Middlesex University and Metanoia Institute

Resilience to Re-offending: mechanisms supporting young men to overcome adversity Research Thesis

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Acknowledgments

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Abstract

This study investigated the mechanisms supporting young men's resilience to reoffending. Resilience was defined as "the outcome from negotiations between individuals and their environments for the resources to define themselves as healthy amidst conditions collectively viewed as adverse" (Ungar, 2004a, p.32). The philosophical approach was critical realist (Bhaskar, 1978) and the methodology used was narrative enquiry, employing content analysis (Lieblich et al., 1998) to elicit mechanisms from the data. Eight young men with previous involvement in the criminal justice system were recruited from organisations in Hastings, East Sussex. They participated in a narrative interview which explored their life stories and the mechanisms utilised to change their offending trajectory.

The study used Hart and Blincow's Resilient Therapy (RT) Framework (2007), to categorise the data. Mechanisms within the framework, located within categories such as Basics, Belonging, Learning, Core Self and Coping, were applied to the young men's experience, to understand the application of RT in promoting resilience to reoffending. All categories of RT were pertinent in nurturing their pathways to resilience. Further analysis of the data elicited additional resilient mechanisms absent within RT. Proposed additions included Clothes within the Basics compartment, and Humour, an important mechanism facilitating coping and affiliation, included within the Belonging and Coping compartments. Social capital was instrumental to the young men's resilience, providing them with essential coping resources; a further recommendation was to rename the Belonging compartment "social capital".

This research challenges common discourses of risk. The young men demonstrated how the experiences and environments where they encountered risk were important in cultivating their resilience to reoffending. Within counselling psychology, this

reinforces the notion of focusing on the subjective experience of the individual, embracing uncertainty, bracketing assumptions and extending traditional boundaries when promoting resilience with vulnerable young men.

This study corroborated existing research demonstrating resilience as the outcome of both individual and social processes (Luthar and Cicchetti, 2000; Prilleltensky, 2005; Hart and Blincow, 2007). With respect to counselling psychology practice it presents a challenge to individualised therapeutic interventions, encouraging counselling psychologists to become active participants in changing the social systems that impact on an individual's resilience, reconciling their roles as healers with their role as change agents. RT (Hart and Blincow, 2007) provides a systemic application of mechanisms targeting both micro- and macro-level processes, offering an extension to counselling psychology practice necessary to promote resilience to reoffending.

1 Introduction

This research presents a narrative exploration of the mechanisms that nurture resilience to reoffending amongst young adult males. Adopting a critical realist stance, my intention was to understand the mechanisms used by young men to change their trajectory, applying this knowledge to support new practice perspectives. The research draws upon Hart and Blincow's Resilient Therapy Framework (2007) to categorise the data. The research is influenced by Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological model of human development. This model proposes that in order to understand human development, one must consider the entire ecological system in which growth occurs. Resilience research by Cowen et al. (1997) and Luthar (1999) highlights that there is more to understand regarding underlying mechanisms or processes and their contribution to positive outcomes. Within youth justice, "desistance" is the term used to describe an individual's cessation from criminal behaviour, and Mulvey et al. (2004) illustrate how this remains one of the most widely recognised yet least understood aspects of criminology. Within counselling psychology, Davy and Hutchinson (2010) highlight how research and practice focusing on young people generally is limited and slowly progressing. This research can offer a contribution to the psychological therapies, resilience and youth justice research regarding the mechanisms that nurture resilience following offending, and how to cultivate resilience in practice. From a theoretical perspective, this research challenges some common discourses on risk and contributes to theory-building in relation to understanding protective processes, mechanisms, chain reactions and turning points supporting young men's resilient pathways.

1.1 Overview of the thesis

I begin the introduction by highlighting how my interest in the topic of resilience and young people has developed. I explore various definitions of resilience and describe the one subscribed to within this research. I consider the individual, their context, and the reciprocal interaction between the two in nurturing resilience. The literature review highlights how resilience research has evolved, shifting from thinking in terms of factors towards processes and mechanisms. It outlines narrative research pertaining to resilience and desistance, and shows the rationale for focusing on resilience to reoffending. Following this, I discuss mechanisms identified within the research as underpinning both processes; I draw on mechanisms and narratives within both concepts as there is a crossover between the two, and both have implications for my findings. I present a range of therapeutic interventions to enhance resilience. My central argument is that it is critical to work at an individual, social and political level to facilitate change. This turns the focus to the RT framework. The introduction concludes with the contribution that this research offers to counselling psychology and psychotherapy practice.

The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows. The methodology section details the rationale for grounding this research project within a critical realist philosophy and using narrative enquiry as the methodological approach. It highlights the process adopted to analyse the participants' accounts using content analysis. The findings section illustrates mechanisms within the RT framework that nurtured the young men's resilience to reoffending. In the discussion I elucidate additional mechanisms pertinent to the young men's resilience, and the contribution that such mechanisms offer the framework. I attend to other concepts that were present in the data that add value both to the RT framework and to practice within the psychological therapies. To conclude I summarise the themes that emerged and the

theoretical and practical contributions. In the appendices I include my coding framework, providing transparency as to how my findings were derived.

1.2 My personal interest in the research

Education has been a personal resilient mechanism. A significant turning point was the funding of my counselling psychology and psychotherapy training, provided through a manager who believed in and encouraged my potential: as a working class young woman I gained access to a middle class profession which nurtured my aspirations. My interest in resilience began when I attended a presentation by Professor Angie Hart on Resilient Therapy (RT). I was commissioning a health service for young people entitled "Pulse" in Hastings, East Sussex at the time, and resilience captured my interest personally and professionally. With my limited knowledge, I reflected how young people who expressed their emotions in socially unacceptable ways were sometimes labelled as "non-resilient" in professional forums. This ignited a professional drive to understand more in relation to young people experiencing and taking risks, particularly in relation to their offending behaviour. What was the impact of such risks, and how did they express and manage such encounters? I was particularly interested in viewing this in relation to the concept of resilience.

I have worked with young people for ten years. I have been struck by the challenges young people face and their response to adversity. During my professional career, I developed a curiosity as to why some young people with similar backgrounds do better than others. I also wondered how young people manage to turn their lives around after experiencing trauma, and why certain experiences appear more risky to some than to others. Finally, I was fascinated to understand how adversity can be positive for some young people. My early career in youth work and as an Integrative Psychological therapist led, through professional curiosity and frustration, to a wish

to understand how, in the midst of disadvantage and risk, an individual can transform their route.

With both personal and professional agendas, my interest in resilience grew after attending the RT seminar, and I felt resilience research would add value to my existing research ideas. I applied for a bursary through Angie Hart's team to attend a conference on the Social Ecology of Resilience in Halifax, Canada. This was the beginning of a serendipitous journey, full of unexpected turning points and positive chain reactions. The conference provided me with an opportunity to spend time with practitioners who were implementing and researching the RT Framework, supporting my understanding and an application of the evidence base in practice. As RT was being delivered in Hastings, I recognised the value of integrating it into my research framework. Following the conference, Angie Hart agreed to be my research supervisor. I presented my research idea at a local resilience conference with a young man who had taken part, and our presentation was positively received.

My developmental and social history has shaped my beliefs about resilience. It will have influenced my relationship with the research participants and my interpretation of their experiences. It has no doubt influenced my choice of research question. I have endeavoured to set out my beliefs and reactions throughout this thesis in an attempt to be transparent and enable the reader to draw their own conclusions on the validity and relevance of my findings.

1.3 The Research Aim

The aim of this study was to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are the internal and external mechanisms that young men utilise to support them through challenging times?

2. How do the different mechanisms nurture their resilience?

3. What mechanisms are supportive at increasing their resilience to reoffending?

My aim within this research was to understand the pathways young men take on their search towards health. Through the young men's narratives I will highlight the internal and external initiatives they brought into their lives, sometimes through unexpected avenues, and acknowledge the unique pathways they chose with the means available to them.

1.4   Defining resilience: a complex phenomenon

It is important to begin by defining resilience. Used in everyday language, resilience describes anybody who has overcome difficult times. "Bouncing back" and "overcoming the odds" are expressions illustrating how an individual adapts. Put simply, resilience is something we all have that enables us to get through life, and mechanisms within our environments such as family, peers, support services and significant turning points can support the resilience process. If we focus on resilience as simply "bouncing back", then the concept becomes too broad and redundant to offer any benefit. This deceptively simple construct is in fact rife with complexities, ambiguities and contradictions, affirmed in earlier reviews of the literature by Kaplan (1999), which I will return to in this section.

Resilience has grown to be a major concept in research on developmental psychopathology and its use in practice is growing within social work and education, conveying the idea that individuals can avoid negative outcomes despite the presence of significant risk factors in their environments. And individuals can function "normally" after developmental setbacks, with and without interventions (Rutter, 1987; Garmezy, 1991). Two distinct judgments are required before a resilient pattern of adaptation can be defined: first, a judgment that there has been a

significant threat to the individual's development, and second that the current or eventual adaptation of the individual is satisfactory, by a set of criteria. Other definitions of resilience acknowledge that it is a process and it occurs in a distinct context, such as when "a person exceeds the expectations that is warranted by an individual's (or community's) biographical field" (Arrington and Wilson, 2000, p.225) or a "dynamic process encompassing positive adaptation within the context of significant adversity" (Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker, 2000a, p.543). The inclusion of context and process indicates a concession that risks and positive outcomes vary between contexts, and that resilience occurs as a process over time.

When faced with multiple definitions of resilience, confusion can arise when conducting research in this field. Masten and Obradovic (2006) suggest that the answer is to ensure that risk, positive outcomes and resilience are operationally defined with caution in all settings. Through applying this caution, each research context will have a unique set of risks and positive outcomes that are dependent upon the resources or demands of that context.

Focusing on young men, we know they experience their context and risks differently. For example, between two young men from a low socioeconomic community, one may perceive an adverse situation as challenging, and the other may not; one may perceive being arrested as a risk, while the other sees this experience as positive. So whereas Masten and Obradovic's (2006) proposal addresses the difference between contexts, it remains problematic, as risks and positive outcomes are also dependent on the individuals' perception. Therefore, definitions of resilience that include context but exclude individual perceptions may provide a contextually relevant measure of resilience that is irrelevant to the individual within that context.

Howard Kaplan (1999) warns against adopting a normative view of resilience: "A major limitation with the concept of resilience is that it is tied to the normative judgements related to particular outcomes. If the outcomes were not desirable, then the ability to reach the outcomes in the face of putative risk factors would not be considered resilience. Yet it is possible that the socially defined desirable outcome may be subjectively defined as undesirable, while the socially defined undesirable outcome may be subjectively viewed as desirable. From the subjective point of view, the individual may be manifesting resilience, while from the social point of view; the individual may be manifesting vulnerability" (1999, pp.31–32).

I concur with Kaplan: viewing resilience through a narrow lens of conventional behaviours risks dismissing those young people living beyond such conventions, who argue that their unconventional behaviour maintains their health.

