were carried out are discussed later in this chapter.

4.4 Ethics

Ethical clearance from the University of Glasgow and the SPS was sought and granted. This involved the completion of both standard ethical permission forms, including detailed descriptions of how ethical standards would be adhered to. There was a need to acknowledge that individuals in custody often display various vulnerabilities. Many have experienced complex trauma which can result in a lifelong negative impact to health and wellbeing. The

high prevalence of drug and alcohol misuse can also have a negative impact on physical, mental and emotional health. It was therefore essential that care was taken throughout the research process to ensure minimum negative impact to participants. How this was achieved is detailed in the following section and later on in parts of this chapter that discuss the first and second-round interviews.

Once SPS had granted ethical clearance, myself and my head supervisor met with the Governors of both research locations. This allowed me to explain my research and methodology, as well as providing the opportunity to raise any questions or concerns they had regarding their establishments or the individuals in their care. It also gave me the opportunity to intonate my appreciation for allowing me to carry out interviews within their establishments. There were no major issues raised by any party during this meeting and both Governors were happy for me to progress to arranging my interviews. Prospective interviewees were approached in confidence by me in the first location (due to this being my place of work) and by the Learning Centre manager in the second location. An explanation of the research aim and process was verbally communicated to prospective participants and, if they expressed interest, a plain language statement was also supplied. This enabled participants to take it away and read it in more detail if they wished to. Once agreement was given, a date and time was arranged that suited their schedule.

Before the start of each first-round interview, I read through the plain language statement with each participant. This again explained the research aims and details of the interview process. Reading through this supported any participants who lacked confidence in reading, particularly if they did not wish to share this information. It also provided an opportunity for participants to ask any questions about the aims and structure of the research process. I then talked through the University of Glasgow research consent form taking care to explain to each participant that everything discussed was confidential and names would be changed when using extracts in my final thesis. It was also explained that participants could refuse to answer any questions and could remove themselves from the research process at any point. It was finally explained that all interview transcripts would be saved and stored in a secure digital format for ten years (as per university guidelines) and then destroyed.

Confidentiality was ensured by keeping the number of staff informed about participants to a minimum. The Learning Centre Manager and a small number of staff in the work sheds were involved in the participant recruitment process and were aware of who was taking part. All interviews were conducted in a private room (in the Links Centre or Learning Centre) with only myself and the participant present. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms were used and research locations have not been specified in detail. Any background details within narratives that could have identified participants were either generalised or omitted.

At the end of each interview I checked that each participant was not distressed by anything that had been discussed. With their permission, both myself and the Learning Centre Manager also checked in with individuals a few days after each interview, again to ensure they were not upset. Should this have occurred, then again with permission, appropriate support would have been sought for the individual. In the first instance their Personal Officer would have been involved to provide this help. Should more specialised assistance be needed, such as consultation with a mental health professional, then this would be arranged. Myself and their Personal Officer would then have worked together to ensure ongoing support. This did not occur at any point during the research process and all participants confirmed they were not distressed by the interviews. As well as considering the welfare of my participants, I also had to engage with my position as a researcher which I shall now discuss.

4.5 My Research Position

As outlined in my introduction, at the time of my research I was teaching at one of my research locations. Seven of my participants were attendees to the Learning Centre I worked in and the remaining three participants in this location attended work but not education. This participant split was replicated in my second location and I had not met any of these individuals before interviews commenced. My reason for primarily looking at the educational experiences of some of my own students was due to the relationship of trust I had built up with them. For the most part, I had initial knowledge of their backgrounds; the role education had come to play both within their sentences and their hopes for the future after release. My time working within prisons provided me with some understanding of the environment my participants lived within. I had a well-established grasp of the daily

workings of the prison estate, along with the challenges and restrictions of the regime described by many of my students. This connected to personal attitudes towards education, which was often seen, in my experience, as a refuge and a path to a more hopeful future. However, my experience did not extend to a deep comprehension of living within a prison. It was my place of work in which I had free movement, and could enter and exit of my own volition. My daily life was not subject to the restrictions and dangers of the regime and I was not confined to a room for lengthy periods of time. This meant that I could never fully identify with how it felt to be incarcerated, either physically or psychologically. I had to remain mindful of this when trying to understand participants' judgements and actions when imprisoned such as not accessing support for personal issues during previous sentences. I had to face these types of biases and apply both empathy and reason to understanding participants' actions within various contexts throughout their lives (and not just during their time in prison).

At this stage I also had to consider my role as the researcher. In line with the interpretivist approach outlined earlier, Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) argue that we cannot escape the social world in order to study it. Thus, the personal biography of the researcher and the roles they undertake influence the research: both the sense they make of the setting and how the participants they are learning from make sense of them as a researcher. The interviewer and interviewee need to establish an intersubjective understanding but at the same time the pursuit of a degree of objectivity within the data collection requires a 'distance' in order to socially situate the responses (Rossman and Rallis, 2012). Some form of relationship, however nominal, always exists between the researcher and participants. A student/teacher relationship had been established with some of my participants so I was partially included within their social world. However, the social world they inhabited in the classroom and the identity they conveyed was not necessarily the same in other areas of the prison or indeed their lives both past and present. I had to take into consideration that participants, particularly those who were my students may have been wary of discussing their identity in other areas of their lives and may only have felt comfortable showing their Learning Centre persona. Moreover, the identities participants had in their pasts could have been contentious for them as they tried to move away from their offending history to construct a more positive future. This presented a challenge when researching changes in a participant's identity development over their life course. I had to accept that individuals would and should only have shared with me the past and present identities they felt comfortable discussing. Overall, while I felt

that participants were generous in sharing many aspects of their identities with me during interview, I also recognise that varying levels of disclosure are a limitation of this research.

There are a number of personal characteristics that can affect the researcher's position ranging from gender, age, personal experiences, race, beliefs, sexual orientation, political and ideological stances and so on (Berger, 2015). Those I perceived to be pertinent to me are gender, socio-economic positioning, educational background and ideological stand-point. As a woman (and feminist) I had to remain aware of unconscious sympathy being skewed towards female participants. On one level I was able to identify with concerns and experiences they described such as an increased potential threat of sexual violence and reproductive issues. But I had not directly experienced or inherently understood the complex trauma many have been through. Likewise, having never experienced domestic abuse I took care not to inwardly judge participants' described actions within these situations (as victim or perpetrator). While I recognise that I am not accepting of partner-on-partner violence within my own relationships, immediately dismissing a participant's interpretation of this within their narrative removed the opportunity to understand these challenging situations. To try and avoid these judgements, I attempted to always take an uninformed standpoint, seeking information and guidance from past research and participants' experiences (Berger, 2015).

I also come from a stable family unit where I was nurtured and supported and did not experience any form of trauma. Education was a central focus growing up and I was encouraged to engage with and develop myself through learning. This has provided me with an enduring sense of agency throughout my life and a great appreciation for a balanced family and comprehensive educational achievement. I understand the socio-economic position (middle-class) I have been able to achieve from this development and so it was important to remember that my participants have often not been afforded the same background but rather backgrounds marked by trauma and instability. Again, subconscious judgement could have occurred when discussing their lack of engagement or appreciation for education. Being reflexive, I understand that their early experiences played as much a part in developing their identity and future as it did for me. Ideologically (and politically) I position myself as left-leaning and support the movement towards equity and equality within our society (as my use of the CA indicates). This was personally developed through my

educational engagement (although standpoints can be developed through different channels). Where participants differed from me in their beliefs and views, I had to retain as neutral a stance as possible for research purposes. This means that I had to be aware not to impose left-wing ideology on their narratives (particularly with respect to how individuals may choose to function within a capability).

Rossman and Rallis (2012) outline how reflexivity was negotiated between me as the researcher and my participants.

> The participants react to you; theirs is also an unexamined reflex. By your mere presence you become part of their social world, and they modify their actions accordingly… Reflexivity, in this sense, is the package of reciprocal and interactive reactions between the researcher and the participants in setting. (Rossman and Rallis, 2012, p 47)

I became aware of this type of action modification during first round interviews with participants that were known to me. My opening question asked participants to describe their earliest memories of childhood and their home environment. This opening question made some participants uncomfortable, modifying their relaxed behaviour to become more reserved. On reflection, I believe this was linked to my explanation prior to interview that a central focus of the research was the role education and learning had played in their lives. Changing direction and immediately asking about their home and family environment rather than education appeared to be the catalyst for these feelings of discomfort. This became an 'unexamined reflex' (above) that I had to reflect upon and address. I felt the discomfort created by this opening question could damage the trust I aimed to create between myself and the participants. Consequentially, after the first few interviews, I amended the opening question to focus on what participants remembered about starting school and later moved on to discuss childhood and home environment. By that point in the interview, participants appeared more relaxed and discussed these parts of their lives more openly.

I also tried to ensure reflexivity through various strategies as outlined by Berger (2015). These included utilising the same participants for repeated interviews, self-supervision

through note-taking (including my own reasoning, judgements and observations) and review of my work (through supervision). I interviewed all participants twice to check for clarification and further detail. I took notes throughout the interviews and afterwards to record observations and reflections, paying particular attention to discussion points that participants appeared to put emphasis on. This also allowed me to record areas of commonality between participants' narratives which helped when thematically organising the data. During data sorting stages I paused at each phase of analysis (taking notes) to reflect and ensure that the data was being looked at comprehensively and themes were being collapsed into larger groupings that included all significant parts of the narratives. This helped to ensure that important areas of discussion were not side-lined by being subsumed into larger themes. These reflections were also used to ensure linkage to the main theoretical focus (capabilities and desistance) while simultaneously allowing other themes to emerge.

Reflexivity at each stage ensured a degree of involvement with my research in order to extract meanings. At the same time, it helped me to remain detached enough that the process was ethical and non-exploitative towards my participants and their narratives. This supported a process of data analysis and reporting that avoided subconscious bias wherever possible (Berger, 2015; Pillow, 2003). Taking the position of practitioner researcher for my student participants, reflexivity was also important in relation to my dual role. This encouraged openness while ensuring I only used details shared during interview rather than any divulged during our time in class. Further intricacies of assuming a researcher/practitioner role will now be discussed.

4.6 Practitioner Researcher

My dual role as education practitioner and researcher was not without its challenges. Bennett (2015) explored this area of duality when he switched from prison governor to prison researcher commenting that 'the role and identity of the researcher will be unstable and vary according to circumstances at different moments' (p 290). I predicted a similar switch with my own students as we were used to interacting in a student/teacher capacity and were generally comfortable within these roles. Trust that had been developed could have been jeopardised as we worked to regain a similar familiarity within our new and different roles of researcher and participant. My hope was that an equilibrium would be re-established

quickly enough to yield open interview dialogue. At the same time, the past experiences I had with my student participants and my understanding of their backgrounds provided a grasp of the transformative impact education had on their lives.

Tierney (2000) explains that as authors and narrators we are all situated within our research as creators of the data and, as Bourdieu (2000) sees it, there is 'no view from nowhere' so a balance must be struck between reporting the story we wish to tell and being the storyteller. The challenge lies in coming to terms with the positions in which we locate ourselves as authors. This is important partly because I could never be a true insider within this research and my distance and position had to be acknowledged to understand the limitations of my findings and interpretations. Some of my student participants admitted wariness at telling me sections of their pasts they were ashamed of. One discussed this concern with me after our first interview, worrying that I would think less of him as my student now that I knew he had been a bully in school. However, after spending time back in the classroom with my student participants between the first and second interview, they appeared to realise our teacher/student relationship remained on the same terms as before. What had been shared with me was confidential and my attitude or opinion did not alter towards any of the participants based on what we had discussed. Due in part to this and because they were more aware of the procedure by the second round, my student participants became more relaxed and open by the latter stage. Participants in the second location that were not my students did not describe the same reservations when asked about their comfort levels after each interview. I perceived them to be more relaxed in the second location, supporting these descriptions. I believe that seeing me as researcher and not a staff member supported this level of comfort.

For my student participants, I also had to remain aware that my interviewing technique and manner should not be as a 'teacher'. My role as researcher was a different one that aimed to gather data rather than to direct and encourage learning. Had I behaved in the same style I did in the classroom this may have restricted a participant's ease in sharing their life narratives as could have felt they were still being addressed by their teacher. This was not an issue for participants who were not my students, but again, as Wengraf (2001) explains, while remaining professional, I had to be aware not to come across as overtly 'academic'. Similar to the 'teacher' role, this could have made interviewees uncomfortable and less

inclined to feel they could open-up during dialogue. While professionality was retained, it was essential to also establish a relaxed enough interaction so participants felt comfortable enough to share their experiences.

Conversely, the participants with whom I was not familiar with may have viewed me solely as a researcher. The positive aspect of this is that honesty and criticism, particularly regarding prison education, may have been more forthcoming. However, in my experience, due to the closely scrutinised environment in which they live, individuals in prison understandably need time to build up trust in staff with whom they work. This trust needed to be established for my research to be as detailed as possible and a lack of prior contact with me could have hindered this process. The staff who approached prospective participants on my behalf vouched for me in a professional capacity. I was also given a short amount of time (about ten to fifteen minutes) with each participant before the interview began so I could introduce myself, and have a chat about the interview process, addressing any concerns. Overall, I found the participants from my second location were open and comfortable talking to me from the beginning of the first interview. I believe this was due to only viewing me as a researcher rather than moving between this and the role of educator. Ultimately, I would not favour one role dynamic over the other as rich data was generated from both groups. I believe that in the long-term it did not negatively impact my findings in a noticeable manner. I simply had to be more adaptive when dealing with my student participants and reassure them that any discussion during interview did not affect our relationship in the classroom.

4.7 Locations and Context

As previously mentioned, my first research site was my location of work. This prison has the capacity to hold just under 800 individuals with a mix of remand, short-term (sentences up to four years) and long-term (four years to life imprisonment). Both groups mix in various sections of the prison, such as work and education. The second research site is smaller with a capacity to hold just under 250 individuals. There are three halls: the largest holds short-term and remand males; the medium sized hall holds females serving short-term sentences or on remand, and the smallest is a 'top end facility' where life-sentence prisoners move for a period of time (usually two years) to begin community reintegration by fulfilling outside work placements and short home visits. After serving time in this top end facility (and on

completion of staff review), individuals will be moved to the Open Estate for the final part of their sentence and further reintegration.

The general regime is quite similar across establishments and so, for example all prisons run work-sheds, education, and visits. However, the daily running of each prison differs in various ways. For example, education class times and subjects available vary in each establishment, as does the job training available in work sheds. In order to gain a variety of perspectives on these services, it was important to carry out my research in more than one location. My initial selection of the prison I worked in was partly due to it being my first experience of carrying out research interviews. I felt comfortable in these surrounding and I was familiar with the staff, layout and workings of this prison. This made it relatively straightforward to conduct interviews here. All staff involved in the process knew me well and were very accommodating. That being said, I was careful not to let my dual roles overlap as much as possible. For ethical robustness, I reduced my full-time working hours to four days a week for the duration of my interview process. I used this one day during the week to access both prison locations until all interviews were undertaken. Research can only be undertaken in prison on weekdays and within working hours because in the evening and at weekends visits with friends and family are taking place. There is also less population movement at the weekends because many areas and services in the prison are only open on weekdays (such as education and the work sheds). It was essential for me to respect and work within the parameters of the regime so disruption of participants' lives was minimized. Once I had set aside time within my week to dedicate to interviews, I negotiated my sampling process which will now be outlined.

4.8 Participants and Sampling

Due to the size of the prison estate in Scotland and the limited timeframe for my research, I decided it necessary to select a manageable sample for interview from a mixed demographic. In total I interviewed twenty people in two prison locations: seventeen men and three women. Interpretive research should attempt to give voice (particularly through direct quotation) to members of each group in focus. But this should also go beyond the partial viewpoints to evaluate, synthesize and place the data in historical and theoretical contexts (Wengraf, 2001). When employing this interview method for qualitative research,

appropriate participant selection is essential for the production of relevant data. Those sampled for interview can be treated as illuminating different cases: for example, each interviewee may be illuminating the separate family, society or organisation that he or she 'represents'. Or each interviewee, their life story, their personal life-discourse or their personal culture is the 'case' that is being studied. Through this multi-case comparative study method, wider conclusions can be drawn on the area being researched (Wengraf, 2001).

Participants were only drawn from mainstream population.[3] This was mainly due to accessibility as both locations only facilitate this type of prisoner demographic. Women constitute just under 5% of the Scottish prison population (SPS, 2019) so including three female interviewees brought their ratio to 15% of the participant total, ensuring this demographic was fairly represented. However, the limitations of the overall sample meant that it did not represent every culture, sentence type (for example, those convicted under a sexual offence) or young people (adult mainstream is age twenty-one and above). The degree in which empirical findings can be generalised to support wider statements within a research focus can always be debated (Bendasolli, 2013). But part of the role of researcher is to apply deductive reasoning to draw conclusions between the data collected and the wider theories to which it is connected (Szifris, 2018). By sampling from the mainstream population, I aimed for my research findings to have as broad a deductive application as possible. Room remains for this type of research to be applied to more specific groups in order to generate findings particular to certain prisoner demographics. However, such a relatively small-scale interpretive study such as this is not aiming for generalisability. The participant sample was sourced from various sections of the overall population and not just those attending education. Within the sample there were 15 participants who engaged with the Learning Centre during their sentence. For the purposes of this research, engaged is identified as attending one to five classes a week (or more). I also interviewed five individuals who do not engage with education but had varying levels of engagement with skills-development in their work sheds. This was in order to gather data regarding the capability developing abilities of other activities and not just those provided in the Learning Centres.

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[3] Mainstream prison population are those who are not detained in a protection hall. Individuals that are in protection are either offence related (generally individuals convicted of a sexual offence) or non-offence related protection (generally individuals who have been placed there for their own protection, for example, if they have acted as an informant against another person). Some individuals self-select to be placed into protection (for example, if they fear being attacked for have ran up drug debts).

In my primary location where I worked, eight of the ten participants attended education at least three times a week, with the majority attending daily. The remaining two from this group attended their work shed daily and did not engage with the Learning Centre. However, they were all engaged in some form of job training/skills development qualifications within their work party (which will be discussed in chapter eight). The participants who attended education were selected by me based on differing levels of engagement (from one day a week up to five). I also considered how comfortable they were talking to me when in the Learning Centre as I believed this would make the interview process easier for both parties. As previously mentioned, the other section of participants was located at a prison that I had never worked in. Its mixed demographic of males, females and top-end prisoners meant that I could access participants with wide reaching characteristics and sentence-lengths (detailed in the table below). This meant I did not have to access a third prison to widen my participant group as I felt I had represented as much of mainstream demographic as was necessary. I had stipulated to the Learning Centre Manager that I would prefer a mix of seven participants that demonstrated various engagement levels with education and three participants who only engaged with work. Due to the varied characteristics within this prison, I also requested three female participants and two individuals situated in the top end facility. I believed this resulted in richer data that described the experiences of men and women serving both short and long-term sentences and individuals who were coming to the end of a life-sentence.

The characteristics of each interview participant is detailed below:

First Location:

Name	Age Bracket	Sex	Sentence Length	Nature of Offending Career	Education or Work Attendee	Highest SQA Qualification Level*	Current Level of Study
Alec	35-40	Male	Long-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	Not undertaking formal qualifications
Calum	40-45	Male	Short-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6
Conor	30-35	Male	Short-term	Repeat	Work	Level 5	Not applicable**
Dave	25-30	Male	Long-term	First Offence	Work	Level 6	Not applicable**
Dean	45-50	Male	Long-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6

James	25-30	Male	Life	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6
Joe	30-35	Male	Long-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	Undergraduate Degree
John	30-35	Male	Short-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6
Liam	35-40	Male	Long-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	Undergraduate Degree
Scott	40-45	Male	Short-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6

Second Location:

Name	Age Bracket	Sex	Sentence Length	Nature of Offending Career	Education or Work Attendee	Highest SQA Qualification Level*	Current Level of Study
Brian	45-50	Male	Life	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6
Carol	30-35	Female	Long-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	Undergraduate Degree
Craig	20-25	Male	Life	Repeat (first conviction)	Education	Level 6	Undergraduate Degree
Jonny	25-30	Male	Long-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6
Lisa	50-55	Female	Long-term	Repeat	Education	Level 6	SQA Level 6
Neil	45-50	Male	Life	Repeat	Work	Level 6	Not applicable**
Nicole	30-35	Female	Short-term	Repeat	Work	Level 6	Not applicable**
Ricki	25-30	Male	Short-term	Repeat	Work	Level 5	Not applicable**
Ross	25-30	Male	Short-term	Repeat	Education	Level 5	SQA Level 5
Simon	35-40	Male	Life	First offence	Education	Level 6	Undergraduate Degree

*SQA Level 5 = National 5 qualifications.

*SQA Level 6 = Higher qualifications.

**Work-based/industry qualification levels are not applicable as they do not necessarily correlate with the SQA National Framework. They are often specifically designed by companies to be recognised within their industries.

4.9 Interview Format

Each interview lasted from 45 minutes to 1 hour which was partly due to the amount of allotted time I had with participants before they were moved back to their hall or to another area of the prison. I also felt that this was enough time to cover the questions I had drafted without overly fatiguing participants. I carried out three to four interviews on each timetabled research day, then returned a week later to carry out the second-round interviews with the same participants (where scheduling allowed). I would then move on to the next three to four participants, following the same framework. This structure meant that what had been discussed in the first interview was fresh in both our minds going into the second interview. Had I carried out all first-round interviews in each location before moving on to the second stage then it would have vastly prolonged the period of time in between each interview. Participants were kind enough to give their time to my research and I wanted to encroach as little as possible upon this. There was also the possibility that if I waited too long between interviews participants could have moved to another prison or been released. Overall, this process resulted in approximately 40 hours of interview data.

I also carried out five interviews with staff members at my primary research location: the governor; a chaplain; an officer from the prison rehabilitation programmes team, and two officers from work sheds (the kitchen and industrial cleaning). This was not necessarily to use extracts within my final thesis, although it meant the option was there if needed. Primarily these provided detailed contextualisation of what was being done in various sections of the prison to support individuals during their time in custody. Having spent the six years working in that location, I felt I had a good grasp of what each section and support service in the prison aimed to do, but that further details from staff would bring more reliability to my knowledge. These interviews lasted between 30 minutes to 1 hour and were carried out as and when staff members were available. While I have not directly quoted any of these in this thesis, I found them helpful in furthering my understanding of what was being done throughout the prison to support and develop individuals during their sentence. Further details of both rounds of interviews will be discussed in the following two sections.

4.10 First Round: Life Narrative Interviews

As already outlined, I focused on participants' life narratives for the first-round so I could gain a strong sense of individual backgrounds and experiences that might have shaped them. When drafting my interview schedule for this stage (appendix 1) I primarily focused on two broad areas: experience of education and experience of life outside of education such as home environment, family and peer group. From focusing on these broad areas, I hoped to gain a picture of participants' capabilities throughout their lives as well as the factors that had damaged and supported their development. I also wanted to understand how and when education had featured throughout their lives and to understand their experiences of it. From this I attempted to make connections between education and capability development or damage. Some questions were also focused on gaining details of how participants' offending behaviour had developed as well as the effect this and incarceration had on their lives. Finally, my closing questions enquired about participants' lives in recent years both inside and outside prison as well as their hopes for the future. While I used questions to guide me, I provided participants the space to verbalise their own story and experiences with minimum interruption. This was important so that significant parts of their narratives emerged naturally with limited guidance from me as the researcher. That way I could ascertain what participants felt had the most impact on their lives and development as opposed to me placing significance on events for them.

What I wished to ascertain from these biographies was not just the role that learning played in the participants' lives but what effect a deviation from and eventual return to education had on their capability development. At the same time, it brought detailed context to each individual's wider personal issues and offending behaviour that may have linked to their background. Life narrative interviews allow participants to tell their story in their own words and manner, bringing life and context to the person they have been, who they are now and who they would like to be in the future (Osterland, 1983). These types of self-narratives represent personal outlooks and theories of individuals' realities, not necessarily factual representations of history. Research has indicated that successful desisters can be more likely to 're-write' their own history to appear more favourable to the audience rather than being completely transparent about their past. Or, they will simply omit details so the whole story is never given (Maruna, 2001). While this may be applicable to all of us at some point, this seems more pertinent to individuals in prison as they may try to create a more positive future narrative while reassessing their past. The prison environment also dictates that individuals re-tell their history on a regular basis to various departments, such as Psychology and Social

Work. Rehabilitation progress is repeatedly assessed to gauge how far individuals have developed positively from their index offence, so it seems logical that their re-telling of these biographies might become more positive in order to advance in this process.

However, this does not mean these narratives should be discounted or viewed as unreliable. These self-narratives are a sort of mythmaking through which the person can reconstruct, edit and embellish their past in order to create a coherent story (Maruna and Matravers, 2007). Even if they do not (and cannot) represent perfect factual representations of history, these stories hold psychological truths. They provide a sense of meaning and purpose to the teller's life, particularly when this is often lacking when examining past actions retrospectively. This can then help to shape future actions as individuals seek to behave in ways that corresponds to their self-myths, or to put it plainly, the story-making can help author the 'better person' that these re-written life stories portray (McAdams, 1999). This re-invention can be central to self-esteem and motivation in both learning and desistance. Therefore, this research considered participants' life stories as a whole rather than just their narrative within one area such as offending or education. This is necessary to better understand the participant and the links between life experiences. For example, it helped to ascertain the connection between education and an expansion in life options that could support a move away from offending, and towards employment, or improved family relations.

Shadd Maruna (1999, 2001) has used narrative life histories in much of his research as he believes they help us to understand the significance of a narrative restructuring on one's own self-understanding as a central element in the change process. Maruna (1999) explains:

> We need to obtain a coherent story of the individual if we are able to understand changes in behaviour, such as desistance. To understand the individual and his/her behaviour, one is required to develop an understanding of the world from the perspective of the individual, and to locate that perspective in the wider context of his/her biography, as it is created within a specific community and culture, and temporal, historic context. It is a reflexive perception of self that, in part, shapes future choices and thus behaviour. This requires methodological, empirical and theoretical attention to people's life stories, their narratives of

themselves, within which their identity is constructed and reconstructed. (Maruna, 1999, p 260)

By providing my participants the space to tell their biographical narrative, I hoped to gain an understanding of their world through their perspective as described by Maruna (above). The outlining of life narrative could allow me to understand how behaviours such as offending had begun and compounded. It could also provide an understanding of changes in these behaviours and outline participants' underlying motivations to desist as well as the role that support agencies such as education have within this process. In chapters five through eight therefore, I have attempted to trace connections between meanings placed on learning, various forms of support, the development of capabilities and participants' progression in the desistance process.

4.11 Second Round: Semi-structured Interviews

After listening to first-round interview recordings, I then drafted questions for my second stage (see appendix 2 for the general question outline). These were more structured than first-round questions and aimed to gain further detail in particular life events and turning points that had previously been described. I decided to retain the life narrative timeline and move through events in a linear manner. Again, this kept an organised structure as I felt jumping back and forward could become confusing for participants and myself when organising the data for analysis. From this stage I hoped to collect more detailed data in connection to my research questions and any other emerging themes. I tried not to overwhelm the participants with too many questions in order to allow space to provide further detail if they wished to.

I also had to remain conscious of participants' previous experiences of interviews. This was of particular importance during the second stage as the interview technique became more traditional and structured. As Wengraf (2001) explains:

> Though being interviewed for research purposes is rare, most adults have a lot
> of experience of being interviewed or of imagining being interviewed for other
> purposes. Usually, there have been strong inequalities of power and vulnerability
> between the interviewer and the person who has either 'requested and obtained'
> an interview or has 'been requested and required to come for interview'.
> (Wengraf, 2001, p 17)

Much of participants' past interactions with interviews have been through social services and the criminal justice system at various stages of their lives. Being involved in research interviews should have been a different and hopefully more positive experience. However, this would only happen if I ensured everyone felt comfortable during discussions. Had I come across as guarded, contentious or intrusive this may have reminded them of previous interview experiences, particularly within the justice system. If this had occurred and the participant became uncomfortable during the interview, this could have curtailed an open dialogue. I also had to remain aware of three areas that could have affected the successful completion of interviews. These are outlined by Moser and Kalton (1983) and are listed as accessibility, cognition and motivation. Accessibility refers to whether the participant has access to the information that the researcher is seeking. This may be due to a gap existing between the interviewer and interviewee's modes of understanding. Of course, during both interviews there remained the constant opportunity to clarify questions, but this does not mean that accessibility may not have become an issue. A lack of information may result for a number of reasons. It may have been forgotten. Disclosing certain types of information (particularly at the biographical stage of interviews) may have resulted in undue emotional distress. A certain type of answer or method of answering was expected which the participant was not familiar with (the frames of reference are discrepant and they are not sure how to answer). Or, a person may simply have refused to answer a question due to personal, ethical or political reasons (Moser and Katlon, 1983). If these situations arose, as the researcher I would have judged whether or not to continue that line of questioning, or the interview itself. Thankfully, none of the participants became emotionally distressed at recalling traumatic periods of their childhood. There was only one occasion in which a participant mentioned a detail about their childhood and asked not to discuss it further. At that point I immediately made sure they were okay and reassured them that we would move on to the next question (which they were happy to do so). The data I collected was based only on that which my

participants were able to recall and felt happy to share with me and so I remain aware of the limitations of my data. These limitations are detailed in the closing chapter of this thesis.

Cognition refers to an understanding by the interviewee of what is required of them within this role. Interviews are social encounters and not simply a passive method of generating data. As with all social encounters, these are rule-guided and those involved may adopt particular roles as a result of this (Moser and Kalton, 1983). It was therefore essential, especially at the outset, that I fully explained to participants what was expected of them as well as gaining confirmation of their understanding of the process. If this had not happened, individuals may have felt uncomfortable, negatively affecting the flow of discussion during interviews. For these reasons, clarification becomes a practical, ethical and theoretical consideration that has to be strictly adhered to in order to ensure a harmonious interaction between researcher and participant (Moser and Kalton, 1983). My experience as a teacher in prison indicated to me that communication can often be an issue for many of the students because their social and interaction skills, due to various factors, were not always fully nurtured and developed. This is why, on my part, I ensured I was clear and transparent about what was being asked during interview, always providing an opportunity for clarification if it was needed. It was also important to the accuracy and integrity of the data that it was reported in participants' own vocabulary and frame of reference. Translating this into standardised English could have eliminated some of the emphasis and meaning. I also consulted each participant about how they would like to be quoted with each saying they would prefer their way of speech to reported as was. This is why I made the decision to transcribe and report participants' interview extracts in their vernacular dialects.

Thirdly is the issue of motivation which is connected to the researcher making interviewees feel that their participation is fundamental to the conduct of the research. This meant maintaining engagement during the interview. From this mutual and sustained engagement, the discussion is opened up to enquire about future possibilities in relation to past experiences (Moser and Kalton, 1983). This is where reflexivity regarding interview scripts is important. While I had pre-prepared questions, particularly for the semi-structured stage, it was essential that I asked any other relevant questions that connected various parts of both interviews. This resulted in richer data and enabled me to ascertain participants' opinions on the issues discussed while assessing how they came to terms with events in their lives. This

also helped build an interconnecting picture of significant events and issues in participants' narratives, relating them to other factors that were considered important. For example, if I looked at school disengagement as an isolated occurrence rather than interlinking it with wider contributing factors within participants' lives then I would only have gained part of the story. Again, by maker broader contextual connections, this resulted in richer data.

Overall, interviewing, particularly in a semi-structured format, provides a way of generating empirical data about the social world by encouraging people to talk about their lives. This is because the basis of these interviews is interactional and the narratives produced are constructed within that dialogue, as a product of the discussion between interviewer and the participants (Holstein and Gubrium, 2002). As Fontana and Frey (2000) outline, interviewers are increasingly seen as active participants in interactions with respondents and interviews are seen as negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents that are shaped by the context and situations in which they take place. While those I interviewed knew their own story before the process began, the types of questions I asked and how they constructed their narrative in response to this had some effect on the data that was produced. How the interview questions and dialogue was framed by me as a researcher could have been a potential source of bias, error, misunderstanding or misdirection and questions had to be asked properly to gain the desired information. Participants are constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers and their participation in the process involves mean-making work (Holstein and Gubrium, 2002). At the biographical stage, while questions were probing to an extent, the focus was really to allow the participant to re-tell the story of their background to date. The issues outlined above became more prevalent at the semi-structured stage of interviews as the questions were more exploratory. Meaning was actively and conversationally constructed during this encounter from both the participant and myself as the researcher. The process itself fundamentally, not incidentally, shaped the form and content of what was said and the rich data that was produced. Before moving on to discuss my thematic organisation and data analysis stage, I shall briefly consider the use of the CA as a research framework.

4.12 The Capabilities Approach as a Framework

Robeyns (2003) explains that an advantage of using the CA as a research framework is that capabilities themselves are properties of individuals. Concurrently, the approach is not necessarily ontologically individualistic (although it has been criticised as such). It does not assume atomistic individuals or that our capabilities and how we choose to function within them are separate from our concern for others and their actions. It is not a mathematical theorem that can definitively determine how to measure poverty or inequality. What the approach does do is advocate that the evaluative space should be that of capabilities, and so in this study, I used it to evaluate participants' levels of wellbeing throughout their lives, the options open to them in relation to the state of their capabilities and the factors that influenced damage or improvement to their capability set, such as incarceration and education. Another of its strengths is that it explicitly acknowledges human diversity such as age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and so on, so there is potential for intersectional consideration. Sen (1992) has previously criticised inequality approaches that assume that everyone holds the same utility functions or are influenced in the same way and to the same extent by equivalent personal, social and environmental characteristics. So, this study examined participants' life experiences to gain an understanding of what factors influenced capability attainment and functioning (or not) within the personal, social and environmental characteristics that are unique to them.

Chiappero-Martinetti (2008) outlines the merits of using the CA as an analytical framework:

> The capability approach is much more than a mere multidimensional framework for assessing poverty and wellbeing; it offers a broader, richer, and intrinsically complex theoretical scheme for describing the multifaceted nature of poverty, understanding its causes and effects, and investigating interrelated layers of analysis that have traditionally been neglected or not adequately debated. (Chiappero-Martinetti, 2008, p 14)

Developing on from this, Robeyns (2006) argues that current and emerging capability literature still lacks a strong degree of operationalization, although progress is ongoing. This

is largely due to the unspecified nature of the approach in that it only outlines what is important when evaluating people's wellbeing and freedom, along with social arrangements. She explains that when applying it to a concrete case(s), as this research does, the framework needs to be supplemented with additional social theories related to the topic. This is why I ascertained links to other theories such as desistance, attachment, childhood adversity and habitus development, among others. This helped me to gain a more detailed comprehension on the contributing factors to participants' levels of wellbeing and capabilities and how they could operationalise these within the desistance process.

There are also time restrictions when utilising this analytical framework. Capturing the possible changing nature of participants' capability sets when they are back in community would require a longitudinal approach that was not possible within my timeframe. While I have aimed to gauge the development of capabilities and how this can support desistance, as my research participants were still incarcerated the links are projected and theoretical. The length of this study did not provide the appropriate timeframe to track every participant after incarceration and analyse how or if education has helped them to develop and function within capabilities at future points, or if indeed, they still place value on education post-release.

4.13 Thematic Organisation and Data Analysis

I transcribed the digital recordings of the interviews and stored transcriptions as encrypted Word documents and saved under pseudonyms for confidentiality. All recordings were deleted once transcriptions were complete. Because interviews had produced in excess of 40 hours of data which was a large amount to analyse manually, they were transferred to NVivo 11 to undertake the organisation and coding stages.

While I had focused on main themes when designing and carrying out my research (education, capabilities and desistance) I simultaneously utilised the grounded theory techniques of open-coding. This resulted in other themes being extracted from the data, particularly in the earliest stages of organisation and coding (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The data analysis followed three general stages. The first two of these is data reduction which

involved organisation into a wide breadth of themes and data display (part of the analysis stage) which focused on collating the data into a more organised format (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Self-transcription gave me the opportunity to pay close attention to participants' answers, extracting as much detail as possible and producing nodes that collated with these. I also re-visited my interview observation notes in order to cross-correlate what I perceived to be significant talking points during both stages. Focusing on both transcripts and notes reduced the chance of missing important details of the discussions. This stage was repeated (usually twice but sometimes more) with each interview until I felt comfortable that I both understood what the participant wanted to say and that I had extracted as much meaningful data as possible. This gave me time between reads to view the same interview data with a fresh lens and identify any possible areas in which my own biases and experiences could have interfered with my understanding of what was being described (Berger, 2015). This phase produced 22 main nodes with some larger ones, such as capabilities, school, prison and desistance being organised into a number of sub-nodes. All main nodes in the childhood section of data organisation are shown below and a full diagram of all data sections can be found in appendix 3. To alleviate the diagrams becoming overly detailed, the sub-nodes are not included. They were utilised for my own organisation where nodes ran over more than one life stage and had a high number of interview extracts connected to them. For example, the 'capabilities' node had sub-nodes of 'restricted capabilities' and 'improved capabilities'. This helped me to locate data more easily when discussing capability set throughout each life stage.

As both stages of interview had followed participants' life biographies, this grouping gravitated towards a linear timeframe to reflect these narratives. There were exceptions to this such as capabilities, offending, home and school environment that transcended various thematic groups and life biography sections. For this reason, the decision was made to organise the chapter layout and data presentation section of this thesis in that manner. This made it easier to both present the data in a manner that made sense when utilising the life biography interview format but also assist in the tracing of cumulative issues throughout participants' lives (such as capability attainment/damage, disadvantage, trauma and offending behaviour). This created a two-level structure of node/thematic organisation whereby some were contained to certain biographical sections and some were returned to throughout the entirety of the data reporting (such as capabilities). Using the childhood stage, I provide a more detailed description of my process below.

Stage one – two (below) involved taking my original 22 main nodes and reducing them to the ones that directly applied to participants' childhoods.