Ungar (2004) provides a definition that includes both the context and the individual's perception of the risk, which is used as the guiding definition within this research. He proposes resilience as "the outcome from negotiations between individuals and their environments for the resources to define themselves as healthy amidst conditions collectively viewed as adverse" (2004, p.32). This explanation is comprehensive, acknowledging how the individual perceives their environment, external resources, and the interaction between the two. This is an interesting definition coming from Ungar, who defines himself as a postmodernist, proposing a socially constructed view; it reflects a critical realist stance which could be contradictory although he himself doesn't define it as such.

I also recognise a further tension. Completely focusing on the young person's perception will not support their societal integration if they continue to engage in isolating activities which make interventions challenging. Ungar and Teram (2005)

state: "An extreme postmodernist stance suggesting that youth are healthy as long as they perceive themselves as such and convince others that they are, will not advance the interests of youth" (2005, p.156). Therefore, when defining resilience it is important to find the balance between respecting young people's self-definitions and affirming what is required of them to participate fully within society. By including context and individual perceptions, multiple definitions of adversity and positive outcomes can be accessed. Stories of resilience that challenge the mainstream can be identified, and risks, mechanisms and processes can be understood in greater detail through accessing first-hand experiences.

Once we move beyond simple definitions, resilience becomes more complex. Our understanding of resilience has advanced through research, yet due to the confusion around the concept, many scholars have questioned whether it actually helps to advance theory, research or practice (Bartelt, 1994; Kaplan, 1999). The fog that surrounds resilience research can be cleared to some extent by complexity theory, a brief overview of which offers a useful contribution to our discussion. Complexity theory is just beginning to have a substantial impact on the human sciences and on the ways in which scientific explanations are framed. Valuable articles by Moran (1991), Quniodoz (1997) and Miller (1999) have explored its relevance to psychoanalysis. Complexity theory can enhance our understanding of resilience by providing an alternative to causal and deterministic models which struggle to account for the multidimensionality of human processes. The theory suggests that we can transcend the unwelcome dichotomy between causal reductionism on the one hand, and a merely interpretive investigation of narratives on the other. Authors such as Smith (2005) suggest we look for order and coherence in a different place, neither in the spheres of intention and meaning alone, nor in those of deterministic structures or mechanisms.

Smith (2005) proposes a non-proportional relation between cause and effect, suggesting that small inputs can have large effects. Considering resilience, this encourages me to explore the way the whole system and its constituent parts interact to create the continually moving ground on which individuals negotiate their way towards health. Complexity theory can offer Psychological therapists hope when exploring resilience. It sheds light on processes in young people's lives that seem paradoxical and contradictory. Understanding the ways in which parts engage with and shape each other allows the observable characteristics of whole systems to be perceived at different points in time. Within this research, this involves a consideration of the mechanisms across each young man's entire system, taking into account the internal and external mechanisms and how they interact to nurture his resilience, rather than viewing a mechanism in isolation and predicting that for another young man the same series of events will occur. Understanding the contribution of interactions – with material resources, social capital, services, and others – to the temporary stability of young men helps us to stay open to the shifting fields of interaction. Recognising that precision in prediction is not possible promotes a philosophy of intervening that is adaptive and changeable, and therefore holds greater promise for transformation to occur.

I will now turn to additional research that has advanced our understanding of resilience as a process.

1.5   From factors to mechanisms

An important change in resilience research was the shift from labelling risk factors and protective factors to recognising and describing processes (Rutter, 1992; Luthar, 1999; Luthar et al., 2000). This change acknowledges that lists of factors only provide a name for the feature (e.g. social support) whereas processes provide a more descriptive explanation of how the factor functions for the individual. For

example, the mechanisms behind social support leading to resilient outcomes may be the sense of belonging, the feeling of acceptance, or the way social support is being offered. Factors are aggregates and do not tell us very much about specific situations, or why things happen the way they do. It is knowledge of the processes that can support counselling psychology and psychotherapy interventions with young men who have experienced risk.

Rutter's (1983, 1985, 1987) early work was significant in contributing to the debate concerning protective factors, and is pertinent to this research. Rutter found it important to think in terms of a protective mechanism, a process over time that changes a person's trajectory in life by protecting him or her against risk. According to Rutter, "Protection lies in the ways in which people deal with life changes and in what they do about their stressful or disadvantaging circumstances. In that connection, particular attention needs to be paid to the underlying developmental processes that enhance people's ability to cope effectively with future stress and adversity and those that enable people to overcome the sequelae of past psychosocial hazards" (Rutter, 1993, p.630).

Understanding the meaning of the risk for the individual is reflected in Hart and Blincow's (2007) concept of inoculated resilience, which recognises vulnerabilities as resources or even protective mechanisms. Hence, resilience as a concept represents the capacity to turn adversity into success or at least the ability to resist adversity's worst effects. School exclusion can illustrate this. Kemsha et al. (2006) found that young people showed resilience to the exclusion event by putting it behind them and getting on with their lives. For some, exclusion operated as a protective mechanism: mainstream school was described as a more risky environment, with more pupils and greater pressure that increased the likelihood of them getting into trouble. This highlights the importance of understanding at an

individual level how mechanisms operate, and once we have more awareness of this then we can use them to better effect.

In my literature search, I found little published research exploring mechanisms that support resilience to reoffending. What research there is focuses on the concept of desistance within criminology. Desistance refers to the end of a criminal career or any involvement in criminal behaviour, and therefore focuses on the behavioural outcome, i.e. the cessation of criminal behaviour. Resilience is a broader concept, not limited to the offending behaviour, and is related to a variety of individual or structural processes that produce adversity in a young man's life. This offers a more extensive application to practice, enabling young men to be resilient to adversity as a whole rather than in one area of their life. However, I recognise that integrating ideas from research on both concepts may usefully complement, rather than replace, existing perspectives. Integrating theoretical insights encourages joined-up thinking at the policy level, particularly with respect to young people in the care and criminal justice systems, who have similar welfare needs but are subjected to disjointed policy assumptions. Extending this perspective, it is arguable that similar interventions may be effective in promoting both resilience and desistance, and therefore I have chosen to focus on mechanisms and narrative research pertaining to both. This leads onto an important exploration of the mechanisms highlighted in the literature that enable these two distinct processes.

1.5.1 Exploring the mechanisms underlying Resilience and Desistance

1.5.1.1 Turning Points

Alongside mechanisms, the idea of "turning points" – significant moments in a person's life that lead them to follow one path over another – has been singled out as conceptually and practically important, by authors such as Quinton and Rutter

(1988). Through psychotherapy I hear many stories from clients describing significant chance moments that prompt a change in trajectory.

To shed light on how these moments influence a person's life in relation to promoting resilience among youth in foster care, Drapeau et al. (2007) point to three types of turning points, namely action, relation and reflection, and propose that these turning points set young people on the path towards resilience and trigger a change.

Action: This is associated with an achievement that gives a sense of accomplishment.

Relation with an adult: This type of turning point is associated with meeting a new person or creating a significant positive relationship.

Reflection: The third is their personal reflections that marked a turning point towards resilience.

This was echoed in Maruna's (2000) study, in which he questioned the influence of turning points on desistance, stating that "nothing inherent in a situation makes it a turning point" (2000, p.25). Instead, like Drapeau et al. he stressed the need to focus on individuals as agents of their own transformation, noting that how they use and interpret the turning point facilitates change. Such research findings highlight the importance of understanding the meaning and significance of "critical moments", the young man's interaction and the way such interaction nurtures their path towards resilience. This was the intention within this present research.

1.5.1.2 Chain reactions and new opportunities

Both resilience and desistance have been described as dynamic and cumulative, with commentators describing both as processes involving a series of positive repercussions or chain reactions (Rutter,1999; Drapeau et al., 2007).

Rutter (1999, p.129) noted that negative experiences tend to cluster and be interrelated:

"Empirical findings have increasingly shown that later experiences are not independent of what has occurred before (Rutter and Rutter, 1993). Indeed it is the existence of long term indirect negative chain effects that leads to the persistence of the ill effects of early stress and adversity (Rutter, 1989). "Bad" experiences are not randomly distributed in the population. There are in fact, huge individual differences in people's exposure to environmental risks (Rutter et al., 1995). The extent of environmental risk exposure is determined in part by societal circumstances but above all it is influenced by how people themselves behave. By their actions, people do much to shape and select their experiences. In this way, vicious circles build up."

Educational Psychologist Garbarino (1995) complements Rutter's research illustrating the importance of opportunity and the ameliorating effect on risk. He advocates that young people and children face an overwhelming accumulation of risks in their families and communities, with a greatly reduced access to compensating opportunities due to the psychologically toxic nature of the social environment they inhabit. He states that life is never risk free and most children must contend with risk factors of one sort or another and the mission for professionals is to increase the opportunities available to young people both at an individual and social level. He also illustrates how risk can provide opportunity corroborating Hart and Blincow's (2007) concept of Inoculated Resilience.

Elsewhere, however, Rutter does show that these causal chain effects can be disrupted by what he called "turning point effects". These are mechanisms that may entail a degree of redirection of life trajectories and include (i) those that shut down or open up opportunities (e.g. dropping out of school or persisting with education); (ii) those that involve a lasting change in environment (e.g. geographical relocation; loss of a parent) and (iii) those that have a lasting effect on a person's self-concept or expectations of other people (e.g. experience of early abuse or neglect) (Rutter, 1994).

Within this present research I was keen to understand the influence of chain reactions in the young men's lives, the impact that both negative and positive chain reactions had on their life trajectory, and the implications for counselling psychology practice. I will now discuss social capital as a mechanism, highlighted in research on resilience and desistance.

1.5.1.3 Social Capital

Social capital has been defined in numerous ways. Putnam (1993, p.167) defined social capital as "features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action." Sources of social capital can include community organisations, friendships and relationships at work. Research by Kemshall et al (2006) indicates that resilience or desistance from crime can also be enhanced or restricted by young people's access to social capital. Access to sources of social capital that can enhance desistance or resilience is not universal. The accumulation of social capital in marginalised areas, for instance, is difficult and comes in many forms. Barry (2006; 2010) argues that social capital gained in the peer group is an important source of temporary social support. However, the nature of the capital can influence the outcome. Boeck et al. (2006) argue that the bond shared with people who have a similar outlook on life

may in fact limit perceptions of change, whereas access to more diverse networks may enable an increased perception of an alternative self. For example, those who wish to be resilient to offending are likely to be hindered when their social capital exists in certain groups such as criminal gangs. Through recruiting the young men, I was interested in how social capital supported their resilience and the impact of their wider social capital such as friends, family, and relationships at work.

1.6 Narratives of desistance and resilience

When conducting my literature search using Summons and EBSCO I discovered limited research within the UK focusing specifically on resilience in young males who have offended. Murray (2010) offers a piece of research focusing on how young people maintain their non-offending status and described this as "active resilience" I will return to this later in this section. Desistance has been the research lens used to inform practice that seeks to prevent young men from engaging in crime. Within both concepts, little research has explored individual narratives as a means of acquiring understanding.

In his work on the Liverpool Desistance Study, Maruna (2000) compares the narratives and life histories of 20 individuals who persisted in offending with the narratives of 30 individuals who were actively trying to desist. Maruna identifies two distinct "scripts" in their narratives. Firstly, he argues that the persistent individuals tended to read from a "condemnation script" that suggested they were "doomed to deviance" and, in many respects, passive onlookers with respect to the direction of their life. By complete contrast, Maruna argues that the "desisting" individuals who were actively trying to give up crime tended to read from what he called a "redemption script" (2000, p.87). Within this present research I was interested in the "scripts" within the young men's narratives and the relationship between this and their resilience to reoffending.

Murray's (2010) research also looking at desistance from offending, carried out semi-structured interviews with 112 young people, of whom 62 had never offended and 50 had desisted from offending. The research question underlying the study was how young people maintain their non-offending status. Murray highlights the challenges young people faced in sustaining their desistance from crime, which included missing out on the pleasures associated with offending, resisting temptation, and being bullied. For the young people who had never offended, Murray demonstrated that their resistance was exemplified by a range of strategies, including managing offending peers, taking temporal leaps, "othering" offenders and telling atrocity stories. Through the employment of such strategies Murray concludes that the young people are engaging in "active resilience", exercising agency within their own lives. Murray's work is just one example of the concept of resilience being applied specifically to offending, as a strategy for resisting offending. I became aware of Murray's research after conducting my interviews. I was mindful as to whether such mechanisms featured in the stories of young men when analysing my data.

Ungar (2004) has made a significant contribution with respect to resilience. Through interviewing 43 young people who he describes as "troubled teens", he found patterns of deviance to be healthy adaptations, permitting young people to survive unhealthy circumstances. The young people's participation in activities such as truancy, substance misuse and crime, and their interactions with "negative" peer groups, are from their perspective the activities, places and relationships where they find well-being, belonging and power. When individual meanings are taken as the basis for explicating patterns of relationships and behaviour, the evidence here indicates that young people forge resilient identities by challenging labels of disorder and seeking positive relationships and health resources within available contexts.

My research mirrors Ungar's work, as I provide young men with the opportunity to voice how they perceive their pathways to adaptation and the mechanisms that contribute to these routes. I looked to the participants to subjectively interpret whether such mechanisms were positive or negative, and how they defined experiences that are socially constructed as risky or deviant.

Narrative constructions can inform psychological therapists' interventions with vulnerable young men. In the research, value is placed on those interventions that target the social conditions which influence such narratives, playing a crucial part in the young person's capacity to experience resilience. I will now explore therapeutic interventions that nurture resilience, and highlight the application of the research in practice.

1.7   Therapeutic approaches to nurturing resilience

Research has clearly advanced theoretical knowledge regarding the concept of resilience. I wanted to understand the therapeutic application of the research in practice, so to keep the focus of my search I used keywords such as counselling, therapy, resilience and young people. A recent review by Hart and Heaver (2012) highlighted over 1,400 "resilience-based interventions" of various kinds delivered within schools and communities to enhance resilience in young people aged 12–18. I have chosen four types of intervention that have particular relevance to counselling psychology, psychotherapy, resilience research and youth justice. I begin with a strengths-based approach, which I challenge in terms of its therapeutic contribution to young people and resilience. Second, the CBT interventions I discuss represent a trend in terms of work with resilience. Third, Ungar's (2011) narrative therapy has been applied to "young people at risk" and is therefore relevant to my sample. I conclude by looking at Multisystemic Therapy as it entails a specific focus on antisocial behaviour (Henggeler et al., 1992, 1997).

1.7.1 Strengths-based counselling

In a major contribution to The Counselling Psychologist, Smith (2006) presents a strengths-based counselling model, working with young people and adults to promote their resilience. Smith emphasises clients' assets rather than their deficits; her approach is founded on the premise that "All youth have strengths; if only the adults in their lives could learn to recognise them and build on them" (2006, p.16). She defines resilience as "the process of struggling with the hardship, characterised by the individual's accumulation of small successes that occur with intermittent failures, setbacks and disappointments", and maintains that an "individual's recognition of their own resiliency provides the route to authentic self-esteem" (2006, p.32).

Smith (2006) proposes a therapeutic strengths-based framework as "an integrative counselling model which blends different theories, movements (positive psychology, prevention, resilience theory, and hope theory) and techniques that build client strengths within a multi-cultural framework" (2006, p.31). She proposes ten stages of therapy drawn from Counselling Psychology and other helping professions. The stages work to an overall aim of focusing on therapeutic goals, creating the working alliance, the therapist function and role, and identifying mechanisms of therapeutic change. The therapist's role is to encourage and instil hope, empower the client and reframe problems through identifying strengths and solutions. Mechanisms of client change are highlighted as the client's strengths which are considered as the foundation for making desired changes. Building resilience takes place through identifying problem-solving strategies. The final stage of Evaluating and Terminating focuses specifically on the strengths and environmental resources most significant in supporting clients to achieve their goals.

My primary response to Smith's model is that the definition of resilience is too general, and predominantly focuses on the individual despite its acknowledgment of contextual processes. It fails to demarcate itself from coping, and therefore feels too vague to aid science or practice. Smith also contends that the recognition of one's resilience provides the route to authentic self-esteem (2006, p.32); however, this route to self-esteem may involve other complex processes at both the structural and individual level, and self-esteem as a configuration of one's self may also be context-specific. Language such as "build resiliency", although well-intentioned, implicitly fosters the view that if only young people were helped to develop resilience they might withstand all manner of adversities, and this therefore locates resilience as an individual trait. Counselling psychology and psychotherapy may do well to frame their foci as fostering resilient trajectories or outcomes rather than resilient individuals.

With regard to the therapeutic stages, the model offers a valuable contribution to aspects of resilience promoting work. Interventions such as encouraging and instilling hope, developing a new narrative and problem-solving skills have been identified by Hart and Blincow (2007) as important resilient mechanisms. However, what appears to be missing is work targeted at the social and community structures. I believe resilience to be nurtured both by the individual and their social context, and these processes interact mutually. As psychological therapists we therefore need to work with and influence critical environmental systems that affect young people's development and resilience.

1.7.2 Cognitive Behaviour Therapy

Turning the focus to Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), Padesky (2009) has developed a cognitive therapy model for building resilience, known as the Personal Model of Resilience (PMR) (Padesky, 2009). She defines resilience as the dual

roles of persistence and acceptance, or how "people persist in the face of obstacles and, when necessary, accept circumstances that cannot be changed." Padesky draws on the six areas of competence (physical, spiritual, moral, emotional, social relational, and cognitive) laid out in Nancy Davis's (1999) research on resilience, and promotes three fundamental beliefs necessary to maintain a resilience focus in therapy: that change is always possible; that every person has strengths and skills to be discovered; and that each person has the capacity to self-right, to be knocked down and stand up again (2009, p.6).

Padesky's (2009) four steps to build resilience within therapy are as follows:

1. **Search** for strengths and skills in something the client really enjoys that is not linked to the problem area. Then ask questions to identify the things the client does to persist and show that these behaviours occur in the presence of problems.

2. **Construct** the PMR. Use basic counselling skills to make summaries and validate the client.

3. **Apply** the PMR to the problem. Help the client pick a problem and set a goal to be more resilient in the face of that problem.

4. **Practice** being resilient.

Throughout the PMR process, CBT skills are embedded in the discussion, such as a collaborative approach, Socratic dialogue, behavioural experiments, and case conceptualization. The therapist needs to express interest and curiosity in the client's world as well as offering positive non-verbal feedback, especially smiling. Padesky (2009) maintains that having resilience as a goal can change the therapy focus from solving or eliminating the problem to being resilient in the face of a problem.

A CBT approach to resilience is also offered by therapist and coach, Michael Neenan (2009), in his book entitled *Developing Resilience: A Cognitive-Behavioural Approach*. According to Neenan, "Attitude is the heart of resilience" (2009, p.17); this view accords with classical Greek and Roman Stoicism with its emphasis on adopting a "philosophical" attitude towards adversity. Epictetus famously told his students that "People are not upset by events but rather their judgements about things", which Neenan calls "the foundation of a resilient outlook" (2009, p.21). It is the basis of the modern "cognitive model" of emotional disturbance. Neenan tackles the common misconception that Stoicism means "suppression of emotion", emphasising that the ancient Stoics merely recommended that unhealthy irrational emotions should be replaced by more healthy and adaptive ones.

The work of both Neenan (2009) and Padesky (2009) shows the contribution that CBT can make to resilience practice, underpinned by a strong evidence base. The literature on adult psychotherapy highlights the therapeutic contribution that CBT offers, confirming its usefulness for anxiety disorders, OCD, phobias and depression (NICE, 2009). In relation to young men who have offended, Latessa (2005) has noted numerous research studies that support his contention that CBT approaches are the only effective methods to use with individuals when they are in prison. CBT is utilised to specifically address the cognitions, thought patterns, and attitudes underlying offending behaviour. These therapies also utilise behavioural reinforcement techniques, whereby rewards and consequences are used to solidify behavioural change. Such approaches are criticised by Samenow (1984; 1998) for being too intellectual, and superficial in obtaining compliant behaviour whilst the young men are in prison, and after release the power of the CBT reduces.

While both Padesky (2009) and Neenan's (2009) work offers a valuable contribution to practice for vulnerable young men, my reservation is that neither approach

attends to mechanisms within the family, community, social and political sphere that contribute to the complex challenges faced by such men. Roth (2006, p.12) asserts that "CBT needs to be integrated with other services that clients are accessing". His point reinforces my own concern about applying CBT as an isolated solution in the absence of other practice considerations.

1.7.3 Narrative Therapy

Borrowing from theory that has emerged over the past half century in philosophy, art, semiotics, anthropology and critical sociology, a number of counsellors, including Michael Ungar (2011) have been advocating a different approach that integrates postmodern epistemology and social constructionism. Ungar (2011) proposes that the best-known application to counselling of a postmodern way of thinking is narrative therapy. Its premise is that what we accept as our reality is a story we tell about ourselves, our problems, their solutions, our relationship with both and the barriers we face to making changes in our lives. Ungar (2011) uses narrative therapy to support young people in building narratives of resilience. Eliciting and nurturing narratives of resilience involves three phases of questions and exercises, woven together, that enhance the power of one's personal narrative. Ungar calls these phases of work "reflecting", "challenging" and "defining".

Reflecting involves exploring the context in which the young person's life story is written in order to understand how different relationships affect this life story's development, and in the process becoming critically aware of who exerts most power. Each question examines important aspects of the youth's life right now and looks backward to see where ideas and accepted truths have come from.

Challenging. The deconstruction of the social discourse of the reflecting phase allows space for the construction of an alternative health-enhancing narrative.

Within this phase, Ungar describes how he reviews the same territory, yet this time the enquiry is directed at focusing on supporting the young person to see how they resisted challenges and successfully confronted risk. The young person becomes more aware of their strengths within challenging stories of vulnerability.