Stage 1:
All Themes

Stage 2:
Life Stage Themes

Adaptive preferences
Authority
Behavioural issues
Capabilities
Care system
College
Desistance
Employment
Future projection
Home environment
Identity/agency
Life events
Health
Offending
Peer influence
Positive developments
Prison
Relationships
Residential/secure unit
School
Skillset
Substance use

Childhood:
Adaptive preferences
Behavioural Issues
Capabilities
Care system
Home environment
Identity/agency
Life events
Health
Peer influence
Residential/secure unit
School
Substance use

From here I took the interview data from the nodes in stage two and wrote a list of general themes that emerged from this life stage (stage three below). For example, many descriptions of 'home environment', the 'care system' and 'identity/agency' focused on participants' experiences of 'fractured family bonds'. So, this became a major theme for the childhood stage. I went through this process with each node from this stage until I felt every emergent theme was covered (stage three below). From here I considered how these themes linked to theory and research. Some theory such as the CA and desistance was utilised from the outset while others were introduced and linked in at each stage as other themes emerged. For example, attachment theory is linked to participants' experiences of fractured family bonds (stage four below). This process was followed until I was satisfied that all emergent themes were supported by appropriate theory and research. Some areas cross-referenced at this stage, for example, the CA linked to a number of emerging themes such as 'poverty/disadvantage', 'isolation/marginalisation' and 'powerlessness' (among others). This confirmed its position as a major theoretical focus of this thesis and was therefore returned to throughout each stage of data analysis and reporting.

For the final stage I arranged themes and research into finalised chapter sections (stage five below). Again, each chapter section contained more than one theme and area of theory/research.

Stage 3: Themes	Stage 4: Links to research/theory	Stage 5 Thesis sections
Trauma/abuse Instability Fractured family bonds Poverty/disadvantage Capability restriction Behavioural issues Health/mental health issues Problems at school Bullying/being bullied Isolation/marginalisation Powerlessness Early substance use (some)	**Childhood:** Trauma/ACEs Attachment Habitus/field CA Disadvantage Self-efficacy Identity development Agency development Influences on HHBs (health harming behaviours)	**Chapter 5:** Primary School Learning Issues Bullying to Bully Home Environment Dignity and Agency Nurture The Care System

The final node/thematic focuses that were extracted from the data are covered in the data reporting chapters of this thesis. At this stage the decision was also made to have a case study focus in each life stage chapter (the same participant is utilised for the final two data presentation chapters). This gave the data a central focus to anchor around while at the same time cross-connecting similarities and differences between other participants' experiences.

Throughout the research process, a number of measures were taken in order to secure the rigour of the research with particular reference to credibility, transferability dependability and confirmability as an alternative to measures of validity and reliability, in positivist research (see Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Morrow, 2005). Credibility (as opposed to validity) focuses on the idea of internal consistency (Lincoln and Guba, 2000) and how this rigour is ensured and communicated to others (Gasson, 2004). This can be ensured by techniques such as prolonged engagement in a research field, persistent observation, researcher reflexivity, participant checks and validation/verification. In connection to my research I experienced prolonged engagement in my research field, both as a teacher and researcher, ensuring I understood the culture and social setting of prison. The persistent observation I was able to undertake both in my classroom and with participants during interviews, supported the development of depth in my understanding of the challenging nature of

participants' wider lives. It also provided another opportunity, outside of interview data, to grasp and collate the collective issues that affected each participant over their life span, such as early trauma, school disengagement and restricted capabilities connected to offending. Self-reflection also supported my reflexivity throughout the research process (outlined earlier in this chapter), ensuring I kept personal biases to a minimum and allowed the participants' perspectives and experiences to guide my research findings. Participant checks were ensured by talking to individuals on more than one occasion for clarification and to allow the opportunity to correct any errors in my interpretation of events or actions. Validation and verification were ensured by utilising a variety of theoretical perspectives to examine and interpret the data. I began with CA and desistance theory as overarching research focuses, bringing in others during the data analysis. The verification took place when themes that were discussed throughout the thesis were linked to existing theoretical research (for example, the negative long-term effects of an unstable childhood home environment were linked to research surrounding adverse childhood experiences and toxic stress). Credibility is also enhanced by rich and in-depth descriptions of the data that provides detail of participants' experiences but also the context in which these experiences occur (Geertz, 1983). I aimed to provide this in my research by gaining detailed descriptions of participants' backgrounds as well as their experiences of areas such as education and prison. Thick descriptions were ensured throughout my data by providing detailed explanations of the connections between participants' narratives and the commonalities they held. By utilising a case study narrative for each chapter and connecting this out to other participant experiences, this indicated the ability to draw transferable conclusions between participants. I did not seek external auditing in the formal sense as I was working within an interpretivist perspective and was concerned that any understanding that was created and verified between myself and participants could have been translated differently by a researcher not immersed in this research or its contexts. However, I did self-reflect on my data interpretations at length during each stage and discussed these (and the drafts of my data chapters) in detail with my supervisors. This allowed my supervisors to highlight any areas that were potentially more significant than I first realised, such as the issue of bullying at primary school, and also to point out areas that needed further clarity and connection to other theories, such as the links between gang membership, attachment and habitus.

The criterion of transferability (versus external validity or generalizability) is connected to the extent to which a researcher can claim generalisation of their findings and theories

(Gasson, 2004). I achieved this by providing sufficient information about myself as a research instrument, the research context, process and participants as well as researcher-participant relationships. This enables the reader to decide how transferable the research findings are to other groups. However, due to the small sample size utilised in my research, I am not arguing for any generalisability from my data. Dependability (as opposed to reliability) considers the manner in which research is conducted and how this could be consistent if undertaken by another researcher at a different time, utilising the same or similar analysis techniques (Gasson, 2004). By tracking and describing my research design through my own notes, diagrams and node groupings on NVivo I was able to establish an audit trail. This would help to ensure dependability to my data by making my research and analysis processes explicit as well as potentially repeatable in the future. Finally, confirmability (as opposed to objectivity) acknowledges that a researcher can never be objective. I have discussed the personal biases I had to consider earlier in this chapter and I remained reflexive throughout the research process by acknowledging these in my interview and analysis notes. By doing this I recognised when biases were present during the research process and from there acted to put them aside, returning to the data once again to ensure themes emerged from participants' narratives and not my own beliefs and theories.

The final stage of the process was conclusion-drawing. This began in the thematic organisation of the data and ended in the final conclusions section once all data had been organised and analysed (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Once the full spectrum of biography thematic focuses was presented and discussed within this thesis, overall conclusions and recommendations were reached for the closing chapter.

4.14 Conclusion

Working within an interpretive research paradigm was chosen to allow both participants and myself to construct and express meaning about their lives and the communities they come from. This is pertinent to those in custody as they are influenced by the prison environment they stay within as well as their wider group identities. As part of this research focuses on participants' experiences of education and learning, an interpretive standpoint encouraged short and long-term nuanced meanings to be attached to these practices. As well as an overview of the interpretive paradigm, this chapter described my research design and the

ethical process involved and my personal position as practitioner researcher was also considered. The research locations, sampling rationale and an overview of the participants was described and from this I provided a detailed overview of my chosen interview structures, both life narrative and semi-structured. Utilising the CA as a research framework was briefly outlined here before the chapter concluded with a discussion of thematic organisation and analysis of my data. The following four chapters will now move on to present and discuss my research findings.

Chapter Five

Capabilities Lost

5.1 Introduction

The analysis sections chronologically move through the stages of participants' narratives. This allows reflection on how and why pre-conditions for capability attainment and functioning have ebbed and flowed from participants' lives, linking this to overall wellbeing. It also indicates when and how education and offending played into their histories and the influences behind individual motivations and disengagements from both. Each data chapter will highlight a case study narrative, expanding the discussion to include other participants' experiences and observations.

At this point, it is helpful to discuss some key characteristics of the participants' lives. All of those interviewed came from areas with varying degrees of socio-economic problems. The only exception was John who was adopted as a baby and grew up in a 'nice, middle-class area' and Simon who grew up in a small, rural community. Participants' households had varying incomes, with around half describing having working parents and feeling provided for as children. However, this measurement is both relative to limited childhood comprehension and comparative to others around them that may have lived in households with lower income. This can develop what Nussbaum calls 'adaptive preferences', which will be looked at later. Home environment descriptions ranged from calm and nurturing to extreme violence, (a quarter placed themselves in the latter category). Five participants were 'cared for' by the state at some point, with Alec growing up in care homes full-time from age nine. Nearly half were excluded from school at least once with suspensions occurring frequently. Three of that number attended residential school and three were placed in secure units due to early offending. Fifteen of the twenty disengaged from school before the age of sixteen, and only three sat national exams. All described experimenting with substances and just over half identified as having a problem or addiction by age sixteen with eight of those coming from homes in which one or both parental figure(s) had an addiction. Thirteen began to commit offences prior to turning sixteen. These issues will be discussed further in the following chapters.

Carol's story is the central narrative in this chapter, with others intertwining to reflect the variations and similarities in the data. From the east of Glasgow, Carol suffered disrupted early years. Her mother was a teenager when she had her and suffered from addiction issues. Her father received a life sentence during her early years and became absent from her life for a prolonged period. After her father's imprisonment, her mother's addiction worsened, and Carol went to live with her grandparents in England. This was the more stable and nurturing part of her childhood. Eventually she returned to stay with her mother and step-father but lived within severe domestic abuse. She described this as the damaging section of her childhood.

This chapter will look at the effect of primary school and the home environment on participants. Learning issues will be considered as well as experiences of bullying and being bullied. The development of dignity and agency in connection to both environments will also be examined. The chapter will close by discussing the effect of the care system on those who were placed in this environment.

5.2 Primary School

Starting primary school can be a significant event in a child's life where they begin to spend more time away from the home and family environment. Social circles are widened as children develop peer relationships and interact with adult authority figures other than parents. School is also when a child begins to experience categorisation based on ability and can be a period of adjustment that has a lasting effect on their development.

Carol attended different primary schools resulting in a disrupted start to her education.

> I went tae four different primary schools wi ma mum moving aboot quite a lot.
> I remember that I missed quite a lot of school aw the way through, so I would
> say it had a negative impact. – Carol

Most of Carol's memories of school were marred by instability. Periods of non-attendance became commonplace and she struggled to settle in each new school she was sent to. This created gaps in her knowledge development, placing her at a disadvantage to her contemporaries who had stable school engagement. Nussbaum (2011) argues that access to and interaction with education develops the necessarily abilities to translate into capability attainment and functioning. Without education, one is already disadvantaged in their ability to live in a fully human way, giving longevity to this disadvantaged state (as it did for Carol).

Other participants reported difficulties settling into primary school.

> I just couldnae communicate wi any of the children. I just couldnae concentrate on whit the teacher wis sayin. I wis always distracted by things like 'what wis gonna happen when I got home?' - Scott

> My way of dealing with it wis putting everything that wis happening tae me tae the back o ma mind…jist building it up…no expressing it. I wis probably destructive in class cause o it. – Joe

> I wis jist an angry boy basically. I wis jist constantly angry. On top o ma own problems, I had ma mum an dad's problems…I wis jist getting angrier at school an throwin things aboot an breakin things. – Craig

Here there are connections between school behaviour and participants' wider lives. Like Carol, many came from unstable home environments and school became a location of escape but it affected their ability to settle and engage as Scott and Joe worried about returning home to violence. Or, as Craig described, it was a location to express his frustration at his family problems. These comments reflect these participants' lack of ability to communicate both what was happening to them and their associated feelings. Their emotional and social skills were underdeveloped, so they struggled to use these skills at school. The resultant 'disruptive behaviour' can lead to further marginalisation from mainstream classrooms and

social situations. School then becomes another environment where support was lacking (which will be discussed at a later point). Undiagnosed behavioural issues such as ADD and ADHD or learning issues such as dyslexia can also contribute to these reactions. Indeed, a number of interviewees have obtained diagnoses for such issues later in life which may have contributed to their behavioural problems at school. However, participants' challenging home environments should also be considered as an influence to obtain a more comprehensive picture and this shall be returned to in a later section.

Carol also felt she struggled to settle in primary school due to lack of engagement from her mother.

> Aye an ma mum didnae care. She couldnae control her ain life never mind mine so it got tae a point that I jist stopped goin some days. – Carol

Carol's mother was struggling to cope with her own addiction. She also verbalised her lack of confidence in her daughter's abilities, shown in a later interview comment that *"ma mum always said I wis stupid"*. Bourdieu (2010) asserts that our familial developed habitus extends to our attitude towards education. If the family has no history of deep engagement with learning this can predispose an individual to exit education early in line with these behaviours. Furthermore, Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) research has indicated that exposure to adversity, particularly neglect, is connected to long-term cognitive shortfalls, such as lower educational attainment (Hildyard and Wolfe, 2002). Combining both these influences can offer some explanation to the high level of educational disengagement in many of the participants' narratives.

Like Carol, others described a similar lack of parental engagement which was layered on to already complex issues within their family units.

> She (my mum) never put a massive emphasis on it (school). She jist let me get on wi it. She never really sat or did homework with me or anything… I think because she wis always pre-occupied wi her pals an drugs an that. – Craig

> I think she wis jist too busy tryin tae deal wi what wis goin on at home (domestic abuse). The school kind o knew but really what could they do? – Brian

> …they never really spoke aboot ma school. Ma mother wis oot working aw the time an ma dad never really asked me aboot it. – Lisa

These comments fall into two categories; participants' parent(s) either had too much to deal with personally, such as addiction or domestic abuse, meaning they struggled to interact with their children's learning; or, school attendance was expected by parents but not engaged with. Perhaps consequentially, self-efficacy towards learning was underdeveloped.

Conversely, there were descriptions of parental encouragement towards school.

> It wis very important tae ma maw especially. She always made sure that I got tae school, but I had a habit o goin in the front door and oot the back door. – Dean

> They encouraged me tae dae well at school. Both ma mum an ma dad would really help me wi ma homework. – Ricki

Nussbaum (2006) asserts that education overarches capabilities, being one of the main tools to aid capability attainment. However, one's functioning within their education provision has a correlation with their capability development. Thus, low self-efficacy can lead to learner disengagement, negatively impacting capability attainment. Bandura (1994) argued that our individual self-efficacy can positively or negatively affect our capability to achieve, particularly in the area of education. He maintained that we are all partly a product of our environment, meaning caregivers can have an impact on this process. He also asserted the importance of positive verbal reinforcement from educators and family. This can mobilise effort and lower self-doubt. Thus, if caregivers do not prioritise education, and/or are

negative about a child's academic abilities, as reflected in Carol's story, this can lead to attitudinal replication in the child, often with lasting effects as we shall see in later sections. Many participants also described learning issues as an added barrier to early school engagement, which will now be discussed.

5.3 Learning Issues

Carol has suffered from life-long hearing and visual problems as well as dyslexia that was only diagnosed two years ago. She recalled the cumulative effects of this in primary school.

> The teacher wis always sittin me right at the front of the class tellin me not tæ write so big in aw ma books. I don't know if maybe I wis writing bigger tae try and make it clearer tae me. I felt victimised. – Carol

While Carol never became disruptive at school, she strongly believes that despite having a great thirst for learning, her health hindered this process. She felt her teachers were unsupportive in their actions, leading her to be isolated from peers and unable to reach her full academic potential. When this is damaged in some way, so too is our ability to achieve a full and flourishing capability set (Nussbaum, 2001, 2006, 2011).

Carol later described a more supportive period in her early years.

> When I lived wi ma grandparents, my grandma did a lot o work wi me cause there wis large gaps in ma learning. Ma reading an writing wis really poor. - Carol

Carol intermittently discussed the positive cognitive and emotional effects of living with her grandparents. She reflected that as well as providing stability, her health improved and she began to flourish at school.

> My gran would always give me books tae read. She always said I had the potential tae go tae university, but ma mum always said I wis stupid. Ma gran saw something in me. – Carol

In connection to Bandura's (1994) aforementioned theory of caregiver-child attitudinal transference, Carol was more engaged in the learning she had a thirst for when encouraged by her grandmother. But, her mother's negative opinion of her educational abilities had the opposite effect on her self-efficacy and learning engagement. Carol was confident that had she remained with her grandmother then her future could have featured university rather than prison. Carol's capability of senses, imagination and thought was damaged as she struggled to develop these skills through engaged learning. Her bodily health was impaired as her hearing issues lessened her ability to connect with peers and this negatively affected her capability of affiliation as she struggled to socially engage (Nussbaum, 2000).

Other participants described health and cognitive problems that led to isolation.

> I had tae get grommets put in ma ears when I wis really young. I couldnae hear well. The teachers put a lot o me no dain well in class doon tae that. – Calum

> I wis really shy …Bein epileptic I wisnae allowed on the computers. In English I wisnae allowed a book cause that used tae set me off so I jist had tae sit an listen. Sometimes I felt like I didnae get included. – Neil

> … the teacher tried tae say I hadnae done ma homework. I got really upset an threw a chair across the table. I had tried tae dae ma homework but I wis struggling wi dyslexia an ma reading an writing. – Ricki

These descriptions reflect restrictions in participant's capability of bodily health (problems with hearing, epilepsy, dyslexia) linking to limitations in others. Their capability of senses,

imagination and thought were also damaged as these issues lessened their ability to engage with education. The isolation suffered was similar to Carol's, meaning their capability of affiliation was reduced. These comments both directly and indirectly imply that these issues stunted their overall academic and social performance at primary school.

For the majority, family life, as well as school and peer engagement provided some level of skills development during early years. However, participant narratives indicate that these experiences were often distorted in ways that created habits that broke with civic culture (such as behavioural issues in class) and healthier social relationships (such as struggling to fully engage with peers) (Duguid, 2000). Bourdieu (2010) emphasised the role of family and school in the development of habitus (and formation of capital). He argued that trying to catch up through educational interventions at a later stage is more challenging if the groundwork has not been laid in the earlier, predominantly family-led stages of socialisation. This emphasises the importance of stability and nurture in those early years to encourage healthy educational engagement and personal development. As well as engagement in class, social interaction can affect development and if these interactions are unhealthy, this can have damaging consequences. Participants' descriptions of peer relationships will now be discussed.

5.4 Bullying to Bully

During early school years, half of the participants described being bullied, becoming a bully or a mixture of both roles. Carol was bullied sporadically throughout primary school, describing how it made her feel and her connected reactionary behaviour.

> I moved tae England and got bullied there cause I wis Scottish. It affected ma confidence. Cause I wis bullied in primary, I had this attitude that it wisnae gonnae happen again, so I became a bully. – Carol

Carol felt threatened by the coercive behaviour of others, so to regain this and protect from further intimidation, she felt her only option was to adopt those behaviours. Through this she

believed she could regain some power in her life, both from bullies and the violence inflicted on her at home. This appeared to have bound her to negative behaviours as she explained that for a long time, she felt that violence became the only way to tackle her problems with others. She has since consciously moved away from these behaviours to live harmoniously within herself and with those around her.

Bullying and being bullied emerged from other narratives. Like Carol, these generally fell into two categories – those who became bullies to regain control and those who retreated into themselves as their confidence and self-worth was damaged.

> …being bullied definitely affected me. I would say that it desensitized me tae violence an empathy. My older pals taught me that I wis tougher than that bully frae primary, an frae that day I didnae really have any fear o anybody. – Conor

> I wis bullied fir 6 years so it messed up ma confidence an I struggled tae stick in at school. I could have done a lot better cause I am a smart boy but obviously the bullying got a hold o me. It wis horrible. – Dave

> I didnae learn much at school. I was bullied all the time. At the playtime we would go out and the school kids would see me dressed in the cheapest of clothes. They would have school bags and I had a plastic Haddows bag. – Scott

Research has shown that victims of bullying have a high probability of engaging in bullying behaviours themselves at some point (reflected in both Daryl and Carol's descriptions). Victims struggle to regain power and control, which can lead to these behaviours emerging (Barker et al., 2008). School transitions – either changing school or moving up from primary to secondary – are often points when bullying begins or a change in role occurs. This can be due to the disruption of social hierarchies with bullying being used to gain or maintain status (Troop-Gordon, 2017). Participants described not wanting to suffer the emotional turmoil of being bullied again and felt their options were limited to transitioning from victim to bully. This ensured they could defend themselves while demonstrating they should not be

challenged by intimidating others. All of those who attested to being a bully felt guilty about it, but they all described similar reasons for this role development – it stopped them being bullied by others. In their peer environments, their options were reduced to either being the intimidator or the intimidated.

Both Dave and Scott described the long-term damage being bullied had on them. It negatively affected their engagement with school and their knowledge development and for Dave it worsened his confidence issues which he still struggles with today. Scott attended the Learning Centre to redress the schooling he missed due, in part, to being bullied, while Dave has found similar skills-development in his work shed. A bully asserts their authority over another by reducing the victim's confidence and dignity. One of the prerequisites of capability attainment and flourishing is the necessity for a person to be equal to those around them and free of domination from others in order to be perceived as truly-human. The trauma of being bullied limits those pre-requisites for the victim, damaging their ability to attain capabilities. A person's capacity to act autonomously is also at risk as they are oppressed, in varying degrees, by the acts of their oppressor (bully). The comments above describe ways in which these capabilities were thwarted; affiliation, as none of these participants were being treated as a dignified being whose worth was equal to that of others; emotions, as their development in this area is being damaged by the fear and anxiety created by the bully; and finally implied damage to bodily integrity as they struggled to move freely in their environment due to fear of intimidation. Participants' autonomy was also negatively affected due to the powerlessness they felt at the hands of their persecutor (Nussbaum, 2011).

These descriptions also touch on early identity development in participants' lives. Research has shown that bullying can result in long-term damage to self-respect and self-confidence (Fullchange and Furlong, 2016). For those who were bullied, the devaluation of their worth made them question who they were and what type of behaviours they wanted to display to others. Primary socialisation (predominantly influenced by the family unit) and secondary socialisation (how we interact and develop with peers and groups) both play a central role in identity construction. The process evolves through ongoing interaction with these two categories, by which individuals define and redefine themselves at various points (see Cooley, 1962; Mead, 1934). A person's sense of self, particularly when young, can be affected, both positively and negatively by the self-regard of others (Jenkins, 2008). For

those treated as lesser by their bullies, this can be internalised and affect a person's identity and opinion of themselves. Studies focusing on bully-victims found them to display severe and often long-lasting vulnerabilities and they were at greater risk of suicidal ideation, conduct problems, anxiety, depression and self-harm (Kelly et al., 2015; Barker at al., 2008). Being a bully has been linked to later drug use, violence, offending and suicidal tendencies (see Ttofi and Farrington, 2011; Gibb et al., 2011; McVie, 2014; Sourander et al., 2011; Ttofi at al., 2011). Being both victim and perpetrator can perpetuate a cycle of social exclusion and rejection by peers which results in behavioural and emotional responses (Vaswani, 2019). For those participants who experienced this at school, the impact appears to have been deep-seated and long-term. From school and peer groups, other environments and parties that influenced participants' development will be looked at, starting with home environment.

5.5 Home Environment

The home and family are central influences in development. Participants provided comprehensive overviews of these formative environments and the pictures that emerged cover a wide spectrum from nurturing to traumatic. Carol's childhood contained both nurture and neglect as her mother struggled with the caregiver role.

> Ma mum wis dead young when she had me so she wisnae really like a parent. She would be sittin getting mad wi it wi ma step-dad an I could take drink oot the hoose an they wouldnae even notice. I started drinkin at aboot 11 an had tae fend for myself with food an that. – Carol

During these periods, Carol also witnessed a lot of domestic violence.

> At the end of primary ma wee sister wis born. Ma step-dad had broken ma mum's arm so she couldnae do bottles an that so I had tae do it. So sometimes when I wis at school then ma thoughts were 'what's goin on at home the noo? I wonder

> if ma baby sister is awright?'…So I missed a lot o school cause o that. Day-to-day I would say it made me angry so I would fight wi other people. – Carol

Carol's descriptions indicate a childhood that lacked capability attainment or flourishing. Her mother battled addiction and struggled to take care of Carol. At its severest points, Carol and her sister were placed with family members or in state care. She described having little stability for much of her childhood, caring for herself and her sister from an early age. What Carol described is an agency of sorts as she developed necessary life skills to look after herself and her sibling. However, that version of autonomous behaviour was survival rather than developing her capacity to plan and choose a path in life. Had she not acted independently when it came to sustenance or caring for her younger sister, the consequences for them could have been more damaging.

Carol discussed the negative effect her home environment had on her capabilities of bodily health and integrity. Nussbaum (2000) suggests that this capability includes having adequate nourishment. Carol often had to seek her own nourishment, suggesting this was less than adequate at various points. The capability of bodily integrity stipulates that a person needs to be secure against violent assault, including domestic violence. The constant presence and threat of this at home meant that she, her sister and her mother were always in danger of being physically and emotionally hurt. She later commented that as a teenager she became the target of her step-father's abuse when defending her mother. This indicated a negative effect on her capability of emotions as her development in this area was marred by fear and violence. She comments above that her reaction to this was anger, regaining the control she could not grasp at home by bullying others in school. She believed the fighting between her parents led her to believe that violence was an appropriate reaction to have towards others. Her engagement in school was also negatively affected as her attention was understandably elsewhere. Sadly, substance abuse problems spilled over into her life as her description of adolescent drinking reflects. This resulted in longer-term consequences as alcohol abuse has become a fixture in her adult life, contributing to her inability to reach her full potential.

Carol's home life indicated compounded inter-generational disadvantage as outlined by Wolff and De Shalit (2007) and is demonstrated in her early adopted drinking habits. These 'clusters' of disadvantages can be amassed over a person's lifespan. This can then become

inter-generational as adults reproduce or pass down these disadvantages to their future generation(s), possibly being compounded over time, creating 'dynamic clustering' (Wolff and De Shalit, 2007). An example of this could be when a parent's substance abuse problems replicate in their children, exposing them to the associated disadvantages they suffered. A number of the participants identified with this type of dynamic clustering, indicating a diminished capability set inherited from parents. This does not mean that once a person is disadvantaged, there is no way to counter this, but the offspring's capability set and functionings are at greater risk. It increases the likelihood of having to work harder, devoting more time and effort to compensate for this inherited shortfall. State intervention is not always present or consistent, making the challenge greater. Individuals may have to risk or sacrifice other functionings, often initiated by themselves, to secure the ones they feel are most needed. Like Carol, many participants described early lives that were inherently disadvantaged with regard to development and their socio-economic location. Wolff and De-Shalit (2007) define inequality (both socially and in general terms) as a force that can make an individual's life better or worse by affecting their sense of attachment to society and those around them (what Nussbaum calls 'affiliation'). The plurality and clustering of disadvantage makes it more challenging to identify who are worst off. In connection to capabilities, it can make it difficult to pinpoint threshold levels of functioning. A shortfall in one element cannot be overcome with a more adequate supply of another (or are 'non-fungible') (Nussbaum, 2000). If we place this within a disadvantaged childhood, these children may need extra support with school to raise them to the level of advantaged children in their age range. However, their home environment may dictate that this deep engagement with learning is not possible, and I provide evidence of this earlier in this chapter. This will be returned to but it is important to establish possible long-term consequences at this stage in order to track if and why they continue throughout the narratives.

Recent studies into Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have found that early trauma (suffered before the age of eighteen) can negatively impact a victim's health and wellbeing into adulthood. These include being victim of or exposed to physical, emotional or sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; various kinds of home and family dysfunction, such as divorced or separated parents, domestic abuse, mental ill-health, substance misuse and incarceration of a parent or household member. The higher a person scores on the ACE system, the more likely they are to suffer long-term negative effects (Felitti et al., 1998; Smith, 2018). Exposure to ACEs can create what psychologists' class as 'toxic stress'. This

occurs when children have no adult support throughout prolonged periods of adversity (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2014). The long-term effects of this include mental health problems in children and adults, such as anxiety and depression. Substance use has been found to be utilised as a coping mechanism to deal with ACEs and their effects, often compounding pre-existing physical and mental health problems (Felitti et al., 1998). Carol's narrative indicates a number of identifiable ACEs. She lived with the threat of domestic abuse; her needs were neglected by her caregivers; and she used alcohol as a coping mechanism. These early experiences had traceable long-term effects on her health and wellbeing.

Other participants spoke of challenging early years similar to Carol's.

My dad would verbally and physically abuse me … he would lock us up in a cupboard with just a bed in it. He would keep us in there till ma mum came back. – Scott

There was a lot of domestic violence and abuse at home when I was growing up. That probably affected me massively cause I believe that a child needs stability in life…I think that the child you have depicts the teenager and adult you become. – Brian

There wis violence when I went tae live with ma mum cause she and her man were selling heroin frae the hoose so they used tae lock me an ma wee brother in a room in their flat. There wis nae handle on the inside so you couldnae get oot. It wis horrible. – Joe

Scott, Brian and Joe are just a few of the participants who suffered through violent childhoods as Carol did. There was clear damage to their quality of life as they were imprisoned by their abusers, both physically and metaphorically. These comments also indicate damage to their capabilities of bodily integrity and emotions just as Carol suffered. These participants were unable to move freely from place to place and the threat of violence

was ever present. Like Carol, these descriptions reflect a lack of healthy affiliation in these participants' young lives, meaning they struggled to engage in social interaction due to the restrictive nature of their abusive home lives. Since these participants' early abilities were not nurtured, it is likely that their physical and mental wellbeing was unable to develop in a way worthy of human dignity. This had an enormous detrimental effect on these participants' abilities to be 'fully-functioning' both in their formative years and as adults. More evidence of this will be traced throughout participants' life narratives.

The early adoption of adult responsibilities, such as assuming a parental role as Carol did for her baby sister, is often a consequence of childhood adversity (Felitti et al., 1998). Domestic violence meant Carol became the main carer to her sister and sometimes her mother. On a daily basis this affected her ability to engage with school. On a social and emotional level, she had to assume an adult role so early in life that she had little opportunity for a childhood. She described experiencing severe stress at a young age which translated into anger towards others. Scott, Joe and Brian also described a link between the childhood abuse they suffered and their emotional, social and physical development.

> My parents used to spend all their money on booze so trying to get something to eat was hard…me and my brother ended up with dysentery and I had a problem with diarrhoea and I felt weak all the time. – Scott

> I think I wis physically healthy, but I wis emotionally damaged as a kid. I noticed that the older I got an the mair stuff happened, I would never show any emotion. I would just smother it wi everything that I had. – Joe

> I had pals, but I wis a bit of a loner. I had trust issues an that definitely came frae everything that happened tae me. – Brian

The ACE scale focuses on tracing the long-term effects of early toxic stress on a person's physical and mental wellbeing both of which are described above. But how do these early environments influence our lifelong habits? Bourdieu (1977, 2010) argued that much of our

primary socialization comes from the family unit. They are a central influence on the development of our 'habitus' – our manner of acting, thinking, feeling and being. These are carried within us and our histories, bringing them into our present lives, influencing the choices we make to act in particular ways. This process is continuous throughout our lives and we engage with it, often subconsciously, adapting new habitus as our fields change. This will be returned to in greater depth throughout the data reporting, but it is important to understand the influence the home and family environment has on shaping behaviours throughout life. The physical and emotional abuse described here places these participants on the childhood adversity scale. Brian links this to the issues he still struggles with today, explaining that this period of his life was a catalyst for much of what went wrong for him. Capabilities that are connected to health and emotions were being damaged for all three, similar to the damage being enacted on Carol at the same stage. Life was more focused on trying to deal with adversity than being able to flourish in areas such as school and peer relations. Disadvantage stemmed from this early trauma and clustered other disadvantages around it, particularly connected to their emotional and physical development.

Both ACE labelling and Bourdieu's theory on habitus and field have been criticised for being deterministic and that a person's life trajectory and behaviours should not and cannot be ascertained at such an early stage. However, Bourdieu (2010) suggested that it was unrealistic to view a person's life trajectory as following a singular path and that it is instead made up of multiple, sometimes chaotic paths. Influences and events occur in life that can contribute to this chaos, such as family breakdown or parental drug use (Hart, 2018). The participants' descriptions in this section indicate that adversity and abuse suffered in an early home environment can damage a person's development and capabilities, thus influencing the paths realistically open to them. That is not to say that a person's habitus and life trajectory will be resolutely dictated by significant events or early home environment. Personal agency plays a role in both Bourdieu and Nussbaum's theories which will be discussed further throughout the data analysis.

Parental substance use was another theme that emerged from the data. Carol's mother had ongoing addiction issues and despite short periods of respite with her grandparents, she lived with and was highly aware of her mother's drug problems.

> Ma mum started takin smack after ma dad got the long sentence…She eventually got aff it but then it led tae her drinkin an that ended up in her takin speed. It aw eventually killed her. – Carol

Carol's stability was disrupted, in part, due to her mother's addiction. She mentioned earlier that she often went unnoticed at home because her mother *"wis too wrapped up in her ain addiction tae notice anything I wis doin"*. Her daily care was not fully tended to, restricting her capabilities and limiting her ability to flourish. Early childhood is when attachments between children and caregivers begin to form. If healthy, these are based on the child's need for nurture, comfort and protection. As a child ages, their proximity to their caregivers lessens. If the attachment with their caregiver is secure, they will return to them when in distress or challenged. This gives them the confidence to explore whilst also developing an internal working model of care and protection. This provides a similar self-comforting and regulating role as individuals move into adult life, helping them to cope with emotional and social situations (Bowlby 1969, 1973, 1980). Carol did not have secure attachment to her caregivers due to their emotional unavailability and intermittent need responses. Over time, this can result in defensive behaviours and problems with unhealthy attachments to others (see Ainsworth et al., 1978; De Wolff & van IJzendoorn, 1997; Liotti, 2004). The effects of disrupted parental attachment can be seen in the above comments. While sympathetic that her mother had her own challenges to deal with, Carol did not feel cared for by anyone except her grandparents. Scott, Brian and Joe touched upon weak parental attachment that left them feeling unsupported during periods of their childhoods. This shall be returned to in order to trace the longer-term effects of problematic attachment.

Other participants described similar damaged caregiver attachment.

> Ma gran had alcohol issues. Ma dad wis never there. Ma mum had issues wi drugs an ma step-dad wis always full o it. Naebody ever worked…so I've never had anybody that I've looked up tae an thought 'I respect them an I want tae be like them'. – Craig

> Well there wis always food an that but ma gran wis an alcoholic an there wis always strange people in the hoose. They'd be up aw night so that kind of affected me goin tae school. I wis confused an I wisnae gonnae get any help at home so I jist started taking mair drugs. – Conor

> If ma dad wisnae drinkin then he would take seizures...as I say ma self-esteem wis kind o messed up…as I say it had a huge effect like havin tae see ma dad fade away an die like that. – Dave

Substance abuse at home led to instability for many participants. Craig felt he did not have any discernible role models when he was younger and the adults that could have fulfilled that role were dominated by addiction and unable to offer him the guidance he needed. His capability of practical reason was not being met at a time when developing the skills needed to become an independent, self-regulating adult were pertinent. He connected this with his lack of direction as a teenager. Conor felt his basic needs of food and shelter were met but he was not necessarily deeply nurtured. His grandmother did not always consider his safety due to her negative relationship with alcohol and related social circle. He felt his early drug use was a coping mechanism which sadly developed into an addiction. Dave believed his self-esteem was negatively affected from watching his father lose his life to alcohol. These excerpts are further examples of damage to participant's capability attainment, functioning and attachments. As outlined by Wolff and De Shalit (2007), these descriptions of inter-generational disadvantage, where substance misuse stemmed, in part, from early exposure at home, then extended this disadvantage into participants' own lives. However, some of the descriptions of home life were nurturing and supportive which will now be looked at.

5.6 Dignity and Agency

Carol described small sections of her childhood that were spent with her grandparents, when life was stable.

> Things were most stable when I lived wi ma grandparents…A lot o the things
> ma gran did we me I still do noo. Like I love reading an she got me tae enjoy
> books. Ma gran always said I had potential. – Carol

Carol's narrative reflects a childhood dominated by violence, upheaval and fear. The time she spent in the care of her grandparents was the only stability she experienced. Her description of this is insightful when tracing a link between stability, nurture and capability attainment. Carol's literacy and communication skills were in a healthier condition due to her grandmother's support and care. Her emotions and anxiety were more balanced as she did not live with the constant threat of violence. Carol's positive self-worth is associated with her grandmother. She saw potential in her, encouraging her to develop her academic abilities. It is no accident that it is those encouraging words that she drew motivation from to succeed in her Open University degree studies. Even so, her mother's more negative attitude towards her remained, existing just under the surface of her self-doubt. Had her grandmother not displayed this encouragement towards her, Carol's mother's sentiments may have been the dominant part of her inner monologue, discouraging her from academic achievement. This returns to the idea of self-worth and dignity that Nussbaum argues underpins capability development. Her grandmother's nurture encouraged Carol to believe in her own self-worth and abilities. This was clearly a support for her as she pursued educational achievement and a crime free future.

Nussbaum's list of capabilities offers one way of delineating what constitutes a 'truly human' life. Existing without those central capabilities, as many participants did at various points, suggests their lives were not truly human. Nussbaum (2011) explains that when a human is not able to be and do what they wish due to life circumstances, the CA responds by arguing this as a failure of social justice. This results in a portion of society not being rewarded equal dignity to those who are able to 'do and be' who they wish to be. While critical of some aspects of social contract theorists, Nussbaum (2000, 2006, 2011) describes the CA as being 'close relative and allies' to her theory of social justice. She explains that our abilities come into the world in a primitive form and are only developed through environmental nurture – this includes support for the growth of physical and mental well-being. Only through this process can they evolve in a manner that is worthy of human dignity. Virtually none of this was present for Carol during childhood, particularly in her

violent home environment. Both her and her sister's physical and emotional wellbeing was severely threatened, meaning some abilities that needed to be developed in order to gain a healthy capability set were neglected and damaged. For example, her ability to engage with learning was not supported by her parents or staff, meaning she struggled at various points in school. The opposite occurred in the care of her grandparents as with their support, her academic abilities flourish. What emerges here is a concept of dignity that influences the development of capabilities. Namely, that nurture is required to be present from the beginning of our lives in order for capabilities to flourish.

Nussbaum (2006) explains that there are central attributes that need to be met in order for the social contract to work, allowing inhabitants to fully function within that society. These attributes are firstly, that each person is free, meaning they are not enslaved to anyone else. Secondly, that they are roughly equal in power and resources, as well as morally. Finally, that they are independent, meaning individuals are not under the domination of or dependent on any other individuals. Linked to this is the ability to act as agent within one's own life. Arguably, this is less evident when one is very young as babies and young children are reliant on parental figures/caregivers. In particular, they need them to supply provisions that are essential to healthy human development such as adequate food and shelter. Conversely, it can also be argued that agency is exercised and developed from the beginning of life as we strive to become independent beings. What then is the effect if this autonomy is thwarted in some way? Friedman (2003) outlines that certain circumstances need to be fulfilled in order for a person to be able to enact their agency. Firstly, a person must face a variety of situations that render a considerable number of options they can choose from. This is missing from many of the participants' lives from early years onwards. For example, Carol had no choice but to live within the violent home that was provided for her. She was removed at certain points, but being a child, she was at the mercy of adults intervening to move her rather than being able to decide this for herself. Secondly, a person must also have previously developed the skills to navigate the process of selecting from these options. If this has been nurtured for an individual from early years, then it is arguable that they will display little or no skill in exercising agency even if the correct circumstances occur. This is true for many of the participants. Carol had so few options presented to her in her earlier life that she struggled to grasp the skill of making independent decisions. Later during interview, she described her desire to get her own flat as soon as she turned sixteen, take her little sister to live with her and make a life for them both. However, she reflected that she knew this would not happen

as she felt a life of instability and prison was already inevitable for her. This lack of agency development may be one of the factors that contributes to the characteristic fatalism of individuals in custody (Maruna, 2010). Many participants described feeling powerless throughout their lives, struggling to function in this manner if and when the opportunities arose. This will be looked at in more detail throughout this research.

Further to this, Friedman (2003) explains that a person's agency must not be interfered by outside factors such as manipulation, coercion and duplicity. This impedes with our practical effectiveness to self-reflect, damaging our ability to engineer our own lives. Agency that is compromised under conditions of coercion, manipulation, and deception by others can interfere with the practical effectiveness of a person's self-reflection. It can even replace a person's own wants and desires with those of others, either by self-sacrificial reasons, or for personal safety. This can further stunt a person's ability to act in an agentic manner. If a person is consistently or deeply subjugated to the will of another person(s), such as those who are victims of abuse, they cannot be seen as a fully agentic and autonomous individuals. Moreover, the enacting of oppression by another party/parties may also damage a person's ability to hold any concern or care for themselves or anyone around them. Instead they may end up only valuing that person or situation that retains them within those oppressive conditions, limiting their autonomy further and perhaps on a long-term basis. This happened to Carol when subjected to her step-father's violence. She was injured trying to protect her mother and had to care for her baby sister, often to the detriment of her own health and wellbeing. Conversely, when living with her grandparents she was cared for, nurtured and treated with respect and dignity. Within these conditions she flourished and began to enact her agency when choosing to pursue her own interests such as reading and learning. She later reflected that her grandmother's previous encouragement drew her back to education as an adult, once more asserting her independent decision to pursue learning.

Other participants described home environments and family units where their dignity was nurtured and respected.

> I had a good upbringing, I mean you didn't know you wernae getting anything,
> you jist had a bit of an idea that money wis tight. – Dean

It wis quite stable cause ma mum an dad were always there although he wis oot working a lot. I wis always provided for. Everything was awright that way. – Jonny

I never really went withoot anything if I needed it. If ma dad wis working an ma mum wisnae there, there wis always somebody that could help oot if needed be. – James

Ma parents didnae fight or anything so there wis nae violence. We didnae have luxuries or anything but we were fed and sent tae school an bed. So, we were definitely provided for. – Lisa

Participants who classed themselves as coming from a stable home environment displayed awareness of some struggles their parents endured while still providing for them. Home environments described here were calmer, with Lisa mentioning there was no violence, indicating she was aware it was present in other home environments. Calum and James included their wider family circle in their descriptions of stability, showing they had a broader support system that contributed to their development. All of these comments display a pragmatism about the provisions in these participants' childhoods. This reflects a degree of adaptive preferences when measuring their homes against others they saw around them and have lived through since then. Participants knew they were going without in some areas, but this did not necessarily blight their memories of childhood as none perceived it to be damaging to them. Instead, individuals showed awareness that finances were tight and that 'luxuries' were exactly that. Their caregivers and family extended them dignity, treating them with care and nurture. The comments do not touch on any aspects of agency development but this may be due to participants describing childhood, when one is less aware of their autonomy. However, as these participants described being cared for as opposed to being subject to coercive or manipulating behaviour, it implies that they existed within a space that created the potential for agency to flourish. Individuals felt their needs (albeit sometimes basic) were provided for, thus potentially making them free to enjoy

various aspects of childhood, such as the capabilities of play and affiliation (with both family and peers) that help to develop a sense of identity.

Participants with more supportive home environments also appear to have been encouraged to interact with learning, just as Carol was by her grandparents. These comments centred around sticking in at school to positively affect future options. School appeared to contain meaning for these participants' parents, but this did not necessarily translate to meaning for these individuals when younger.

> Aye, school wis really important fir ma parents cause my big sister wis really clever an they said 'if you dae well in school then you'll get a good job'. – Dean

> There wisnae arguments aboot it, you jist had tae go tae school. I wish I'd listened tae ma parents an knuckled doon a bit mair. – John

> I went through life jist day by day withoot havin any plans. I can remember ma mum an dad saying 'it's important tae go tae school, an even if you don't like it noo, you'll look back when you're older an wish you could go back'. – Liam

These parents made a connection between educational engagement and achieving stability in life, such as steady employment. While participants did not necessarily adopt this lesson at that age, they appear to have internalised it and are implementing it through their engagement with learning now. This is evidence of the capability of senses, imagination and thought as participants' thought processes and ability to reason were being nurtured through education. This introduced the capability of practical reason to these participants as their parents verbalised the connection between staying at school, getting a job and ultimately having a stable life. Levels of functioning are debateable at this time due to age and other factors like behavioural problems which will be looked at in the following chapter. Compared to those who did not have a nurturing home environment, the enduring power here is that these participants had capability attaining skills instilled into their younger

selves. In effect, these individuals can re-connect with these lessons for guidance, reflecting the longevity and importance of capability development during formative years.

5.7 Nurture

Many participants described the skills and qualities they felt they developed through positive relationships with parents, family members and caregivers. Similar to the comments above, some described parents who encouraged interaction with school and these participants felt they could still draw on these qualities and abilities even now.

> I definitely learned life-skills frae ma dad cause I noticed how much he worked. That definitely taught me tae be a hard worker, an tae provide fir your family. – Calum

> I probably learned a lot frae ma gran. She wis a dead kind person. She would always try to get me to do the right thing. – Conor

> Aye ma mum taught me how tae have respect towards women, aye, manners I suppose towards women. And I don't like people that hit women either cause ma dad never hit ma mum. – Dean

> The basics of right an wrong. How tae treat people. They basically jist instilled values in me. They taught me that if you want anything then you need tae work fir it. – Neil

Not all of these participants would have classed themselves as having stable childhoods. However, as Carol did when discussing her grandparents, these individuals were able to extract the positives from these challenging situations and identify what qualities and capabilities it has developed in them as a person – emotions, affiliation, practical reason. These participants described healthier attachments to caregivers, which in turn supported a

development in personal qualities and abilities they utilise as adults. They reflect on their caregivers sympathetically and with hindsight they understand them as human and flawed just as they are now, but also that they tried their best for them. Calum particularly credits his supportive start in life as developing the qualities in himself he still holds to be positive. Similar to Carol's narrative, these descriptions show fragments of capability development in childhoods that were predominantly lacking in capability fulfilment. Nurture appears to have come and gone for many and it is important that particular childhood narratives are not compartmentalised into being traumatic and damaged with no evidence of care. Even within unstable environments, the beginnings of capability development sporadically occurred, such as when staying with other family members for a time or periods of stability when a caregiver had some control over their issues. These snapshots of stability provide rich examples of the enduring power capability development can have on a person's development. Participants dig deep to reconnect with what was developed in these periods of childhood and use them to harness stabilising influences into their lives now.

One notable aspect is that all participants committed offences, regardless of the level of nurture and stability at home. Criticism against the ACE system of labelling argues that children with low or no ACE score may also grow up with the same amount or more complex issues than those with higher scores. They could potentially miss out on support if services overtly focus on assigning this proportionate to ACE scoring. It is still unclear whether the ACE connection to poor outcomes is direct causation. Research has indicated that wider factors outside the home environment, such as poverty, poor housing and social isolation are known to significantly affect adult outcomes (Finkelhor et al., 2015). This indicates that treatment at home in this period of participants' development was not the only contributing factor to the challenges they now face. Viewed together, these narratives paint a stark picture of early life for most participants with many indicating plurality of disadvantage (Wolff and De-Shalit, 2007), compounding over generations and time rather than improving. While the home and family environment are the central influencer on a child's development; school, peers and other environments must also be considered. These will be returned to in the following chapters. Experiences of those participants who spent time in state care will now be considered.

5.8 The Care System

Nearly 25 per cent of the UK prison population identify as 'care experienced' at some point during their childhood. This is compared to only two per cent in the general population (Bromley Briefings, 2019). Five (a quarter) of the participants discussed their experience of being cared for. This number could potentially be higher, but some may have chosen not to disclose this. Research into the long-term effects of spending time in the care system has indicated that compared to the general population, cared for children display lower rates of academic achievement, poorer physical and mental health, greater social isolation and difficulties with developing social bonds, have a higher arrest rate and are more likely to become homeless due to the absence of a family support network (McDonald et al., 1997). This indicates that being cared for has a long-term detrimental effect on capability development.

Carol described her negative experience of being cared for.

> The people we went tae had nae heatin or plumbin an ma wee sister wis only 18 months at the time so I couldnae bath her either. – Carol

While Carol and her sister were removed from the violence and substance abuse at home, their basic provisions and consequentially their capabilities (such as bodily health) did not improve from being placed in care. While this decision may have been for their protection, Carol remembered it only as another disruption in an already unstable childhood. She had to become primary caregiver for her young sister both at home and in care due to inadequate support. Carol was both a carer and cared for at this point, an overwhelming position to be placed in at such a young age. Her capabilities were already severely reduced; Carol was struggling to function in these environments while having to prioritise the care of her sister above her own. Social bonds were weakened and the instability it attempted to address was not rectified, reflecting further restriction in her already reduced capabilities.

This type of negative and disruptive experience is echoed by other participants. Alec and his siblings were placed into care when he was nine years old. He was never fostered or adopted and remained in state care until he turned 16. He provided the most vivid picture of life in this environment.

> I jist remember getting took oot the school an we ended up in a home. Frae that minute I jist got intae a lot o trouble; runnin away wi other boys, stayin away aw night an things like that. – Alec

> In the homes I took valium, diazepam, temazepam, hash, acid, ecstasy, buzzing solvents…Then we were running away so we would actually steal to get money to buy drugs as well. – Alec

Soon after being placed in care, Alec was separated from his siblings and did not experience any type of family unit after that point. Due to escalating behavioural issues, visits with his mother were minimized, weakening his attachment to her further and damaging his capabilities of emotion and affiliation. Alec described a childhood dominated by chaos and confusion wherein basic needs of food and shelter were met (apart from the short periods when he ran away) but little else was developed. Being in care created (or continued) a very restricted capability set for Alec throughout his adolescence. His broken familial relationships may have affected his ability to maintain healthy attachments after this point as he struggled to find a nurturing figure in his life. Amongst this instability, his self-medication with drugs developed, resulting in addiction and offending. These influences would turn out to negatively prolong capability attainment and functioning. This shall be looked at further in the following chapter.

Other participants also described the negative effects care had on their capabilities and overall development.

> It jist made ma behaviour worse. What were they goin tae do tae me? Pit me in a home? I wis in one already. – Dean

I jist started drinkin aw the time an takin aw different drugs. That's the point when I started tae take stuff every day. – John

These descriptions indicate that participants' behaviours were a reaction to the state care environment they found themselves in. Dean and John felt the move only served to compound their problems; Dean's attitude towards authority worsened and John's substance use deepened as a coping mechanism whilst also compounding his abandonment issues which first stemmed from being adopted as an infant.

What is not being criticised here were the decisions taken by authorities to move participants into care, as it was clearly deemed necessary and would have been for a variety of reasons that this research has no access to. Instead, what is being studied are the consequences this had on capability development and wellbeing. It would have been hoped that their new environments would have been more stable and less damaging for these individuals but, instead, what emerged were descriptions of new problems that developed. Social bonds were weakened with parents and while they may have contributed to the initial problems, many of these participants felt, as children, that they did not want to be separated from them. Alec particularly verbalised the emotional torment he experienced being apart from his mother. Bonds were also weakened between siblings through separation. For some participants, these family ties were never re-established, causing long-term damage to their capability of affiliation. Some also felt that being placed in care compounded pre-existing emotional problems, with John vividly describing the worsening of his abandonment issues. Participants also described feelings of abject powerlessness as they were moved around against their wishes and often with little explanation. Many reacted with worsening behaviours and substance use, continuing these issues into their adolescence and adult lives.

5.9 Conclusion

The overall powerlessness and instability described in these early narratives had far-reaching effects on participants' lives. A clear link can be traced between these early experiences to various behaviours that still affect many as adults. Instability at home primarily led many to

suffer the same conditions in the classroom. School was a respite for some from violence, such as Scott and Carol. However, participants were often too anxious about what awaited them at home to settle and engage. Or, many struggled to process the abuse they suffered, often developing reactionary, disruptive behaviour towards peers and staff, affecting their ability to interact. Learning and health issues also played a part in participants' problems with school settlement. Many of these were either undiagnosed at this point or dealt with in such a way that the participant felt more alienated. This appears to have created as many issues as it attempted to solve. Lack of engagement was also influenced by family with many explaining they struggled to ascertain the worth of school when it was not particularly encouraged at home.

Bullying was a theme covered by a substantial number of participants. This has had long-term effects on confidence and self-worth and many felt their only option was to become the bully themselves or withdraw from peers which further weakened their social bonds. This area was highlighted and vividly described by many participants when recalling early school years, indicating that the memories of and ill-effects remain with them as adults. Looking back, many are now able to connect their feelings of powerlessness with their reactionary behaviours, such as becoming a bullying and early substance use.

Home environment is arguably the largest influence in a child's development. The majority of descriptions indicated varying degrees of instability and abuse. This placed many participants on the ACE scale as children, indicating a higher likelihood of suffering long-term problems due to these adversities (bullying holds similar long-term damage to health and wellbeing but is, as yet, not on the childhood adversity scale). Participants with the most unstable home environments indicated the most damaged capability set, even given the challenge of recollection due to the passage of time. For these participants, daily life was a struggle for survival, particularly with regard to nourishment and safety with Scott's descriptions of violence and neglect the most vivid. This left little room or support for flourishing in any area of these participants' lives, particularly school and socialisation. This compounded the inter-generational disadvantages and capability damage that many were born into.

Fractured and damaged attachment to parents and caregivers can be traced in these early descriptions, indicating connections between this and participants' various struggles with social and emotional development. Conversely, those who described more secure and nurturing family relationships were able to identify the skills these developed that they still use as adults. Alec provided a vivid narrative in this area as his agency was noticeably diminished when he was moved into care. He described feeling at the mercy of state control from this point on, becoming highly fatalistic at an early age with regard to any power he had over planning his own life and future. What emerged were the connections between adversity, attachment damage, early capability deprivation and the establishment of behaviours and issues that compound inherited deprivation. This will be looked at in more detail in the following chapter.

The effect of early childhood trauma and adversity had traceable effects that will be picked up on as this research progresses through the stages of participants' life narratives. Identity and behaviours are beginning to be developed at this early stage of childhood with the home environment (field) demonstrating the most prolific affect upon how participants acted (habitus). The treatment they suffered rippled out into their demeanour outside of the home and when engaging with others, resulting in early behavioural patterns that will also be picked up throughout this thesis. The manner in which many of these issues escalated during teenage years is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter Six

Capabilities Contained

6.1 Introduction

The move from childhood into adolescence brings a natural increase in personal autonomy. It is generally a period of rapid development in various areas, with physical, cognitive, social and emotional changes often occurring simultaneously. Young people begin to distance themselves incrementally from caregivers, often testing boundaries set upon them. They spend increasing time out of the home and become more influenced by their peer group. Experimentation with drugs and alcohol can begin for some during this time and more intimate relationships are being formed and negotiated. More abstract and long-term thinking patterns are developed and many begin to engage in risk-taking behaviours as independence is established (Soleimanpour et al., 2017). This is naturally occurring behaviour in teenagers as they navigate the changes in themselves as they move towards adulthood. However, for participants, many of these life events turned out to be significantly detrimental to their development.

For most participants, life began to interact with the criminal justice system by early teenage years. This emerged in various ways with some committing petty offences that incrementally increased into more serious offending as time went on. Others suffered increasing instability but did not move into committing offences until their teens or early twenties. In general, a relationship between a lack of stability and a move towards offending emerged clearly from the participants' narratives. The various factors that contributed to this instability will be looked at in detail throughout this chapter. Capability set and functioning were also negatively affected by these instabilities and many participants experienced a continuation of this from childhood with further deterioration due to developing issues such as addiction. The ways in which capability damage effected participants' wider quality of living and contributed to offending behaviours will also be considered.

6.2 Disengagement from school

The central narrative in this section is that of Conor. Life was challenging and unstable for him from an early age as he displayed quite severe and, at the time, inexplicable anger issues. He lived with his mother and older sister, attending an anger clinic on a weekly basis in an attempt to address these problems. His behavioural issues became so severe that he was deemed by social workers to be 'outside of parental control' from a young age. He cannot recall if the clinic made much difference, but reflected that his mother found him extremely challenging to deal with and eventually, it became too much for her and she placed him in the care of social services. Conor believes this was the root cause of his life-long abandonment issues, describing the damage it caused as a 'domino effect' from then to where he is now. To save him being placed in care, his grandmother took Conor to live with her in a nearby area. He saw his mother weekly, but commented that his behaviour was calmer when in the care of his grandmother. This move was a huge trauma for Conor at a young age, weakening familial bonds that have never fully healed. He began to use drugs and alcohol while still in primary school, developing a dependency by late teenage years. As such, his attendance at school was almost non-existent by the time he was in secondary and he was suspended and excluded, predominantly due to drug dealing and consumption.

Narratives indicate a variety of reasons for participant disengagement from school. The majority stopped attending mid-way through secondary, with only three staying on to sit national examinations. Hirschi's (1969) social control theory is widely used to explain the links between school and issues with delinquency. This theory suggests that a positive school experience creates social bonds that lessen the likelihood of involvement in early offending. These bonds have four elements: attachment (caring about others and what they think); commitment (particularly to educational values and achievement); involvement (participating in school activities) and belief (accepting school rules and respecting authority). Hirschi argued that these elements of social bonding contribute to a stake in conformity, consequentially lessening the likelihood of participation in unconventional or rule-breaking behaviours. This section will look at how these social bonds were placed in participants' later school experiences to identify contributing factors to their disengagement.

Conor began his relationship with substance use at age nine, the youngest of any participant. He believed that starting to smoke cannabis led to early disengagement from learning as he struggled to take in and retain information at school.

> When I wis smoking hash I wisnae really learning anything. I wisnae in the right mind tae take in the information… I got suspended a few times fir smoking cannabis. I wis playing truant a lot an aw…Then when I started takin valium I wis chaotic, I wisnae reliable, I wouldnae go tae school most o the time an sometimes when I wis in school, the polis would be comin intae see me. – Conor

The issue of strangers drinking in the house with his grandmother also diminished Conor's ability to engage with school as well as negatively effecting his personal safety.

> There wis always different people in the hoose, strange men an women. Sometimes they'd be up aw night drinkin so that kind of affected me goin tae school. – Conor

> I went tae high school, then I got moved tae a Catholic school where they were even stricter. I only lasted aboot two weeks an I wis expelled frae there as well. I'd basically missed oot o a lot o time in high school at that point. – Conor

There were a number of emerging influences by early teenage years that stunted Conor's interaction with learning. Similar to Carol's disengagement from school, Conor's life outside the classroom played a large role in his disengagement. The lack of rest and security at home meant he struggled to engage in the classroom, decreasing the role of learning in his everyday life. His attendance was not given a great deal of focus by his grandmother and consequentially himself. Disengagement with the structure of school, no matter how badly attended, appeared to remove the final format of routine from Conor's life. He described the chaos in his life by this point, particularly due to his valium use. This drug made him more unstable, an effect that other participants testified to. It is not a straightforward cause and effect relationship when it comes to substance use and disengagement from school. Rather,

they are complexly intertwined with both influences compounding the other. Conor's home environment was largely devoid of routine, so this influenced his struggle with the structure of school. When in primary he remained in the same school throughout and was a regular attender. He attributed primary school as providing him with some sense of stability that he often lacked at home. However, once in secondary, this stability weakened as he was repeatedly excluded and moved around a variety of educational establishments. He suffered long gaps of non-attendance while his next placement was being secured, resulting in disruption to his learning, furthering his disengagement.

Accounts of this nature emerged from many of the other narratives. As mentioned in the previous chapter, an inconsistent or weak focus on the benefits of school from parents had a detrimental effect on the value participants placed on it. Put bluntly, if there was little encouragement for learning to be a central focus at this age, then it is not unusual for children to be directed down other routes. Conversely, participants also described ways in which education, while present in their parental focus, was often not enough to keep them engaged.

> They wanted all of us tae go an learn an get an education an that. Ma maw especially. She always made sure that I got tae school, but it wis jist whether I stayed at school or not. – Dean

> I wish I'd listened tae ma parents an knuckled doon a bit mair an done aw the right stuff an stayed on at school, but I couldnae concentrate. – John

> They obviously wanted me tae go tae school and the wee feel sorry face got me a lot o places…but then it came tae the point that I started doggin and skipping out o school. – Dave

Some participants alluded to the influence of peers in their disengagement from school.

> I wis between 14 and 15. I wis runnin aboot wi people frae a different area an half the time we wernae goin tae school…At first ma mum an dad would take me an make sure I went but by the time I wis 15 I jist stopped goin. – Jonny

> Ma maw would always wake me up tae get ma uniform ironed an on. She'd have ma breakfast an lunch ready tae go but I jist dogged it. – Rikki

In some situations, parents tried to keep their children at school, but disengagement continued anyway due to disinterest and peer influence. This shows that even when school was encouraged at home it was not always enough to show participants the longer-term value of participation. Bourdieu (1990) argued that our engagement with school is often influenced by our parents' attitudes and abilities. If parents had succeeded when they were in school, they would be in a better position to support the learning process with their own children. If they saw longer-term merits to gaining qualifications, they would be more likely to pass this attitude down (although this is not always the case). In this way, pupils that are positively influenced by parental attitudes embody more cultural capital than those who are not. This helps to achieve qualifications (or institutionalised cultural capital) which in turn affords these individuals more power in the job market and ongoing cultural capital. As young teenagers, it is not unusual that participants were unable to see long-term benefits to school engagement. But, as Bourdieu pointed out, if parents were not representing the assets to education then it is more challenging for children to make that connection.

When an individual does choose to be involved in education, their attitude towards themselves and their levels of aspiration can be just as important as access itself. Poor attitudes and low aspiration can adversely affect how much value one places on education. This is one of the tragedies of socio-economic deprivation. Adults with low expectations and aspirations can have a detrimental effect on how a child views a significant area of their lives, such as the child developing preferences in which education is a low priority. As our aspirations can be framed by our 'social location' and by the impact of social class, our choices may be diminished or constrained not only by the resources available to us, but also by the ways in which our preferences and ambitions are formed (Alexander, 2008). As teenagers develop their sense of identity and place in the world, they connect that to where they will do best given their dispositions and resources (Bourdieu, 1984). From this, they

develop 'subjective expectation of objective probabilities' (Bourdieu, 1990, p 59): or, a person actively chooses what is most likely to be open and achievable to them.

Restricted capabilities denote less options; for example, a lack of control over one's environment in the form of not having secure and stable housing limits a person's ability to think about and engage with the job market. A threshold level of capabilities needs to be met in order to develop and pursue wider options. Nussbaum asserts that access to a decent standard of education is one of the main tools in helping people to achieve the capabilities and that it is crucial to the overall health and wellbeing of a person (Nussbaum, 2006). Due to the state provided nature of education in the UK, participants all technically had access to education when younger. However, their often-unstable personal lives meant consistent and meaningful engagement with learning was not always possible. Abuse, lack of encouragement and developing substance problems resulted in many participants not having the space and ability to make school a priority. Disengagement with education then impacted their capability attainment both at the time and in the long-term.

Accumulated capital can be passed down intergenerationally from adults to children (in the same way restricted capabilities and disadvantage can be inherited). Families can draw on one form of capital in order to generate another. For example, economic capital may be converted into cultural capital through the purchase of books and educational resources. Cultural capital that is accrued through education can be converted into other forms of capital but this is more straightforward for those who have strong family capital. Thus, different people that engage with the same form of education and qualifications may yield different rates of profit due to differing levels of family capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Most of the participants' families reflected low levels of capital due to poverty, physical and mental health problems and substance abuse. This made it challenging to convert any of the capital gained through education into other forms and early disengagement from school compounded this issue.

Like Conor, leaving the routine of school was a turning point for many participants which created further instability.

I think ma dad jist wanted me tae stay off school an be there cause ma big sisters hid left the hoose by that point. He jist wanted me an needed me there wi him after ma mum died. - Liam

Fifteen wis when I started smoking hash and it makes you pure lazy. I didnae really care aboot stuff like school. It jist makes you no want tae dae anything. – James

It had a big effect on me when I stopped goin (to school) cause I started gang-fighting an that. There wis a few serious incidents like people getting stabbed, no frae me personally but people I wis with so in the eyes o the polis, it wis me. – Dean

Well I wis expelled. I wisnae goin tae classes. I wis skippin school a lot by then. By the start o third year wis when I wis getting quite deep intae drugs so I only really attended fir a few weeks. – Nicole

When I wis expelled frae there wis aboot the time ma gang stuff started really happening. Nearly everyone that I hung aboot wi frae ma area had been kicked oot o school so that gave me a lot mair free time tae get up tae stuff wi them. – Joe

Research has drawn a clear link between educational success and school attachment as a central protective factor in the prevention of youth offending (see Gottfredson, 2001, Hirschi, 1969, Maughan, 1994, Sprott et al., 2000). However, school was not necessarily a sanctuary for participants from the challenges they faced, often proving difficult due to bullying and learning issues. A number of participants described using the school environment and staff to act out against the abuse and powerlessness they suffered elsewhere in their lives. Many participants commented that they were either happy to leave school or simply felt indifferent about it. Now they are older, quite a few reflected on the detrimental effect disengagement from school had on their behaviours and the level of instability in their

lives. School failure in childhood and adolescence is widely accepted by researchers as one of the most consistent precursors of later adult criminality (Loeber, 1991). Unbeknown to participants at the time, the routine of school, however sporadic and unstable, was still holding in place some form of structure in their lives. Developing behaviours, such as substance use and fighting, were given more focus, meaning they generally worsened. As education is a central tool in achieving and functioning within capabilities, disengagement from it damaged these further. In lives that were already capability starved, this is an impairment most participants could ill afford. But disengagement with school was not the only influence to worsening instability in participants' lives. Heavy drug use had already become a major issue for Conor and Nicole and the death of a parent led to spiralling substance use and behavioural problems for Liam and Dean. While the influence of school began to lessen for most participants as they disengaged, it is again essential to embed this within the familial and social influences that were present during this period. The family unit is the first area that will be discussed.

6.3 Boundaries

Conor explained that he always felt loved and wanted by his grandmother. He credited this as the main reason his anger and behavioural issues improved in her care. At the same time, he reflected that he could have benefitted from stricter boundaries at home.

> I wis allowed tae stay wi people fir as long as I wanted. Once I hit 12 I wis allowed tae drink an smoke. – Conor

> If I'd maybe had boundaries when I wis younger it might have been a deterrent. But I wis outside parental control, the Children's Panel even said that. I wis basically jist a loose cannon. – Conor

Conor understood the challenges his grandmother faced in raising him alone, but felt that more rules could have stopped him 'going off the rails' as badly as he did. This part of Conor's narrative merges the acts and influences of others, such as his grandmother, with

his developing independent behaviours and the expansion of his agency. He was beginning to establish and act upon his wants in life, such as drinking and smoking. However, Conor was not necessarily demonstrating competency in enacting this agency. This refers to a person's capacity (or capacities) to act and choose from a significant range of circumstances in a manner that reflects deeper concerns and ideals that have been reflected upon and reaffirmed over time. In order to have developed these skills, a person must have been confronted with a variety of situations that afford significant options among which they need to choose. People can only do things if enabling conditions are present in their lives and any possible disabling conditions are absent (Friedman, 2003). A life that is restricted in capabilities, as participants' narratives indicate, have not had the necessary experience in developing the self-reflection and choice making abilities that are needed to develop agency. Participants' options were restricted and their abilities to realistically 'choose' were often non-existent. On the surface, Conor appeared to have the freedom of choice as a young teenager: he could drink, smoke and stay out late. But he had no behavioural rules or norms to work within meaning he had no opportunity to push these, reflect and realign his position within them. This enabling condition for developing Conor's sense of agency was not present so there was less deterrent for his unruly behaviour. This is an ability that Conor admitted he still struggles with today.

Other participants followed a similar trajectory of behaviour by early teenage years. Previous unruly, childish behaviours became more problematic by this stage.

> The polis would lift us an take us hame. It wisnae jist me, it wis aboot three or four o us. It wis jist fir like hangin aboot or a couple times fir like smashin windaes or jist petty stuff like that. – Alec

> I never thought I wis the top man o the gang or anything…it wis jist goin oot wi your mate's fir a fight an a booze. – Dean

> I think I wis too influenced by ma friends an ma parents wernae strong enough tae say or I wis too rebellious tae listen. I think ma parents could have been stricter when I got a bit older. There wisnae really any discipline. – Lisa

> I started drinking cause my parents were drinkers. I wis 12 by this point. They
> drank in the hoose so it wis easy enough tae steal it frae them. – Carol

These descriptions infer much about an incremental progression towards offending and the restricted capabilities that connect to this. This will be returned to throughout this chapter, but what is introduced here are how and why instabilities inflicted upon participants during early childhood had now moved into more established behaviours in adolescence. Like Conor, some participants contemplated that their behaviours could have been curtailed by caregivers at this point. However, some, like Alec, did not have a constant parental figure to enact any control. He was, in effect, left to his own devices much of the time as he was moved around care establishments. Any attempts to challenge spiralling behaviour by social workers and panels appear to have been too detached to make any difference. As touched upon in the previous chapter, his lack of healthy attachment to and nurture from a caregiver had a detrimental effect on the development of his internal ability to comfort and self-regulate in challenging situations (Bowlby 1973, 1980) meaning he felt like he had less control over his life as time went on. Lisa summarised another aspect of this in her comment that *"…ma parents wernae strong enough tae say or maybe I wis too rebellious tae listen."* While it is the duty of parents and caregivers to shape those they raise, what responsibility do they hold when they follow a less stable path? Lisa implied that she probably would not have listened to them even if they had attempted to be stricter and this may have been the case for other participants as well. The debate of who is responsible for deviant and behavioural problems in young people is an ongoing and complex one that is not appropriately placed to be discussed fully in this research. Instead, what is extracted from this data is the reduction in capabilities that can develop from unstable parental/caregiver attachment and support and how this can contribute to spiralling behavioural issues.

A person can be, in large parts, an extension of those who socialised them, particularly via the primary socialisation that takes place within the family unit. If this socialisation has been unstable or promoted unhealthy behaviours then this can result in similar actions being passed down. This can create problems in the exercising of individual moral agency or becoming morally misguided by other persons such as peers and partners (Friedman, 2003). The comments above touch on variations of these influences. Alec and Dean admitted to

being influenced by their peers and while this is not unusual in teenagers, problems arise when the influences upon behaviour are anti-social such as fighting and substance use (both alluded to above). Their personal agency was not necessarily developed enough to deter the influence of these types of socialisation. This also indicated a lack of practical reason in participants' young lives as this capability dictates that one is able to engage in the critical planning of their own life (Nussbaum, 2000). The descriptions in this section all indicate a lack of awareness of this idea of engagement and planning. Life continued on in a similarly unstable and challenging manner to how it had been in participants' early years. Capability damage imposed upon many during unstable childhoods had moved into their teenage and eventually adult lives. As discussed in the previous chapter, this demonstrates 'dynamic clustering' by which disadvantages (and restricted capabilities) are passed down from parent to child (and often over many generations) (Wolff and de-Shalit, 2007). This is particularly verbalised by both Conor and Carol when they described how the substance problems their caregivers suffered from opened them up to similar substance engagement and damage. This led to further capability restrictions once their substance use had become problematic. This will be looked at in more detail in later sections.

6.4 Guidance

Capability restriction is apparent in similar areas of participants' lives throughout their teenage years as it had been during childhood. While Conor was clearly grateful to have been taken in by his grandmother, this home environment was problematic.

> Ma gran wis a drinker an I seen a lot o things, seen a lot o situations like… like when I look back on it, like ma gran bringing strangers in, anything could've happened to me. – Conor

Conor's capability of bodily integrity was damaged when his safety was compromised by his grandmother bringing unfamiliar people back to the house to drink. Conor suffered a childhood that was marred with abandonment, heavy engagement with social services as well as behavioural and emotional problems. Past research suggests that vulnerable young people such as Conor experience a differential development into adulthood, often

characterized by an acceleration of adult roles (Berzin et al., 2014). Conor described the fear he experienced from being exposed to (often unfamiliar) adults drinking in his house, opening him up to a more adult environment. While this may not be an adult role as such, Conor was forced to consider and protect his own safety at an age when this should have been done for him by his caregiver.

Conor also recalled an overwhelming feeling of uneasiness towards his lack of personal safety. His home did not necessarily feel like a sanctuary for him and he began to spend more time outside it with his developing peer group. The influence that Conor's peers had over him began to change during this period and when he moved to another school, he met older friends that had a different influence on him to previous peers.

> I moved frae there tae another area that wis rougher an I started hangin aboot wi other boys. They taught me that the boy that wis bullyin me wis nothing and that I shouldnae hiv been lettin him bully me…I wisnae scared anymair. – Conor

As touched upon in the previous chapter, renegotiation of hierarchies and personal power often occurs when a young person changes school environment (Vaswani, 2019). Here Conor described the guidance he received from his new peer group to stand up for himself. Unfortunately, by his own admission, he assumed a bullying role as a means of self-protection. Meaning can be derived about personal place and value by engagement with others in our social spheres. Experiences of adversity and toxic stress in adolescence, like that experienced by Conor, has the potential to develop functionally adaptive but biased relational schemas. These can influence how a person defines themselves over time, especially in relation to others, for example, feeling unworthy, overly self-reliant and not worth loving (Corrales et al., 2016). This period of emerging adulthood is usually a time of identity development and while this may be a positive experience of self-exploration for some, for others it can be a time when dysfunctional schemas can be introduced or reinforced (Bartholomew, 1997). Conor recalled both the confidence and resulting dysfunctional behaviour that developed from interaction with his new, older peer group. Later sections will look at how these types of influences carried over into adult life for many of the participants.

As participants moved nearer to adulthood, descriptions emerged of continued capability damage and trauma. Consequentially, as participants' independence and identity developed, these ongoing restrictions began to affect behaviours in different ways from when they were children.

> As I got older, the mair I started tae realise whit the drink does. Ma mum went through bad periods of her life where she self-harmed. She tried tae commit suicide quite a few times an that wis a horrible experience. – Dave

> It wis like war pretty much. Ma step-dad wis shoutin an bawlin an hittin ma mum. I grew up in domestic violence an I wis physically and sexually assaulted by ma father. So, it jist combined wi what wis already there an formed intae this horrible thing (his offending). – Brian

> Getting battered at hame jist made me want tae go oot an fight wi everybody. – Dean

Just as Conor and others reflected that a lack of boundaries at this stage contributed to their worsening actions, so too did the lack of nurture in their home environments. At this stage participants were beginning to consciously connect and react to what was happening around them. Many described moving away from feeling like passive agents that trauma was enacted upon to internalising it and reacting based on these internalisations. Dave described his heightened awareness of the destructive relationship his parents had with alcohol and how it worsened his mother's already fragile mental health. The consequence of this was that he had to adopt the role of carer through much of his teenage years. Brian suffered through one of the most traumatic childhoods described during interview. He explained that he spent many years as an adult processing and dealing with the abuse he suffered. He displayed a high level of engagement with the long-term effect this has had on him particularly in connection to his offending. Dean recalled that his father's attempts at physical discipline only contributed to the escalation of similar behaviour in himself when outside his home environment. These were all vivid descriptions of ongoing and often escalating capability impairment: bodily health, bodily integrity, emotions and affiliation

were all damaged in various ways, demonstrating that capability impairment carried on from childhood, worsening for most of the participants through adolescence. The adverse reactions that many started to display were an often-uncontrollable consequence of the ill-treatments suffered in early childhood. Capability damage was inflicted upon participants, resulting in behaviours they often could not understand or stop. This in itself demonstrates restriction in the capability of emotions as participants described being blighted by the fear and anxiety of abuse (Nussbaum, 2000). It also widens into ongoing restrictions of various other capabilities such as Brian's bodily integrity coming under prolonged threat from ongoing abuse at the hands of his father and step-father.

In relation to Bourdieu's (1977, 1984, 1994) theories, habitus can be defined as a property of actors (individual, group or institutional) that is both structured and structuring. The structure relates to an individual's past and present circumstances such as upbringing and education. The structuring is connected to how these structures form settled and durable dispositions that shape an individual's present practices and behaviours. In short, 'habitus is the link not only between past, present and future, but also between the social and the individual, the objective and the subjective, and structure and agency' (Grenfell, 2012, pg 52). These narratives indicate that habitus had a profound impact upon the extension and worsening of capability damage from childhood to teenage years. The consequential effects of this meant the path was beginning to be carved to extend this damage into participants' futures. Rather than acting as a guide and positive influence, many participants' familial habitus provided little support. This resulted in feelings of confusion and isolation and repercussions of this will be looked at in later sections. The closer bonds that participants had with various people in their lives will now be discussed in more detail.

6.5 Social Bonds

Conor, like many of the other interviewees, grew up in a fractured family unit. After he was placed in the care of his grandmother, his mother met and married his step-father, eventually having more children. He had little contact with his half-siblings or his sister. He recalled the personal trauma he felt from the lack of inclusion in his family unit.