Defining. This third phase involves the young person exercising a measure of control over their personal stories of health. Therapeutically, the task now turns to gaining a wider acceptance for the new defining narrative, beyond the problem-saturated identities by which the young person has been known. The purpose is for young people to explore who accepts them for this new way in which they see themselves, who does not, and who they need in their lives to support them to be healthy and resilient.

I appreciate Ungar's (2011) work as it emphasises the significance of social relations and context through an analysis of discursive power and the subordinate positioning of young people's own discourses. It challenges the idea that resilience is typically individualised. However, the narrative therapy approach appears solely to focus on individuated and discursive re-positioning. The young person has the opportunity to create a new self story, updating their core self and their perceived position within their societal context. These processes are empowering, yet the danger is they may also reinforce the notion that social and cultural relations are seen only as "individual challenges" and the importance of solving those challenges intra-psychically to facilitate personal growth.

1.7.4   Multisystemic Therapy

I have chosen to focus on Multisystemic Therapy (MST) as it has particular relevance for young people who have or are offending. Developed by Dr Henggeler (1997) at the University of South Carolina, MST is an intensive family and

community based therapy programme that focuses on addressing all environmental systems that impact on young people who are offending: their homes and families, schools and teachers, neighbourhoods and friends. MST recognises that each system plays a critical role in the youth's world, and therefore requires attention when effective change is needed. MST works with young people aged 12–17 who have a long history of arrests. Its goal is to reduce youth criminal activity and antisocial behaviours, and to achieve these outcomes by decreasing rates of imprisonment and out-of-home placements. MST aims to achieve these goals by empowering young people and parents with the skills and resources needed to independently address the difficulties and cope with their complex environmental and social challenges. It is founded on nine principles, which work to:

- Increase the caregiver's parenting skills

- Improve family relations

- Broaden the young person's social capital to include friends who do not engage in criminal behaviour

- Increase engagement in positive activities

- Improve grades, and future aspirations

- Broaden the social network to friends, family and neighbours to support the caregiver to implement changes.

The MST programme is delivered through an ecological framework: the therapist will integrate themselves into the young person's environment, rather than the young person accessing a therapy session once a week. The MST therapist is also available twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. MST combines elements of systemic and structural family therapy, CBT, parent training, behavioural methods and supportive therapy. MST therapists are trained to Masters or Doctoral level.

The evidence base surrounding MST is well documented (Henggeler et al., 1992; 1997; Schaeffer et al., 2005) and positive. The programme has been implemented in eight randomised clinical trials with over 700 serious, violent, substance-using young people and their families. The evaluations have demonstrated reductions of 25% to 70% in long-term rates of re-arrest reductions of 47% to 64% in out-of-home placements, extensive improvements in family functioning, decreased mental health problems for young people with serious offences and cost savings in comparison with usual mental health and youth justice services. Additionally, MST has been found to be effective internationally, in Australia, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Northern Ireland, England, New Zealand and Sweden. Most of these studies however have been under the supervision of Dr Henggeler, its founder, and raise questions concerning research bias. The Campbell Collaboration conducted a Meta-Analysis of MST and found that there is no evidence to suggest that it is any more effective than other services for young people (Littel et al., 2005). The meta-analysis also identifies how further knowledge regarding the mechanisms that facilitate change within the MST framework is required, an important consideration for local commissioning. Furthermore, MST costs approximately 5,000 USD per young person and on average 2% do not complete the programme and leave at initiation. Therefore, if it fails to impact on imprisonment and long-term behavioural change it may be more costly than other therapeutic programmes and what happens to young people who leave the programme is not explicit. In addition, the application seems limited to young people who live with their family of origin and how the programme is applied to young people in care, those in and out of care and young people with multiple comorbidities is less obvious. However, MST has several advantages over previous identified approaches, offering a comprehensive intervention targeting the individual and social conditions that young people and families are faced with.

Despite their acknowledgment of context, with the exception of MST, all these resilience interventions seem to continue to be focused on individualised adaptation. I see the merits of the work being offered; working at an individual level is a key part of my own therapeutic approach, supporting me in uncovering conflicts and tensions that prohibit resilience. But focusing solely on the individual can be disempowering, placing emphasis on individual responsibility and giving little acknowledgement of important social resources. As an advocate of young people's resilience I believe a balance between promoting individual and social responsibility is required, as both offer important resources for enabling resilience. This is my rationale for choosing the RT framework (Hart and Blincow, 2007) to analyse my data. RT recognises adversity as a collective experience, and the achievement of improved resources for disadvantaged groups is acknowledged at the social, community and individual level. I will now provide an overview of the RT framework in more detail.

1.8   The Resilient Therapy Framework

Informed by resilience research, Resilient Therapy (RT) proposes a range of interventions, entitled "potions", which are the constituents of five separate but interrelated conceptual arenas, termed "compartments" or "remedy racks". The conceptual arenas are Basics, Belonging, Learning, Coping and Core Self. Together, under the umbrella of four Noble Truths, they form a systemic whole designed to increase resilient responses to overwhelming adversity. The philosophy of RT is one of dual and reciprocal responsibility between the practitioner, their organisation, the professional community and the young person with their historical and current framework and social network.

The different compartments within RT are underpinned by a strong research evidence base and the corresponding interventions have been developed through a weave of the research and consultation with parents and carers, to translate the

research into resilient moves for professionals, parents and carers. Using the framework as an overall approach adds to the emergent evidence base, part of which this piece of research is contributing to, alongside other community development projects in which RT is currently involved. The challenge in evidencing an approach such as RT lies in its strength in adapting to different contexts and communities – whereas MST for example has a consistent community of individuals that it is targeting – therefore strengthening the RT evidence base over time.

In my work as a psychological therapist in a psychiatric environment, RT encourages me to consider a young person in the context of their families, education, peers and wider social and cultural influences. Such consideration of context is an underlying principle of counselling psychology and informs my practice; RT extends this practice, providing a range of interventions, integrated across the developmental, social, educational and biological complexities with which young people may present.

1.8.1   The Noble Truths

RT sets out four key principles that form the bread and butter of the RT methodology: Accepting, Conserving, Commitment and Enlisting. Known as the Noble Truths, they are derived from Buddhist philosophy, and are important fundamentals for RT practitioners, highlighting what preparation they need and where they should start from. Each is drawn from a specific therapeutic school, as follows: Accepting (Rogerian); Conserving and Commitment (Psychodynamic); Enlisting (Family and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy).

1.8.1.1   Accepting

As the term implies, this noble truth involves accepting where people are starting from, including understanding their historical context to support the practitioner's

knowledge regarding the present. This enables the grounding of resilience mechanisms at the right starting point, acknowledging challenges, negative chain reactions and how things have come to be as they are, to inform current and future interventions.

RT recognises how challenging accepting can be, particularly when the young person's reality is different from the practitioner's experience. To support this, RT highlights the importance of developing an "inequalities imagination" (Hall and Hart, 2004). This encourages the practitioner to critically reflect on their practice, inspiring them to imagine at a deeper level the impact of health inequalities, and to use their imagination to improve the creativity of their practice.

1.8.1.2 Conserving

Conserving encompasses the psychotherapeutic concept of containment proposed by Winnicott (1965). Within RT conserving enhances containment, focusing on how what has been contained can be protected and nurtured in a way that promotes resilience for the young person. Conserving is inter-linked with accepting. It recognises historical events or past dynamics within both positive and negative relationships, and highlights the importance of conserving these to support future resilient decision-making or to contain protective mechanisms worth revisiting.

1.8.1.3 Commitment

Commitment emphasises the importance of reliability and predictability as key features of therapeutic engagement. Within the current climate it is challenging for practitioners to remain committed, due to funding restrictions which impose brief time-frames and can result in staff losses. RT highlights the importance of offering long-term commitment in supporting the young person to overcome the odds. As

with psychodynamic approaches, RT is underpinned by secure, reliable attachment relationships, which allow supporting mechanisms to work to their best effect.

1.8.1.4 Enlisting

Enlisting is a strategic approach, involving joined-up working between services, which takes into account the resources necessary to facilitate important resilient moves for the young person. RT highlights limitations, challenges or negative chain reactions that can occur when enlisting is not treated in a considered way, such as intra-agency divisions, emotional detachment for both families and practitioners, or ineffective use of time and meetings, all of which can result in disengagement on the part of the family or young person. RT also appreciates that enlisting presents an opportunity for practitioners to enlist the most appropriate parts of themselves, i.e. to integrate the personal and the professional in a way that prompts positive chain reactions for the young person. Enlisting therefore encompasses both the internal and external worlds of the practitioner.

The noble truths outline the starting points of RT and the preparation practitioners need, actual RT practice is structured through five practice compartments, also known as potions: Basics, Belonging, Learning, Core Self and Coping. Each compartment, detailed below, includes interventions designed to increase resilient responses to adversity, and involves strategies and practices for working directly with children and families, as well as supporting the practitioner to link and reach out with others (in line with the principle of enlisting).

1.8.1.5 Basics

In RT, mechanisms that nurture basic needs have been considered at some length. Some of the most fundamental aspects of human existence have a big effect on the kind of life young adults will have access to, including a roof over their heads,

enough money coming in to pay the rent – both influenced by work opportunities – and food, to keep them warm, safe and functioning. Statistics in the latest Child Poverty Strategy show that 22% of children and young people in the UK are living in relative poverty; links between poverty and the impact on well-being have been well-documented (Department for Work and Pensions, 2011). The Layard report (2005) highlighted how addressing basic inequalities has a positive impact on happiness and mental health. Hart and Blincow (2007), meanwhile, note how attention to addressing basics within resilience-based interventions is limited.

Maslow's (1943) influential hierarchy of needs holds that basic physiological needs have to be in place before other needs can be attended to; RT's Basics compartment differs, proposing that basics can be worked on as an on-going process whilst focusing on learning or coping mechanisms. The aim within this research was to understand the importance of basics within young men's lives and how such fundamentals contributed to their resilient pathways.

1.8.1.6 Belonging

Belonging has been defined as "the psychological need for people to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive and significant interpersonal relationships." (Baumeister and Leary, 1995, p.497). RT acknowledges that belonging is not limited to families, and recognises the importance of an individual's culture, ethnicity and heritage as contributing mechanisms. It integrates attachment theory into belonging, providing a framework for intervening with young people. Attachment theory helps us understand the importance of significant relationships within the first two years of life. Following these relational experiences, the child develops an "internal working model" which becomes their relationship blueprint. For a young person with insecure attachment patterns, RT highlights how purely focusing on attachment provides a limited intervention frame to support optimal

development. This is also echoed in research by Sroufe et al (1999) who acknowledge the important of wider affiliations and how adolescents with insecure attachment histories are amenable to change. The belonging compartment absorbs learning from attachment theory while recognising the importance of wider affiliations in promoting resilient outcomes. Through broadening the lens it offers hope, a second chance to put into place missing mechanisms. Belonging offers a wider repertoire from which those mechanisms can be drawn. Within this research I explored the contribution of belonging to the young men's resilient pathways, to their contexts and to their valuable mechanisms.