> I'm no gonnae lie, I did used tae be jealous o ma siblings. Cause I used tae think why can I no have whit they have – nice family, mum, dad an everything goin well? If I'd been aroond them mair then I maybe wouldnae have looked towards other people as role models that wernae positive in ma life. I would have looked tae them fir that, but instead I looked up tae the wrong people. – Conor

The picture that emerged from Conor's early childhood and teenage years was one of diminished capabilities and damaged social bonds. His capability of affiliation was reduced due to alienation from his family unit. He explained that he believed this rejection damaged his ability to make healthy connections with others, an emotional adaptability that is a necessary pre-requisite of this capability. Conor suffered from abandonment issues throughout his life that he felt stemmed from his initial familial disassociation. In line with Bowlby's (1969) landmark theory on attachment, Conor would be classed as suffering from excessive separation anxiety due to the repeated rejection he felt from his parents. The result of this can be an inability to form deep or healthy relationships with others. This became more problematic for Conor when he tried to gain security from his peers, resulting in being influenced by what he described as *"the wrong people"* or becoming overly attached within friendships. Conor struggled to find a positive role model when growing up. His grandmother was the only constant social bond he had so he looked to establish a wider familial unit elsewhere, predominantly in his social group. Research has indicated that absence of belonging is connected to a variety of negative long-term behaviours such as aggression/violence, difficulties regulating emotions and cognitive processing, diminished empathy, lowered sensitivity to pain and social withdrawal (Baumeister et al., 2001). It can also result in the development of shamed-based schemas due to feelings of being unworthy and unlovable (these have a higher likelihood of developing when psychological abuse has occurred in childhood) (Harvey and Metcalfe, 2012).

Research also indicates that Conor's levels of resilience could have been negatively affected by the adversities and detachment he suffered in his early childhood. This meant Conor's ability to navigate the transformational stage of adolescence could have been more challenging due to the negative damage early trauma and limited positive support had on his emotional and cognitive development (Soleimanpour et al., 2017). Comprehensive and reliable family support and engagement is one of the central elements proven to develop

resilience and coping skills in young children. The better this support is, the higher the likelihood of overcoming traumatic experiences and being able to turn toxic stress into a manageable level, providing the mechanism and opportunity for stress response systems to return to a healthy baseline (Bellis et al., 2017). As much of this type of support was lacking for Conor, it indicates that his ability to develop sustained resilience throughout his challenging adolescence may have been disrupted. This provides a context to understand both Conor and other participants' problems with resilience and coping strategies during adolescence (and possibly long-term), particularly those participants who suffered from trauma and attachment issues in their early years.

Other participants reflected on the effect of weakened social bonds growing up, particularly within families. Like Conor, many made the connection between this and emergent behaviours.

If I'd got tae see ma siblings I'd definitely have been happier. Never once did I get told that would happen, like that if I got intae trouble that I would get put intae a different home and I wouldnae really see them. – Alec

I stayed wi ma mum when I wis younger but when I grew up a bit I moved in wi ma gran an grandpa cause ma mum couldnae control me anymore. Ma little sister wis born when I wis 7. I get on wi her noo but at the time I liked bein an only child. I wis on ma own an then she came intae the world and it wis aw attention on her an none on me. I'd say that made me act up a bit more. – Ross

These comments reflect broken or weakened familial bonds in participants' lives. Alec and Ross were removed from their homes and either placed in care or with extended family, damaging relationships with parents and siblings. Both felt the effects of this but in different ways. Alec's entire family was split up when they were taken into care, the emotional damage of which he still feels today as he has never again been able to regain a familial unit. In opposition to this, Ross recalled being unhappy when his little sister was born as this took attention away from him, creating distance between he and his mother. His behaviour

worsened to counteract this as he associated the arrival of a sibling with the dislocation of his family unit.

Other participants described the longer-term effects of weakened family bonds.

> I think it would have made a big difference (having a cohesive family)…I wouldnae have ended up bein in and oot the jail…cause aw ma family, oot o ma dad's side, his siblings kids aw did well fir themselves an they've aw made a good life fir themselves…an I dunno, I think if I'd taken the same path as them then maybe I'd be sitting pretty the noo. – Calum

> I think if he'd given me the love and attention ma sister got maybe we would hae ended up with a good life. Maybe we wouldnae have ended up in jail. – Scott

Both Calum and Scott were more projective about how they might have turned out had their social bonds with family been better. Calum lost his father as a teenager who he explained had been a great role model for him up to this point. He reflected that his cousins, having not suffered the trauma of parental loss, have had more stable lives than him. Scott's family relationship is particularly insightful in this area as he and his younger brother were both physically bullied and abused by their father. His younger sister, however, was spared this trauma and her life has been more stable with a job, house and family. However, Scott and his brother have been in and out of prison from early adulthood, both struggling with substance abuse and emotional trauma. It is understandable that Scott looked at the balance in his sister's life and wondered if his would have been the same had his father treated him in a similar, nurturing manner.

Attachment is also damaged for all these participants. Both Alec and Ross were separated from their maternal caregiver at quite a young age. Ross had a more supportive wider family unit which may have helped to compensate for some aspects of the emotional damage caused by this separation. Alec, however, did not find any support from either a close adult, wider family or state provided services. He was, by his own description, left alone to deal with the

trauma of losing his maternal and sibling attachments. He reflected that his emotional state may have improved had he been allowed to see them. After his death, Calum keenly felt the loss of his father as his main guide and role model. Scott did not have the same strength of bond that his sister had with their father, which compounded the emotional hurt of the abuse he inflicted upon him and his brother. How participants' coping mechanisms and resilience were affected by this separation trauma will be looked at in later sections.

Some of these comments also described a change in field for the participants such as being placed into the care system or moving in with grandparents in another neighbourhood. Aside from the emotional trauma this had on participants, this led them to renegotiate their habitus in order to establish themselves within their new field. For example, when Alec was moved into the care system, his habitus had to adapt to a new set of framing structures; a new field with its own logic, rules and players. He had to find commonality with his new field (peer group within the homes) in order to survive that environment. This resulted in his behaviours being influenced in a negative way which will be looked at in more detail in a later section.

Loss of a parent during teenage years was a trauma that a few of the participants experienced.

> I missed ma mum. That's whit it (his worsening behaviour) aw boiled doon tae. I'm no sayin that I wouldnae still have go intae trouble if ma mum hadnae passed away. I'm no using it as an excuse but it jist made me a lot worse than I probably would have been. – Dean

> I wis jist turning 14. I think it jist froze ma heart when ma dad died. It caused me a lot of psychological damage an I think an I wis chanellin that on tae my enemies. I became more aggressive. Jist pure rage and anger coming oot. – Joe

For Dean and Joe, their grief displayed itself in worsening behaviours and early onset offending. Angry and confused and without cohesive support around them, both were given little guidance on how to understand and process this loss. This anger and frustration was displayed outwardly towards others and the world in general. Returning to Bowlby (1969,

1973, 1980), children that suffer attachment disruption due to loss of a parent (among other ways) can result in unexpressed feeling of yearning for and anger towards the attachment figure for this abandonment. If a trusted and stable substitute attachment figure cannot be found then the child has little alternative but to move into a defensive condition of emotional detachment. This can often lead to dismissing or avoiding affective states associated with separation or loss. In short, it can damage the child's ability to attach themselves in a healthy manner to others, often withdrawing altogether from this type of bonding. This is summed up succinctly by Joe when he comments that the loss of his father *"jist froze ma heart"*. The long-term consequences of this type of attachment damage will be returned to later.

Conor's lack of self-worth at being isolated from his family led him to seek belonging within his peer group.

> I wis jist trying tae find oot who I wis in life and I wis a bit confused. See like the people I wis looking up tae wisnae the sort of people I should hiv been looking up tae an I realise that now. I wis looking up tae people that were tougher and a lot better at fightin than me. Basically, I wis looking at the wrong role models. I wis looking up tae career criminals an drug dealers. – Conor

Conor felt he found a cohesive group of peers that he lacked at home in the form of siblings. This is the portion of his adolescence where his social group changed to people that he felt were more assertive. But Conor's new peer group appeared to be a double-edged sword and he felt as if he needed their protection and encouragement in order to learn to defend himself, but in hindsight he felt they led him further into negative behaviours. Conor's resilience was being built but, much like his ability to affiliate, it was problematic, eventually leading him towards early offending and further substance use. At that point Conor's field linked together with his habitus to result in his specific practices. The field (Bourdieu, 1986) is really our social field of practice in which our habitus are linked with that of others. The links that connect us can be unique in content but are shared in a more general sense with others within the same field. These can be areas such as gender, ethnic background, sexual identity, social class, occupation and so forth. Social class, for example, will share similar structural positions within society, generating similar experiences of social relations, actions, experiences and structures. Each field, both individually and as a whole, is a relational space

of struggles in which each person acts in order to maximise their positioning. If the field changes or one is introduced into a new field then the habitus must adapt in order to gain positioning in that field. Individuals essentially learn the unwritten rules of the game through practice and time. These all combine to result in our practices, bringing meaning to our worlds (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Bourdieu, 1986). Conor's habitus changed when he moved to another area and school. This led him into a new field of older peers who he began to relate to by adopting their guidance. This led him to renegotiate his previous behaviours and how he viewed himself (victim of bullying) to how he wished to behave and be perceived (strong and able to defend himself). At the same time, he established the social bonds that were lacking within his fractured family unit as his grandmother, while kind and caring, offered him little in the way of guidance. By his own admission, he was confused and trying to find his way in life, meaning he located this much needed guidance and development of coping skills within his peer group.

Other participants also commented that they found strengthened social bonds through their friends.

> Even noo I think I still look up tae the wrong people. I jist wanted tae be a drug dealer like the olders. That wis my ambition. That wis aw I thought aboot. Make money, have a motor, have a cool life. – Ross

> I probably done most things for acceptance, but if you're hanging aboot wi the wrong type o people then you're looking fir the wrong type o acceptance. So, you start tae dae things tae be part o the group, like you're maybe startin tae smash windows or jist break intae things an fight wi folk. – John

> There wis older guys that I looked up tae an there wis younger ones that looked up tae me. It wis jist how it wis where we grew up. It wis the way o the scheme. – Brian

> I'd be drunk aw the time and I started using cannabis and I jist spiralled oot o control frae there wi drugs. It wis aw mainly gang-fighting an drink an drugs. That's where it aw started. – Dean

The seeking out and adherence to a social group is a natural behaviour in all young people. Our teenage years are generally when we feel at our most awkward and so our desire to feel accepted can be at its most heightened. What emerged from these narratives was a connection between weakened social bonds in participants' home environments and the seeking out of these in their peer groups. The social group became a pseudo family unit, fulfilling a guiding role in a way that participants' family members were unable to. Unfortunately, the influence was not always constructive and participants reflected on how these peers influenced some of their earlier negative behaviours. While this could be interpreted as standard teenage behaviour, there were more complex issues happening. Like Conor, independent decision making is a skill that many of the participants struggled to engage with by the time they were teenagers. Many described being easily influenced by friends towards unhealthy behaviours. Participants with the most damaging of home environments were understandably desperate to spend time away from them. Despite the limited options of how to spend this time, participants still perceived this as an improvement to their home lives. However, the resultant behaviours were detrimental both in the short and long-term. For example, Joe was desperate to escape the powerlessness of his childhood but the actions he used to regain some of this power was through the development of his image and notoriety among his peer group and area. Up to this point he had been repeatedly subjected to the abusive will and behaviours of others, meaning he had not been given the nurture and opportunity to develop a notable sense of agency (Friedman, 2003). His central motivation was to gain some form of control in his young life but the options open to him to achieve this were, in reality, very limited, just as they were for Conor. The abuse Joe had suffered and the lack of nurture that was placed on his emotional development when he was a child meant the way he processed and coped with this trauma was through displaying aggressive behaviour.

What also emerged from these comments is that the construction of self and public images had become a more conscious process for participants. Their awareness of who they were, who they wanted to be and how they wished others to perceive them was developing.

Identities are negotiated in a large part from our interaction with others. An image of the self is presented to others and this can be accepted or rejected leading us back to confirming or re-negotiating our image. The identity of the individual emerges within the ongoing relationship between self-image and that which we present publicly (Goffman, 1983). Some participants' comments focused on peer acceptance but in hindsight feel they were looking up to *"the wrong kind of people"*. The behaviours emulated to gain approval were often negative but a necessary step in acceptance. This is because group identity infers some amount of conformity to the collective norms, thus habitus was further influenced by this field of peers. Acceptance by these groups confirmed these identities and behaviours for participants, so they journeyed further down these paths. Their similar behaviours and circumstances drew them together as collectives, providing participants with a sense of belonging often lacking at home (Jenkins, 2008). The ongoing influence of peer group on identity construction and self-perception will be returned to throughout. At this stage it is important to look at the role of substance use in participants' lives. This was often introduced and influenced by peer group, sometimes to devastating effect.

6.6 Substance Use

Substance use emerged more strongly in participants' descriptions of this stage of development. As already discussed, many had been aware of drugs and alcohol during their childhood due to exposure by family members. Conor was aware of his grandmother's issues with alcohol relatively early.

> Ma gran wis always there but she would be drinkin so I didnae have that much tae say tae her. She wis drinkin wi people so I went oot an done ma ain thing. - Conor

By the end of primary school, Conor began to experiment with substances himself.

> I'd definitely say it's affected me in later life. I think it (cannabis) wis a gateway drug, an obviously paranoia has affected me as well. But at the time I jist didnæ see anything wrong wi it. – Conor

Conor suffered acute trauma in the first decade of his life. Rejection by his mother and the emotional upheaval of being placed in his grandmother's care via social services harboured long-term effects on his emotional wellbeing. As an adult he has been diagnosed with a personality disorder that contributed to his anger issues as a child. The use of a relaxant such as cannabis may have alleviated some these problems, so it is understandable he found it comforting, certainly to begin with. However, he felt it opened him up to using harder drugs by secondary school. This was influenced, in part, by being bullied and his introduction to an older peer group.

> I wis 12 an I owed money fir drugs, an I got tied up in a hoose, burnt wi things, hit wi things an that, so I think that traumatised me. That's when I started tae get panic attacks and paranoia. Tae cope wi this I used drugs. I started taking valium an harder stuff like cocaine. – Conor

> …see if you're thinking aboot dain somethin an you know it's wrong then you think aboot it an weigh up your options. But when you're on valium you dinnæ do that, you jist go an dae it. So that affected me getting intae fights. – Conor

Both memories show the detrimental effects that drug use has had on Conor's life. His abduction exposed him to more violent people, having a long-term negative impact on his mental health, leading him to further self-medicate with harder substances. His second comment connects his substance use to his early offending. Valium began to have a detrimental effect on his consequential thinking, leading him to make decisions that, by his own reflection, resulted in damaging outcomes. His already limited capabilities shrank further as his emotional, mental and physical health began to suffer in line with his drug use. This damaged his capability of emotion as he struggled to process his reactions and thoughts towards everyday life. His capability to affiliate was negatively affected due to the violent actions of others towards him, damaging his human dignity. Finally, his capability of

practical reason was impaired by substance use, reflected in his comment that when he took valium, he had little consequential thinking connected to his actions. Due to the unstable nature of his childhood, he struggled to enact much agency before this point and becoming ruled by substance dependency only weakened this further.

All of the participants described substance experimentation as teenagers with thirteen out of the twenty interviewed developing an addiction by late teens/early adulthood.

> Valium, jellies, heroin aw by the time I wis 14. It started wi drinking when we were a bit younger, but then one of the boys started bringing that stuff, so we switched. – Jonny

> When I went tae residential home there wis older boys an glue sniffing wis prevalent. Frae that moment on I like got intae crime, like smoking dope an drinkin an things like that. – Alec

> I started takin smack at 15…two boys frae school had it an I took it wi them. There wisnae any thought or anythin to it, I jist took it. I never thought aboot it being nasty or addictive, I jist done it. It wis awright for a few weeks, then you end up tappin money off your family and then sellin your stuff, then eventually you start stealin off folk an that's when it goes right doon hill. – Liam

> I wis smoking drugs by the time I left primary school. But the harder drugs, that wis by the end o second year an I wis using Class A narcotics. I hung aboot wi older folk an they were aw dain it. – Nicole

> I started experimenting at aroond 14. Drink and drugs at the same time…I'd be drunk aw the time and I started smoking cannabis. I jist spiralled oot o control frae there wi drugs an drink an fighting. – Dean

Substance use entered participants' lives for a variety of reasons. These ranged from teenage experimentation, a desire to fit in with their peer group or a distraction from the trauma occurring in other areas of their lives. What is similar about all the narratives is that substance use appeared incrementally, with participants only categorising it as problematic once a dependency had been established. It often began with softer substances such as cannabis and some participants described its soothing properties, particularly from the early trauma they had lived through.

However, there is a certain amount of youthful naivety in these comments. The severity of experimentation with hard drugs was not obvious to some participants at this age and it was more a case of doing what others around them were doing. Like Conor's descriptions, the damage to capabilities from substance use was in its early stages. Life and bodily health began to be negatively affected as experimentation developed into dependency. There is already evidence here that some participants struggled to function within the capability of emotions. Specifically, Liam and Dean who were battling the emotional turmoil that came with the loss of a parent. Alec dealt with a similar type of loss having been forcibly removed from his mother's care. Had their support and functioning in this capability been in a healthier state then their need to self-medicate with substances may have been less prevalent. Some participants also connected early substance use with the development of offending behaviours. Petty theft, gang violence, property damage and the use of illegal substances all further emerged from narratives from this point onwards. Alec, Liam and Dean all directly testified to the influence of drug use upon their early criminal behaviour. Although their narratives all indicated more than this singular catalyst, it played a notable influence in their paths to offending.

Early trauma can also be a contributing factor to the development of addiction. Research has shown that childhood stressors such as abuse and violence within the home can contribute to a variety of negative health problems such as substance use, depression and suicidal tendencies (see Brodsky 1997; Kingree 1999; van der Kolk 1991; Hefferman 2000; Kendler 2000; Rohsenow 1988). As previously discussed, early life trauma can lead to structural and cognitive changes in the brain and the connected system that regulates stress. This can affect a person's ability to self-regulate their emotions as well as their response to fear. When these abilities are impaired it raises the susceptibility of being open to health harming behaviours

such as substance misuse (Bellis et al., 2017). Many attested to drugs and alcohol being easily accessible in their lives. For some participants it was present at home while others were introduced via their peer group. Either way, when drugs and alcohol appeared many described using it to self-sooth the effects of childhood trauma, indicating a correlation between early adversity and substance misuse. However, this is not an exclusive connection as a number of participants that did not attest to experiencing childhood adversity also developed substance abuse problems. The difference was that these participants described their early usage as teenage experimentation as opposed to self-medication. They also began to use substances at a later age than those who suffered early childhood trauma, usually beginning in late teens to early twenties as opposed to early adolescence.

Conor described how his early use developed into addiction, affecting every aspect of his wellbeing.

But when I started taking heroin I wis feeling the lowest I could feel…It could have been any drug. It could have been crystal meth an I'd have taken it. I wis so low in ma mood I jist wanted tae feel something. Jist anything tae feel again. – Conor

I lost a lot of weight. I wis goin oot shoplifting…jist anything tae get money…Obviously, takin heroin is negative but I think it helped. I used tae say it wis like a blanket getting wrapped roond me aw nice an hot an brilliant, an it took me out of normality. – Conor

Conor's life took a darker turn when his grandmother died in a flat fire while he was in custody. He was understandably devastated by her death and lost his complete support network. Once released he had no accommodation and was placed in a homeless unit. At this point his drug use escalated. His grief and fragile emotional state meant he sought comfort and escape and heroin took him "*out of normality*". His heroin use developed into dependency, contributing to the continuation of his offending as he had to steal to fund his habit, indicating a direct link between his substance use and criminal behaviour. Grant and Dawson (1998) found that early substance use (both drugs and alcohol) predicted an

increased rate of future substance use. Early offending, like that described here, has been found to predict future substance misuse (Gordon et al., 2004). Likewise, early substance use has also been linked to future offending (Slade et al., 2008). Connecting these types of past findings to this research indicates a strong connection between participants' early substance use and onset offending, both at the time and into their adult years. This will be returned to in the following chapter.

Conor's capability set was already in a reduced state due to the loss of his home and family unit. Control over his material environment was directly damaged when he became homeless, bringing severe instability to his daily life. The anxiety that is brought on by a lack of secure and permanent accommodation damaged Conor's capability to develop and express his emotions in a healthy manner, particularly his grief at the loss of his grandmother. His lack of self-worth was reflected in his acutely low mood in the homeless unit, damaging his capability of affiliation as he believed he was not deserving of a good life. Conor's bodily health was also harmed in line with his heroin use, commenting that he lost weight and his mental health worsened. His second comment links back to substance use as self-medication as he felt heroin controlled his spiralling emotions and offered comfort he was not getting from human contact. It is unsurprising Conor's drug used continued as it provided some relief from the daily challenges he faced. Even though he was provided accommodation when he was released from prison, his descriptions did not indicate any other form of state support during this period. Conor appeared to have been placed in the homeless unit and left to process his grief and trauma alone. As a result, he was reduced to daily survival with little to no help in directing him towards a more positive future.

One of the main impacts on capability attainment and functioning is the hand to mouth existence often created by severe addiction. As substance use worsened it adopted the central role for many participants, meaning they were often left struggling to fulfil the most basic of needs such as sustenance and shelter. Connor's wellbeing, both physically and mentally, deteriorated as his addiction developed.

> I wis tryin tae kill maself by overdosing. I would go wi an addict an I would convince him that I took heroin every day when I really had nae tolerance to it. So, then he would jag me and I would be gone. – Conor

> The homeless units were an eye opener fir me, basically sittin wi nothin, no TV, nothin, jist the clothes I wis sittin in. I started self-harming an I had that mindset where I wis gonnae kill maself or I thought aboot death every single day. Ma mental health wis really bad…Eventually I decided tae go an get some help an I got sectioned intae the hospital fir a wee while. – Conor

It would be challenging to find any capability that Conor was functioning in during this time. His mental and physical health was in a perilously dangerous state as he struggled to fulfil his basic needs, reducing his life to daily survival rather than any form of flourishing. The added instability of his addiction meant basic needs fulfilment became even more challenging. Conor was struggling to hold any agency within his life. Addiction support was clearly in great need at this point as his spiralling drug use had to be addressed before he could begin to engage with services that would improve his wellbeing or help him plan his future.

It is important to take a pause in participants' narratives here and take a more detailed look at the capability of practical reason. Nussbaum states that (along with affiliation) practical reason plays an architectonic role in capability development. That is to say it helps to organise and pervade the others. For example, if a person is well-nourished, is placed in secure housing, their bodily health is in a good condition, they are more likely to be able to engage in the planning of their own life (Nussbaum, 2011). They have the space and security to think and plan for the future rather than being reduced to a hand-to-mouth existence that garners nothing more than mere survival. Addiction can severely damage practical reason as daily life becomes focused on satiating cravings. Nussbaum (among other theorists) has argued that a person cannot live an autonomous life unless they live under circumstances that afford them a plurality of acceptable options. The ability to engage with and plan one's own life is underpinned by the capacity to self-reflect on personal wants, needs and goals (Friedman, 2003). Addiction, in particular, restricts or completely removes this type of engagement, meaning participants with substance abuse problems were at risk of being stuck in this state of non-functioning in the long-term. Intervention and support were badly needed to begin the process towards capability attainment.

Connor began to take control at the point when he accessed medical support for his mental health problems. This helped him move away from simply existing to placing some direction into his life. This did not result in immediate positive changes, but he reflected that getting a handle on his mental health problems and addiction was the first step to improving his life.

> I went intae hospital an that's when I started lookin at everything in ma life, aw the emotions, what I felt aboot people…So see like ma step-dad, he came tae see me in the hospital as well so that wis like 'wow' tae me… I realised whit a good guy he wis. So, I started tae think aboot ma mum. I always thought that she didnae want me but I didnae know about aw the traumatic things that had happened tae her that she hadnae told me aboot.– Conor

> I started tae work fir ma sister's boyfriend. He owns his own company an I started goin oot like tae fit the wee canopies… Aye that's when I'm at ma happiest, when I'm working. – Conor

Even though Conor still battles with his issues and has returned to prison a number of times, this was the point when he felt he turned a corner and repaired familial relationships. He began to reflect on how he felt about himself and others, enacting more agency within his life. He was by no means functioning in many capabilities by this point, but he was beginning to move towards attaining them. In particular, as he started to process his feelings and re-instigate family bonds, his capabilities of emotion and affiliation improved. By gaining help with his drug issues, he was less governed by daily survival and the support he received in hospital appeared to provide him with some space to move beyond craving satiation. His capability of practical reason also showed improvement as he began to make more independent decisions about his future and employment provided some structure and direction to his daily life. There is a notable difference here in tone and hopefulness compared to his earlier comments when he felt powerless to the events that were happening to him.

Other participants with varying substance use problems also described periods when they suffered very poor physical and mental health.

> My health wisnae good due tae drinking. I've had pancreatitis twice. I've always suffered wi fits through the drink as well. I ended up wi agrophobia an I started smoking a lot o cannabis. – Carol

> I had an operation on ma leg an the surgeon told ma mum if I wis ever back seeing him again that he would take ma leg off. That's how bad it wis. That wis tae do wi injectin cause ma artery blew up. – Neil

> I've had Hep C an I've got bad legs an a lot o nerve damage frae injecting…ma mental health has been affected wi it as well. – Nicole

> Valium had a big impact on ma life…fir aw the wrong reasons. I fell oot wi ma girlfriend through it, lost ma wee boy through it,fell oot wi the family through it…aw through heroin an valium. – Dean

These comments (and the wider data)hold a variety of descriptions that indicate the negative effect substance use can have on an individual's capability attainment and functioning. For some participants, the capability of bodily health was damaged in a number of ways – Carol had pancreatitis and still suffers from alcohol-related fits; Neil nearly lost his leg due to artery damage from injecting drugs; Nicole has ongoing issues with nerve damage in her legs amongst other issues; Dean's capability of affiliation to his family and child were damaged due to his heroin and valium addictions. What these narratives indicate is that escalating substance use compounded participants' ability to attain capabilities. Health, wellbeing and social bonds worsened as dependencies developed. Substance reliance compounded many of the disadvantages that participants inherited due to the challenges faced by their parents. Participants' economic situations were acutely stretched to support developing habits continuing the cycle of poverty many had been born into. Overall life

expectancy was lowered due to the health problems associated with substance use, mirroring the early health problems and deaths of a number of participants' parents.

Similar to Conor's narrative, many discussed how substance use damaged their ability to plan their own lives.

> It wis a lost couple of years jist wi takin smack an that an I jist kind of let myself go right doonhill. Every day was jist aboot getting smack. I never, thought aboot being older or havin a family or anything like that. By the time I wis 15 I wis takin drugs an that sort of 'short-circuited' aw that. – Liam

> Taking drugs; well I wis jist possessed. I felt like a car with nae petrol an withoot it I couldnae function. That wis ma sole and only thought. No cause I enjoyed it. It wis jist a necessity. – Neil

> No, I've never really done either of them (work or college). Ma life wis centred on ma drug issues. – Nicole

> Heroin ruined ma life tae the point that I didnae have a life. I wis jist existing. – Calum

Substance use impacted participants' abilities to consider their lives past the immediate management of their addiction, having a consequential negative impact on other sections of their lives. Dean found that it severely damaged his familial relationships and Nicole reflected that it stunted her ability and motivation to pursue college or employment. Liam provided the most impactful insight by commenting that drug use *"short-circuited"* his ability to hope or plan for the future.

Overall, the data indicates that the impact substance use has on capabilities and autonomy is multi-faceted and complex, impacting nearly every aspect of wellbeing and development,

condensing participants' lives to only being able to fulfil their basic needs. Many also described that it changed how they viewed themselves at this stage of their lives. This shall now be looked at in more detail.

6.7 Identity

Participants were asked to discuss how they viewed themselves during and after particular events, such as when they disengaged from school, when their substance abuse issues began, and when they started committing offences or received their first sentence. This encouraged engagement with self-perception and self-development which is significant because it provides a person with the space to continually assess and realign their core values. These in turn, can play a major role in how life choices are navigated or even if individuals feel they have the power to plan their lives at all (Grenfell, 2012).

As previously touched upon, Conor verbalised both positive and negative aspects to his identity development. He labelled himself as being in a 'gang' when he was a teenager.

> It (his gang) meant a lot. It wis one o the things in life I wis good at and made me feel good an wis important tae me. – Conor

While his friends were not always a positive influence on Conor's behaviour, it provided him with a form of familial unit that he lost when he became estranged from his mother and siblings. Due to this disconnection from his wider family, Conor felt he had to search for other role models and guidance in life.

Like Conor, other participants provided descriptions of close group membership. Many used the label 'gang' as he did, although they pointed out that the connotations placed on this label are not necessarily how they viewed themselves. For many it was a committed peer group, as many children and teenagers have.

I wis aboot 14 or 15 when I started drinking an I wis legless an then frae there I jist continued it every weekend wi ma pals. Then I started gang fighting, assaults and then I started getting charged. – Ross

I belonged tae ma scheme an ma gang. I felt wanted there, I felt needed, I felt respected, I felt important. Which is something that I never had in ma life before. – Craig

So the mair o this nuture I wis getting ootside the house, the mair I wis allowing maself tae be nurtured, if that makes sense? So I mean who I wis socialising wi an getting intae trouble with. – Joe

Well people say it wis a gang but at the time you obviously didnae see it as a gang, you jist see as a bunch o pals dain whit yir dain. We were jist running aboot dain whit wee weans dae, jist in the street. – James

The positive aspect is that again, for many, these groups provided these participants with the familial-type security that was missing at home. The more negative aspects were the behavioural issues that occurred within many of these peer groups, often developing to violence and early offending. These roles are some of the participants' earliest memories of identity construction. What the data indicates is that when participants could not gather constructive identity influences from those who would traditionally provide this, such as parents and siblings, they instead found it in their peer group. Participants may not have been fully conscious of this at the time, but in hindsight they all placed meaning on how and why their identities were changing through their peer group membership. Group membership is known to be meaningful to individuals and Bourdieu conceded that individuals utilise group membership to develop a sense of their place and where they belong in society (Grenfell, 2012). It helps individuals negotiate their social identity and encourages self-evaluation which is an important tool in developing the autonomous self as a way of continually negotiating individual wants and values. Groups distinguish themselves from others (inner group vs outer group) in order to develop positive social evaluation and self-esteem (see Tajfel, 1970, 1981; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). The group is both categorised and defined by

itself (the members) and by others (Jenkins, 2008). This is an interesting distinction to make when looking at the term 'gang'. While a number of participants used this terminology for their group identity during adolescence, they also explained that it was just a term to identify their group of peers. As group members, participants did not necessarily connect this with the violent and socially challenging behaviours that the media and wider community have tagged these groups with. Participants instead described gravitating towards these peer groups in the pursual of role models and familial type secure relationships. As participants engaged more fully with these new fields (peer groups), their habitus was influenced in line with their new environment. Unfortunately, although they offered support, their guidance was not always positive.

Participants also discussed their internal struggles with identity development and self-worth. As his life became more chaotic, Conor's self-confidence lessened, resulting in the belief that he was not worthy of a good life.

> I thought well I'm never gonnae get a job in life cause I've got a criminal past and I havnae got any qualifications. So my mindset wis if I want something I'll jist go an take it, or I'll get money through drugs or whitever. I knew I wis never really gonnae be or do anything wi maself. – Conor

Two influences upon Conor's self-worth can be extracted from this comment. Firstly, what Nussbaum (2011) defines as 'adaptive preferences' were working within his ability to see past his immediate restrictions to a more flourishing existence. Conor was adapting to the restrictions he had to live within, trying to provide for himself to the best of his ability. He felt that due to his early criminal convictions, his path was set on living outside the law to make money. Conor's capability of affiliation was restricted as he described feeling unworthy of a life equal to others. This is particularly evident in his comment *"I knew I wis never really gonnae be or do anything wi maself"*, reflecting the low opinion he had of his worth and abilities. He made the connection between his lack of qualifications and the negative effect this would have on gaining legitimate employment. This connects to Nussbaum's (2011) argument that education permeates the capabilities, widening one's options and ability 'to do and be' in life. Conor felt he was consigned to the limited options in front of him, the majority of which connected to offending and prison. State intervention

in the forms of mainstream and residential school did not improve Conor's life to any notable degree. Combined with his lack of income, escalating drug use and early criminal record, Conor described his path in life being reduced to that of being 'non-legit' (or living outside the law) as the most accessible option. In order to have the best chance of survival, it appeared to be the most feasible route to follow.

Other participants provided accounts of reduced self-worth during teenage years.

> I thought I wis useless an no worth havin decent stuff. It became survival after a while, jist tryin tae feed myself an findin somewhere tae stay. – John

> I don't think I had anything important in ma life. I definitely didnae have any direction. It wis jist an existence. – Alec

> I knew I wis either gonnae be in an oot the jail or sellin drugs. I knew it wis gonnae be one or the other or both. – Ross

> Well I did think 'when I'm 18 I'm gonnae go an get ma ain hoose an take ma sister tae live wi me'. But I knew I would get the jail and that wis never really gonnae happen. – Carol

The CA upholds that options translate into freedoms, providing people with the opportunity to decide what life they wish to lead (Dreze and Sen, 1995). Due to their restricted capabilities, participants described having few life-options at this stage. Disengagement from school restricted these further. None of the participants expressed any planned direction when they discussed leaving school and only half of them entered into further education or employment, much of which was on a casual, short-term basis. This reflected the limited paths participants had to mould their futures on as they moved towards adulthood.

When asked to comment on their engagement with identity development, participants' descriptions centred around either not thinking about this at all or viewing themselves in negative terms such as gang-member, drug user, criminal. Social interaction plays a key role in our self-narrative, meaning a person's social context must be taken into account when trying to understand these narratives. The opinions of those around us, modelling, structural obstacles and opportunities all contribute towards identity development and change (see Becker, 1964; Felson, 1985). The life story is adopted and developed based on the limited amount of interpretations and narrative archetypes that one's society and social group gives individual's access to (Foucault, 1988). Descriptions indicate that these were limited and often negative for participants, meaning the examples they had to base their identity on were more likely to condemn them to similarly unstable and capability devoid lives. Conor is a strong reflection of this theory, grasping for guidance from a fractured family unit, he found this from the only source he could; his peer group. While they provided support, he felt it became largely detrimental in nature, opening him up to substance misuse and behaviours that would eventually lead him into prison. John and Alec verbalised a tragically diminished value for their own lives and both attested to simply surviving and nothing more. Devoid of anything they would class as 'good' or any concrete support by this point, they saw both themselves and the lives they were leading as lacking in worth. Their capabilities of affiliation and practical reason were absent and their daily existence (rather than flourishing) inferred that most other capabilities were either limited or missing altogether. Ross and Carol felt powerless to the inevitability of prison appearing in their futures. This reflected their adaptive preferences that, even had they wanted another path in life, their options were so reduced that their aspirations were impossible. Carol's comment is particularly poignant as she had the desire to escape her abusive home and take care of her younger sister, shielding her from further harm. However, due to the instability of her life, she had already accepted this would not be possible.

The development of self-identity is a life-long process that relies upon self-reflection coupled with our attachment to others (both individual and group) within a range of resources (Jenkins, 2008). Bourdieu (1990) explained that over time and protracted conditioning, people internalize the objective chances they face in life, meaning they 'read' their future and select the fate or path that is statistically most open to them. Individuals measure their abilities, dispositions and resources (albeit often subconsciously) and estimate their correct place in the social world, staying away from paths they feel they would struggle

on. This is how they achieve 'subjective expectations of objective probabilities' (Bourdieu, 1990, p 59) or rather, the path that is more likely for individuals is that path they end up following. A person's resources (or capabilities) plays a large part in dictating their social placement and options (Grenfell, 2012). The above comments indicate the lack of resources available to participants at this stage and capability restriction led individuals to follow the limited identities and paths in front of them (adaptive preferences). Participants all verbalised a resignation to the roles they would or had already become. Healthy self-identity is a luxury that is not afforded to those with restricted capabilities and the link between this state of being and participant's early offending will be discussed in the following section.

6.8 Early Offending

The majority of participants began offending during this stage of adolescence. Conor had increasing interactions with the law by the beginning of secondary school.

> I kept getting hunners o charges frae the police. I started goin tae the Children's Panel's…I dunno…I think I jist wanted tae be anti-authority. – Conor

> Aboot 12 wis the first time I got arrested an charged, cause I got caught wi a bit o cannabis in school. I got suspended a couple o times fir fighting as well. Then they were like 'right we're gonnae take you oot o this school'. – Conor

Conor's first comment mentions his negative attitude towards authority when he was younger. He could not fully explain why he felt like this, although he commented later that his peer group were older and tougher than him so this may have contributed to his negative attitude. Conor explained that he felt his earlier experience of being bullied led him to become aggressive in order to protect himself. In changing this part of how he was perceived (powerless to being in control), he made an implicit and explicit claim to holding a particular identity. This all became part of 'proving himself' to his new friends, adopting a new image which may have intimidated others. Continuing to be a victim or intimidation by others was not an option for Conor as it had already caused him emotional damage. This asserted a

moral demand on those around him to treat him with respect or even fear. At the same time, he rejected the parts of himself that he no longer wanted and the treatments that were connected to that previous identity or role (see Goffman, 1969).

Conor's behaviour and early offending meant that by early secondary he had been repeatedly excluded. This resulted in extended periods of non-attendance until his next school placement was secured, leading to large knowledge gaps, daily instability and further disengagement from school. The lack of structure also meant he had more time to spend with peers, continuing with the behaviours that were getting him into trouble with the police.

> Maybe I wis trying tae find oot who I was and I wis confused an I wisnae gonnae get any help at home cause my gran jist drank. So, I jist started taking mair drugs…When I started taking drugs I started stealing a lot. I started breakin intae cars an hooses, like stuff I would never hiv done if I wisnae takin drugs. – Conor

Research has indicated that a negative school experience (such as marginalisation, suspension and exclusion) does not necessarily directly cause criminal behaviour. Rather, the cumulative effect of these types of school experiences can result in disengagement from the education system. This then exacerbates pre-existing high-risk factors that lead those most vulnerable into offending behaviours (Sutherland, 2011). Conor reflectively pieced together the catalysts and influences that contributed to his early offending. He had an anti-authority attitude coupled with identity struggles by early teenage years which is understandable within the context of his confusing and unstable childhood. He felt a strong link between his personal issues, his substance use and his resultant early offending. Smaller misdemeanours with the law were a consequence of instability and addictions issues, placing him on an early path into the criminal justice system. The early onset of substance abuse has been directly linked to an increased risk of criminal behaviour, arrest and conviction, particularly when the crimes are related to possession and distribution (Slade et al., 2008). Research has also shown that young people that engage in both substance use and criminal behaviour do not do this in isolation. A significant proportion of young people in the criminal justice system (and specialist treatment centres) have been affected by trauma and abuse that relates to their substance use and resultant offences (Revolving Doors Agency, 2016). Conor displayed the cohesion of both these influences, having already described the self-

medicating effect his early substance use had in dealing with his childhood trauma. He began stealing to sustain his drug use and earn some much-needed money and so, for Conor, his drug use and early offending were inextricably linked.

The narrative thread that links personal instability, substance use and early offending was present in many of the participants' narratives.

> I think I wis encouraged by the people roond aboot me an me wantin tae fit in. So, if I'd maybe been a bit mair comfortable wi maself then I'd maybe no have felt like that. It had a dramatic effect on ma life. I think the drugs are the reason that I sit here today. I think I've jist got that addictive gene. – Nicole

> …that's when I started stealing tae fund ma (heroin) habit. I could take it or leave it fir the first six months tae a year…an I dunno, it wisnae jist overnight… but eventually I got a habit. – Calum

> When I started drinking an I wis legless an then frae there I jist continued it every weekend wi ma pals. Then I started gang fighting, assaults and then I started getting charged wi that. – Ross

These are just a selection of participants' descriptions of early offending and, like Conor, they described the same interlinked nature of substance use and early criminal acts. Some of the above comments allude to participants' personal issues that contributed to their initial substance use. For example, Nicole's insecurities were a factor in being influenced by her peers into drug experimentation, eventually becoming her root cause of offending. Ross is more succinct in his connection between substance use and offending, spending a lot of time drinking with his peer group and fighting which eventually resulted in assault charges. For these participants, the initial criminal act of experimenting with illegal substances led into further criminal acts when experimentation turned into a larger issue. How the regularity and seriousness of offending developed for participants will be looked at in more detail in the next chapter.

For other participants, the catalysts to early or current offending included other factors.

> Stealing just became part of my life because I didnae have anything when I wis younger. I could go oot there an buy the clothes that I wanted, I could dae things, I could feed myself. Tae me, stealin is normal. - Scott

> Well aw ma offences hiv always really been violence, cause I saw so much violence at home I thought it wis an acceptable way tae sort things oot. I got ma first sentence when I wis 15. It wis for a stabbing an I got sentenced tae two years. – Carol

> I wis really confused cause I wis only 12 when I got taken intae care. They (social workers) didnae really tell me anything. You're jist left in the dark so you're a bit like 'well fuck yous then. I'll jist dae whit I want'. That wisnae a conscious thought that I had at the time but looking back noo I think it wis a subconscious one. – Craig

> It wis jist aw these things happening tae me and I had nae power tae stop it so it jist turned me intae a pure maniac. I jist saw maself goin doon that road o criminality. – Joe

These descriptions show lives that were devoid of capabilities. Scott attributed much of his offending impulses to the lack of anything material in his young life. Growing up in abject poverty, his stealing enabled him to provide himself with the essentials his parents struggled to give him. This meant he had to adapt it into a 'normal' and regular part of his life, regardless of the risks. To be reduced to providing for himself in this manner reflects how compromised Scott's capability set was. None of these descriptions display attainment in the capability of emotions or practical reason. In fact, the lack of the former can connect to an inability in achieving the latter. Emotional trauma created from abuse often led to reactive and sometimes violent behaviour. This restricted participants' capability of practical reason

as increasing offending funnelled them into the criminal justice system over any other path. What is clear is the inevitability and powerlessness participants felt in resigning themselves to a future of instability and offending.

Carol verbalised a similar acceptance of her early violent offending behaviour. She felt the confrontational manner in which issues were dealt with in her abusive home environment meant she had never learned another way in which to face or deal with her problems. Her habits (or coping mechanisms) were directly influenced by her home (field). Just as she witnessed violence between her mother and step-father, her primary reaction when she felt threatened or disempowered was to lash out and behave aggressively. This was the only way Carol could protect herself when at home, so it is logical she adopted this violent protective stance when in other environments. Craig and Joe both alluded to the attitudes they developed through the powerlessness of their childhoods. Craig felt his early unstable behaviour escalated quicker than it should or could have. He believed this was due to the lack of communication afforded to him by family and social workers during his tumultuous childhood. Similarly, the abuse and trauma Joe had suffered by early teenage years, coupled with the sudden death of his father left him feeling as if he had no command over the direction his life was taking towards offending and prison. The adverse trauma experienced by participants meant they became more likely to engage in risk taking and health harming behaviours that are directly linked to criminal behaviour, such as substance use and violence (Scottish Government, 2018). Higher adversity in childhood has also been linked to criminogenic risks such as substance abuse, poor educational attainment and mental health issues (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). Resilience levels are linked to poverty level, school attainment and support networks, all of which participants struggled with. This meant that participants' abilities to overcome the ill-effects of childhood adversity was less likely, placing them at further risk of suffering longer-term consequences (Scottish Government, 2018). These areas are touched upon in participants' descriptions (above), indicating a further connection between their early life experiences and pathways into offending. The next chapter will look at these links in more detail.

6.9 Conclusion

Adolescence is a stage of life with a large amount of transition and change. Added to this were participants' personal challenges that resulted in continued and compounded disadvantage through this period of their lives. Disengagement from school was a common feature, with most participants leaving education by their mid-teens. For many this linked to increased substance use and further instability. However, the manner of this was not linear or straightforward cause and effect and it is difficult to trace exactly where and how all three of these life events linked together and influenced each other. For some participants, increased substance use influenced disengagement from learning. Others were more influenced by issues at home such as caring for siblings or ill parents. Some participants described a mixture of both of these catalysts. What emerged from the narratives is that any issues that were already present in participants' lives appeared to worsen when the underlying structure of school was removed. Once education was gone, so too was one of the most powerful tools for capability development. This implied that participants' capability sets would likely worsen from this point onwards.

Both familial and peer bonds were a focus throughout teenage years and many participants reflected upon their lack of adult guidance and role models at this time. Attachment with caregivers had been damaged for some in childhood, with this worsening by teenage years. Many of the adults and parents described in the narratives had clear and overwhelming problems to deal with. This meant that it was often not possible to provide solid guidance for their dependents. Comments reflected upon the lack of boundaries they often had and how this exacerbated teenage rebellious behaviour. In particular, Conor commented that he was largely allowed to do as he pleased and felt that more solid boundaries may have helped to lessen his behavioural and substance use problems. Many participants witnessed substance use and violent behaviours in their home environments so it seeped further into their own lives. Some descriptions focused on the worsening of familial bonds from childhood and the negative effects this had on individual emotional wellbeing. Conor traced his deep-rooted abandonment issues from the broken relationship he had with his mother, step-father and siblings. Alec, firmly placed in the care system by this point, provided the most poignant narrative of the isolation and emotional damage that comes from familial separation. Overall, participants were retrospectively insightful when tracing the negative

impact of weakened familial bonds during this period, with many describing how it had impacted their struggle to forge solid and trusting relationships throughout their lives.

As is expected during teenage years, peer influence played a widening role in participants' lives. Many reflected that they found the familial unit within their friend group that they were lacking at home. This was important in providing participants with some form of support during this period, but it turned out to be a negative influence in many situations. While role models and guidance came from many of these friends, it also introduced participants to, or worsened their relationship with areas such as substance use and behavioural problems. Peer influence, coupled with descriptions of home environments (both here and in the previous chapter) reflected the changing influence that fields had on individual participant's habitus. For example, Conor described learning to stand up for himself from his older peer group, but this unfortunately over-extended into more health harming behaviours. Often, participants were introduced to substance use by friends or they played a part in the development of experimentation into dependency. This was one of the largest damagers to capability development that emerged from the research. Once drugs and alcohol began to play a large role in participants' lives, their capabilities were negatively affected. The more that daily living was dominated by substance use, the more participants' lives were reduced to a state of survival rather than any form of flourishing. This is theme that will be returned to in the following chapters.

Substance use also strongly connected to early offending in the majority of the narratives. Once usage increased, so too did the need to fund developing dependencies. In most cases, this took the form of low-level drug dealing and stealing which led to early custodial sentences. For other participants it escalated reactionary and sometimes violent behaviours, often leading to early charges. Many of the narratives traced a link between underlying mental health issues, trauma and emotional struggles that were being self-soothed through early substance use, indicating the lack of support (both personal and state) in participants' lives. Any interventions that did take place, such as a social work presence or time in front of the Children's Panel, made little or no improvement in participants' situations, instead criminalising many of them from a young age for reasons far outside their control.

Participants clearly struggled to figure out who they were and their place in the world and restricted capabilities meant that life options were often extremely limited. Again, many of the disadvantages that participants were born into appeared to continue (and in some cases worsen) into teenage years. Participants suffered varying amounts of anger, frustration and sadness at the uncontrollable nature of their lives with many grasping power where they could, although this was often in places that led to further instability. The next chapter will focus on participants' early adult lives and the development of these issues.

Chapter Seven

Capabilities Imagined

7.1 Introduction

My data has moved from childhood through to adolescence and traced the capability deficits produced in participants' lives during these stages. The cluster of environmental and societal disadvantages that many participants were born into remained and often worsened during teenage years. Participants reflected that support and guidance was often lacking from adult figures (such as family members) due to the disadvantages and limited capabilities they were struggling with themselves. In a wider context, many participants reflected upon a lack of support from services that could have made some progress in rectifying disadvantages. The result for many was a continuation of instability from childhood into teenage years. As disadvantages clustered, options became more limited, channelling many participants down a path towards early offending and prison. This chapter will look at how this offending increased and the ongoing detrimental effects this had on participants' capabilities and functionings. It will also focus on the effect prison has had on individual wellbeing and development.

By late teenage and early adulthood, participants were committing offences with increasing regularity. Arrests, court appearances and custodial sentences began to feature more heavily in narratives at this stage. For those whose cycle of offending and prison had become established, life was more unstable during periods back in the community. Narratives tell of overwhelming addiction problems, unhealthy personal relationships, periods of homelessness and worsening mental and physical health. Disadvantages and capability restriction continued from adolescence and in many cases, deteriorated further. Addiction is a particularly strong theme in many of the narratives, directly connecting to many individual offending patterns. By its inherent design of separation, imprisonment can work against the process of restructuring life and an identity free from offending. A major negative aspect of this was that increasing amounts of time in custody weakened social and familial bonds, often negating any progress that was made towards desistance. However, many participants described that prison became a stabiliser within their personal chaos, often providing access

to much needed support services. This indicates that the process of desisting can begin while in custody.

The focused narrative in the next two chapters is that of Joe. Born and raised in a very challenged area south of Glasgow, he and his younger brother grew up in a variety of unstable environments. His academic abilities were noticed early on in primary school and he described a fascination with learning. However, he and his friends would get into trouble regularly at school by fighting with other boys. While he described this as 'play' fighting, he also explained that he became fascinated with engaging in more serious territorial fighting while still in primary school, leading to his suspension on a few occasions. He and his brother spent most of their younger childhood living with his father, step-mother and half-siblings. His father focused most of his time on his new family while Joe and his brother spent increasing amounts of time in the care of their grandparents. Like Carol, he felt that being in their care was the most stable and nurturing part of his childhood.

Joe's father and step-mother eventually chose to move to England, taking him away from this supportive family unit. Joe felt out of place due to his accent and struggled to settle in school. He continued to fight with fellow students, occasionally being suspended for this behaviour. Joe described his father as a negative influence on his aggressive behaviour as a child and he would entertain Joe with stories of his own gang-fighting days. Joe felt this made fighting sound exciting but also taught him that aggression was an acceptable approach to dealing with problems. He believed his dad was not consciously trying to teach him this lesson, but rather he was a very young father and did not necessarily comprehend the weight his words carried. Nonetheless, Joe felt this planted a seed of fascination for fighting that continued throughout his youth.

Around this time Joe's father and step-mother's relationship rapidly deteriorated meaning life at home was challenging. Joe always felt provided for in a basic sense and he was not subject to any abuse in his father's care. However, he received little of his attention and both his father and step-mother had substance use issues. Eventually, Joe's birth mother took him and his brother back to Glasgow with promises of a more nurturing life. Unfortunately, this did not turn out to be the case and instead they were beaten and neglected, locked in a room for prolonged periods without food and water while his mother and partner sold drugs from

their flat. Both Joe and his younger brother lived in abject fear on a daily basis. This was understandably the most traumatic period of his younger childhood. As a consequence, Joe's behaviour worsened and he commented that he got into more fights when he was living with his mother and step-father than at any other point in school. Fortunately, after a year, they were removed and placed back into the care of their grandparents.

Around this time, Joe's father tragically died from a drug overdose. He pinpointed his father's death as the event that pushed his behaviour over the edge. He felt *"his heart froze over"* from grief, causing psychological and emotional damage which he then channelled into his violent behaviour. He described himself as *"pure ferocious"* with only rage and anger coming out of him. The secondary school Joe attended in Glasgow had a catchment area that enveloped five housing schemes and this was when his territorial fighting rapidly escalated. Joe explained he would take out his emotional frustration and turmoil on others and so his commitment to his peer group and territory became an integral part of his identity. This demonstrated Joe's need to affiliate with a peer support group, even during his most violent and unstable periods. As Joe disengaged from school, his early offending and aggressive behaviour increased and this is where we pick up his story.

7.2 Ongoing Capability Restriction

Joe's late teenage and adult life that will be the focus in this chapter. However, it is important to briefly look at Joe's earlier years to ascertain the state of his capability set, the variety of disadvantages suffered and how this connected to his behaviours. During Joe's earlier life, his capability set was repeatedly restricted and damaged. Similar to Carol, he described a more stable, nurturing environment when he lived with his grandparents where he was nurtured and his capabilities more developed.

> …they (his grandparents) were always dead caring, cause I didnae have tae fight fir ma gran's attention. Ma gran and grandpa loved me. – Joe

This stable environment with his grandparents was positive for Joe. However, what became more dominant were the frequent bouts of instability that contributed to his damaged capabilities and behavioural problems. When Joe moved to stay with his father and step-mother he was provided for on a basic level, but he did not feel wanted or valued within the family unit. His father had small children with his new partner and Joe felt he was more focused on bonding with them. He connected this to some of the emotional problems he experienced.

> When I wis a kid an I stayed wi ma gran I used tae greet on ma ain when I would think aboot things. It wis always things that I watched that had that bond and affiliation between parent an a kid. It wis almost like dead sad or something. – Joe

Joe was aware, perhaps only subconsciously at this point, that his life was missing a strong parent-child bond. He commented later that he did not resent his father for this but instead felt that as a young parent he was given little guidance on how to raise Joe and his younger brother. This lack of bond damaged Joe's capability of emotions as Nussbaum (2011) explains that this only exists in a healthy state when we are able to make attachments to people outside of ourselves. Joe struggled to achieve this level of bond with his father which he felt detrimentally affected his own emotional development, leaving him struggling to connect to others on a deeper level. As discussed previously, if a child has damaged attachment to their primary caregivers, then it can affect their ability to attach to others in a healthy manner throughout life. Attachment patterns begin early in life in response to certain circumstances that either reinforce the attachment or damage it. These later become reinforced and internalized as more general internal working models of relationships (Bowlby, 1988). This is reflected in Joe's comment (above) when he described his emotional response to witnessing parent-child bonding. He understood that his experience of that was not secure, so it became upsetting for him to witness. He described throughout his interviews that he eventually supressed these types of emotional reactions as a type of self-preservation from being hurt by others. Joe's emotional response to damaged attachment was internalised and influenced the guarded way he dealt with relationships as an adult. This shall be returned to more fully later in this chapter.

Nussbaum (2011) argues that a person's capability of affiliation can only be deemed healthy and productive to social development when they are able to live with and toward others and to interact in its various forms. Joe was isolated from most of his family, resulting in damage to this development of affiliation, creating life-long attachment issues for him. He and his younger brother were frequently overlooked in favour of his father's younger children.

> I remember one time when ma gran came doon tae England an ma dad went oot tae a restaurant wi his girlfriend and their kids. Ma gran went off her nut fir leaving us in the hoose. So, I feel we were side-lined a lot by my dad. – Joe

Joe lived with but not within his family unit which he felt negatively affected his capacity to establish social and emotional connections with others outside as he grew older. He described struggling to develop any relationships that he would have classed as 'healthy'.

> I don't know if I ever did see maself as a person. I dunno, it's weird, it's almost like I never feel like I've connected tae people or something. Ma experience o human beings is that they will turn on you. – Joe

The central connections that Joe felt would have developed his ability to trust others were his relationship with his father and mother. Due to the unstable and sometimes abusive nature of these connections, he believed this led to a breakdown in his emotional development. When children feel secure in their attachments to caregivers, they become confident to explore attachments and relationships with others. When the attachment is insecure, it has the opposite effect on the child, both short and long-term (Bowlby, 1973, 1980). Joe's comment (above) reflects the lack of ability he had in establishing connections with people in the wider context of his life. When these social bonds are lacking, it becomes difficult to connect to and care for others and ourselves. So, as Joe struggled to feel wanted, he became distrustful of others and felt it necessary to remain detached to protect himself.

Joe also reflected on the overwhelming sense of powerlessness he felt throughout his younger life.

> At the time I wis consumed wi having power cause I didnae have it. Cause o being powerless as a kid, I became consumed wi having power over stuff. There wis ways that I knew how tae get it so that's whit I started dain. – Joe

Joe and his brother experienced frequent moves, familial issues, problems at school, the loss of his father and physical abuse. These conditions meant he held little agency within his own life. This reflects a lack of capabilities as Nussbaum (2011) asserts that the CA supports people to agentically select which functionings to pursue and which to leave behind. A traceable lack of options (functionings) and power in a person's life therefore means they do not possess these capabilities in the first place. Joe's options were limited from the outset as his unstable formative years indicate. As he grew older and the disadvantages worsened, so his sphere of options became even more restricted. This contributed to his adaptive preferences or the manner in which people adapt their lives to the way of life they know and the options that are open to them (Nussbaum, 2000). Apart from staying with his grandparents, there appeared to be little intervention in Joe's younger life that improved either his capability set or his options to select from going forward. A reaction against this was his attempt to grasp some power wherever he could and his comment *"that's whit I started dain"* indicates that once he began this process of behaviour, he felt it was the only tangible path for him to pursue.

Ongoing capability damage from teenage into early adult life is present in other participants' narratives.

> I don't find it easy tae build relationships wi people or like open up. I think that's cause I've always moved an there wis always people comin in an oot ma life…like a lot o big people in ma life have came an went. – Craig

> I jist probably thought I wis useless an no worth havin decent stuff or whitever. I probably thought I wisnae worth havin a decent life. – John

> I can speak tae people like friendly an that an I get on wi maist people but I wouldnae really speak aboot feelings or things like that. – Alec

Nussbaum (2011) argues that it is the responsibility of the state to make up for capability deficiency in order to place individuals on an equal footing with those who are more advantaged. Yet, the disadvantages that many participants were born into meant a continued shortfall to their capability set that frequently went unadjusted by state provisions. This resulted in a capability deficiency that participants were unable to recover from as life progressed. Many suffered from dynamic clustering of disadvantages accumulated over time and reproduced over generations. The more these disadvantages compound, the more challenging it is for individuals to improve their position, particularly without comprehensive intervention (Wolff & De-Shalit, 2007) Like Joe, these descriptions reflect the long-term effects that early capability limitation can have on a person's wellbeing. Craig felt that his ability to develop stable social bonds was not supported, leaving him with difficulties trusting others. Alec suffered similar damage to his emotional development as he struggled to communicate with others about how he felt. This capacity had not been developed in him by caregivers, making it harder to process what was happening to him or to verbalise requests for support when needed. This led Alec to internalise his emotional turmoil, only finding relief when he began to experiment with substances. John verbalised damaged capabilities that connect to emotional and physical wellbeing. The continued capability restriction he lived within adapted his thinking to believe he was not worthy of a good life. This was compounded by John's lack of accommodation and substance abuse problems, reducing his daily life to a focus on mere survival.

This section reflects the ongoing and worsening of disadvantages and capability restriction for participants as they moved into adult life with some suffering with these restrictions from childhood. The compounding of these issues occurred because sufficient support and service access was not available, meaning in most contexts these problems failed to improve or worsened. Added to this were cultural factors, such as substance use, that also created further disadvantage and capability damage. Many participants verbalised that using substances provided relief from ongoing issues, so it became a type of support structure when a state provided one was lacking. This continuation of capability damage and disadvantage

permeates all sections of participants' lives by this stage and will be looked at throughout each section that follows.

7.3 Increased Offending

The regularity and seriousness of offences increased for most participants during this time, and custodial sentences began to occur. Due to increased violent behaviour, Joe was excluded from two secondary schools by the end of second year. At this point he was placed in a residential school but this environment did not support him as intended, and his behaviour worsened. Outside he was descending deeper into his gang lifestyle and was beginning to disappear from both school and home for weeks at a time. Joe attended the residential school for six months before he was given his first custodial sentence. When discussing his move towards offending, Joe also described a more positive route he may have taken had his parents encouraged his academic abilities.

> It would have given me direction an gied me something tae focus on as well cause obviously I didnae know how tae grow up an be an adult. I wis jist too busy living this party life where every day just ran intae the next…it wis jist one big waste. – Joe

The limiting of Joe's educational attainment restricted his capability of senses, imagination and thought. His comment that *"I didnae know how tae grow up an be an adult"* indicates Joe's inability to think in a fully informed manner which is an inherent skill of functioning within this capability. Joe verbalised a connection between the powerlessness he felt during his formative years and his attraction to regaining this through physical violence. The instability of his parent's lives meant they offered him unstable guidance when growing up. Joe took direction from his father as and when he could, but this memory infers that it affected his behaviours in a negative manner and encouraged his fascination with fighting. His capability of practical reason was also affected as the fulfilment of this particular capability dictates that a person is able to critically engage with and plan one's own life (Nussbaum, 2000). Instead, Joe felt he did not know how to grow up and find his own way in life and so just adapted into the option open to him which was *"living a party life"*.

At points throughout interview, Joe reflected on the development of his offending behaviour. He described a movement towards this as he disengaged further from school.

> Every day wis different but the same – drinking, smoking hash, goin wi lassies, constant fightin wi other schemes, selling stuff, no tae any great extent but tae like school kids an stuff. But I wis trying tae think of how tae advance it. I wis constantly focused on avenging stuff. That wis a huge part o me at one point. - Joe

By this point Joe became more involved in the activities described in this comment. He had moved towards his offending identity and was *"trying tae think of how tae advance it"* and away from more stabilising areas of his life such as school. He reflected further on why this path took precedence during this period of his life.

> The way ma thinking was at the time wis that I wis consumed wi having power cause I didnae have it. Cause o being powerless as a kid I then became consumed wi having power over stuff…Naebody told me I could dae something wi education in ma life. – Joe

Joe made the connection between his spiralling behavioural problems and his pursuit of agency. Nussbaum (2000) asserts that through functioning within the capability of practical reason, an individual should develop their ability to critically reflect and plan their own life in an autonomous manner. For children, she explains this is achieved, in part, through attendance of compulsory education until they have developed the capabilities that are central in enabling them to have and make informed and autonomous choices. For many of the participants, including Joe, remaining in school was not a straightforward choice or action. As previously discussed, the instability in participants' lives often meant school could not be prioritized and was eventually disengaged from. This is another example of options being adapted to a reduced state as school engagement became unfeasible for many. The repercussions of this (as previously discussed) is that less education and skills development generally result in a lowered capability set and options for participants. For Joe, his unstable

home life and his feelings of abject powerlessness were overwhelming, meaning he had little focus left for the classroom.

A lack of role model(s) was discussed by Joe throughout his interviews. He was a bright student in primary school but the lack of guidance he received meant he never felt encouraged to use these skills to shape his future.

> Obviously, kids seek approval an positive reinforcement and nurture, but the only nurture I wis getting wis ootside the hoose. So the mair o this nuture I wis getting ootside the hoos, the mair I wis allowing maself tae be nurtured. I mean I wis being nurtured by who I wis socialising wi an getting intae trouble wi. – Joe

> I think havin nae power as a kid, whit I mean is jist aw these things happening tae you and you have nae power tae stop it so it jist turned me intae a pure maniac. – Joe

> A kid should look up tae his father, well a boy anyway, but I didnae ever once look up tae ma dad. Aw ma role models were people that were uber assertive, people you didnae want tae cross an I prided maself in the fact that I could be like that someday. But they wernae jist violent. They always had beautiful women and money an I thought that I wanted a bit o that. – Joe

As previously discussed, when role models are lacking in the traditional areas, young people may look for them elsewhere. Joe keenly felt the lack of guidance from his father, describing how he looked for strong male role models amongst his older peer group. He looked up to them in a way that was different to how he viewed his father, so he adopted their guidance instead. Pursuit of education was not verbalised as an option for Joe and he followed the only logical path that he saw open to him. Through this he hoped to gain the agency and power his childhood had lacked by emulating his peers' lifestyles.

Other participants verbalised similar outside influences on their early offending.

> The people I wis looking up tae, it wisnae the sort of people I should hiv been looking up tae an I realise that now…Basically I wis looking at the wrong role models. – Conor

> I basically got flung oot the children's home intae a bail hostel wi guys that were a lot older than me an a lot mair streetwise and they ended up showing me how to steal cars an that. – John

> Even noo I think I still look up tae the wrong people but see when you're young you jist want tae have the motor an the best o gear. I jist wanted tae be a drug dealer. That wis my goal. – Ross

These comments described structural and personal constraints that led participants to enact agency in a particular way, often culminating in violence and offending. Each one of these participants verbalised the need for positive guidance, but instead they could only connect with more negative versions of this. Like Joe, both Conor and Ross sourced their nurture from role models that directed them towards offending behaviours. For John to survive the challenges of living in a homeless unit he had to take guidance from those around him who were more 'streetwise'. This also narrowed his options into criminal behaviour in order to make money.

A further restriction on agency occurs when life is or has become a constant struggle to satisfy the basic needs of survival, such as sourcing food, shelter and warmth. The continual battle to survive removes any space to engage with wants and desires that are not a basic need. The quest to direct and plan one's life is a luxury not afforded in such conditions. Past research indicates that poverty has psychological as well as physical dimensions such as powerlessness, voicelessness, dependency and a lack of affiliation (Narayan et al., 2000). The lower placed in the social hierarchy, the less likely an individual is to have full control over their life and opportunities for full social participation. Research has indicated this can

have a negative effect on a person's health and longevity, both physically and psychologically. The more weakened the social bonds, the more likely the person is to be prevented from being properly educated or have any great control over their environment (both personal and political) (Marmot, 2005). Vivid descriptions of these types of agency restrictions emerged from the participants' narratives. Lack of state support and intervention also contributed to an increase in offending behaviour which will now be looked at in detail.

7.4 State Intervention

Joe, like many of the other participants, had been involved with state interventions from a young age. He appeared at a few Children's Panel hearings and interacted with social workers at various points, often feeling unsupported by these agencies.

> I've no been tae a lot o Children's Panels, but I've had a lot o social work interaction in o ma life. I don't really have a high regard for a lot o them cause I think a lot of them are incompetent… when I lived wi ma mum I told them whit wis goin an I'd be completely covered wi purple stripes, black eye's, lumps in ma heid, but I'd still get taken back there. – Joe

Joe would have benefitted from supportive and robust interventions at various points in his childhood but this did not happen. He described the ongoing trauma he suffered from being placed back in his mother's care by social services when there was obvious evidence of physical abuse. This resulted in Joe developing a distrust of these services that he struggles to overcome even now. Joe's previous description of his worsening behaviour when placed in a residential school is another example of ineffectual state intervention in his life. Instead of addressing the underlying reasons to his worsening aggression, he was instead moved from school to school. This increased his feelings of isolation and powerlessness, exacerbating his aggressive behaviour.

The issue of unsupportive intervention is evident in other participants' narratives.

Do you understand why you were placed into care?

To be honest…no really naw…we wernae getting told answers either which wis probably just makin me worse…and I wis jist running away…and then you have tae go tae Children's Panel's every 6 months an they used tae say 'you cannae go hame the noo' an I didnae like them sayin that so I got intae more trouble– Alec

They (social workers) didnae really listen tae whit we had tae say and whit we were goin through. Naw, they'd rather listen tae ma dad fir some reason. An me and my brother were sort o punished and sent away tae a residential school, taken intae care an aw that. I felt that wis wrong. I felt the social workers should hiv helped me function in a normal school instead o sending me away. I felt that social workers kind of spoiled ma life. – Scott

We had a social worker but ma mum told me aw the right things tae say tae them so on the surface it looked like a good family. Me an ma sister even went intae care at one point. I wis 12 when that happened. I felt they (the social workers) wernae really that involved in ma life. – Carol

Aye it wis the social work that put me in St Johns. I had tae go tae the Children's Panel an they put me doon as 'an unruly' an ma dad couldnae control me. An he couldnae. I jist wouldnae listen tae him. – Dean

These extracts are from earlier sections of participants' lives but are important when tracing a link between a lack of capabilities and ineffectual intervention and support (predominantly by the state in these cases). Throughout interview, Alec provided vivid descriptions of the difficulties and instabilities he faced growing up in the care system. He felt that any support he had in his life had been damaged when he was isolated from his mother and siblings. His behaviour worsened because of this emotional trauma and instead of supporting him through this upsetting period, state interventions punished him for his reactionary conduct. When he tried to discuss how he felt during Children's Panel meetings he felt it was swept aside without explanation. The intervention that the state enacted upon his life did not improve

Alec's situation either in the short or long-term and from that point onwards he felt alone. Scott told a similar story of feeling that he and his brother were punished for his father's alcoholism and abusive behaviour. While social services may have believed that placing them in a residential school was for their protection, what Scott desperately wanted was for his father's issues to be addressed so life at home could improve and they could stay in mainstream school. In Carol and Dean's situation, their families were unable to act as support due to their own challenges (this is again evidence of inter-generational disadvantage and capability restriction, particularly in Carol's case). Again, state intervention came in the form of social workers and children's hearings, and both described these as negative experiences.

These (and other) participant descriptions of limited support and intervention reflect the further restrictions placed on their capability attainment and functioning. Nussbaum (2001, 2006, 2011) argues that society has a responsibility to provide and promote crucial good that will develop a set of opportunities for their citizens (substantial freedoms). Individuals would then choose which of these opportunities to pursue and in what ways (functionings). What can be seen from these accounts is that neither of these states were being developed for participants. In a similar manner to dynamic disadvantage (Wolff & De-Shalit, 2013), restricted capabilities also became inter-generational. One is inherently linked to the other and this continued for participants from adolescence into adulthood. Comprehensive support was not provided from either familial and/or state sources. Unstable family units struggled to grasp capabilities for themselves and were thus unable to develop this for their offspring. Many participants testified that state intervention was sporadic and often felt like punishment rather than support. Root causes of capability restriction were not being addressed and so the problem continued and compounded.

The interventions that were intended to help participants instead appeared to have been largely ineffectual in their purpose. These should have assisted in raising participants' capability sets but based on these descriptions, it is obvious this was not happening. Instead, capability restriction continued and worsened as participants moved into early offending behaviours. State interventions could have generated further opportunities for participants at a pivotal point in their lives. Instead, most reported these types of interventions to have been more punitive on their development and wellbeing. A restriction in capabilities continued

and this only worsened as participants began to receive custodial sentences which I shall now discuss.

7.5 Early Sentences

Three-quarters of those interviewed had spent time in prison by late teens or early twenties. The previous chapter discussed the effect that disengaging from school had on their lives. Most reported increased offending behaviour and substance use at this point, the latter playing a central role in many participants' interactions with the criminal justice system. Joe was arrested on a number of occasions when he was a young teenager. These were mainly for lower level offences such as breach of the peace.

> The polis knew whit I wis dain. They were coming tae ma hoose an telling ma gran shit an I wis pure pleased, like they were validatin me an ma position in the community. It wisnae a deterrent. I encouraged it I think. It wis mental. I wanted it (a reputation) an I would have done anything tae get it because it wis obviously the reversal o whit I had before. I think cause o the powerlessness o ma childhood up until then, I wis consumed wi the exact opposite. – Joe

This description connects to a variety of threads. Firstly, the ineffectuality of intervention from the police is evident. By this point Joe did not care about his increasing interaction with the law and it appeared to encourage rather than deter him. He described that his preoccupation with developing his reputation was due to being largely ignored and neglected by his parents and peers. He felt as if he was gaining control through notoriety in a life that had previously been consumed with others controlling him. It is logical that he would pursue this power once he began to attain it. His behaviour escalated, and he received his first custodial sentence at age 15. He was sentenced to four years for violence and was placed in a secure unit due to his age. At 16 he was moved to HMYOI Polmont and he provided a vivid description of his experiences there.

> Polmont wis jist like a macrocosm o it aw. You're either one or the other in there – a predator or a victim. There wis nae grey area. So that wis worse. The screws were constantly goin oot their way tae get on ma case…There wis hunners o shit, like taking me doon the digger (solitary) aw the time. – Joe

> Is jist aw these things happening tae you and you have nae power tae stop it so it jist turned me intae a pure maniac. I jist saw maself goin doon that road o criminality…Prison creates networking if you want tae further your contacts…It wisnae until I got this sentence that I thought fuck this man! – Joe

For Joe, and others, their first prison sentence was the culmination of many criminal justice interventions throughout their young lives, mostly in the form of social workers, children's panel, care, residential school and secure units. These made little difference to the instability and restricted capabilities that plagued participants. Early sentences appear to have been no different as Joe vividly described custody as another environment where power was taken from him. The officers dominated his daily life in Polmont, trying to control his behaviour through punishment. Joe reacted against this loss of power as he did when he was younger, often being placed in solitary as a consequence. At this point he saw prison as a way to strengthen his reputation and advance his criminal contacts, later describing this preoccupation with advancement as a *"full time job"*. Just as he mentioned that he saw himself going down that path, powerless to halt it, Joe also appeared to have internalised that life as his occupation. Like other participants at this stage, Joe may also have realised that the legitimate paths of employment or further study were not necessarily open to him, so he made the choice to try and 'succeed' on the only path he felt was available. It was only during his current sentence that Joe began to use the facilities in prison to his advantage. This will be looked at in a later section.

Joe had to adapt to his new surroundings in prison. His field had changed, both socially and environmentally. An individual's practices are a result of their relationship between their habitus and their field. As already discussed, Bourdieu (1984, 2010) defined habitus as an individual's tastes, practices and works that are developed through their familial and cultural roots. A person's field is the competitive game or area of struggles in which they, through time, develop and change their abilities to maximize their position. A person's habitus cannot

be understood on its own as it is grounded and developed through the field they are situated in (Bourdieu, 1986, 1994). During his first custodial sentence, Joe encountered a change in his field and he reacted to this by negotiating his place within it while at the same time renegotiating his habitus. To survive he commented that *"you're either one or the other in there – a predator or a victim"* meaning he felt he had to make the decision early on to become the stronger of these two options in order to get through his sentence. Joe was now in an enclosed environment that provided him with the ability to further his contacts and develop his criminal identity. As our identity develops through life, our memberships of organisations (both concrete and socially constructed) all contribute to the development and diversity of our identity (Jenkins, 2008). Joe essentially adapted to his new field in order to develop his habitus in a way that he felt could benefit him on the restricted route he was going down.

Other participants report similar experiences of their first or early sentences. They commonly described that prison did not have enough of an impact to deter them from committing crime or receiving another sentence.

> Prison obviously wisnae that big a deterrent cause it wisnae as bad as I thought it wis gonnae be. I learned that it wisnae that bad that I wouldnae go oot an dae the same shit again. – Nicole

> Well I wis back in the YO's again so it wis the same people but I wis in a different hall this time. But it wis pretty much the exact same an it had nae affect at aw. I maybe came oot with a bit mair of an attitude. – Ross

> But see when I got the jail the first time I thought it wis brilliant. I wis 16 an I walked intae recreation and it wis full o people that I knew, older people an they bought me tobacco an I thought 'this is brilliant…an easy'. But I still wanted oot. – Conor

The reality behind these comments is not that prison was a positive environment. Individuals in custody are deprived of their freedom both daily and in a wider sense as they are dominated by the restrictions of the regime. There is widespread violence, substance abuse and bullying. Connections with family and friends are weakened and sometimes irreparably broken while employment and housing can be placed in jeopardy. Nonetheless, what these comments demonstrated is that participants felt their lives either improved in prison or stayed the same. This is another strong indicator of the severity of capability restriction and disadvantage in participants' lives: being placed in a custodial environment as restrictive as prison made no real difference to them. Indeed, later sections will demonstrate that, many of the participants felt it eventually helped improve their lives in some areas. Participants were also adapting to their new field, described in a variety of attitudes and responses. Nicole described it in an almost indifferent manner. It was survivable so she knew she would cope if she had to return in the future. Ross felt it worsened his attitude rather than improved it. Conor described wanting to be out but at the same time being quite positive about the benefits he got from being in custody. Like Joe, each participant's habitus was influenced and modified in order to survive their new field.

For those participants who spent time in the care system, they met some familiar faces when placed in prison.

> Well in the homes it wis jist boys…some o them are even in the jail tae this day an hiv followed the same sort o path as me. I remember when I first got the jail I wis worried like 'ppfft I'm in the jail' but when you're in you see hunners o people you were in homes wi, so I settled in kind o okay. – Alec

> Like I couldnae actually believe how many o them were in there that I wis actually in St John's (care home) wi…when I went intae one o the wings in Polmont, there wis like 18 o them in it. It wis like the full unit and I knew hunners o people in it. - Dean

> Half the people from ma residential school are in the jail with me the noo. – Scott

The link between the care and prison system is not a new one. As previously mentioned, 24 per cent of the prison population in the UK reported having spent time in care as a child (this rises to 31 per cent for women). This is compared to only two per cent in the general population (Bromley Briefings, 2019). Meeting peers they had shared the care experience with meant participants found their early experience of prison less intimidating. This meant a lesser change to their field as, being surrounded by familiar people, participants' social bonds were much the same. While this would have been some form of comfort in an otherwise intimidating experience, what is notable is the connecting path into prison for those who were care experienced. This is another strong indicator of state intervention doing little to improve the situation for those it is designed to help. Alec in particular provided a vivid description of growing up in homes that did not address his needs. He left care as soon as he turned 16 with no qualifications and a substance use problem that he was funding through stealing. With such drastically limited options, it is sadly unsurprising that he ended up in custody a mere two weeks later.