1.8.1.7 Learning

RT's focus is on children and families experiencing constellated disadvantage. RT makes a conceptual shift from the focus on education, given that this requires continuous school engagement, which is challenging for individuals who are experiencing adversity. RT therefore recognises that opportunities to learn take place in a variety of contexts, individuals and relationships, and also acknowledges social and emotional learning. Approaching learning in this way provides a broader scope for intervening, focusing on where and how we can support young people's learning.

I was keen to understand where and how the young men learned, the significance of the learning interventions they received, and mechanisms underlying such contributions. I wanted to understand how their life experiences contributed to their learning. As psychological therapists, such understanding increases our knowledge of how we can offer learning to young people in a way that is meaningful within their context.

1.8.1.8 Coping

Coping refers to psychological and/or behavioural responses that diminish the physical, emotional and psychological effects of stressful events. The intention within the RT framework is to increase the protective mechanisms that help young people to insulate themselves against risks and challenges, enabling them to make use of internal and external resources that work with rather than against them.

Through the young men's narratives, I aimed to understand the coping mechanisms they found useful. I was interested in the internal and external mechanisms enhancing their coping ability and the interaction between the two.

1.8.1.9 Core Self

Core self is perhaps one of the most complex compartments to illustrate within the RT framework. RT acknowledges this complexity and highlights, prior to commencing, the importance of a strong working alliance and an understanding of the young person's developmental matrix, including their social, emotional and behavioural aspects. Core self work involves focusing on the young person's internal template alongside the external contributing processes. The aim is to support the development of shifts within the young person's core psychological functions through supporting their reflexive functioning, increasing their awareness about their own process and encouraging a sense of personal responsibility and hope for the future.

Within this research I was interested in the young men's journey of self-discovery and the mechanisms that support the development of their resilient selves in relation to reoffending. I was curious about how they articulated their sense of self; by acquiring this understanding, psychological therapists are better equipped to support young men in understanding who they are (their sense of value and

importance, their relational field, the impact on their behaviour), and to inspire a sense of hope.

The relationships between these practice compartments and the four noble truths are laid out in the table overleaf, the so-called "magic box" summary of RT.

RESILIENT THERAPY MAGIC BOX SUMMARY

POTIONS:	BASICS	BELONGING	LEARNING	COPING	CORE SELF
	Good enough housing	Find somewhere for the child to belong	Make school life work as well as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
	Enough money to live	Help child understand his/her place in the world	Engage mentors for children	Being brave	Teach the child to understand other people's feelings
	Being safe	Tap into good influences	Map out career or life plan	Solving problems	Help the child to know her/himself
	Access and transport	Keep relationships going	Help the child to organise her/himself	Putting on rose-tinted glasses	Help the child take responsibility for her/himself
REMEDIES	Healthy diet	The more healthy relationships the better	Highlight achievements	Fostering their interests	Foster their talents
	Exercise and fresh air	Take what you can from any relationship where there is some hope	Develop life skills	Calming down and self-soothing	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
	Play and leisure opportunities	Get together people the child can count on		Remember tomorrow is another day	
		Responsibilities and obligations		Lean on others when necessary	
		Focus on good times and places			
		Make sense of where child has come from			
		Predict a good experience of someone or something new			
		Make friends and mix with other children			
NOBLE TRUTHS:	ACCEPTING	CONSERVING		COMMITMENT	ENLISTING

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Table 1: The RT Framework, comprising the noble truths, the five component parts and the interventions. (See Appendix D for a corresponding table with a narrative detailing the potions.)

1.9   Comparing RT with other therapeutic approaches

RT challenges individualised therapeutic approaches, offering instead a "therapeutic methodology" that can be embedded within existing practices such as targeted youth support, social work and assertive outreach models. The impetus for RT emerged from developing a "community of practice" (CoP), a range of practitioners and parents coming together, sharing knowledge and expertise in a way that allows new forms of knowledge and creativity to emerge and be applied in practice (Wenger, McDermott and Synder, 2002). The CoP is now used in East Sussex as a vehicle for training practitioners and parents. The methodology and core principles of RT and the integration of a variety of discourses create a rich community where knowledge, expertise, resources and skills can be transferred.

In terms of the relationship between RT and the therapeutic approaches highlighted earlier, there are positions where they both meet, and separate. The main point of divergence is the sociological view to practice promoted and subscribed to within RT. In addition, RT pays attention to the reciprocal relationship, focusing on the practitioner's development alongside the young person. Furthermore, Smith (2006), Padesky (2009), Neenan (2009) and Ungar (2011) promote a traditional therapeutic approach which focuses on individualised transformation, whereas RT is a "therapeutic methodology" that incorporates key values and principles from both therapeutic traditions and resilience research, and uses a therapeutic approach extending beyond traditional therapeutic interventions, not exclusively provided by professional therapists. RT can also be delivered by professionals trained at any level, challenging MST which specifies practitioners trained at Masters or doctorate level. On the one hand this offers hope for the young person experiencing constellated disadvantage, whose resources to access "therapy" can be limited, as time available for sessions is constrained; in this context RT offers an alternative

that is accessible, flexible and responsive to their individual and social needs. From a different perspective it challenges me to question my view on what is required for professionals to be delivering an approach that is entitled "therapy". Through proposing that any professional can deliver RT there is potentially a giving away of the psychological skills and competencies that individuals trained in the psychological therapies have acquired, and a possible dilution of what is being offered therapeutically. I will return to this debate within the discussion section on RT and re-offending.

Smith (2006), Padesky (2009) and Neenan's (2009) approaches promote a strengths perspective which prefigures many fundamental tenets of RT, including problem-solving, the concept that every person has skills and talents to be discovered, and the development of a new narrative as advocated by Ungar's (2011) narrative therapy. The difference with these approaches is that the interventions they offer are non-prescriptive and not tied to specific therapeutic techniques. Additionally, the optimistic attitude encouraged by Neenan (2009) along with "encouraging and instilling hope" as suggested by Smith (2006), appear to be based on the behavioural principle of positive reinforcement and inspiration, whereas for RT, hope is based on therapeutic outcomes that are real, sustainable and reflexive (Hart and Blincow, 2007, p.183). The approaches offered by Smith (2006), Padesky (2009) and Neenan (2009) promote a positive spin without specifying the mechanisms required to nurture such optimism. My reservations with nurturing optimism are its lack of authenticity and its sustainability for young people facing complex and challenging circumstances. Hope represents a realistic integration of such challenges and a representative stance based on the young person's individual and contextual surroundings.

Ungar's (2011) narrative therapy approach corresponds with RT's *helping the child to know him/herself* and the noble truth *conserving. Defining* chimes with RT's *getting together people the young person can count on*, and underpinning this stage is empowerment, present across all aspects of the RT frame. Aspects of Ungar's approach also correspond with core-self interventions such as supporting the *young person to understand himself* and *to take responsibility for himself*. Ungar's (2011) approach can add value to such potions; equally, integrating this work within RT enhances the value of the narrative approach, located within a framework that promotes collective and individual empowerment, targeting social justice as opposed to being undermined by it.

The purpose of this research has been to understand the mechanisms that contribute to young men's resilience to reoffending. RT offers a framework for categorising the data, underpinned by resilience research. My research will offer a reoffending angle to the framework, supporting new practice perspectives.

1.10 The Research Context

I chose Hastings as it has been the location of my professional career and I am passionate about influencing local practice. Hastings is a district borough in the county of East Sussex on the south coast of the UK. Hastings is the most deprived district in the County; nearly three in ten households are on low income in Hastings, which is defined as less than 60% of national median income (East Sussex County Council 2010).

Hastings has the highest percentage of youth offending activity within East Sussex county council, comprising of 25% of the workload in the county. For young people aged 10–17 who are offending, of first-time entrants into the county's criminal justice

service, 28% were in Hastings, with 253 young people committing crimes (East Sussex County Council, 2010).

1.10.1 Community Support

There has been considerable investment in youth services, beginning under the Labour government in 1999. The local NHS team identified locally that young people aged 18 required services tailored to their needs as young adults, rather than accessing adult services. A project called Pulse was set up to meet this need, and through a hub and spoke model provided a range of health interventions targeting the emotional, physical and mental health needs of young adults aged 18–25. I managed this project for two years and recognised the need for a specific young men's intervention. To meet this need, a young men's health worker (YMHW) post was created, engaging over 100 young men each quarter. When young men within this age group leave the criminal justice system, they are allocated a probation officer for three months post-sentence; the YMHW provided a gap for young men who required additional long-term support.

Alongside Pulse, other local services serve this age group. Xtrax Young People's Service is a multi-agency drop-in service for young people aged 16–25, providing access to food, advice and guidance, laundry and shower facilities, entertainment, and service signposting. This service is open five days a week at times that are accessible to young people.

Finally, Respond Academy is a creative alternative education provider which offers young people the opportunity to learn art, dance, photography, music, media and film production. This service provides an opportunity for excluded young people, and engages those who are experiencing considerable disadvantage.

The YMHW, Xtrax and Respond were the referral sources for young men interviewed within this research.

Resilience interventions are increasing in Hastings as local commissioners recognise the value and contribution of this work. Funding was secured to apply the RT methodology through a community of practice. Training started in January 2012 in East Sussex.

Since the change in government in 2010 all of these services have been subject to at least a 30% cut in their budgets (Higgs, 2011). Pulse has been mainstreamed into the Targeted Youth Support service, a preventative intervention targeted at young people up to the age of 19 who are at risk of substance misuse, offending and poor emotional and sexual health. The YMHW post was deleted despite a positive evaluation, leaving a gap for vulnerable young men and young people beyond 19. The impact of the current economic crisis on the research context highlights the challenges young adult men living in Hastings may encounter as part of their navigation towards health. Cuts in services emphasise the importance of research into the most efficient kinds of interventions, such as this. Of further importance is illustrating the impact of service mechanisms and how to build and develop practice locally.

1.11 Contribution of this research to Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy

How does RT add value to the psychological therapies? Davy and Hutchinson (2010) highlight how counselling psychologists in the UK are predominantly trained to work with adults; work with children, adolescents and families has a lower profile. Harris and Pattison's review (2004) suggests that the evidence base for different types of psychological therapy and counselling is more limited with children than

adults. Volume 25 of The Counselling Psychology Review (April 2010) highlights how work with children, adolescents and families is growing within the discipline, and notes the contribution of counselling psychology to this work. Dunn and Layard (2009) highlight the evidence mounting in the UK of young people with mental health concerns, emphasising that the focus of counselling psychology needs to widen to the younger population.

The similar values and working principles shared by RT and counselling psychology (such as reference to the multiple contexts, the importance of working within multi-disciplinary frameworks, an emphasis on well-being and subjectivity), suggest a complementary relationship that could enhance counselling psychology training and practice with children, young people and families.