Other aspects of participants' lives were negatively affected during early sentences. While many were already using substances, it worsened at this point.

> When I first went tae Polmont they started bringin in that drug testing an cause valium an hash an that stay in your system fir 30 days then people started takin heroin cause it's only in yir system fir two/three days max. I think that's why a lot of people started takin heroin in the YOs. – Dean

> First time I took heroin I wis 16 years old an it wis in jail. I didnae realise whit a habit wis and I kind o left the jail wi a habit and it kicked off quite quick frae there. – Alec

> Drugs is another thing I've learned in prison. I know I started cannabis in the hostel but I became involved with other drugs like speed, acid, ecstasy – I started all that in the jail. – Scott

Increased drug use was due to a number of factors: access; coping mechanism; boredom and for some participants it eventually led to dependency. As discussed in the previous chapter, substance misuse caused further damage to capability attainment for many participants. This is compounded by time in prison, meaning individuals' capabilities were more restricted upon release. None of the participants described encountering any support for these problems in Polmont. That is not to say that such services were not present, but the inference was that it was not widely available or engaged with. More recently, participants described situations where they have had to wait for long periods before they could access the drug and alcohol support services they so badly need. Like the care system, the prison service was not successfully addressing the issues and behaviours that had led participants to be there. Instead, descriptions indicate that early experiences of time inside prison both compounded these problems and created new ones (particularly drug use) that would lead to further incarceration.

Problems also arose for participants both within themselves and in connection to how they were received by wider society.

> I remember worrying that I'd never been in the jail before but it wis full o boys that I knew frae other homes so I kind of fitted in…I kind of knew that I'd end up in jail frae the homes and that was the road that I chose… It wis inevitable. – Alec

> Once I got the jail the first time there wis a feelin o 'oh well I've got a criminal record noo' so you've crossed the Rubicon sort of thing. It made it easier tae justify daein somethin in the future. – Liam

> I think when I wis younger I wisnae really given a chance an when I wis somebody would tell them I'd been in the jail. The mair the criminal records mounted up I knew that naebody would really gie me a chance. – Nicole

As reflected in these extracts, some participants described a tragic resignation to the inevitability of prison appearing in their future. Once this had occurred, they felt defeat on a deeper level. What participants had expected to happen had come to pass but it also moved them further away from the likelihood of living within the law in the future. Many participants felt it was even less likely they would be given a chance now they had an adult criminal record with Liam commenting that this made it easier to justify committing more crime in the future. In a wider context these descriptions reflect further restriction of options for a group that had a very limited set in the first place and the resignation and defeat of participants is palpable in these comments. This restriction in options also reflects the same effect on participants' capabilities and agency. The CA focuses on choice or freedoms, with Nussbaum arguing that the central good that societies and governments should be promoting for their inhabitants is a set of opportunities, or 'substantial freedoms'. People may then choose how they wish to exercise these freedoms in action, if at all. Overall, the approach commits itself to respect people's self-determination and the power that this holds (Nussbaum, 2011). My research narratives and particularly the comments above reflect the fact that neither these freedoms or the ability to self-determine were present for participants. The restrictions in their lives accumulated as influences such as offending, and substance use became more dominant. Participants described the mounting challenges they faced once repeat offending and custodial sentences became a fixture in their lives.

It jist increased by then and then I started getting the jail at that point, jist short sentences, like 6 months. And then it wis jist a revolving door frae then. – Calum

Aye, I'd get oot, work, an it would only last fir aboot six weeks an then I'm back in. I'm never oot fir any longer than six weeks. I've been stuck in that cycle fir aboot two or three-year noo. – Conor

I jist didnae think aboot the consequences. No, I never thought I would end up in the jail. But then you get the jail and then it's jist gone in a circle. – Ross

Participants had effectively been funnelled down the road of offending which was now their main, and sometimes only option for survival. Self-determination is reliant on healthy self-

reflection which, in turn, can only occur effectively when one is not impeded by interfering conditions. These can be inflicted upon a person by another in the form of negative and abusive behaviours such as coercion or manipulation or can come from wider influences such as lack of institutional support or the debilitating restrictions that comes from addiction. The combination of these in participants' lives resulted in deprivation in their ability to self-reflect and self-determine their paths. Interventions had been numerous for many participants by this point but unfortunately made no major impact to improve their situations. Once this 'revolving door' of prison began, it became increasingly challenging for individuals to move away from. This issue shall be returned to at later points.

How participants extract positivity from their time in prison will also be looked at in greater detail in the following section and chapter. The comments in this section are firstly significant in showing how participants adapted to their early custodial sentences. They denote a coping mechanism whereby they extracted the positive from a negative experience – they were gaining secure accommodation and regular meals. However, as already touched upon in previous chapters, this can also indicate that participants were displaying adaptive preferences, by which people accustom their desires in line with the life they know and the options open to them (Nussbaum, 2000). As discussed above, these options were very limited for participants, meaning adapting their preferences was an important component of their personal endurance. However, it must be stressed that this is not a positive state and its existence is further indication of severely damaged capabilities, both inside and outside the prison. It is also a sharp reminder of the disadvantaged lives participants suffered from and the failure of state services and interventions to improve these states of being. If a participant's wellbeing improved by being incarcerated (be that actual or perceived), then the level of what they were given access to in the wider community and political sphere should have been questioned and improved. If not, then capability attainment and desistance would and will continue to remain out of participants' grasp.

7.6 Prison Now

Nearly all of those interviewed for this research began offending and receiving custodial sentences by late teens/early twenties. Since then, most have experienced regular returns to prison for varied sentence lengths. For some participants this has increased incrementally,

either serving life by instalments or eventually received in a life sentence due to escalation in the seriousness of offences committed. A smaller number of the interviewees have only received short term-sentences (four years or less) but with regular occurrence. There are two exceptions to this – Simon and Craig – both of whom received a life sentence for their first offence. Many participants have dealt with the effects of incarceration from an early age and by now it has become integrated into their lives and identity. The regularity with which these individuals return to prison has meant they must cope with the ongoing disruption and instability this creates. Any headway that is made with regard to employment, housing and social bonding is weakened and often broken when they are returned to custody. Participants who received long-term or life-sentences for their first or early offences were, in some respects, thrown into deeper waters with their first experience of prison. They had to deal both with becoming accustomed to life inside and learn to cope with the emotional and psychological enormity that is a life sentence. This variety of experience in participants' lives has produced rich and detailed accounts of prison in their narratives. What united each participant at the point of research was the motivation they displayed to use their time inside to improve things for themselves rather than simply serve their time in the system. The rest of this chapter will look at participants' current experiences of prison and how this has changed from their earliest sentences.

At the time of interview, Joe was nearing the end of an eight-year sentence. He felt his most recent time in prison changed how he viewed himself, as well as his intentions and plans for the future. Joe was always aware that he had academic talents, having been told this on many occasions by teachers in school. But, the instability in the rest of his life damaged his ability to pursue this path when he was younger. Even though Joe was placed in both secure and YO institutions, he did not engage with the education on offer until he began his current sentence. When he finally did re-enter the classroom, the effects on him have been profound.

> I started it (education) in Barlinnie and I wis struck wi this unquenchable thirst tae find stuff oot. I wis constantly questioning everything. It's become an addiction. It's the best thing I've got tae get away frae crime…an it' something that I'm passionate aboot cause the mair you know the mair you can rethink things. Like people think the shit I got up tae wis ma personality but I dinnae think it wis. I think it wis everything else that wis goin on aroond aboot and that

wis ma way o showing whit I thought aboot it. But in reality, I wis seriously hurt.
– Joe

Joe has never had a notable issue with substance use. Instead he described his addiction when he was younger as fighting and the adrenalin and control this created for him. It provided him with the power that was lacking in the rest of his life. Once back in the classroom, these associated emotions shifted on to learning. He described it in similar terms and it is clear he has regained a certain amount of agency within his own life through education. Joe touched upon the link between education and desistance for him and he knows this is the most constructive path to allow him a prison free future. Where once he felt his skills were within his criminal profile, he now believes his academic abilities were his greatest strength all along. Even though he was still in prison when interviewed, Joe's field (and therefore his habitus) had shifted within it. He had accessed different aspects and services of the prison, so his social perspective had changed. This demonstrates that an individual's surroundings do not necessarily need to change drastically for their field and habitus to alter. He also touched upon his identity development and was reflective about the connections between his previous offending behaviours and the pursuit for control in his younger life. He explained that lack of support damaged his ability to pursue his academic abilities and contributed to the aspects of his identity that led to violent offending. Joe does not view these actions as his inherent personality, but rather a reaction against the chaos surrounding him. He then discussed how this has changed and why he feels his interaction with education has improved.

Well I have organised chaos in here, but ma goals are different noo and I see maself differently. I don't see maself as part of a gang, I don't see maself as a criminal, I don't see maself as a notorious figure. – Joe

I think I'm a much better person. I don't rush tae judgement and conclusions. Everything that happens tae me in life, I analyse every single response that could have made that person dae that an then think aboot whit's the best way tae deal wi it. So better thinking skills…an I read a lot mair academic stuff noo. – Joe

Joe explained that life felt calmer for him, both within himself and the wider context. Prison may have contributed to this, but it is not, nor should it be utilised as the ideal intervention to address issues that begin earlier in life. The very fact that Joe and other participants can trace an improvement in their lives, no matter how small, from interaction with services in prison demonstrates the power state intervention could have had in their earlier lives had it been more comprehensive and meaningful. What was notable was Joe's change in identity and thought processes as he made an obvious move away from his previously described criminal identity and the social bonds that were connected to this. These are both essential parts in the desistance process. In particular, primary desistance relates to behaviour and at the point of interview Joe no longer interacted with offending, but also expressed no intention to return to this, either through necessity or choice. Instead, he viewed his future path as living within the law.

As mentioned earlier in this thesis, secondary desistance in linked to a shift in identity or rather that one no longer sees oneself as a criminal (Maruna and Farrall, 2004). Our identity is largely socially constructed and negotiated, meaning that in order for this change to be secured on a long-term basis, it depends on both how we see ourselves and how we are viewed by others. Desistance is both a personal and political process and one that is inextricably linked with wider social bonds (McNeill and Schinkel, 2007). Joe no longer viewed himself as a criminal and the notoriety he had been committed to nurturing when he was younger had instead shifted on to the development of his academic identity. However, the more problematic layer of this is how others view him. Imprisonment, by its very nature, weakens the social bonds that are so integral to resettlement and identity change acceptance (McNeill and Schinkel, 2007). Combine this with the stigma that is attached to those who spend time in prison and this creates a picture of the inherent perceptions and social structures that work against successful desistance. Joe has had a challenging enough journey to see himself in a more positive context but getting wider society to see him this way will be an even greater struggle.

Joe's comments also indicated an improvement in his capability set due to his interaction with learning. As already discussed, education underpins Nussbaum's list of ten and is used as a central tool in order to attain capabilities in the first instance, then an individual can choose how and when to function within them (Nussbaum, 2011). Education and skills-

development opens up the possibility of generating other opportunities. This can be seen clearly in Joe's journey with education – his natural ability (basic capability) for reading, writing and general learning has been nurtured through his recent studies into developed academic skills of research, analysis and reporting (internal capability). It is hoped that Joe's nurtured academic abilities are the key to successful desistance for him and a stable future outside prison. His success in education shows an improvement in his capability of senses, imagination and thought – he described an improved capacity to reason, think and express himself. Joe is now an articulate adult which is a significant step forward from the child that struggled to communicate and used aggressive and violent behaviour as a manner of venting his frustrations. A marked difference in Joe's thought processes reflected an improvement in his capability of emotions. Nussbaum (2000) outlines that in order for this capability to be achieved, one must not have their emotional development blighted by fear or anxiety, as Joe's was when he was a child. Again, the result of this lack of emotional nurture was reactionary and aggressive behaviour. He commented (above) that he could now engage with his thoughts and shape his reactions around this, taking into consideration the consequences of his actions. Joe believed these capabilities were developed through education which has also provided him with long-term goals and aspirations. This indicated a clear improvement in his capability of practical reason as he critically engaged with the planning of his own life throughout his recent sentence. Joe's options when he was younger were very limited due to his lack of capabilities, meaning he followed the only path he felt was open to him, leading him into offending and eventually prison. His educational path and the resulting improvement in capabilities means he felt there were wider pro-social options open to him in the future (namely further study and employment).

Other participants described experiences similar to Joe's whereby life felt more stable in prison where access to services was more comprehensive compared to the provision found in communities.

> I'd been on the homeless fir aboot 6/7 year and they'd jist pit me in temporary accommodation. The Job Centre wisnae payin me the right amount o money an I wisnae able tae make their meetings so I wis gettin sanctions. I wis havin tae live off £6 fir two weeks. I had nae money so I wis havin tae buy drugs tae sell them in order tae keep ma hoose on the go. – Ricki

Ricki's description was not connected to his life within the prison as the following ones are. However, it was a succinct description of the daily lives many participants have when not in prison. Most are stuck in the vicious and destructive cycle of offending due to lack of meaningful intervention and support. Ricki's lack of economic state support left him with virtually no money to live on, forcing him to turn to his only viable, but illegal option to generate income (selling drugs). Ricki's narrative was another example of severe and ongoing capability restriction and also demonstrated how a lack of capability in one area can interconnect with and produce the same effect in others. For example, Nussbaum (2000) describes part of the capability of control over one's environment (material) as meaning that a person should have the right and ability to hold property (both land and movable goods) and should recognise the equal property rights of others. They should also have equal rights in pursuing employment. Ricki's lack of stable long-term accommodation was a restriction of this capability as he was placed in a variety of temporary rather than permanent housing facilities. This caused issues with Ricki's income benefits which had a detrimental effect on a number of his capabilities, for instance bodily health as he could not adequately nourish himself due to lack of money (Nussbaum also outlines that secure housing is a pre-requisite for good bodily health, meaning his homeless status also damaged this capability). The capability of practical reason is central to a person's ability to form a concept of what they consider to be a good life. From this, they can then engage in planning their own future around this concept (Nussbaum, 2000). Ricki's descriptions indicate that his daily existence was unstable and focused on survival rather than any form of flourishing or planning for the future. This resulted in severe damage to his capability of practical reason. Ricki's story is a common one throughout participants' narratives and his description demonstrates that restriction to capability attainment is complex and interconnected. This shows that both disadvantage and capability restriction cluster and compound as wellbeing deteriorates.

From the chaos and instability that many participants have suffered in their communities, daily life in prison has provided various forms of support.

> I got sentenced tae life in the February when I wis 15 and that May I had people
> in the secure unit tellin me tae dae ma exams. I wis like 'whit's the point?' but
> they were like 'this is the start o your new life. This is aw gonnae help you get

oot an have a good life'. So I done them and continued frae there an that wis pretty much it aye. – Craig

Well I've been off heroin fir aboot 18 months, since jist after I came in here. I'm never gonnae take it again. I feel noo that I'm stable, I'm off drugs, I've put weight on so I want tae get healthier. – Conor

I'm working with the personality team an they're showing me how tae control ma emotions, how tae understand why it's aw happening tae me and understand why I'm feeling like this and what I can do tae help it. – Ross

Life here is mair settled. Outside I didnae have anywhere tae live, I had an addiction an ma way o sorting things oot wis jist battering people. At least I get fed an clothed in jail. I cannae drink so I'm healthier in maself and ma mental health is better. Like I'm on the right medication for it noo. – Carol

These comments described various ways in which participants felt they had benefitted from time inside. The emotional and psychological enormity of receiving a life sentence at 15 could have overwhelmed Craig. However, he felt that positive guidance from staff helped him to see that he could turn some of his time in prison into a positive, developing the skills to have a 'good life' after release. Conor's health has improved and he has accessed support and medication to cope with his heroin addiction and mental health issues. Having had anger issues from an early age, Ross has accessed support to help him understand and process his emotions more constructively. Carol described having stability in prison where she has secure accommodation, food and warmth. Like Conor, she has accessed support to help her achieve sobriety. As many of the participants' issues were directly linked to their offending, the intention is that by stabilizing the problems, their likelihood of re-offending will diminish.

These descriptions reflected an improvement in capability set for participants, particularly those linked to securing shelter, sustenance and treatment for health problems. These align

most strongly with an improvement in the capability of bodily health. But, as shall be explored further in the next chapter, this capability improvement (and thus the meeting of basic daily needs) then allowed participants to engage with other services, leading to wider capability improvement, such as education and skills-development. State interventions appeared to be more accessible for some inside prison compared to the community. This could be due to more limited availability in the more socio-economically challenged areas that participants come from. Many reported that connecting with support where they live can be an arduous and often fruitless process. A lack of fixed address if participants are in temporary accommodation can further complicate the process of accessing health services and claiming social support. However, prison is not nor should be viewed as a solution to these complex problems. The environment is severely challenging, and incarceration can cause and exacerbate various problems and weaken bonds with family and loved ones. If housing and employment are both stable, these too can be compromised and lost when serving a sentence, causing further set-backs in lives that are already disadvantaged. For every positive comment like the ones above, there are just as many unfavourable narratives, showing that prison is not the environment that should be relied upon to address various consequences of disadvantage. These issues and the facilities to tackle them must be improved at national policy level in order create improvements for participants and their wider communities.

7.7 Conclusion

Adulthood sadly brought no great changes or improvement to participants' situations. The capability restrictions and disadvantages that were established in their young lives were still present in this section of their narratives, often in a worsened state due to addiction and time spent in prison. Instead of holding power and direction in their lives as adults, participants continued to display little agency or ability to direct their paths.

Custodial sentences were commonplace for many by late adolescence and early sentences were little deterrent for participants. This is further insight into how challenged their lives were outside prison rather than the ease of life inside. Many participants described how they were provided with food, accommodation and other basic necessities in prison that they struggled to source back in the community. The capability restriction that is evident in all of

the narratives by this stage links to the limited choices (or adaptive preferences) that were open to participants. Joe viewed the new field of the prison as a way to adapt his habitus and further his criminal identity. This may seem aggressive on the surface, but he astutely explained that underneath he was trying to gain some power in his life that he had never experienced in his childhood. Joe felt respected and in control and believed that going further down the path of criminality was the only way to maintain this. Like Joe, many of the other participants felt that crime and prison were the only feasible paths for them to take. Education and employment were either limited or non-existent by adulthood. The paradox is that as participants moved further down the road of offending and prison, their options became even more restricted. At this stage, many participants became stuck in the revolving door of custody, with time inside often bringing some welcome stability to their ever-increasing issues on the outside. Addiction continued to be one of the main damagers to wellbeing and capability attainment and was the root cause of offending for many participants. Life was about daily survival and nothing more, with many interpreting this severe disadvantage to mean they were not worthy of a good and flourishing life. There was sadly little hope or positives to be found in this section of participants' stories.

Hope and progress tentatively emerged at the end of this section when participants began to discuss their most recent experiences of prison. Many have been able to access and utilise support that had been lacking in their lives and were beginning to gain some stability in their mental health and addiction problems. This has produced the space that many needed to begin engaging with what they would like their future to look like, leading them to areas such as education and job training. Participants' experiences of this and their connected hopes for desistance are a central focus of the research and will be looked at in more detail in my final data chapter.

Chapter Eight

Prison, Education and Desistance

8.1 Introduction

This research encompassed participants that predominantly engaged with education during their sentence as well as a smaller number that spent time in various prison work sheds. This focus helped to create a picture of the kinds of personal development that happens in a variety of settings throughout the estate. Participants were also encouraged to describe other services they had engaged with that had played a part in developing their abilities. These included health services, addiction support, chaplaincy and a variety of other organisations. This research therefore utilises the term 'education' to include various settings and services that foster personal development within a custodial setting. The most prominent of these was classroom-based learning, but included other environments. This final section will look at the various ways in which learning in prison helped to develop participants' capabilities and contributed to their hopes and plans for a future free from offending.

By its inherent nature, imprisonment does not naturally fit with the ethos of either the CA or theories of desistance. For example, incarceration damages the capability of affiliation because social bonds, both personally and societally, are weakened by spending time in custody, particularly for those serving long-term sentences. A custodial sentence can also restrict a person's emotional capability as their attachments to people other than themselves (such as partners and children) is weakened from separation. With regard to desistance, imprisonment, by its very nature, is an inherently problematic context in which to support and seek this process (McNeill and Schinkel, 2016). Incarceration denies a person responsibility and can delay maturation, particularly when custodial sentences occur from an early age (Liebling and Maruna, 2005). It tends to seal negative identities rather than support the development of positive ones. The routines of 'purposeful activity' (such as education and employment) that are central to the SPS ethos are detached from the same type of activities on the outside. These need to have more direct replication and links with the same services in the community for them to play a meaningful contribution towards the desistance process (Joliffe and Hedderman, 2012).

A number of research studies have argued that incarceration can play a positive role in the narratives in those who have successfully desisted. It can provide the 'hook for change' that Joe mentioned when discussing the discovery of his academic identity in prison (Giordano et al., 2002). The time that individuals in custody have at their disposal can provide the opportunity to re-asses who they are, where their life is at that point and who they would like it be in the future (Aresti et al., 2010). However, my research was positioned pre-release and so care had to be taken in making assumptions that the progress made in prison could be sustained by every participant once back in their communities. The lack of continuity in community-based support services coupled with the personal difficulties one can face with resettling, makes desistance even more challenging. The presence of hope and positive intentions could have contributed to each participant's commitment to desistance at the point of interview. While these feelings are motivators towards discovering the agency that is central to capability development and desistance, it also had to be viewed within the context of the prison setting. Here many testified to engaging with much-needed support services to address their specific issues. But, when these support systems are weakened or do not exist on the outside, the likelihood of capability development and desistance becomes limited once again. Prison can provide access to certain support structures, but these are starkly contrasted with what incarceration damages and removes from a person's life. Those who manage to begin desistance within the prison walls do so in spite of incarceration, not because of it.

8.1 Benefits of Education

Education and personal development have, in more recent years, become central to the rehabilitation services within UK prisons. The SPS Learning and Skills Strategy (2016) outlined plans for prison education up to 2021. The learning and skills provisions are defined as person-centred, ensuring the comprehensive access and delivery of all levels from basic skills up to degree level (through The Open University). It relies on both project-based learning and the creative arts to ensure broad learner engagement. Like the participants involved in this research, a large amount of those within the prison estate have had negative past experiences with school and so can be understandably wary of engaging with learning again. The education provision adheres to the four main principles of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE, Scottish Government, 2008) that aims to use education to produce

'successful learners; confident individuals; effective contributors; responsible citizens.' Whilst improved basic skills and qualifications are a central aim, the principles of both the SPS strategy and CfE are also linked to increasing self-esteem, employability, and nurturing improved familial, peer and community relationships for release (SPS Learning and Skills Strategy, 2016). For many in the prison system, educational under-achievement has been the norm, whether that is due to learning and behavioural issues, outside factors that stunted engagement or both (as discussed in previous chapters). Currently, 47 per cent of the working age prison population have no qualifications compared to 15 per cent in the general population (Bromley Briefings, 2019). Due to this, the value of achieving academic success should not be underestimated, particularly when those in prison are often viewed as failures by wider society. Just as significant is the space provided within the education and training facilities. By default, being within the prison system, all facilities are permeated by discourses of security, discipline and power displayed through the presence of security-trained staff, locks, keys, alarms and rules. But, if services are run in a supportive manner, they can be viewed concurrently as spaces wherein the central concerns are safety, care, mutual respect, and creativity. This allows individuals the encouragement to focus on their personal development (Liebling, 2018). They are more emotionally safe spaces where interactions can be more humane, producing different emotional reactions from elsewhere in the prison. As shall be discussed in this section, this can produce outcomes for individuals that go beyond that which is penal-centric (Warr, 2016).

So how do these policies and spaces connect to capability development? As previously discussed, Nussbaum does not conceptualise education as one of her ten central human capabilities, but she does argue that education permeates them. Access to a decent standard of education is one of the main tools in helping people to achieve the capabilities and is crucial to the overall health and wellbeing of a person, to democracy, social justice and a country's development (Nussbaum, 2000, 2006, 2011).

> People who have received even a basic education have greatly enhanced employment options, chances for political participation, and abilities to interact productively with others in society, on a local, national and even global level. (Nussbaum, 2006, pg 152)

Both Nussbaum (2000) and Sen (1999) outline capabilities and functioning as having both an internal element – such as increased knowledge and skills through education – and external – such as a sufficient amount of money to live on. But individuals should also be aware of the range of possibilities these internal and external resources can have on them depending on their individual ability to convert resources into capabilities (Rubenson and Desjardins, 2009). The CA is where the ethos of skills-development within prison education connects to social justice. The SPS postulate that engaging with learning and work-based training will attempt to make up for skills and personal development deficits that are needed post-release. Research has identified a reduction in recidivism for those who have engaged with prison education (see MacKenzie, 2006; Hurry et al., 2006; Davis et al., 2013; Ellison et al., 2017). Participants in Canadian prison research who interacted with Adult Basic Education (ABE) attested significant personal changes due to their interaction with learning during their sentence. These included better social skills; increased engagement with their own and others' feelings; improved handling of anger issues; increased control over themselves and their lives; and a more positive perception by others (Porporino and Robinson, 1992). These all indicate a connection with improved capabilities and the aims set out by the SPS.

Participants attested to various personal and emotional developments from interacting with education and skills-development. Joe's main motivator throughout his sentence was his engagement with the Learning Centre. Through his time in education he rediscovered and further developed his academic abilities, achieving a wide variety of qualifications, most recently an Honours Degree from The Open University. Education has been the most positive influence on Joe during his sentence and he perceived it to be his greatest chance at a more stable, crime-free future.

> Education shows you different ways o looking at stuff. Like I said before, people are always looking at the way people behave an thinking that's the way they're made but it might just be a situational reaction cause o stuff that's goin on in their life. It's no necessarily the person. I try and give people the benefit o the doubt now. – Joe

As previously discussed, Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 2010) outlined the effect that our habitus can have on our view of the world and those within our personal sphere. The habitus is comprised of an individual's dispositions that are developed from the beginning of life; representing the internalisation of social structures as refracted through, for example, an individual's home and family environment. Previous chapters have discussed the effect this had on participants' habitus when they were younger, specifically shaping their interaction and attitude to education and early offending. Once the habitus is fully established, it is converted internally into a settled disposition that generates practices and perceptions (Bourdieu, 1997, 1984, 2010). Previously, there was evidence of many participants adopting similar attitudes towards education to those in their homes and family environments (be that positive or negative). Bourdieu (2000) explained that changes occur when the social field and the habitus move out of synch. The settled correlation between immediate adaption of habitus to environment is suspended and reflection occurs that can result in a move towards new practices.

The above comments indicated Joe's movement away from his previous habitus towards a new one. Joe was not entirely clear how and why this change came about for him, simply reflecting that when he was given his most recent long-term sentence, he decided he wanted his life to change. From a geographical point of view, Joe's field remained the same: prison. However, his view of himself, his abilities and what he wants for his future have dramatically changed. Joe has moved away from his previous criminal identity that meant so much to him and has instead enveloped himself and his development in academia. Essentially, his field within the prison altered and, at the time of interview, he inhabited different spaces and social circles. Joe spent time in the Learning Centre and the library, mixing with different peers than he had previously been drawn towards. He felt his attributes were more positive and he described himself as a *"better person",* with improved *"thinking skills"* and less likely to *"rush to judgements"*. He *"gives people the benefit of the doubt now"* and even touched on the role of situation and environment (field) in previous habitus and reactions. Joe appeared to be aware that these had an influence on his previous adverse behaviours. While he acknowledged the positive changes within himself, Joe also extended increased empathy towards others with his consideration *that "it might just be a situational reaction cause o stuff that's goin on in their life* (habitus and field). *It's no necessarily the person".* This connected to an improvement in Joe's capability of affiliation as he was now able to place himself in the situation of others (Nussbaum, 2000) before he reacted or passed

judgement. His critical thinking skills were also enhanced, signifying a growth in his capability of senses, imagination and thought whereby he felt he was now more reflective when making decisions and more cautious than his younger self.

Joe carried on this sentiment when he described the effects education and prison had upon him both internally and externally.

> It's made ma mair reflective, mair analytical, mair critical…like academical critical thinking. I over analyse everything. It's no great thing tae say but I think prison has done me mair good than harm. I've lost a lot but I've gained a lot too.
> – Joe

Joe returned to the learning that brought him enjoyment in primary school and rediscovered his abilities in this area, describing the change in his thought processes from studying. His comment about reflection also indicated an improvement in his capability of practical reason, whereby he felt more able to critically reflect upon himself, his actions and his own life (Nussbaum, 2000). This will be looked at more fully when the connections between prison learning and desistance are analysed in the next section. What is also notable was Joe's reflection that he has both lost and gained from prison. This connects back to the desistance paradox that prison should not be relied upon to develop the skills and attributes needed to move away from criminal behaviour, but simultaneously it can provide people with the access to much needed services to begin this process. Again, it must be stressed that this happens in spite of incarceration and not because of it. Prison should be a final resort and a more constructive aim should be the provision of comprehensive state interventions earlier in life such as supporting young people to engage with education when domestic and societal constraints could negatively affect attendance.

While many have criticized Bourdieu for being deterministic in his theory of habitus, the role of agency can be explained within its constraints. The choices available within our habitus always contain a certain amount of limitation (educational, socio-economic, cultural and so on) but options do exist within this. Our habitus shape rather than completely determine our life choices (Harker and May, 1993), encouraging us to read and pursue the

future that we ascertain to be most appropriate and achievable (Bourdieu, 1977). In this manner, it can reproduce structural constraints, but given the right environment and support, it can also help individuals to transcend them. Education is one such environment in which this can arguably occur. The middle class are the dominant cultural force within UK mainstream schooling and the education system both upholds and replicates their ethos. Those who do not fit into this can struggle to flourish within this cultural backdrop, often finding themselves marginalised (Mills, 2008). Many of the participants' descriptions of their experiences with mainstream schooling would support this theory. Prison education is more populated by those who come from the cultural background of the marginalised. This provides more leeway to contextualise the learning and teaching processes towards issues and challenges that generally affect these backgrounds. It also creates more room to support issues of learning difficulties and behavioural problems that contributed to isolation from the mainstream classroom in the first place. For example, more time and focus can be spent on delivering classes that focus on difficulties with literacy. Learning activities can also be contextualised to identify more appropriately with the students' backgrounds. Many of the creative arts subjects do exactly this and with much success. For example, encouraging students to write about their substance abuse problems in a way that is exploratory and cathartic (while still working towards a qualification if they so choose). In this manner, prison education can support learners to discover and develop previously unknown skills due to their original marginalisation from traditional schooling. The field can be viewed as an arena of struggle and discovery of new forms of capital. The hierarchy of mainstream education is contested and the underlying principles and structure of this previously experienced field can be challenged and rejected (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). This type of educational structure can let those marginalised students in on the rules of the game (that they previously did not understand in school) and this can help to transform their field as opposed to upholding the status quo (Mills, 2008).

This change arguably opens up the possibility of capability improvement as students who were previously isolated in the classroom are now supported to engage. This can immediately improve capabilities that are directly connected to learning (such as senses, imagination and thought) and, in turn, improve those that are indirectly connected to it (such as practical reason). As this field of learning began to open up to participants, their agency (or adaptive preferences) widened as their options for further study and employment began to tentatively grow. Education can be instrumental in capability development, but a person's

capability level can also play a central role in their decision and ability to participate. This is where Nussbaum (2000) argues that public policy should play a central role in counteracting the structural and individual barriers to educational access and participation (Rubenson and Desjardins, 2009). Joe found himself in a situation, both personally and environmentally, whereby he could re-engage with education. The prison structurally provided this for him, but again it should be emphasised that this is not the environment that should be relied upon to provide this to marginalised individuals. From this basic provision and capability development, further capabilities can be nurtured. Sen (1999) argues that the engagement between habitus and social structures regulates the perceived opportunities and liberties that individuals face, and hence their functioning within that. In connection to adult education participation, people are free to define, choose and control what is good for them only if they have the basic level of capability to be able to function within these freedoms. The basic paradox arises that a lack of capability is what often stops people from interacting with education, thus providing them with no ability to improve their capability set. Conversion from interaction into capability functioning is often too challenging for the provision of support to be of any tangible asset. The approach helps draw attention to the fact that dispositions and preferences are inter-related to people's economic and social conditions (Nussbaum, 2002). Joe now found himself in a situation where, due to being incarcerated, some barriers had been placed upon him, while at the same time other barriers (such as an abusive home environment) that had previously stopped him engaging with education had been removed.

Other participants described similar benefits from their time in education and work.

> I think one of the most important things aboot education is that it isnae so much thinkin aboot future employment prospects, I think it's aboot self-esteem in a way. – Liam

> I think I'm a better person. I hope I am. My confidence is ten times better in the last two years. That's pretty much from going to education. It's something that I enjoy, and I feel like I fit in. I've felt more like myself now. I've not felt like that since school. – Simon

It's sort of taught me about who I am as a person, not jist learning aboot grammar an things, but also teaching me aboot who I am as a person. – Brian

You feel better aboot yourself an you feel mair confident an you feel smarter. You're more articulate and people maybe think a bit mair of you. – Craig

Before I did think o the future but I didnae think some things were realistic. But noo I know cause o education that it's mair achieveable noo. The future's mair of a reality fir me noo. I think first mair noo and I make plans. – Alec

These comments extend beyond the immediate sphere of qualification attainment and basic skills development. They move into the central concerns of transformative learning which connects habits of mind and meaning perspectives (or Bourdieu's habitus) to an eventual transformation in perspective (Mezirow, 1985). Education in prison works well as a field of transformative learning because teaching methods are less prescribed, with project-based and co-operative learning often utilised to engage and encourage learners. The teacher becomes the facilitator rather than knowledge being transferred via rote methods. This structure aligns with the SPS assets-based approach to rehabilitation as well as the CfE focus on collaborative, cross-disciplinary learning. This has led to a flourishing of project-based teaching methods that embed qualification achievement and skills-development into the learning activities (Sams, 2014). The intention is that this type of interactive learning develops the whole person rather than just their bank of knowledge, placing just as much emphasis on nurturing interpersonal and self-reflective skills. By engaging and giving responsibility for learning over to the student, they are able to extract increased personal meaning from it, resulting in new frames of reference and finally transforming habits of mind (Mezirow, 2000). Past projects that were designed and ran collaboratively by student, education staff from and outside agencies include the creative arts magazine STIR and the Glasgow School of Art project. Collated feedback from those involved indicated that engagement in these activities generated higher feelings of self-worth and control, better abilities at collaborative working and shifted individuals' perspectives about their past selves (Sams, 2014). These are all central factors to successful desistance (LeBel, 2008). The

descriptions above connected to these types of transformations as learning was linked to how participants viewed themselves at that point in time rather than their past identities. Nearly all of those interviewed mentioned an improvement in their self-esteem or they felt they were now 'better' or 'nicer' people. Brian and Alec touched upon feeling more robust and equipped to deal with life outside and Craig believed other people's perception of him would or had improved in line with his more positive self-conception.

This central focus of personal development links back to the aims of the SPS to develop self-esteem, social and familial relationships and stronger links to the community. The participants described a sense of hope and promise that learning developed within them. It had encouraged them to self-reflect and brought meaning into their lives. It also helped individuals to understand their past behaviours and to engage with the pursuit of the future they hoped to make for themselves (see Morin, 1981). The comments above also inferred a development in a variety of the participants' capabilities. Like Joe, their senses, imagination and thought had improved as they were able to think, imagine and reason more competently due to their engagement with learning. This connected to a development in participants' capability of practical reason as their imagination and analytical abilities have encouraged critical reflection of their lives and planning for the future (Nussbaum, 2000). The skills of communication, emotional and reflective capabilities can assist engagement with desistance as these abilities are central for activating that 'hook' or 'turning point' that enables the person to consider moving beyond the routines and narrative they have adhered to in their past (Vaughn, 2007). Development of capabilities is thus intrinsically linked to the desistance process. We pick this up again in Joe's later interview comments.

> I think cause it's the skills I want tae use tae get intae further education then I think they're invaluable cause I'm jist sharpening ma tools in here for goin oot intae that world. – Joe

> I'm dying tae go tae uni when I get oot. I think I would thrive there. I've nothing tae live up tae and I've nothin tae prove. An I think moving away frae ma area is the only way I'm gonnae dae it cause it's jist a pure pain in the arse, people's attitudes. The party's over. Deal wi it. – Joe

Joe verbalised the connection between the capabilities he developed through education and how he believed these would contribute to his resilience and hope for the future. His second comment also touched upon future development of his capability of affiliation. Nussbaum (2000) outlines that to attain this capability, one must firstly be able to socially interact with and imagine the situation of others. One of Joe's comments above described his development in his ability to empathise meaning he already showed an improvement in this capability. This overlapped with the development in his capability of emotions, demonstrating the non-fungibility of the approach: a flourishing in one capability cannot make up for a deficit in another (Nussbaum, 2000). As can be seen from this example, the attainment of one capability often interconnects with others, emphasising the comprehensiveness of Nussbaum's list in aiming to provide a complete threshold level of wellbeing. Secondly, the capability of affiliation dictates that a person should be treated on the basis of self-respect and be viewed as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others (Nussbaum, 2000). Joe hoped that his time spent in education would lead him to ongoing academic study. These capabilities will continue to be developed in this future self as he believed he would 'thrive' in that environment, learning from the engagement and encouragement of those around him. Here is demonstration of the link between capability establishment through education and future capability development (Sen, 1999).

Many participants echoed the same feelings and future projections as Joe.