Furthermore, interventions in the UK and internationally offered by Hart and Blincow (2007), Worsely (2009) and Hart and Aumann (2009), using evidence-based research, predominantly focus on younger children and families. This research will contribute to how existing interventions are applied to young men involved in crime. Because of the limitations of many therapeutic interventions working to promote resilience, as indicated earlier, there is a need for an integrated therapeutic approach with young people that works proactively to address processes at the social as well as the individual level.

Working at the social and individual level presents a challenge to psychological therapies. For more than 40 years, counselling psychology has consistently engaged in a process of defining and redefining itself (Shullman, 2002), partly inspired by membership calls to expand the role of counselling psychologists to reflect changing societal demographics. There has also been challenge from counselling, community and critical psychologists to counselling psychology to

replace its typical focus on individuals and individuals within groups with a commitment to social justice and action (Prilleltensky and Nelson, 2002; Vera and Speight, 2003). Social justice is not only an ideological stance through which practice and research work is filtered; it is also related to behaviours that constitute social justice work. According to Vera and Speight, "issues of social justice cannot be addressed through therapy alone … A social justice perspective emphasises societal concerns, including issues of equity, self-determination, interdependence, and social responsibility" (2003, p.254). In my counselling psychology training there was a strong theoretical focus on issues of diversity and multiculturalism; missing was discussion of the practical implementation of social justice initiatives in the community. RT has bridged that gap when working with young people. Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky (2005) highlight the difference between proximal caring, which takes place within the therapeutic relationship, and distal caring, which takes place at a community level to promote justice. Within this present research, where the focus is resilience to reoffending – both a social and individual issue – solely working at a proximal level will have meagre chance of success and be constantly undermined by conditions of injustice. This research (and RT generally) offers a useful application to the theoretical knowledge provided in counselling psychology training. Both can assist trainees in understanding the importance of social justice work and how to apply such knowledge through a systemic framework.

As highlighted earlier, this present research is influenced by Brofenbenner's (1979) Ecological model of development. The theory views development in terms of an 'ecological system' which is divided into five subsystems or layers of the environment that interact reciprocally. The systems are defined as 1. Microsystems, an individual's immediate environment, including family, school and friends. 2. Masosystem, which is the relationship between microsystems. 3. Exosystem

includes relations between a microsystem and a system in which the individual is not directly involved. 4. Macrosystem is the culture in which someone lives and ethnicity, social class and religious group. 5. Chronosystem, the way in which the environment affects development over time and also the way transitions such as divorce, affect the individuals development. The theory recognises how the systems are so intricately intwined that conflict in one adversely affects all the others. It is my view that young people's daily activities in turn both influence and are influenced by the multi-layered ecology within which their lives are embedded, an ecology that ranges from the proximal contexts of everyday life to the larger political, legal and cultural contexts of wider society.

Statistics indicate that while young people constitute 9.5% of the population, they represent a third of the population sentenced to prison each year, and 70% of these will re-offend (Ministry of Justice, 2007). This represents the young persons' choice of navigation, and the consequences of social, economic and policy interventions within their context. My aspiration is to develop, through understanding young men's subjective accounts, a stronger advocacy base for the shifting of resources to strengthen and support disadvantaged young men's resilience locally and nationally.

2   Methodology

2.1   My epistemological position

My view of reality or the nature of being (ontology), and my understanding of what it means to know (epistemology) are intertwined. My ontology and epistemology are influenced by a critical realist philosophy, as developed by Bhaskar (1978). I believe reality is socially constructed and takes place via an inter-subjective field whereby individual and social structures are mutually interactive. Therefore I hold subjective-objective ontology. My understanding of knowledge is that it is socially produced through this reciprocal interaction and is therefore very transient. I see research as a vehicle for generating knowledge through understanding how human behaviour is impacted on the one hand by agency, social processes and mechanisms (taking into account the complexity of the relationship between them), and on the other by meanings ascribed by individuals. The methods I use need to be suited to the discovery of how those interactions come about and the meanings people ascribe to them.

Critical realism is well suited to research questions that explore complexity, such as this present study. Rather than controlling for or simplifying complexity, critical realism advocates Clark and Alexander (2008) highlight how complexity must be embraced and explored. Because the current research explores phenomena within the real world, this avoids the problematic generalisation of findings from the unnatural world to the natural world. Finally, critical realism is well suited to research that seeks to explain outcomes, and employing it here helps recognise the causal relationship between society and the individual. This research seeks to understand young men's resilience to reoffending (the outcome), and explores the interplay between the internal (individual) and external (society) mechanisms, to highlight how this can be nurtured in practice.

Clark and Alexander (2008) note that a critical realist researcher works epistemologically under the premise that knowledge of the world is fallible and theory-laden, therefore we never construct our knowledge from scratch; scientific knowledge is a product of the socio-historical conditions in which it functions. Consequently, "our knowledge of the world around us will depend on the way that we look at it" (Agar 2005, p.34). Further to this, Waksler (1991, p.viii) recognises that adult views of children and young people differ from children's and young people's views of themselves. However, this does not mean they cannot be explored empirically; the knowledge gained can successfully explain and inform practice. My approach is based on treating young men as reliable informants concerning their own experience, and their subjective accounts and constructions of their social world lie at the heart of this research.

2.2   The narrative method

I chose the narrative enquiry method as I believe human beings learn a great deal from re-telling stories, creating new meanings and deepening existing ones. Speedy (2001) observes how, when people re-tell stories of their life and work, quite different stories might emerge or previous ones may be elaborated upon. She reminds us that "telling and re-telling and listening again to other tellings has become central to the practices of narrative therapies" (2001, p.122). I have not engaged in therapy with the young men who have taken part; however, there was nevertheless something helpful and maybe even therapeutic occurring during our research conversations. One participant, Jake, commented: "*Well it's like a counselling session innit. Because I hardly ever talk about this.*"

Webster's dictionary (1996) defines a narrative as a "discourse, or an example of it designed to represent a connected succession of happenings" (1966, p. 1503). Narrative research according to Lieblich et al. (1988) refers to any study that uses or

analyses narrative materials. The data can be collected as a story (e.g. a life story provided in an interview) or in a different manner, and can be used to learn about a social phenomenon such as resilience or an individual's personality.

Kim Etherington (2004) sees narrative enquiry as a means by which we systematically gather, analyse and represent people's stories as told by them, challenging traditional and modernist views of truth, reality, knowledge and personhood. This reinforces the rationale for using narrative enquiry within this research: by attempting to understand the subjective experience of young adult males through their lived experience, we add to existing knowledge relating to vulnerable young men and resilient mechanisms. In addition, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) propose that life stories construct both individual and cultural meanings, allowing researchers to access not only the individual's identity and systems of meaning, but also their culture and social world, particularly important when studying resilience.

As noted by Speedy (2008), Etherington (2004), and Mishler (1991) there is no one version of narrative enquiry methodology. From my reading to date, I am intrigued by the methods proposed by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) and Reissman (1993). I tentatively held Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) position with regard to the direction of enquiry. They describe a "three-dimensional narrative inquiry space", a set of terms which includes "*personal* and *social* (interaction); *past, present* and *future* (continuity); combined with the notion of *place* (situation)." Studies using this approach are to enquire into this three-dimensional space and within this framework. It is appropriate to ask questions along four directions, described as "*inward* and *outward*, *backward* and *forward*". Questions which look inward to beliefs, feelings and hopes which are personal; to look outward refers to the environmental conditions, with backward and forward relating to temporality, past,

present and future (2000, p.50). This was relevant within this research, as I was enquiring into the young men's internal space, exploring their hopes, feelings and beliefs alongside their societal context, and through a temporal lens encompassing their past, present and future.

In terms of the stages of the enquiry process, I appreciate Reissman's (1993) "stages of representation". These range through attending to experience, telling, transcribing, analysing and reading. Attending to experience involves the question of what is attended to (and what is left out), located within the individual's history and context. Telling involves the narrative reconstruction of events as performed to others. In the interaction with others, the narrative changes again, giving rise to different meanings and possibilities. This also influences the self-construct, as the depiction of the story portrays the teller how he/she seeks to be seen. The transcribing stage elicits further interpretation of the story. Reissman suggests that transcribing too is "incomplete, partial and selective" (1993, p.11), with different transcription conventions creating different meanings. Analysis of the text involves the reshaping of the story by the researcher, influenced in various ways by his or her values, theoretical approach and context. Finally, the reader also becomes a co-constructor of the depicted story, bringing his or her own meanings and interpretations to the piece. To Reissman, all stages are collaborative and interpretive: "Meaning is ambiguous because it arises out of a process of interaction between people: self, teller, listener and recorder, analyst and reader. Although the goal may be to tell the whole truth, our narratives about others' narratives are our worldly creations … Meaning is fluid and contextual, not fixed and universal. All we have is talk and texts that represent reality partially, selectively and imperfectly" (1993, p.15).

2.3   A reflexive position

My understanding of researcher reflexivity, informed by Etherington (2004), is the capacity of the researcher to acknowledge how their own experiences and contexts (which might be fluid and changing) inform the process and outcomes of enquiry. Researchers are urged to talk about themselves, "their presuppositions, choices, experiences, and actions during the research process" (Mruck and Breuer, 2003). " If we can be aware of how our own thoughts, feelings, culture, environment and social and personal history inform us as we dialogue with participants, transcribe their conversations with us and write our representations of the work, then perhaps we come close to the rigour required within qualitative research " (Etherington, 2004). The premise behind critical self-reflection is a way of considering the ethics of the power-knowledge relationship with participants and to engage in a process of transparency throughout the research in order "to close the illusory gap between researchers and participants, and between the knower and what is known. Viewing our relationship with participants as one of consultancy and collaboration, we encourage a sense of power, involvement and agency. When we enable other people and ourselves to give voice to our experience, those voices create a sense of power and authority" (Etherington, 2004).

My position and subjectivity will inevitably have an impact on my findings. It has been my intention throughout to engage in the process of reflexivity. My position is complex, as I experience myself as being both on the inside and towards the outside: as a practitioner in Hastings for eight years I am aware of the local context, particularly the agencies from which young men were referred; however, my role changed within the last eighteen months, and I am no longer working directly with local services or involved in the commissioning process. Robson (2002) suggests that when the researcher has a direct connection with the research setting this can

influence the research process. Ferguson and Ferguson (1995) caution against researchers with insider status and highlight the importance for the researcher to hold their knowledge with caution and be aware this perspective is only partial. They acknowledge the value of being honest with yourself about personal perspectives and being open to disconfirming the evidence, a position I took up through the interviews. Being aware of my insider status supported my objectivity, and I was mindful of continually returning to the young men's experience of services and bracketing my own assumptions.

I was also aware of aspects of my identity such as my gender, class and profession, and the impact of these on the interview process. I am a white, working class female, fortunate to have trained in the middle class profession of psychotherapy, which could influence the perception of my social status. Six out of the eight young men had an experience of "lost mothers" or an absence of parenting, causing me to reflect on how telling their story to a female in a nurturing profession impacted on their narrative and how this might differ with a male. I was curious who I represented and how this influenced the young men's descriptions. I have played a nurturing role towards my younger brother, of similar age and experience. Therefore, I was continually mindful of this reciprocal interaction and its impact on the data gathered.

To support my own process I looked to Etherington (2004), who describes how "reflexivity in counselling practice involves operating on at least two levels. First we need to be able 'to reflect on our selves which in turn requires an awareness of ourselves as active agents in our process' (Wosket 1999). Second, we also need to know what we feel, think, imagine is happening in our heart, mind and body; we need to know the inner story that we tell ourselves as we listen to our client's stories (Rennie 1998). So we move in and out of several levels of awareness as we listen to a client and to our selves" (Etherington, 2004, p.29). In addition, I was aware of

having a third part, my internal researcher, which required bracketing off the psychotherapist, the local practitioner and the young woman, and reminding myself of my research aim and therefore the information I needed. This informed decisions about what I might say next, what I was picking up on, what I was ignoring and how my own life experiences and contexts might be impacting on my listening and responding.

2.4 Procedures for gathering data

2.4.1 The narrative interview

The narrative enquiry process was an open-ended in-depth interview with each participant. We explored their life story, focusing on past, present and future dimensions. This enabled the young men to describe their journey, with particular emphasis on challenges they had encountered and mechanisms accessed to overcome adversity. Each interview was open-ended, with minimal structure. All the interviews took place in the referring organisation.

To support the young men to relax, I adapted the stage outline approach of Lieblich et al. (1998), which encourages the interviewee to imagine they are writing a book about their life and to start with the first chapter. I felt it more age-appropriate to introduce the notion of creating a film about their life. I encouraged them to think about which actor would play them, revealing more by explaining their choice of actor and how they related to them. They developed a character name, used as their pseudonym in the research. To support their storytelling they reflected on the scenes they would include in their film, inviting a temporal dimension, and each young man contemplated their film's ending.

The interview protocol can be found in Appendix B. The central focus was to support the young man to share life experiences, highlighting significant times, challenges

faced and how such encounters were overcome. Particular emphasis on their offending story was explored: their involvement in crime, the nature of their crimes, their experience of prison, and the mechanisms utilised to support their resilience to reoffending.

I wanted to create a safe, open dialogue for the young men, viewing myself as a privileged observer to the stories I was inviting them to tell. Being interviewed in their environments supported this safety. I utilised my skills as a psychotherapist to empathetically reflect my understanding of their experience, to enquire about the impact of difficult experiences and how certain mechanisms supported them to get through.

Each interview lasted 2–3 hours. I encouraged breaks for the young men if they needed some space. The duration allowed for a thorough exploration of their experience and a comfortable pace. Each interview was taped via an audio recording device, and the recording was transcribed to produce a verbatim transcript. Each transcript was talked through individually for comments and feedback.

2.4.2 Interview pilot

I carried out a pilot interview with two young men, which proved a valuable process. The trauma within the stories was overwhelming. Feeling overwhelmed impacted my questioning and therefore the collection of data. Simply put, I realised I had to "toughen up", to find a way to maintain empathy for their stories while keeping access to my internal researcher, with the support of Etherington's (2004) reflexive process, described earlier. I realised I needed a wider selection of questions to support the young men's articulation and to uncover why and how certain

mechanisms had an impact. Therefore the pilot was informative; my first interview felt energising as my confidence as a researcher was evolving.

2.4.3   Participants

Smith and Osborn (2003) propose that research using narrative enquiry should make use of purposive homogeneous sampling, using small numbers of participants selected for their capacity to illuminate the research question. I chose to interview a specific group of young men. I set the following criteria:

- Young men aged between 18 and 25

- Ceasing to engage in criminal behaviour

I chose this age group as this age group reflects the highest number of young adults involved in the criminal justice system (T2A, 2009). As my interest was resilience to reoffending the criteria was simply ceasing to engage in criminal behaviour rather than specific crimes committed or time following conviction for example. Posters were advertised in the three referring agencies, Pulse, Xtrax and Respond. (The poster can be found in Appendix G.) Each agency would contact me when a young man was interested. I contacted the young man by phone or through going into the agency and introducing myself. Voluntary engagement was emphasised.

I intended to interview ten young men; between the three agencies I recruited eight who met the criteria. Interviews took place between January and July 2011.

2.4.4   Characteristics of the participants

The young men's social identities, displayed in table 1 below, show certain similarities. All were of a working class background; their education, employment and training position (EET) varied. They had all committed a criminal offence during their adolescent years, and 50% of them had spent time in prison. At the time of being interviewed they were no longer offending. The length of time since offending

varied for the participants between six months and three years. At the time of interviewing, three of the young men were fathers and one young man was expecting a child.

Young man	Age	Racial Identity / class	EET Status	Crime	Prison Yes/No	Parent Yes/no
Hits Man	18	White/ working class	Education	Substance misuse	No	No
Marcus	18	White/ working class	Education	Theft/ substance misuse	Youth offending centre	No
Gaz	21	White/ working class	None	Criminal damage	Yes	Yes
Grumpz	23	White/ working class	None	GBH	Yes	Yes
John	23	White/ working class	Employment	Drink-driving	Yes	Yes
Mouse	19	White/ working class	Employment	GBH	No	Expectant
Chalkie	19	White/ working class	Employment	Domestic Violence	Yes	No
Jake	21	White/ working class	None	Theft	No	No

Table 2: Characteristics of participants.

2.4.5 Informed Consent

Information sheets were provided for participants (a copy can be found in the Appendix). The sheet communicated the following:

Rights of participants

- The commitment on behalf of the researcher to preserve anonymity.

- The right of the participants to choose a pseudonym for use within the research to support anonymity.

- The right to consent to be involved and to leave the research at any time during the research process.

- The right to decline involvement in specific parts of the research project (such as declining to answer certain questions).

The purposes of the Research

The purpose of the research (including aims and objectives) was communicated in all cases with as much clarity as possible, and understanding was checked.

The dissemination of the Research

The intended use of the research was made as clear as possible in all information sheets.

All participants were asked for written consent. Being aware that the duty of the researcher is to judge the extent to which people understand the implications of involvement, in pursuit of good practice I involved one of the organisations in the preparation of the research information and consent forms. The young men were offered the right to withdraw at any time.

All the young men referred agreed to take part. This was aided by my relationship with the referring organisations and the young men's trust in those services. Their anonymity was preserved throughout the duration and dissemination of the project. All original data, interview materials, transcripts, consent forms and other documents that contained personal details were stored in secure conditions, accessed only by the researcher.

2.4.6   Ethical considerations and Harm to Participants

The project got ethical permission from the Metanoia Research Ethics Committee, and a copy of the letter confirming ethical approval can be found in Appendix A. The health, safety and security of participants were of principal concern within this research.

I took every precaution to ensure that participants did not encounter psychological or emotional harm. I ensured contact details for locally based support services were available. At the end of each interview I enquired what support was needed and the impact as a result of taking part. The reactions varied and all of the young men advised that they had found the process therapeutic. It had been beneficial to share their story with someone who listened and was interested in their experiences, and might also be of benefit to other young people. Several of the young men were interested in future opportunities involving the research.

All participants were given details of a named contact, principally my supervisor, where they could provide feedback or submit complaints about their research experience.

Liamputtong (2007), in her considerations of research with vulnerable groups, emphasises that ethical considerations should not only be part of the research process, but also be considered before and after the research. Here, ethical considerations were not only applied to the research process, but also when choosing the appropriate method: narrative enquiry allowed for a process where the young men were invited to describe their reality and the subjective meaning certain experiences had for them. Through this I didn't attach any a priori concepts such as positive/negative or risky/protective to their descriptions of interactions with mechanisms contributing to their resilience. I also avoided referring to "pro-social" or

"anti-social" behaviour, which are contested concepts and could easily lead to stereotyping young people's sociability. After the interviews I set up a Facebook page entitled "resilience to reoffending", to enable the young men to stay updated with the research progress, including presentations and funding applications. It was also a mechanism for staying in contact with the young men if they required further support. I also wanted to illustrate the on-going commitment to the project and the relationship I had established with the young men following completion of the interviews.

Mauthner et al. (2002) state that as researchers we need ethical approaches that are situational, contextual and relational within a research environment based on respect for what children and young people themselves have to say. Overall this research adhered to the British Psychological Society's (2009) Statement of Ethical Practice. When devising information leaflets and consent forms, I followed this statement, focusing on:

- Clarity of information for participants
- Consent
- Confidentiality and Anonymity
- Health, Safety and Security
- Feedback and Complaints
- Anti-Discriminatory Practice

I also adhered to these guidelines within the research process as an overarching point of reference, when considering:

- The context of the research
- Power relations
- Maintaining standards of informed consent and confidentiality

- Responsibility to myself and participants throughout the research process to do no harm

- Maintaining a value of integrity to me, the organisations and young men involved before and after the research process

- Working within the boundaries of my professional competence

2.4.7 A research diary: My experiences of the research-participant relationship

In analysing the data, my intention was to carefully observe my own thinking, assumptions and beliefs. Gadamer (1975) believes it is important for the researcher to keep a reflective diary which includes their emotional responses throughout the research process. I recorded my emotional reactions, thoughts and feelings in response to each interview and throughout my analysis. Halling (2006) emphasises the importance of the researcher's own feelings as a reflection of the phenomena under study, seeing this as akin to the psychoanalytic notion of countertransference, where one acknowledges that one's responses and reactions are reflective not just of oneself as an individual but of one's relationship with and experience of the other person in the room.

2.5 Analysis of the data

Polkinghorne (1995) makes a clear distinction between two forms of analysis when using narratives: the analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. Of relevance within this research is the analysis of narratives. This approach uses narratives as data through which it is possible to access the world of the storyteller, seeking "to locate common themes or conceptual manifestations among the stories collected as data" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.13). He suggests that analysis can be based on:

1. Concepts derived from previously known theories which are applied to the data

2. Concepts derived from the data

Both of these apply within this present research: (1) I have taken concepts derived from the RT framework to organise and frame my data, and (2) I have analysed the data to identify concepts additional to those within the RT framework. For both processes I took a content-analysis approach (Lieblich et al., 1998). Making the decision to analyse the data using the RT framework was an iterative process. This can be beneficial, as my questioning was not directed towards understanding or framing their stories through the framework, a process which emerged organically. The limitation is that within the interview I may have missed mechanisms of significance. Because I wasn't aware of the evidence base I didn't explore them further and therefore they haven't emerged within the data. My rationale for using RT to organise the data is that it provides me with a frame that is underpinned by the resilience research evidence base and is contextually relevant in Hastings, East Sussex.

I followed three steps, adapted from Lieblich et al. (1998), to support my content analysis: (1) selection of the subtext; (2) definition of the context categories; and (3) sorting the material into categories.