> I realise how important it is (education), jist fir like your brain tae even work, jist tae be like doin something. Now I'm jist hungry fir it an I'm hoping tae keep daein it when I leave prison. I cannae go doon the same road I did aw they years ago. – Lisa

> I'm a better person for it. It's sad tae think you maybe need something like this tae change your ways an the way you think. I jist want a good life an I don't want tae be involved in any sort of violence. - Craig

> Up until a few years ago, I didnae have many options. Now I go an work in a barbers. I've done a business course in here an a couple other things in the past few years jist tae give maself a better chance when I get oot. – Jonny

> I've learned quite a lot aboot maself, like whit environments I'm good in, whit ma good qualities are an how best tae use them. It's the strangest thing cause when I'm in prison I'm at ma work every day, I've got a good work ethic an I'm eager tae learn. So, I know I've got that in me, I've jist never had the chance tae implement it oot in the community. – Nicole

Previous chapters discussed participants' earlier, largely unfavourable, experiences of education and skills-development. I have looked at how home and social environment can strongly influence our habitus and attitudes towards institutions such as school. Thus, those who end up in the prison estate have often gone through influences and experiences in earlier life that develop skills and dispositions that break with normative civic culture and social capital (Duguid, 2000). The transformative learning participants engaged with has resulted in a change to these views and habitus as reflected in the comments above. This is always of varying levels in every educational environment and not every student will have this experience. But what was significant for participants was the realisation that other roles could be adopted during incarceration and they could become more than just a prisoner and their associated number. Participants could also become a student and the staff in the Learning Centres go to lengths to ensure individuals are always addressed and treated as such. As a student of the affiliated college, attendees must adhere to the guidelines outlined by that educational institution. While this may appear counter-productive to inflict one set of rules on to an already highly restricted regime and person, instead what it attempts do is support the student to engage with pro-social instructions. These are in place to ensure individuals are treated with respect whilst supporting the developments they wish to pursue. The role of student (in the Learning Centre) and employee/apprentice (in the work sheds) demonstrates that individuals in custody can assume roles different to the ones they have previously fulfilled. This connects to the underlying principles of Nussbaum's approach (2000, 2006, 2011): respect, dignity and each person treated as an 'end', as a distinct individual, not a means or instrument for some other person's gain. By using learning to treat the student as a member of wider society (albeit more descriptive than physical), as opposed

to a prisoner with problems and deficits that need corrected, it provides individuals with the opportunity to attach their attitudes to a broader perspective (Szifris, 2016). This can go some way to mending the social bonds that have been lost through imprisonment and encourage learners to see themselves and their future place outside those walls more constructively. Craig no longer associated himself with the violent person he was when he was younger. Both he and Lisa had begun to assume the role of learner/student and wished to design a future from this. Johnny was a barber and business student, both of which he felt had widened his options. Nicole had moved from her role in her community as drug user and dealer to a motivated, skilled and engaged employee, highly regarded by staff and peers. She insightfully verbalised that which is pertinent to all participants – they need a chance back in their communities to implement these skills, to be viewed positively in these new roles and to no longer be defined by their histories (see Duguid, 2000; Uggen et al., 2004). Participants had been able to gain social, emotional and psychological steps forward through basic capability attainment, enabling them to believe they could assume roles that would support desistance.

The majority of the prison population have grown up in generational and compounded disadvantage. The CA asserts that this must be addressed and facilities levelled in order for those most marginalised to have the ability to both attain and function within capabilities (Nussbaum, 2000). Prison potentially damages a great amount, if not all, of Nussbaum's list. It removes liberty and weakens relationships whilst often treating the prisoner as a less dignified and respected person. Participants' descriptions showed that they grasped opportunities to address this by using the services on offer. Prison should not be the only place where this support becomes more accessible, but sadly this appeared to be the case. Education and skills-development helped many to leverage the often-basic capabilities needed to begin building new identities that are so essential to desistance (see Bushway and Paternoster, 2014; Farrall and Maruna, 2004; Maruna, 2001). Further connections between these influences and the ongoing process of desistance will now be discussed.

8.2 Desistance

Examining motivators behind desistance when placed within the boundaries of imprisonment can be inherently problematic. The social bonds that imprisonment threatens

or removes are a central force to successfully living a crime free life. Social bonds can be severed or damaged with family and loved ones, employment and housing can also be lost and mental and emotional wellbeing can suffer. Repetitive short sentences, particularly those under twelve months, can be particularly damaging to any headway that has been made towards desistance since previous release (Armstrong and Weaver, 2012). Again, it must be emphasised that the removal of liberty is the punishment for criminal behaviour and custodial sentences should not be viewed as a way to 'treat' or 'fix' individuals in a collective and contained manner. Instead, the services and interventions that are needed to address offending behaviours and socio-economic issues need to be more comprehensively provided back in the community and at earlier points. That being said, many of the participants attested to using their time inside to their advantage and engaged with the support and development they needed to work towards desistance.

Desistance is divided into 'primary' which directly refers to the cessation of offending behaviour and 'secondary' which focuses on an individual's change in identity and self-perception away from the terms of 'prisoner' and 'offender' (McNeill et al., 2012). Past research has indicated that a higher likelihood of moving away from offending comes from connecting a person's more negative past to a more positive present and future. This is often done in a way that makes the journey to this point seem an almost inevitable and essential part of the person's narrative, rather than rejecting their past self completely. This makes the process of dealing with the shame and guilt of the past more bearable (Waldorf et al., 1991). By accounting for their criminal pasts and understanding what contributed to their actions, individuals can move forward. This all contributes to the pro-social identity development that is a key contributor to successful desistance.

When facing their past narratives, individuals in custody often question their internal feelings of guilt, shame and accountability, while internal processes of acceptance of and moving forward are essential to creating a positive future (Maruna, 2001). This is why both identity-shift and personal development are as central to the desistance process as the ceasing of criminal behaviour (Maruna and Farrall, 2004). By using education as a 'hook', Joe had applied his learning to every area of his life, affecting a change in how he viewed himself and how he dealt with others. Joe displayed a deep engagement with his identity and how this had been constructed and re-constructed over his lifetime. He was also aware of what

and who had influenced these changes. This make Joe's comments particularly insightful when looking at what contributes towards offending and an eventual move away from it. Firstly, Joe's connection with education was transformational, changing the direction of his self-perception and hopefully the direction of his future.

> That's whit weird cause that's aw I ever wanted (being a criminal). It's aw your life wanting tae walk off a cliff and taking twenty years tae get tae the edge an then when you look over the edge you think 'fuck that' an you start walking back the other way. – Joe

Joe's initial period of reflection and reassessment of what was important to him has been identified in past research as a common feature of the initial stages of desistance (McNeill et al., 2012). He displayed active engagement with his own life history and revaluated where he was at the point of interview and where he would like to be. It is this internal dialogue that creates the potential to influence future choices and actions (Friestad, 2012). Joe both discovered a new or re-framed self, whilst simultaneously connecting it back to his pre-offending (or pre-spoiled) identity that was engaged with academic ability (in early primary school). In effect, he had always been the person he sees himself as in the present but his life had taken a different direction due to influences largely outside of his control. Joe felt he had managed to gain 'chaotic' stability in prison which allowed him the space to interact with learning. His previous self was not really him as a person, but rather the consequence of everything else going on around him.

The stability Joe found in prison also helped to develop a number of his capabilities, most noticeably that of senses, imagination and thought as he described an improvement in his thinking and reasoning skills in line with his academic advancement. This also supported him to produce work of his own creation, often to a very high level. Likewise, his practical reason showed an improvement. This capability focuses on a person's ability to form a conception of the good and engage in the critical planning of one's own life (Nussbaum, 2000). By the time he was interviewed, Joe had turned away from his offending identity (which he believed he always wanted) in favour of pursuing his academic self. He showed engagement with what he wants from life and how he will plan and work towards this. He has turned back from that cliff edge in order to make a future that will focus on his son and

academic study. Throughout his past he had been classified by the criminal justice system with negative titles such as 'gang-member', 'criminal' and 'notorious' and both he and wider society accepted these labels as who he was. Desistance, particularly in the secondary sense, is focused on personal and public perception. Many desisters need to cease to see themselves as criminals (and all the roles associated with this) and begin to identify with more positive self-perceptions (McNeill and Weaver, 2010). This change was also verbalised by other participants.

> You jist get that sick o bein in this lifestyle that I would dae anything tae enable maself to no have this kind o life. Jist be workin so I can be a different person ootside, an instead o takin, I'd be givin back tae society. – John

> See jail noo, I'm tired o it. It's no like the sentence is getting tae me but I'm realising now, I think I'm growin up a wee bit an thinkin what do I want and what quality of life dae I want tae have? – Conor

> It made me grow up so quickly. Especially being in jail and no alcohol. So, I had to really look at myself and what made me? What were the good bits that I could make better and what were the bad bits that I could leave behind? – Simon

> I dinnae want tae be criminal any mair or somebody that comes tae jail an has drug problems. I want tae take ma life in a different direction while I've still got the chance. – Johnny

As previously mentioned, desistance is an active process in which agency (the ability to exercise choice and manage one's life) is 'discovered' (Maruna, 2001). Agency is essential to the pursuit and achievement of a life which is good for the individual. Those in prison, particularly those who return regularly, often show signs of being highly fatalistic. This suggests they have low self-efficacy and feel they have little to no control over their own lives. They feel they are unable to determine the direction of their futures and life simply 'happens to them' (Maruna, 2001). Narratives of those who have successfully desisted found

they had developed a sense of control and agency in their lives: meaning they felt they had a clear sense of purpose and control over their futures (McNeill et al., 2012). Agency must be an ability that is discovered and nurtured in order for those in prison to firstly, conceptualise what their 'good' future would look like; secondly, be provided with and be able to engage with the services (such as education and work) that can support the achievement of this future; and thirdly, provide the relevant ongoing support after release to enable attainment and functioning of capabilities and thus increase the likelihood of successful desistance.

The reflections above show a variety of motivations for participants' initial move towards desistance. Most intonate a weariness with the lifestyle and repeated spells in prison as well as growing up and moving away from previous identities. All of the comments, both implicitly or explicitly implied an engagement with thinking about the life participants would like to have in the future and what would make that 'good'. This indicated a movement towards services and pursuits that improved their capabilities, such as education, job training and support services. Agency was being established as participants begun to engage with what they wanted to change in their lives and the futures they would like to have. The next part of this process is moving further into participants' new narratives.

8.4 A New Narrative

Participants' narratives indicated that educational experiences can combine with other roles and responsibilities to create a shift in self-perception. It can also provide a stable pro-social identity when inside the prison that can be built upon for the future (see Bonite et al., 2009). For Joe, education was the key to the stable future he hoped to build for himself and his son. He displayed acceptance of the person he is now and what he has been capable of in his past, partly due to the various traumas that have occurred in his life. Joe, like other participants who wished to desist successfully, needed to make sense of their lives and past histories.

> I think I'm already becoming the person I want tae be. It's a weird type of person
> I am. Think o something that's split doon the middle. Like I dinnae think you
> can be rehabilitated cause if you got put in a certain type o situation then you

could react in the same way. So tae me it's like I need tae learn tae live wi that other side… I don't mean that I battle it noo. I mean that it's locked inside a cupboard and the key's hanging ootside an we can still talk through the door. – Joe

Now when I look back, I wonder if this wis supposed tae happen. Like if I wis supposed tae go through aw this jail stuff tae be able tae see it frae the inside oot rather than the ootside in. – Joe

Joe was highly reflective about the dichotomy in his identity. Instead of making claim to no longer possessing that part of his personality, he explained that it co-existed with his new identity, diffused and overtaken by his commitment to his young son and academia. Joe commented that either side could still be developed and nurtured dependent on the situation and contributing factors. When his capabilities were in their unhealthiest state (during his childhood and teenage years), his identity could only develop within the limited options open to him, all of which connected to offending. While many of Joe's capabilities were still in a restricted state due to incarceration, they were more developed at this stage of his life. Stability and engagement with services such as education meant he could interact more fully with his self-development, nurturing a more positive self for the future as his capabilities, pathways and agency widened. His second comment showed an acceptance of his past 'spoiled' identity and any guilt or shame that he may have associated with this. By internalising the good and bad parts of his life narrative as an essential part of his make-up, Joe was able to move forward, motivated that his life could and would be different.

Other participants touched on the role they felt their life experiences played in their desistance journey.

I think prison is part o my identity. I'm comfortable wi it, I'm no ashamed o it, I'm gonnae make it a positive thing an move on in life an leave prison behind me but still use everything I've learned in prison. – Nicole

> Like getting praised fir work an getting telt that you can actually dae somethin good, it makes you feel good. It makes me feel good that other people can believe that I can be mair than jist a number in the jail an mair than what people have labelled me outside. – Calum

Like Joe, Nicole and Calum alluded to the assets they had discovered and developed during their sentence(s). Services such as education and job training have moved towards a more assets-based approach within prisons. Staff are encouraged to help individuals explore the skills and abilities they have and develop these into a new narrative rather than seeing them as filled with deficits that need to be corrected (Porporino, 2010; McNeill, 2012). By raising above their personal histories and moving towards future possibilities, a new narrative can emerge that can find hidden potential with an individual's previous identities (Maruna, 2001). The programme itself (be that work, education or any other form of activity/service they interact with) does not work from the perspective of the desistance paradigm, but rather it engages the individual to develop those assets that will support desistance (Duguid and Pawson, 1998; McNeill, 2012). Just as Joe had found this through studying, so too had Nicole and Calum through job training and volunteer work. It is essential that services in prison focus on identifying and developing individual skill-sets as this will help to improve capabilities (as is shown in participants' narratives). This should result in improved options post-release that will contribute towards successful desistance.

8.5 Giving Back

One particular perspective of a new narrative is that of 'professional ex' or 'wounded healer' (Lebel et al., 2015). This encompasses the idea of utilising past negative experiences and behaviours to help others who could be or are going through similar trauma. These types of assets-based roles allow the marginalised individual to manage the stigma that is placed upon them by wider society, helping them to overcome their negative labels and reconcile with society for their past crimes (Braithwaite, 1989). Joe tapped into this ideal when describing the assets he could bring to his future academic studies and his role as an active parent.

Well see when there's people studying jail, it's sad tae say but surely being on this side is gonnae have some sort o use fir doin criminology. You'll never see this side o jail like I have. I want tae channel my experience intae ma academic stuff. – Joe

My son's jist so amazing an he's the best thing that's ever happened tae me. I think it's a hook cause we have tae show kids…cause today's kids are tomorrow's adults. I know this might sound weird but it's like I'm undoing ma past by making sure his life is better. – Joe

It was more constructive for Joe not to view his past as wasted years but instead as an essential part of the journey towards the person he had become and would continue to be in the future. This would mean taking his informed and unique personal experiences of prison and the criminal justice system and applying them to his future academic research and writing. His 'wounded healer' role was resolutely focused on his young son. By nurturing and supporting him in a manner that Joe himself had not experienced as a child, he felt he was able to undo his past and re-write his own narrative in to what it should have been. This connected to an increased sense of agency for Joe as he translated his past behaviours as being essential to the success of his promising future rather than a waste of his younger life. Because individuals in prison, particularly persistent returners such as Joe, traditionally display low self-efficacy and a lack of autonomy in the determination of their own lives, this needs to increase in line with a higher chance of successful desistance (Maruna, 2001).

This redemptive future narrative was a common theme that emerged from other participants' descriptions.

I'd like tae help other people that are kind o in the same circumstances as me like in care, takin drugs, then in recovery…so teachin other people where maybe people could learn frae ma mistakes type o thing. – Alec

In the future I want tae be a drug worker cause like the ones I've had in the past, I think they've aw done it oot o books. I would like tae dae it frae the perspective o somebody that's actually done it an lived it. I think that would be a better perspective. – Calum

If I could design a job it would be tae work wi young people frae aboot the ages of 13 up tae aboot 21 tae dae some training, some sort o exercise, like fitbaw, weight training or the gym. Like kids that maybe hivnae got much, they're in a scheme an are maybe goin a bit off the rails at school. – Craig

Aye, if I could get oot then hopefully I'll be able tae dae something wi it. Like charity work an that…Plus it helps you tae be helpin other people…it helps you tae stay oot o trouble. – John

I feel I hiv the experience tae become a counsellor. I can help boys that are like myself when I wis younger. An I can maybe talk tae people an help them cause I've been through it myself. – Scott

Each comment described a scenario in which the participant was able to take their more negative past and develop this into a more positive future for themselves and those they will help. Many of the benefits of this correlate with an improvement in capabilities (shown in brackets below). As well as personal and social redemption, the benefits of assuming this type of role include the development of personal learning (senses, imagination and thought), increased pro-social competence (emotions and affiliation), increased purpose and focus (practical reason) and improved self-esteem (affiliation) (see Aresti et al., 2010; Brown, 1991; Maruna, 2001). These facets have all been verbalised in the above descriptions, particularly that of improved pro-social competence and developed personal learning. The first-hand experiences that Joe and these other participants have had could contribute unique insight into their chosen paths. Participants felt they could not only help those with similar problems but also stop them developing in the first place, particularly with the younger generation. These roles would provide purpose but also allow participants to come full circle, repairing the damage inflicted in their past narratives by halting it in others.

8.6 Imagined Desistance

Soyer (2014) explains the unique insight into imagined (or projected) desistance that comes from a study such as this which looks at the motivations and support for the journey while it is unfolding. More traditional life-course studies look back once desistance (or recidivism) has been achieved (or not). But by looking at what drives a person in custody to begin the desistance process, this can lead to a deeper understanding of what support is needed to encourage this journey on both a personal and structural level.

Social bonds theory suggests that variations in ties to family, relationships, employment and education can explain changes in criminal behaviour (particularly if it is persistent) as individuals move into early adulthood (Maruna, 2000). Joe placed his young son as central to his motivation to desist. He also explained that his attachment to education would further develop the appropriate contacts he needed so support his move away from offending.

> Pro-social contacts, like the people at the uni that have been helping me. People that can encourage pro-social stuff an' can talk aboot the stuff that I want tae talk aboot an help me develop whitever I need tae go tae uni. – Joe

Education can hopefully provide Joe with a future 'legitimate' career away from crime and prison. Further to this, it would nurture social relationships in his life that would give him broader access to opportunities away from committing crime. He would be associated with mainstream education, developing relationships within this context that will help him to fit in to a more settled and crime-free life. It should help to support a move into future employment, improving Joe's human capital and chances of successful desistance (Sokoloff and Schenck-Fontaine, 2017). Like most others that work towards desistance, Joe will find many aspects of this transition challenging. This is why it can be constructive if the work begins prior to release. Links to the community and organisations that support this process are invaluable and likewise, the interventions within the prison must be designed in such a way as to develop the central structures of desistance. Much of this is about developing agency and thus support is likely to be most effective if it encourages self-determination.

This again returns to the ideal of developing a person's strengths and abilities rather than working 'on them' (McNeill, 2006). This must also exist beyond the prison walls, whereby probation and community-based services need to create opportunities for these newly developed skills to be utilised. This can further develop an individual's changing identity, such as becoming a student or employee (see Farrall, 2002, 2004; McNeill and Whyte, 2007)

Many of the participants had more stable periods in their lives when offending either dramatically lessened or was not present at all. As previously mentioned, desistance is a difficult and complex process and one that often involves lapses and relapses rather than one single move from offending to non-offending (McNeill and Weaver, 2010). Reflections on past periods of primary desistance (or the move away from committing criminal acts) are essential for ascertaining what factors are central in supporting this process (Nugent and Schinkel, 2016). These generally centre around support with mental health and/or substance misuse, employment, education, pro-social relationships with family/friends/community, housing. Overall, these connect to better capability attainment and functioning. Imagined desistance was also important in detailing participants' hopes for the future whilst providing insight from the agent's perspective of what best supports the process. Many participants based these projected ideals on successful periods of desistance from their pasts. In short, participants possessed credible insight into what worked for them and what they needed in order to stop offending. The barriers arise when the services and support they need are not there or individuals are unable to access them.

> The only time's I've got oot an done kind o well like the last two times I've been released I've been goin wi a lassie. They're the two longest periods I've hid an I think it's cause I've had a bit o stability wi her cause we had a hoose, an I couldnae take drugs. I think if I wis tae stay oot then I think a job an stability would play a bit part. – Alec

> That wis one of the good periods in ma life. I had a girlfriend an I wisnae on smack or anything an wis tryin tae find work. That wis kind o the first experience I had o any kind o 'normal' life. – Liam

I need tae improve ma anger, jist get oot o this jail fresh-minded an jist try an get a job an start ma life. As I say, aw they problems that I've had tae deal wi have affected me. It's no put ma life on hold but it's jist stopping/pausing/stopping/pausing. I jist want tae continue on ma life fir good till I get old. – Dave

It became like, getting oot o prison an you felt weird cause you wernae used tae society, an obviously you self-mediated fir issues that you had an that meant you were a drug user so that gave you other problems. Then you got involved wi various criminality tae keep the supply o drugs an tae keep money in your pocket an tae keep frae bein on the streets basically. Dain aw the things you have tae jist tae survive an then you end up back in jail. – John

Housing, addiction and mental health management, employment and strong pro-social relationships are mentioned above as providing stability and structure for short periods of time in participants' pasts. Most were highly aware of what they personally needed to help them reintegrate back into society and stop offending just as much as they knew and understood the reasons why they had committed crimes in the first place. Unfortunately, the support was often non-existent when they were released and the issues they had to overcome were and continue to be of such a challenging nature that relapses occurred (this is particularly true of offending behaviour that is directly linked to addiction).

Participants also provided vivid accounts of what they would like their lives to look like once they had successfully desisted. These followed similar descriptions for nearly every participant – home, job, study, relationship, family and stability.

I would be studying at a seriously high level, well as high as it gets. Having 101% contact wi ma kid but no having any contact wi ma area. Travelling is a big one cause obviously I've never really travelled. - Joe

I would be workin, I'd be driving, I would have ma own house, maybe a girlfriend an kids an I'm a bit mair educated. Like take whit I can frae the jail instead o wasting ma time here. – Conor

I'd probably be workin as a joiner ootside an hae one or two kids an I'd be married by noo…an education would help me tae get intae the trade I'd want tae get intae and it would help me wi ma life skills as well. – Calum

Right so jist tae be a normal, average person who takes his kids tae the fitbaw, goes tae their school plays, helps them wi their homework…see jist that, that's pretty much it tae be honest…someone they look up to an respect an want tae be like…that's it basically. – Craig

Jist like get a girlfriend…be a better person…happier…get a job an live ma life…get a house…aw that kind o stuff. Jist anything tae keep maself oot o prison. – Dave

Family an trying tae make the future better than whit the past has been. I don't want much frae life. I jist want tae be comfortable wi ma family. An if I can jist help a couple of folk then I'd be happy. – Nicole

I'd like tae be law-abiding anyway. I would like tae get a good job, own ma ain hoose, be able tae support ma daughter if she wants tae dae anything. Like have the money tae dae that rather than just scraping by. An I would like tae help other people tae become better people themselves. – Carol

Participants generally wanted to achieve similar pillars of 'normality' in their futures. Employment and a secure place to live come high up on the list of priorities. Relationships were also central, providing participants with pro-social contacts and a sense of belonging. A job would provide a structure to everyday life which is particularly important to those with

mental health and addiction issues and many participants commented that work and study had brought structure to their time in prison. This developed a sense of purpose that lessened an individual's likelihood of returning to substance use and kept the mind focused away from struggling with mental health issues. These strategies do not necessarily work for everyone, but many participants testified that it had helped at various points and so appeared in their picture of future stability.

The 'Good Lives Model' (GLM) (Ward and Maruna, 2007) for prisoner rehabilitation articulates that people (not just those in prison) are predisposed to pursue particular goals and primary goods to make for themselves what they consider 'a good life'. These include (capabilities in brackets) life, knowledge (senses, imagination and thought), excellence in play and work (play, control over one's environment (material)), agency or autonomy (practical reason), inner peace (emotions), friendship (emotions, affiliation), community (affiliation), spirituality (senses, imagination and thought), happiness (emotions) and creativity (senses, imagination and thought). Secondary goods, such as various relationships and types of work, provide avenues by which primary goods can be pursued and achieved. Primary goods are plural in nature, producing a variety of motivators for people to seek out when creating their future lives. The list of primary goods that encompass a good life are variations on Nussbaum's list of central capabilities (2000). Both the GLM and the CA place the development of agency as central to the conceptualisation and pursuit of a good life. When participants described their future life projections they were populated with primary and secondary goods. Thus, they were describing a time when their capabilities (and their functioning within them) would be in a healthier condition.

8.7 Motivation and Ongoing Opportunity

Research that has focused on successful post-release desisters suggests they display higher levels of self-efficacy than those who were unsuccessful (Maruna, 2001). This means they held onto the belief in their own ability to succeed in dealing with prospective situations. Self-efficacy is also a central catalyst in a person's desire to pursue change, although much wider support is needed in order for that change to be established and sustained (Lebel et al., 2008). Participants' comments shown in this section all indicated improved levels of self-efficacy and agency compared to earlier points in their lives (discussed in previous chapters).

They had all experienced some form of 'hook', turning point, frustration or weariness with prison and were, by the point of interview, utilising the services available to change their futures. Self-efficacy and hope had developed for many participants due to the progress they had made in a variety of areas – education, job training, volunteering. A number reported an improvement in their personal situations because they had been able to access support to improve their mental and physical health, addictions, and issues linked with previous trauma. For some participants, their relationships with family and friends had improved, although still remained in a fractured state due to imposed separation when in custody. While positive steps forward had been made, maintaining desistance after release would be the most challenging part of the process. Participants had hopes and some already had concrete contacts and plans for further study, employment, housing and support after prison.

However, past research has strongly indicated that one of these factors will not, by itself, support desistance. Instead, employment must be coupled with job stability, commitment, and social bonds within that workplace with peers and superiors in order for it to reduce offending. Marriage or a stable relationship will not support successful desistance, but rather stability and strong social bonds within these relationships can help a person to stay out of prison. Prolonged commitment to these institutions tends to induce conformity in the agent, contributing to successful desistance (Sampson and Laub, 2005). Conversely, when looking at internal motivation, past research indicates that high self-efficacy, hope and self-belief can be a more powerful factor in the desistance process. From this a person is able to opt in to and make use of positive social opportunities (such as employment and education) and are more likely to survive setbacks and disappointments as long as the issues are not insurmountable (Lebel et al., 2008). The data in this thesis indicates that participants had been able to establish these early threads of desistance during their sentences, particularly that of self-efficacy and hope.

But what does this mean for life post release? Participants had improved their capabilities and developed social and human capital during their sentences, predominantly through education and job training. But these developments would only hold a deeper meaning for participants' future narratives if they were to become more concrete on the outside. Bourdieu (2010) argued that education can support a person from any background to accrue cultural capital but the difference comes with their ability to convert this into other forms of capital.

For example, participants in prison are able to gain the same qualifications as everyone else in Scotland (the majority are linked to the SQA framework and Higher Education is offered through the Open University). However, due to their often-unstable backgrounds and criminal record, an incarcerated individual's 'rate of profit' from their 'scholastic investment' (Bourdieu, 1986, p 243) will probably be lower than students who come from a stable background. This also means that the capabilities attained through learning when in prison ebb away once individuals are back within their insecure personal environments. In her 2018 paper that focused on the links between education, inequality and social justice, Caroline Sarojini Hart explained the entrenched socio-political problems when trying to raise people out of poverty and away from discrimination;

> The implications of the wider external constraints on the outcomes of education, for instance, related to employment discrimination, call for policies to be intersectional, operating across education, employment and other aspects of social, commercial, legal and political life. For example, employment practices need to be subject to better regulation and scrutiny with clear pathways for cases of discrimination to be legally addressed, without penalty to victims. Moreover, much work needs to be done to change culturally entrenched attitudes and dispositions that unfairly lead to disadvantage. (Hart, 2018, p 14)

The barriers and discrimination that are shown to individuals who have been in prison needs to be addressed culturally and at policy level in order for the progress made during incarceration to have sustained meaning. If this happens then it creates a larger opportunity for successful desistance for those who are committed, as well as establishing greater hope and motivation in those who are wary of attempting the process. (McNeill and Schinkel, 2016). This data has shown that some interventions in prison are helping to support those who have the self-efficacy and motivation to begin desisting. But again, it must be reiterated that this is largely due to the person and not the experience of imprisonment. Interventions and support services need to be tailored to the individual to produce the best results. They must also extend beyond the prison and be present after a sentence has been spent in order to convert the work done inside into a sustainable future narrative (McNeill and Schinkel, 2016). Ongoing support must be present in the community and our wider attitudes to those

who have spent time in prison needs to change. Unless this happens, much of the work towards desistance that is done before this point could be and often is, wasted.

8.8 Conclusion

Incarceration should not be relied upon to support desistance. However, participants' narratives indicated that prison can and is being used as a site to begin this process. In spite of the damage custody does to capability set and social bonds, there are clear descriptions in this section of support that worked as a catalyst for change in participants' lives. The Learning Centres, work sheds and various services within the estate (such as the health service, and community-based organisations) all provided personal and skills development opportunities. Participants described being aware of these types of services during previous sentences but what was different for them at the point of interview was the change within themselves and their future goals. Coupled with this were the small sections of stability that participants had begun to gain in their lives. Support and treatment for challenges such as addiction and mental health issues had made a marked difference to many of them, particularly those who cited these problems as the root cause of their offending.

However, as already argued, this progress is achieved in spite of prison and not because of it. Had support and intervention been more comprehensive at various points of their lives then participants may not have ended up with such complex issues. The motivation participants displayed to change their future came in a variety of ways. For Joe it was predominantly due to his young child as well as having reconnected and excelled in the field of academic study. He could now imagine a future path that encompassed this new passion, utilising his past experiences of offending and prison to inform his future academic writing. For others, the reasons centred on factors such as maturing and growing weary of the life they were leading; having a better handle on personal issues; having families and/or relationships that they wanted to spend time with; or they had finally connected with personal skills, talents and self-worth that made them realise they were deserving of a better, more stable life.

Both classroom-based education, and learning in the wider sense had been a more positive experience for participants than in the past. A number explained they felt more focused and supported than when they were at school. Due to being marginalised from the mainstream classroom when they were younger, many erroneously thought they had no ability when it came to learning. Thankfully they had discovered areas of development they flourished within and were able to build these into their vision of a crime and prison free future. For example, Nicole flourished in the areas of leadership, both in her work party and the recovery support group she helped to set up for her peers. Her potential had already been spotted by both SPS staff and those from outside agencies who had been working with her. She described her new-found abilities with much deserved pride and commitment.

What is most engaging from this section of data are participants' descriptions of the secondary desistance process. Joe was particularly insightful when discussing his internal identity shift from the negative labels of his past to the student and parental role he now fulfilled. What was also significant was that he did not reject this part of his life as being wasted or shameful. Instead he internalised it as a necessary stage of his narrative that took him to where he was at the time of being interviewed and would positively contribute to the future that he planned to make for himself and his son. Others verbalised this identity shift and how they felt that going through their personal trauma and challenges had better prepared them to help others in similar situations, particularly the younger generation. This essential identity shift was already beginning for many participants while still in prison. The added challenge to this, and one that would be outside of their control is the creation of wider options for participants after release. Community and wider society must move away from simply viewing individuals as prisoners or ex-prisoners in order for the mechanisms for desistance to be comprehensively supported in the long-term.

Participants were all similar in their descriptions of the stability and normality they wished to have in their future - home, family, relationship, job, good health – essentially a picture of healthy capabilities. They had managed to convert the support services within the prison to improve some of their basic capabilities, but there was still a long path ahead. In lives that had been marred with inherited and ongoing disadvantage, participants' abilities to continue to access these types of services and convert that into ongoing capability development could become an almost insurmountable challenge. The want and motivation were clearly present

for every participant, but the support that would be available for them post-release could be the deciding factor in whether their individual desistance journeys would become successful ones. To close my research, the final chapter will give an overview of my research findings, conclusions that can be drawn and recommendations for the future.

Chapter Nine

Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide an overall summary of my main findings, again reflecting the chronological order of the interview stages. From here I will outline the implications of this thesis for wider theory. The limitations of my research as well as its significance for future studies will then be considered. Finally, the wider implications for policy and practice will be outlined and discussed.

The aim of this research was to look at the educational experiences through the life course of a group of Scottish prisoners. I examined the role and meaning that education had in participants' lives. I also focused on their life experiences, the fluctuating role of education and the effect this had on their capabilities, both historically and more recently. Participants' journeys through the criminal justice system and the effect of time spent in prison were also considered. The benefits of re-engaging with learning while in custody was a focus of the latter parts of the thesis, where I tried to make connections with how education might support capability development and the desistance process. This research was exploratory in nature, taking an interpretative stance and utilising qualitative interview techniques to gain rich and in-depth descriptions of participants' life experiences and narratives. The interview questions were designed to discuss wellbeing levels and the factors that contributed to its advancement or demise.

Before my conclusions and recommendations are reported, I re-state my main research questions.

1. What role and meaning has education played in participants' lives?
2. How have their educational and life experiences affected the development of capabilities, both historically and more recently?
3. What role has education played in helping them imagine, plan and prepare for the future, including in relation to potential desistance from crime?

The CA, in particular Nussbaum's list of ten capabilities (2000, 2006, 2011) provided a framework from which to gauge individual wellbeing, quality of living and future conception of what a good life might look like for the participants. This framework allowed me to consider the altering state of participants' capabilities at various stages throughout their lives, connecting this to the wider factors that potentially influenced attainment and functioning. By more specifically tracing the ebb and flow of education within participants' narratives, I was able to connect this with its role in supporting the further development of capabilities. This thesis argues that access to and engagement with learning can lead to a healthier capability set and an overall improvement in wellbeing. As I have shown, this is evidenced throughout my data, particularly in participants' descriptions of their recent engagement with education and skills-development while in custody.

In the prison context, a reduction in reoffending rates is generally utilised as the statistical measurement of a rehabilitative service's success (or not). This type of data does not, however, generate any detail on how and why particular support worked for individuals. The research presented in this thesis provides rich and detailed accounts not just of what life is like in prison but about the regime and the manner in which this can both damage and develop fledging desistance processes. The research also revealed a connection between educational support and improved capabilities. For example, the discovery and enactment of agency within an individual's life is both evidence of an attained capability (practical reason and thought) and central to the desistance process. This interconnection of education, capability development and desistance explored in this thesis provides new and rich data to each theoretical strand.

This chapter will provide an overall summary of my main findings, again reflecting the chronological order of the interview stages. From there I will outline the implications of this thesis for wider theory. The limitations of my research as well as the significance for future studies will then be considered. Finally, the wider implications for policy and practice will be outlined and discussed.

9.2 Summary of Main Findings

What emerged strongly from participants' narratives were the varying degrees to which development was hindered by disadvantage from the outset of their lives. Home and family environments were frequently unstable, insecure and often abusive. These early traumatic experiences resulted in life-long negative impacts on participants' levels of wellbeing. Their descriptions allow me to suggest a direct link between a higher level of instability in the home with a comparably high level of capability restriction. Those participants with the most traumatic childhoods displayed the most damaged capability set in early childhood. For some individuals it was a daily challenge to be nourished and remain safe. This was due both to violence inflicted upon them by caregivers and to general neglect arising from problems such as restricted income, severe substance abuse and mental health issues. Many participants described their caregivers suffering similarly challenging childhoods, reflecting the often-inter-generational nature of trauma and disadvantage.

These complex issues meant that relationships with parents and caregivers were often fractured. Descriptions of ongoing problems with trust and emotional connectivity were linked back to this by many of the participants. The most severely affected participants described abandonment complexes arising from the most acute disassociation with parents and caregivers in early childhood. In contrast, those who came from more stable and supportive family units verbalised feeling more security in their familial relationships as adults whilst also describing higher comfort in their capacity to connect to others. Participants' overall capacity to interact with and establish relationships with people throughout their lives appeared to have been largely shaped by how this was demonstrated to them by caregivers during their early years.

Early traumatic experiences meant that many struggled to engage and settle in other environments such as school. The unstable nature of home environments was often replicated in the classroom as the most traumatised participants described displaying disruptive and reactionary behaviour towards staff and fellow pupils. Their reflections suggest this was, for the most part, a grasp at regaining some form of control within their unstable lives or a physical display of the emotional upset they were suffering but struggling to verbalise. For a smaller number of participants, undiagnosed psychiatric and learning

issues contributed to these behavioural reactions. Those individuals with most enthusiasm for learning recalled the desire to engage but said they had felt unable to do so due to dealing with the myriad of issues they faced, sometimes compounded by a lack of focus on the merits of school from family members. The overall feelings described by many participants were of isolation and marginalisation at primary school. A lack of support and being labelled as 'disruptive' meant that school was not the respite from home life that many had hoped it would be.

Bullying was a focus for many of the participants when discussing primary school. Those who had suffered as victims reflected that this worsened their attachment issues that had been established in their damaged parent-child relationships. This added to a lack of self-worth and confidence, furthering participants' feelings of isolation. A change of school in primary or the move to secondary school provided the opportunity for some individuals to escape bullying, sometimes by assuming the role of bully themselves. This did not appear to develop from a place of bitterness or maliciousness but rather as an obvious way to protect themselves from being a victim. This is another example of regaining power and control in a situation that damaged these capacities. Bullying is the most consistently vivid memory of school for many of those interviewed with indications that its ill-effects were traumatic and deeply embedded in their development.

A lack of control over their own lives was established for many of the study's participants during their turbulent formative years, leading to a higher degree of fatalism as they developed and aged. A sense of agency was not nurtured for participants at this early stage, resulting in many feeling they had little to no influence in determining the trajectory of their lives. This is an issue that continues for many as adults in the criminal justice system (Maruna, 2001). Challenging behaviours began and became deep-rooted with intermittent and ineffectual intervention doing little to change these. What emerged most notably in this early stage of childhood was the obvious relationship in many participants' lives between deprivation, trauma and a concurrent lack of capability development. Reactive conduct was established which lead to further isolation and personal challenges that would compound as they aged, meaning many participants remained in these disadvantaged states as life progressed rather than being able to move away from them.

The challenges and issues that participants reported in childhood remained and often worsened throughout teenage years. Although these years can be turbulent for many young people, adolescence proved to be particularly tumultuous for the majority of those interviewed. One of the most common descriptions was of disengagement from school, with most leaving education before the age of sixteen. Truancy was high and many participants verbalised not seeing the point of learning when they were younger in the way they did by the time they were interviewed. Exclusion also became commonplace for a smaller number of participants, leading to disruption in their education. Much like in their early years, school was not a place of stability and structure but rather another location where individuals often felt challenged and disempowered. On the whole, participants described feeling punished and marginalised for issues over which they felt they had little control. Those who were moved to residential education reported a more positive experience. Staff were more understanding and encouraging and the less rigorous focus on academic learning appeared to suit those who struggled to settle in a mainstream classroom. That is not to say that removal and segregation should be the answer to these types of issues within the school system, but it does, perhaps demonstrate the positive impact that timely and appropriate intervention can have on the lives of challenged young people.

Substance use also appeared in most participants' lives during this period. The catalyst for the use of drugs and alcohol was often experimental and social, again not an uncommon occurrence during adolescence as teenagers push the boundaries of experience. What was more significant to participants' experiences was the powerful role substance abuse assumed in many of their narratives. Experimentation swiftly turned to dependency for a number of participants as self-medicating properties brought comfort and psychological, emotional and personal challenges were often described as being soothed by the early use of substances. An increase in substance use also correlated with further disengagement from school for most of the participants, although it is unclear which factor had more influence over the other. What was clear was that participants' lives suffered further instability once the structure of school was removed. Without education, the most influential mechanism on capability development was also lost and this led to a worsening of participants' capabilities and wellbeing.

Offending began during adolescence for the majority of those interviewed. This was most commonly linked to substance use and the need to fund developing dependencies. A small number of participants described the impact drugs and alcohol had on their behaviours, often resulting in violence that led to early prosecution. Children's Panel members and social workers became even more commonplace in many of the narratives, unfortunately with little positive impact. Many participants reflected that they felt isolated, confused and criminalised for issues that had developed from early trauma and over which they had little or no grasp. Substance use and early custodial sentences appear to have had the largest detrimental effect upon capabilities. Already vastly restricted in many cases from unstable childhoods, these influences only served to tighten these limitations. Participants who were children of addicts described the daily struggle for basic necessities that they continued to experience in adolescence as their own dependencies worsened. Disadvantage was, in that sense, inherited and compounded for the majority interviewed.

Peer groups became a more central influence as participants increasingly distanced themselves from their home environments. Many reflected on a lack of guidance and support from family members and professional figures (such as teachers and social workers) suggesting this led them to seek this from other sources. Friends assumed the role of a pseudo-family unit for many participants, providing much needed support and security, replacing the weakened familial bonds that many suffered. Unfortunately, at the same time this peer influence often contributed to the development of early offending behaviours and substance abuse. On reflection, a number of those interviewed believed that stricter boundaries and more adult instruction could have abated their teenage rebellious behaviour. However, this is conjecture that in reality, could have played out either way. What it does indicate is the notable desire many participants had for positive intervention and guidance which, in the end, never appeared. Isolation was more pointedly felt by many, especially those such as Alec who was firmly placed in the care system by this point.

The high degree of fatalism that began in childhood became a much stronger influence once substance use and offending began to take a central role in participants' lives. Nearly all commented that they had little agency in their own lives or control over the paths they were following. A lack of capabilities led to drastic restrictions in participants' options to construct a good life for themselves. Routes were selected out of necessity rather than desire

or choice, meaning participants had limited opportunity to develop a strong sense of identity or direction. Control was established as and when it could be, but this was often to an individual's detriment, usually resulting in a reduced sense of agency in the long-term.

Life remained in a similar state for many participants as they moved into adulthood with many aspects worsening as prison became a recurring fixture. Most participants' descriptions provided an insight into the instability both of life outside prison and of the turbulence of early sentences. For those who had spent time in the care system, prison held many familiar faces from previous environments. This indicated the added restrictions in life options for participants who had come from state care and the interconnection of the care system and prison. The acute isolation and instability described by those who were care-experienced reflected the added challenges they faced when trying to cope with life outside of state supervision. For those participants who had not experienced state care, challenges in their adult lives followed the same themes: ongoing substance use, offending, mental and physical health challenges all played a varying role in narrative accounts. The majority interviewed became used to the revolving prison door by this point in their adult lives. It became more challenging to pinpoint root causes of offending by this stage as contributing factors interlinked with the severe instabilities already present within participants' lives.

Participants' narratives revealed the ongoing and compounded restriction of individual capabilities. Many reported the relief that prison brought in the form of basic provisions such as food, shelter and warmth, supporting the capabilities of life, bodily health and bodily integrity. However, this was a double-edged sword as an increase in sentences led to a further reduction in viable options for participants to live in a law-abiding manner when back in the community. Many described the resignation they felt when they became aware of being bound to the criminal justice system as a way of life. Participants' options became so reduced that a law-abiding life was not, they thought, open to them. With this resolution came the acceptance of offending as part of their identity. Some of those interviewed described utilising earlier sentences to their advantage as a tool to further their criminal identity. This became a pseudo form of flourishing as individuals strived to provide well for themselves through crime. For others, particularly those with the severest addictions, daily life continued to focus on mere survival. Vivid accounts of homelessness, suicidal ideation and ongoing trauma painted a bleak picture of early adulthood for most of the participants. Many

poignantly commented that prison became a welcome stabiliser at points where they doubted their capacity to survive, indicating the distinct lack of state and personal support that was available to those in need.

The themes of agency and power continued to come to the fore in the individual accounts of adulthood. Participants described these capacities dwindling further at this stage which is not surprising given that prison, an institution that is designed to restrict a person's agency, was becoming more prevalent in their narratives. The desolation that addiction and deteriorating mental and emotional health brought to their lives left many participants believing they were not worthy of flourishing in any form. Sadly, none reported feeling any sense of power or agency by the time they were adults. Life was simply happening to participants and many felt they had no choice but to continue on as it was, with some tragically aware they were unlikely to survive it. Much like childhood and adolescence, power and control were grasped as and when they could be, usually in the form of a criminal identity for those participants who pursued this path more rigorously. They felt they were, in some ways, able to hold control over their identity and its development in a way that others were not.

Despite this bleak backdrop, tentative and hopeful steps forward emerged as participants discussed their more recent experiences of life and prison. Services and support were beginning to be utilised to their advantage and many participants had achieved some stability in their addiction recovery and mental health treatment. Much like the struggle for desistance, narrative accounts revealed that these quests for life progress are chequered with lapses and relapses. A return to the community often took participants back to an old way of life and the severe challenges that entailed. Services were often non-existent or difficult to engage with, meaning wellbeing was damaged once again. But, participants' determination to try and move towards a better life must be credited. Most have seized opportunities when in prison to engage with areas such as education and job training in the hope that they could utilise these capacities upon their next release.

Prison had become a location of improvement for all the participants in recent years. Again, it must be stressed that prison is not being recommended as an intervention to deal with the complex issues that had arisen in participants' lives. Had appropriate support been provided

at earlier points, this could have possibly improved options in the manner it had more recently. Services such as education, work training, mental health and addiction support (among others) helped participants to begin working towards the more stable futures they so desperately sought. While most stated they had been aware of these types of services during their previous sentences, it had only been recently that they felt ready to engage more fully with them. For most participants, this was due to two factors: firstly, a lack of maturity, interest and increasing personal instability meant they had not previously had the head space to think about anything other than serving their time; and secondly, how they felt about themselves and their hopes for the future had changed. Participants now wanted to use the opportunities available to them to try and make these hopes a reality.

After initial engagement with services such as education, many participants tapped into previously undiscovered abilities. Fortunately, their recent experiences with learning and in the classroom had been much more positive than their earlier school days. Many individuals described feeling more supported by staff as well as developing a better belief in themselves to be able to achieve. Those who were led to believe they were 'stupid' or 'bad' due to learning and behavioural issues, had now learned they had talents and qualities that superseded these negative memories. It had still taken time to improve their confidence but these participants were beginning to work these newfound qualities into their future ambitions. Interaction with learning (be that in education or work) and personal development (from health and wellbeing support) had brought an improvement in many participants' capabilities. Practical reason was the capability most alluded to during interview as each person described an engagement in planning their future in way that had not been present in their earlier lives.

The secondary desistance process was also alluded to by many during interview. Participants described a tangible internal shift in identity and the embracing of roles that would hopefully move them away from offending. Instead of the 'criminal', 'prisoner', 'gang member' or 'bad person' that was so easily applied to them by others, and internalised, throughout their lives, they had begun to see themselves as 'parent', 'student', 'employee', 'friend', among other roles. These roles had featured to some degree in earlier narratives, but personal issues often made it difficult to develop or sustain them. Many participants reported only recently having the self-confidence to adopt these roles whereas before they believed themselves to

be undeserving of positive things in life. Past spoiled identities, though internalised, were being utilised more positively by the time participants were interviewed. A number described a type of 'wounded healer' role in which they intended to use their negative experiences to help others in the same situations, particularly those younger in age. In this manner, what could be viewed as wasted years were now a constructive part of participants' identities that could both help others and shape their own futures. This internal shift that is essential to successful desistance was already beginning for most while they were still in prison (McNeill et al., 2012). Often the most challenging part of this is how it would be transferred beyond the prison walls and accepted by their loved ones and the wider community. The absence of this social acceptance, like problems with access to housing, employment and healthcare, could be a major and possibly insurmountable stumbling block to participants' successful desistance journeys.

Descriptions of individual futures all focused on similar ambitions – a house, relationships (both familial and romantic), employment, good health, recovery from their substance abuse issues – essentially a picture of stability with a healthy capability set. Participants' time and the services available in prison had been utilised to make slight improvements to their basic capabilities and begin the work needed to move towards these pictures of a good life. Still, a long and challenging road lies ahead. Motivation and the desire for a better life came across clearly in all the narratives. But what would eventually govern whether this happened was not just the determination of those concerned, but the support and goodwill of others once the participants' time in prison had passed.

The data discussed in this thesis argues that upholding the wellbeing and dignity of individuals in custody should be a focus within prison planning and strategy. As indicated, the effects of imprisonment can be complex and long-term. The wellbeing and dignity of many individuals in the prison system are often in a diminished state prior to custody due to various factors including health, socio-economic restrictions and a lack of access to services in the community. Prison is often relied upon to 'fix' these problems as well as attend to an organisational and government-led penal agenda. In recent years the Scottish Government and SPS have made notable steps in moving towards a more individualised and assets-based approach to custodial support. However, both structure and regime design needs to place more focus on the wellbeing and dignity of individuals in custody. Vastly outdated and

overcrowded prison buildings can impinge on the health and wellbeing of both prisoners and staff, while also sending a negative message about the living standards individuals in prison should be forced to endure. Rather than inflicting continual and ever-increasing restrictions, custodial spaces and regime need to be designed in a manner that increases an individual's potential to make choices. This would help to develop a sense of agency that is essential to successful desistance and healthy capabilities.

Based on the findings form this thesis, I contend that staff practices and support services also need to be designed and implemented in a manner that focuses on promoting an individual's wellbeing and capabilities rather than, as now, with an overt focus on 'fixing' a person's deficits and offending behaviours. While the hard-work of supportive officers is recognised in this research, the limitations of the offender management programmes to work in isolation to support desistance should be acknowledged. For example, most individuals with whom I worked and whose offending was linked to addiction displayed significant levels of self-awareness with regard to the root causes of their criminal behaviour. What many verbalised suggests an urgent need for a more constructive manner of support with robust and regular access to health and wellbeing services to help address the root causes of addiction rather than the related criminality.

Behavioural treatment of individuals in custody must be embedded with dignity at the core. Practices such as searching and restraint should be carried out in a manner that does not trigger previous trauma which upholds and respects an individual's human rights. Communication should build respect and trust with individuals regarded as mature human beings. Listening to and addressing people's often complex needs should help to increase wellbeing in the short and long-term. However, support for long-term change cannot be effective in isolation and SPS should expand their partnerships with skilled agencies to more robustly help individuals during and after their time in custody.

Since 2017, the provision of education in Scottish prisons has an altered structure in which programme tutors have replaced many of the qualified FE lecturers employed under the previous provision. While the commitment and ability of tutors is not questioned, the decreased requisites for the job role means certain levels of qualifications can no longer be offered to every learner. While many prisoners do not necessarily wish to engage with

education leading to qualifications, I argue that the provision of education should reflect that of the broader community in order that no learner is disadvantaged. General staffing numbers have also decreased, at times leading to a more restricted educational service for those who wish to engage. Similarly, to building provision, reducing the robustness and availability of education sends a wider negative message about the quality of services to which individuals in prison are entitled and which, I contend, they deserve.

Education services in prison need to be more robustly connected to the wider sector in order to provide longer-term opportunities for individuals to engage with learning. Students often verbalised a desire to continue with education after release but the provision in prisons does not adequately support this transition. Prisons are located across Scotland so stronger connections need to be built with the education sector for each establishment, not just, as now, between the SPS and their partnered education provider. FE and HE also need to recognise the value of education for those who opt to include it in their desistance journey and to provide a space and resources within and from their institutions to support and encourage this engagement. This links, of course, to the need for a broader and deeper attitudinal change towards individuals who have been in custody in order to increase the social bonds central to desistance.

The measurement of success of prison education should, additionally, become less focused on numerical and human capital. The recording of hours of student engagement and modules processed tells little of the personal development that individuals gain from learning. While tracking engagement figures is important to understand where and how educational services need to be promoted, relying on such measures as the main indication of worth does not recognise the value as a service that develops wellbeing. A more meaningful measurement of success would include a focus on the social capital and capabilities that are developed for individuals who engage with education while in custody.

9.3 Implications for Theory

1. *Prison education and the development of capabilities*

While much research has been done on capability development through education, no notable studies have specifically explored this within a prison learning context until this study. This thesis contributes by providing an understanding of how prison-based education can support the development of capabilities. It also explores the manner in which it attempts to redress capability damage that has accumulated in individuals' lives.

By exploring capability development within this context, this thesis also provides an informed perspective on the benefits of prison education. It offers detailed descriptions of the social, emotional and cognitive gains from the type of learning that goes beyond mere qualification and knowledge attainment. It is important to understand these benefits in order for them to be continually developed within educational provision and to defend education's place within the wider prisoner support structure.

2. *The benefits of education within the desistance journey*

This thesis contributes to the knowledge base by intersecting education with capability development and outlines the ways in which this can support the desistance journey. Previous research has focused on reduced recidivism as a measurement of success within prison support services (such as the Learning Centres). My findings have garnered user input at the point of utilising these services rather than retrospectively. This provides more nuanced and robust descriptions of the ways in which prison education has both developed capabilities and how participants aimed to utilise these to pursue desistance. This can help to inform the design and provision of services within prison so that capability development is promoted and linked to central underpinnings of desistance preparation. For example, a more robust link to the desistance process could be established for individuals in custody if personal agency growth became an embedded user-focus in all prison support services (such as prison designed offending rehabilitation programmes).

3. *The motivations to learner engagement*

Participants in this study shared their varied motivations for engaging in learning within the work sheds and education. Initial and sustained involvement in these sections of the regime can prove challenging for the prison service. This research provides first-hand and detailed accounts of how and why individuals come back to learning from a place of previous disengagement. The descriptions of beneficial engagement contained in this research can inform the design and promotion of support services in an attempt to capture and retain participation.

4. *The inherited and cumulative effect of capability restriction and offending*

The life narrative accounts in this thesis provide a robust documentation of the inherited and cumulative effect of disadvantage and capability restriction. While previous research has been undertaken in this area, none has focused specifically on how this contributes to offending behaviour over a life course. This addresses a gap in the literature that can again contribute to the provision of support services for those individuals affected.

5. *The role of hope and imagination in the constructing future desistance*

As my research was undertaken with participants that were still incarcerated, their descriptions of desistance were imagined and projected. The only concrete points of progress were those achieved during incarceration that participants believed would support them post-release, such as job-training and qualifications. Participants displayed notable hope when describing the lives they had begun working towards. Their imagined future desistance will play a central role in sustaining this positive outlook throughout their sentences and so, can be viewed as an important foundation to desistance. Some prior research has discussed this type of desistance (see Soyer, 2014) and this thesis adds to that knowledge base.

9.4 Limitations of this Research

1. Considerations regarding generalisability

Due to time restrictions, only twenty mainstream adult prisoners were accessed for this research. No generalisability, and certainly no statistically verifiable generalisability can be drawn from this participant sample size. However, analytical generalisability can be drawn from wider characteristics of the sample. Ages ranged from 25-55 with a male/female representation higher than the current sex split in the prison population (females made up 15% of my research group and currently make up 5% of the Scottish prison population). Both short and long-term sentence length was represented in a 35% to 65% split. Individuals serving repeat sentences were a larger portion of sample (80%) but first-offence experience was represented by two participants (20%). Life sentence and top end facility experience was also included. Both education and work attendees were involved (with a 70%/30% split respectively) as well as a variety of learning levels from no-qualification to undergraduate degree. This helped to explore the effects of varied learning contexts, levels and experiences. Both research locations encompass areas and custodial residents from varying socio-economic backgrounds (middle class to living below the poverty line). By sampling these wider participant characteristics, the study invites consideration in extending these experiences to others in similar situations. However, at the same time it does not focus on smaller scale demographics such as young people, the ageing population, members of the LGBTQ+ community and individuals serving a sentence for a sexual offence. The data that is presented and conclusions drawn may not be as directly applicable to these groups and further research would be needed.

2. Restrictions in sample engagement

This research utilised participants that were seen as being 'engaged' in some form of skills-development during their term of incarceration. This produced data that leans towards positivity regarding the support provided in prison. There are sections of the prisoner population that choose not to interact with the regime for various reasons and their opinion has less of a representation within this thesis. However, I would argue that it is still present as participants provided rich descriptions of their lack of engagement during previous sentences, meaning the factors that contribute to this disengaged state have been considered with the research. What was more of a focus was how and why participants re-engaged from

this marginalised position. Future research could include a more detailed consideration of the disengaged population in order to ascertain the influences on this disconnection.

3. Lack of post-release follow-up

As research interviews were carried out with participants while they were still in custody, descriptions of desistance after release are projected. This provides accounts of what individuals perceive will be of most support once they are back in the community. But it does not trace whether these ambitions were realised by the participants or if the progress made while in custody improved their ability to desist.

4. Exploratory and opinion based

In my research methodology chapter, I outlined the measures I undertook in order to verify the credibility, transferability dependability and confirmability of my research (see Geertz, 1983; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Gasson, 2004; Morrow, 2005). To ensure the credibility, I utilized prolonged engagement in my research field and persistent observation of participants (both as teacher and researcher) which gave me another opportunity (outside interviews) to familiarise myself with the types of issues that affected my research group. I also ensured dependability in my data by remaining reflexive at each stage through self-reflection and note taking as well as discussion and review of my work by my supervisors. This ensured I kept personal bias to a minimum and allowed the rich participant data to emerge and lead my analysis and findings. Participant checks were ensured by carrying out two interviews with each participant, checking for clarity and expanding detail, allowing the opportunity to correct any errors of interpretation. Validation and verification were undertaken by examining the data through various theoretical lenses which included the CA, desistance research, attachment theory and studies on childhood adversity. Credibility and richness of data was secured by gaining as much detail throughout interviews of participants' biographical contexts as well as experiences of certain areas, such as education. Thick descriptions were ensured by connecting and cross-referencing participants' narratives in order to provide extracts and verify thematic commonalities. The utilisation of a case study in each chapter further demonstrated the connectivity between individual life accounts. Transferability and generalisability are discussed above and not drawn from this research due to the small number of participants involved. However, through the tracking and descriptions of my research design and analysis (in notes, diagrams and node groupings) an

audit trail was established should other researchers wish to undertake similar studies with other participants group(s) in the future.

However, I also recognise that this research is exploratory and opinion based and therefore holds some restrictions. Participants rightly only divulged aspect of themselves and their lives that they felt comfortable sharing with me. The passage of time and self-selection both affect the content of the data. While the CA was utilised as a continual framework throughout this research to measure participants' wellbeing over their life span, the interview data produced was based on individual opinion and interpretation. The possible links made between education, wellbeing, capability development and possible desistance by both myself and participants were exploratory. The use of the CA as a wellbeing measurement lends robustness to this research but connections do not represent proven cause and effect.

9.5 Implications for Future Research

1. A starting point

Despite its limited focus on imagined desistance, this research can be utilised as a starting point for further research into early desistance during incarceration and its links to continued desistance post-release (see Soyer, 2014 for a discussion of early desistance processes during incarceration). A longitudinal study that tracks progress during and after incarceration of people who re/engaged with education during imprisonment would present a fuller picture of the success (or not) of the progress that is made while in custody and the various forms of support needed for desistance to be successful.

2. A framework of wellbeing

Applying the CA as a measurement of wellbeing during incarceration could also be utilised in future research. Benefit would be gained from using the same framework for other populations in the prison estate, such as young people and the ageing population, among others. This can also measure individual levels of agency while in custody, helping the SPS and services ascertain whether this is being achieved in a manner that supports capability development and desistance.

3. Educational practice and the development of capabilities.

This research contributes to the ongoing discussion on how educational interventions can support an expansion of capabilities (see Kiff, 2018). This has been discussed throughout this research in both the primary and secondary context as well as prison-based education. When connected to the desistance process and the provision of community-based support post release, this research is a starting off point to gauge the ability of individuals to convert the capital gained through education into capabilities and improved wellbeing (see Chiappero et al., 2018; Hart, 2018). It would be insightful to extend this study post-release to try and ascertain the varying levels of support that individuals may need for this conversion to occur.

4. Education as a transformative space

This research contributes to the ongoing discussion of the transformative nature of education, particularly in the context of prison. Similar to comments from my participants, previous research has indicated that education is seen as a space less associated with the rules and rehabilitation programmes of the wider prison. Instead it is often viewed as a more neutral and non-threatening environment to reflect and engage with the self and others, helping to develop agency and individual paths forward (see Behan, 2014; Pollack and Edwards, 2018).

5. Assisted desistance

The narrative nature of this research connects to others that seek to explore and explain the nuances of how various support services can assist the desistance process (see Bottoms and Shapland, 2016; Healy, 2016; Maruna and Mann, 2019; Wincup, 2019). Instead of measuring the success of educational intervention through reduced recidivism as an end point, this type of research presents more detailed descriptions of how a service such as education (and other support services) can begin to support the desistance process. This can help to make future intervention design more impactful, helping organisations such as the SPS to become desistance-focused rather than utilising desistance programmes.

6. Supporting individual flourishing

By tracing the connective path into and away from offending with limited and expanded capability sets, research of this type can contribute to the debate on how individualised desistance actually is. Capability restrictions presented in this thesis indicate a connection to the limited choices that can direct a person towards offending. The improved capabilities, as well as the human and social capital that participants gained through educational engagement, indicate that interventions and better access to services (such as education and work-based learning) have a structural role to play in the desistance process. This contributes to the discussion around the shift to a more strengths and welfare-based approach to rehabilitation in Scotland (see Schinkel, 2014; McNeill, 2016b)

9.6 Implications for Policy and Practice

1. Intervention throughout lives needs to be robust and effective

The life narratives described in this thesis indicate that intervention needs to come earlier and in a more robust manner. While there is evidence within participants' accounts of intermittent support, many described not feeling it was structured enough or they were not consulted adequately during the process for it to make a notable difference. Prison can be viewed as the last opportunity to address an individuals' issues, but this should not be relied upon as the location to access and provide the most comprehensive support. Incarceration damages more than it creates solutions so effective intervention should ideally occur much earlier in these types of life narratives. Recently progress is being made in this area with an increased focus on Early and Effective Intervention (EEI) across the youth justice and care sector, but improvements in this must continue to be a focus.

2. Design support services that develop capabilities and agency

The development of agency is central to capability functioning but also successful desistance. As such, support services both in and outside of prison should focus on capability attainment and promoting agentic actions within individuals. Overcoming social problems, such as housing, employment and relationships is often not enough for desistance to be successful in the long term. Motivation, agency and a threshold capability set all need to exist for individuals coming out of prison to harness and live a 'good life' of their own

design. Participants described that this in itself creates a reason to stay motivated and crime free when faced with obstacles. The ability to make choices should be developed as this can often be damaged by the strictures of the regime itself. Past research has indicated that pre-release motivation can be quickly diminished when faced with the variety of obstacles back in the community (Nugent and Schinkel, 2016). Thus, similar to capability and agency improvement, the development of resilience should also be a central focus to support services.

3. *Measure wellbeing more comprehensively within prison*

While various research is conducted both by academics and the prison service, utilising a framework such as the CA to comprehensively measure wellbeing while in custody would be welcomed. The Cambridge Institute of Prison Research has developed a tool for measuring the moral performance and quality of life within prison, looking at areas such as humanity and dignity for staff and residents (Liebling, 2011). While some of the data that would be generated using that framework may correlate with one that focuses on capability development, there are arguments in utilising both to generate a more comprehensive view of wellbeing within a custodial setting. Simply focusing on reduced recidivism as a measure of success does not provide a detailed enough account of what is currently being done and the ways in which services can be improved to create better support for those in custody.

4. *Promote user voice in the design and delivery of support services*

Research has indicated that when individuals in prison have been asked about effective supervision, they stated that they valued being listened to and recognised as individuals within the system. Due to this, it has been argued that it would make for more effectively designed intervention services if service users were involved in their design (see Sapouna et al., 2011). While this is beginning to happen within the SPS, user voice must be fully utilised both in and outside the prison in order to make support meaningful and robust. More specifically, descriptions from this research surrounding re-engagement in learning can be used to promote the positives of service interaction to staff. This would hopefully increase prisoner referrals to areas such as education. Desistance processes differ for different people in different contexts (McNeill, 2009), so the design and delivery of support must reflect this. Staff members across the estate (particularly those involved in case management) should approach support in a more individualised and empathetic manner. Again, some progress

has been made in this area by SPS through changes in staff recruitment and training to a value and ethics-based design.

5. *Design services to reflect those in the community*

Services within the prison should reflect the structure and link with those back in the community as closely as possible. For example, the provision of education should foster stronger ties with the FE sector in order for individuals to continue their learner journey post-release should they wish to do so. While provision is supplied by an FE college at present, it is often treated as a separate entity and has little contact with the wider sector. Getting students placed within FE and HE institutions in preparation for release relies on staff motivation rather than a robust throughcare service. If stronger links were established then this could be addressed. Likewise, if employment in the prison reflected the 'normal working day' as much as possible then this would result in more robust preparation for individuals to be able to adapt to and retain employment back in the community. There has been work towards this within prison but it should be more of a focus in the future.

6. *Strengthen community links and integration opportunities*

Available alternatives to an individual's primary identity (as criminal) can be limited due to a lack of society's level of tolerance. Moreover, reintegrating a new identity back into the community can be a very challenging part of the process due to a perceived lack of trustworthiness towards individuals. However, it is trustworthiness that is used as collateral to gain employment, secure housing, and so on. The stigma of being an 'ex-offender' can heavily discredit the individual and stunt their ability to develop a new role in society. Research suggests that individuals who feel a welcomed part of their community are less likely to reoffend than those who feel stigmatised. When stronger emotional ties are developed with members of their wider networks then individuals are more likely to consider the feelings of those involved in these social networks when deliberating about reverting back to criminal behaviour (Veysey et al., 2009). Thus, prisons need to maximise community links for those in custody in order for these relationships to suffer less damage and for reintegration to be more supported. This, in turn, should reduce the likelihood of a return to custody.

The SPS Throughcare Service for short-term prisoners was disbanded in recent months in order to address severe staffing issues throughout the estate. This service had supported positive work for those reintegrating after release (Maycock et al., 2019) and the recommendation is that this service is reinstated once staffing allows and that it should also be extended to support long-term prisoners.

7. Address societal barriers to reintegration

If agency development is to become a central support focus, wider social barriers need to be addressed in order for this to become meaningful. Blocking opportunities in areas such as employment and housing undoes a lot of the work on capability development and agency that participants have described within this research. Structures should be designed to enable rather than constrain (Farrall et al., 2010), with social policy and support provision reflecting this focus.

A wider societal shift also needs to occur for reintegration to become easier. Terminology such as 'ex-offender' should be changed in order to overcome labels that can be placed on an individual long past their release. This has generally occurred throughout academic writing but does not extend much beyond the academy. The general attitude from the top down towards those who have served custodial sentences and wish to move forward in life must become one of trust and support for this shift to occur. There is evidence of these types of structural changes having successfully occurred in Scandinavian countries (see Lappi-Seppala, 2006; Rubenson and Desjardins, 2009), who now testify to some of the lowest global re-offending rates.

8. Alter the narrative surrounding desistance

Research has shown that desistance is not a linear but rather a back and forth process before stability is attained (McNeill, 2009; Farrell et al., 2010). Often this narrative is restricted to those who carry out or come into contact with this type of research. This needs to be verbalised more robustly to those in custody. Often the despair and guilt that I witnessed in my students who were released and returned was crippling, undoing much of the progress that had been made up to that point. If it was comprehensively explained to individuals tackling the desistance process that this is often part of the journey and indicate the positives

of what they have achieved (for example, they may have managed to stay out much longer than the last time or secured a job that is being kept open for them), then perhaps motivation could be sustained rather than damaged. On a research basis, the SPS also has the opportunity to engage with individuals who repeatedly come back into custody to gain deeper understanding of what supported and hampered their reintegration after their last release. Gauging the success of a support service through the single measurement of reduced recidivism overlooks the nuanced details of development that a service can provide. By engaging with individuals who have returned to custody, the SPS can explore what facets of support helped individuals both pre- and post-release and develop their services accordingly, leading to more robust and meaningful interventions.

9.7 Statement of Thesis

Disadvantage and capability damage are multi-faceted, inherited and often intergenerationally compounded. These conditions negatively affect an individual's ability to engage with various support structures within their lives (such as education), leading to a worsening rather than an improvement of these inherited states. Restricted capabilities directly reduce both options and agency, reducing individuals to pursuing their basic survival needs as opposed to allowing any form of flourishing. When this happens, people are forced to select from the limited paths open to them even if these will create further damage (for example, substance use and offending). While time in custody can bring basic stability to an individual's everyday life, it also impairs capabilities more than it enhances them and should not be relied upon to 'fix' individuals. However, timely and robust support does exist within prison and individuals can begin to make progress towards desistance within this challenging environment. Agency and capability development are key to much of this progress and both can be attained through education and skills-development. Imagined desistance is a powerful tool in discovering and sustaining personal progress but this must be linked to ongoing support back in the community for long-term change to be possible.

9.8 Conclusion

This concluding chapter has presented an overview of research findings and utilised the thesis statement to address the original research questions. I have also considered the limitations of this research and its strengths both as a standalone thesis and for use in future work. The implications of my findings for policy and practice provided recommendations at both organisational and governmental level.

This project has gathered, analysed and discussed rich, biographical accounts of a group of Scottish prisoners engaged with various forms of education or training. From looking at the wider context of their life narratives and the complex challenges therein, the integral connection between capability damage and disadvantage has been evidenced. The central role of education within the attainment of capabilities and its ability to improve impoverished states has also been demonstrated. Finally, the relationship between capability development, engagement with learning and imagined or early desistance has been explored. The narratives within this research offer affective human accounts of the often-insurmountable challenges that face those within our modern criminal justice system. Barriers to obtaining a good life, in which people can flourish, often seem to be in place from birth. Attempting to address these barriers by the time the person has reached incarceration is a hugely challenging but not impossible task, both organisationally and individually. As well as persisting in supporting change through education in prison, we should do all we can to reduce the likelihood of these types of narratives developing for others in the future. To do so will require significant and enduring transformation at every level in Scottish society. My hope is that these shifts take place in time to improve all of our futures; that would be a fitting response to those who so kindly and generously shared their own stories in this thesis.

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Appendix 1 – First-round Interview Sample Script

Childhood and Primary School

- **Tell me about your experience of primary school?**
- What was your school like?
- What did you enjoy/not enjoy about school?
- What was your attendance like?

- **Tell me about your home and family environment during this time?**
- What quality of life did you have at this stage?
- How important was school to those caring for you?

Teenage Years and Secondary School:

- **Tell me about your experience of secondary school?**
- What role did learning and school play during these years?
- If you disengaged from it, how and why did this happen?
- What effect did this have on your life?
- If you stayed engaged in learning and school, what did you gain from it?

- **Tell me about your wider life during your teenage years?**
- How did life begin to develop and change for you?
- What was your home environment like during this stage?
- What quality of life did you have at this stage?

Adult Life and Prison:

- **Tell me about your life as an adult?**
- How did your life change and develop during this stage?
- How did offending develop at this stage of your life?
- What do you remember about your early experience(s) of prison?
- What quality of life do you have at this stage?

- **Tell me about your most recent experience in prison?**
- What role has education and learning played in this period of your life?
- What motivated you to do re-engage?
- What importance do you place on education and learning now?

Closing Questions:

- **What do you think has been developed through interacting with education?**
- **How do you think it helps develop your options and choices for the future?**
- **In an ideal world what would you be doing/what person would you be?**
- **How do you think education can help you with that?**

Appendix 2 – Second Round Interview Sample Script

**Not all questions would be asked as many covered during participant descriptions

Childhood and Primary School:

- Can you explain in more detail why you think you struggled with primary school?
- Why do you think you struggled with anger in school? Why do you think these behaviours emerged?
- How did your issues with bullying and learning difficulties makes you feel?
- What did school mean to you at this point?

- School was important to your parents. How did they encourage you to engage with it?
- How did they handle your issues and behaviour?

- How the problems in your home life affect you as a child?
- How do you think your home life contributed to your well-being?
- In what ways do you think your family developed you as a person?

Teenage Years and Secondary School:

- How did the worsening bullying and learning issues make you feel in secondary school?
- How did that impact your life and identity?
- Why do you think you struggled with aspects of high school?
- What did school mean to you at that stage of your life?

- What would school have to have been like to be good for you personally?
- How did you feel about disengaging from school?

- Why did your friends have such an influence over you at this stage?
- What effect did they have on your life?

- What would you say was important to you when you were a teenager?
- How did you see yourself as a person at that stage?
- How did you imagine your adult life unfolding in the future?

Adult Life and Prison:

- How did the loss of your father affect you at this stage?
- How did your worsening drug use and mental health affect you and your everyday life?

- What do you think was the main influence(s) behind your early offending?
- What effect did your early offending have on your life?
- How did you see yourself after this?

- What effect did prison have on your life and identity
- You said prison has helped you. Can you expand on this?
- How do you think you can carry this on to your life outside?

Life Now and the Future:

- What skills do you think are being developed in the classroom?
- How do you think these skills will help you for the future?

- What do you think you gain from learning and training at this stage in your life?
- What value do you place on it now compared to when you were at school?

- What is important to you in life now?
- What role does education play in your plans to realise these hopes?

- Can you describe what you'd like yourself and your life to look like in the future?
- What do you think will help you for when you are released from prison?
- Again, why this particular developmental path? Where do you think it will take you?

Appendix 3 - Thematic Data Chart

Stage 1:

All nodes

Stage 2:

Life Stage (nodes)

Stage 3:

Themes

Stage 4

Links to Research/Theory

Stage 5:

Thesis Sections

Adaptive preferences
Authority
Behavioural issues
Capabilities
Care system
College
Desistance
Employment
Future projection
Home environment
Identity/agency
Life events
Health
Offending
Peer influence
Positive developments
Prison
Relationships
Residential/secure unit
School
Skillset
Substance use

Childhood:
Adaptive preferences
Behavioural Issues
Capabilities
Care system
Home environment
Identity/agency
Life events
Health
Peer influence
Residential/secure unit
School
Substance use

Teenage Years:
Adaptive preferences
Authority
Behavioural Issues
Capabilities
Care System
College
Employment
Future projection
Home environment
Identity/agency
Life events
Health
Offending
Peer influence
Prison
Relationships
Residential/secure unit
School
Substance Use

Trauma/abuse
Instability
Fractured family bonds
Poverty/disadvantage
Capability restriction
Behavioural issues
Health/mental health issues
Problems at school
Bullying/being bullied
Isolation/marginalisation
Powerlessness
Early substance use (some)

Ongoing disadvantage/capability restriction
Anti-authority behaviour
Increased peer influence
Increased isolation/marginalisation
Disengagement from school
Early offending
Periods of study/employment
Lack of direction/identity awareness
Powerlessness
Ongoing fracture family bonds
Worsening health/mental health issues
Early/increased substance use (all)
Early sentences (some)
Personal relationships (some unstable)

Childhood:
Trauma/ACEs
Attachment
Habitus/field
CA
Disadvantage
Self-efficacy
Identity development
Agency development
Influences on HHBs

Teenage Years:
Trauma (ongoing effects)
Social bonds/social control theory
Habitus/field
CA (ongoing restriction)
Disadvantage (compounding)
Identity development
Agency development
School engagement/attainment
Substance use (influences and effects)
Early offending (influences and effects)

Chapter 5:
Primary School
Learning Issues
Bullying to Bully
Home Environment
Dignity and Agency
Nurture
The Care System

Chapter 6:
Disengagement from School
Boundaries
Guidance
Social Bonds
Substance Use
Identity
Early Offending

Appendix 3 (continued)

Stage 1:	Stage 2:	Stage 3:	Stage 4:	Stage 5:
All Nodes	**Life Stage (nodes)**	**Themes**	**Links to Research/Theory**	**Thesis Sections**

Stage 1: All Nodes

Adaptive preferences
Authority
Behavioural issues
Capabilities
Care system
College
Desistance
Employment
Future projection
Home environment
Identity/agency
Life events
Health
Offending
Peer influence
Positive developments
Prison
Relationships
Residential/secure unit
School
Skillset
Substance use

Stage 2: Life Stage (nodes)

Adult Years:
Adaptive preferences
Authority
Capabilities
College
Desistance
Employment
Future projection
Identity/agency
Life events
Health
Offending
Positive developments
Prison
Relationships
Skillset
Substance use

Stage 3: Themes

Ongoing disadvantage/capability restriction
Ongoing anti-authority (some lessening)
Periods of study/employment (some linked to reduced recidivism)
Periods of stability
Reoccurring/worsening offending
Small increases in direction/identity development
Ongoing health/mental health issues
Ongoing substance use issues
Some control over various issues (above)
Change in prison experiences
Engagement with work/education
Different experience of learning
Positive development in direction/identity
Projected desistance
Future hopes/aims

Stage 4: Links to Research/Theory

Habitus/field
CA (restriction and development)
Disadvantage (compounding)
Attachment (ongoing effects)
Trauma (ongoing effects)
Agency development
Self-efficacy
Social bonds
Education and development/ transformative learning
Identity development/shift
Desistance (various aspects of this process)

Stage 5: Thesis Sections

Chapter 7:
Ongoing Capability Restriction
Increased Offending
State Intervention
Early Sentences
Prison Now

Chapter 8:
Education in Prison
Desistance
A New Narrative
Giving Back
Imagined Desistance
Motivation and Ongoing Opportunity