2.5.1   Selection of the subtext

On the basis of a research question or hypothesis, all the relevant sections of a text are marked and assembled to form a new file or subtext, which may be seen as the content universe of the area studied (Lieblich et al., 1998). For example, within this present research the aim was to identify the internal and external mechanisms supporting a young man's resilience to reoffending. Therefore the first step was to

highlight aspects pertaining to internal and external mechanisms that were significant after offending. This extraction of the data from the text was particularly important in the current research, as these interviews were non-directive. (As Lieblich (1986) and Wiseman and Lieblich (1992) illustrate, in narrative research where the researcher chooses a "directive interview" approach which instructs the teller to focus on the "relevant" material, then all the text is taken as the data for the content analysis.)

2.5.2 Definition of the Content Categories.

Categories are various themes or perspectives that cut across the selected subtext and provide a means of classifying its units – whether words, sentences or groups of sentences (Lieblich et al., 1998). Categories can be predefined by a theory, here the RT framework (Hart and Blincow, 2007). The process was twofold as I was looking both for corresponding and new or distinct categories. The following highlights the steps I took:

1. Categories were pre-defined by the RT framework. Once I had identified the mechanisms within the subtext, I identified the major content categories emerging from the reading that fitted with the categories identified within RT.

2. The categories were the Noble Truths and the practice compartments. I broke each practice compartment down into the different interventions within each.

3. The next step was to interrogate the data for ideas for further categories which were additional to the framework. I chose principal sentences, descriptions and definitions that expressed new and distinct ideas that were not part of the RT frame.

4. When defining further categories it was important to ensure that categories were not a variation on a theme of those within the RT framework, that they

did justice to maintaining the richness and variation of the text and were broad enough to use. Having clear definitions of each category within the RT frame helped me to identify new and distinct categories.

5. New categories wherever possible were defined using language relevant to the content matter and the young men's definitions. For example "Turning points" were frequently mentioned in the young men's narratives and this definition is well understood within resilience research (Rutter, 1999). There were exceptions, as young people are not always able to articulate their experience in a way that corresponds with the literature, for example "inoculated resilience", a definition offered by Hart and Blincow (2007), was a category assigned to young men's description of bad experiences with a positive impact.

6. Finally, when defining new categories, I was holding in mind the existing RT categories and searching for new subcategories within the data. For example, was there anything missing from Basics? Any relevant mechanisms informing Core Self? There was a constant interaction between the transcripts, the resilience research base, and my own interpretations.

2.5.3 Sorting the Material into the Categories

At this stage, separate utterances or sentences are assigned to relevant categories. The first stage of this analysis process was across all the narratives to identify the sentences that fitted the RT framework. Prior to and during this process I ensured I had a thorough understanding of the RT framework; I would check my understanding in supervision with Angie Hart, confirming that my interpretation fitted RT's intention and the young men's experience. This was clarified with the young men on returning their transcripts. I highlighted samples of their sentences which I

had placed into categories, checking that my understanding and interpretation fitted with their experiences.

The number of times a category appeared in an individual narrative was recorded as 0, 1 or 2. No category was processed more than twice for each individual, so if a mechanism was mentioned more than twice it was still scored as 2 in the content analysis. This decision was made in an attempt to focus on the mechanisms expressed in the interview rather than the length (Lieblich et al., 1998).

2.6 Validity Checks

Rooney (2005) highlights how concepts of validity in any research are complex and dependent on ontological and epistemological assumptions about the nature of reality and truth. Deem and Brehony (1994, p.165) state that "validity is best regarded as something which is to be worked towards rather than fully achieved". Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p.21) argue that qualitative research rigour needs to be judged according to the axioms of "credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability". Cohen et al. (2000) recommend that by making the research process transparent and honest, the reader can construct their own perspectives. From the perspective of practitioner research I would add to this list the notion of "usefulness" offered by Heron and Reason (1997). Does the research make a contribution to practice and the world?

Respondent validity was attempted by presenting findings to participants, although the usefulness of this approach has been debated. Giorgi (1997) questions the procedure, as participants will not have immersed themselves in the data to the same level as the researcher. Along similar lines, Ashworth (1993) supports it on moral–political grounds, but warns against taking participants' evaluations too seriously: it may be in their interests to protect their "socially presented selves".

After I had completed my analysis and written up a draft of my findings, I invited the young men to a meeting to present and explore with them my findings. Four young men had moved out of the area and though I emailed their transcripts, I have been unable to talk to them on the telephone. Three young men who participated in the research were present and two young men who had had previous involvement in offending took part. The focus group corroborated the research findings, particularly emphasising the following:

- The significance of Basics in nurturing resilience to reoffending.

- The consequence of Belonging, through a service or the town.

- The contribution of core self work, particularly understanding oneself.

- The importance of working at a social and individual level to promote change.

- The influence of becoming a young father and how professionals can nurture this through encouraging responsibility and a sense of purpose.

- The value of understanding the subjective experience of the young man within his context.

- The impact of being believed in and having something/someone to believe in.

I will now illustrate the findings in more detail, beginning with the analysis of the data alongside the RT framework.

3   Findings Part I: RT Mechanisms

In this section I present a summary of the mechanisms supporting young men's resilience to reoffending in the context of the Resilient Therapy Framework (Hart and Blincow, 2007). The summary is based on the core themes emerging from the analysis of each participant's experience. Themes from the RT framework were applied to the young men's narratives. It is important to stress the retrospective application of the framework to the data: the young men had not received an RT intervention, and my interviews were not directed at eliciting such themes. The significance is twofold. The services, including prison, were not utilising RT, yet their delivery corresponded to key mechanisms within the framework, highlighting evidence-based practice.

I found all five components of the RT framework present: Basics, Belonging, Learning, Core Self and Coping. I have presented the findings under these headings, illustrating the importance of each remedy within each component. For example, within Basics, one of the remedies is *Good enough housing*. I highlight remedies significant to the young men's experience. The young men's narratives illustrated the importance of the Noble Truths, and these are revealed under the heading "Noble Truths." These core themes and the corresponding psychological meaning units can be found in the appendix.

The components, remedies and Noble Truths are presented in the table below. (I have changed the terminology within the RT frame, which uses "child", to "young person" to support the current application.)

Basics	Belonging	Learning	Coping	Core Self
Being Safe	Help the young person understand his or her place in the world	Engage mentors for young people	Understand boundaries and keep within them	Help the young person take responsibility for her/himself
Being free from prejudice and discrimination	Tapping into good influences	Understand boundaries and keep within them	Be brave	Instil a sense of hope
Play and Leisure opportunities	Get together people the young person can count on	Help the young person to organise him/herself	Solve problems	Foster their talents
Good enough housing	Responsibilities and obligations too	Develop life skills	Foster their interests	Help the young person know him/herself
Enough money to live	Focus on good times and places	Map out career/life plan	Calm him/herself down – self soothe	
	Help the young person make friends and mix with other young people		Help the young person lean on others when necessary	
Noble Truths				
Acceptance	Commitment		Conserving	Enlisting

Table 3: RT Framework and Resilience to Reoffending

3.1 Resilience to Reoffending and the RT framework

The young men's narratives revealed resilience to reoffending as an outcome of the reciprocal interaction between internal and environmental mechanisms. The environment included services, key professionals, friendships, intimate relationships, prison and their communities. Individual resources included capacity to cope, drive, determination, self-reflection, self-esteem and self-worth. The stories demonstrated the complex interplay between the two. For example, within Basics,

external support in order to access housing, to have enough money, to work and to be safe within their community was important. Furthermore, the young man's individual approach to providing his basic needs was fundamental to his resilience. The combination of the two promoted the opportunity for the young man's resilience to thrive. I will illustrate examples of this throughout this section.

There was an interrelationship between the components – for example, having basic needs impacted on a young man's sense of belonging, thereby facilitating a shift in his core self. This interrelationship varied between individuals. The learning component was crucial to all their restorative paths: all of the young men had disengaged from mainstream education from a young age. However, they sought opportunities within other contexts to facilitate their learning. Significant turning points, the learning and their approach to the turning point all nurtured their resilience. Services played a fundamental role in supporting their learning.

The young men demonstrated an innate capacity to cope. They developed their own creative ways of managing, enhanced through services, including prison. The current support service offered a valuable coping mechanism, providing somewhere to go and functioning as an unconditional parent, accepting them, being committed to their needs, holding and containing their worries and mirroring ways of dealing with the challenges they faced. A recurring theme was the importance of being believed in and/or having someone or something they could believe in, whether a person, a service, impending fatherhood, a religion or a talent, facilitating hope and motivation for the future.

3.1.1   My personal response to the findings

I was struck by the young men's articulation of their stories. Their use of slang and metaphors and their perceptive reflections challenged my preconceptions regarding

their insight and was enlightening. I was moved by their on-going search for compensatory mechanisms. As a person fearful of taking risks, their methods of risk-taking both intrigued and shocked me. Their individual definition of and response to risk reminded me professionally to bracket assumptions pertaining to the phenomenological interpretation and experience of risk.

It was evident from the young men's narratives what type of service provision they had received, and the lack of enlisting that occurred between services. For example, evident in Chalkie and Mouse's stories was the re-framing of their narratives which occurred through the YMHW service that they accessed, which made the core self mechanisms of greater significance to them. Gaz valued the sense of belonging that Xtrax offered, and there was an opportunity to enlist the YMHW where he could have also benefitted from access to a range of interventions, emphasising the value of enlisting other services, enhancing the young man's resilience.

Services played a crucial part in the young men's resilience to reoffending. This seems of particular importance, given the reduction in services due to the recession. I was also struck how the services provided came not from counselling psychologists but front-line workers on low salaries and voluntary services. At the time of writing, the YMHW who did valuable work with John, Mouse and Chalkie is no longer in post. As a result of uncertainty within funding streams the worker felt undervalued and left to pursue another role, leaving a discontinuity in the service for these and other young men. This reflects the professional inequity that as a counselling psychologist I am part of and have a responsibility to challenge, reflecting one of many social systems impacting on young people's and professional's resilience. Following this research, I intend to disseminate the findings locally and nationally, promoting the practice opportunities to counselling

psychologists and to champion the role of front-line workers within voluntary and statutory organisations.

I will now turn to the young men's stories, to illustrate mechanisms within the RT framework that enhance young men's resilience to reoffending.

3.2 RT framework components

3.2.1 The Importance of Basics

The young men's narratives illustrated the importance of basic needs in support of their resilience to reoffending. Having such basics offered mechanisms such as safety, security, enhanced self-esteem and self-worth. John and Grumpz described how having such basics meant they didn't return to the original problem. I will now explore in more detail how the provision of particular basic needs contributed to the young men's restorative pathways.

3.2.1.1 Good enough housing

John's story emphasised the importance of having a place to live and its significance to his resilience to reoffending. The first time he came out of prison he had nowhere to live, and he shared the impact:

"*Well I thought anyway you go to prison, you might get a bit of help for when you come out, but you don't. They just give you £54 and kick you on your arse. They don't help you, you know they don't help you get a flat or a room, you know a roof over your head. So I thought right, I need a roof over my head so I'll get back in there. I booted the door over my ex's, caused a bit of a scene. I got pulled away and put inside.*"

Angrily John described how following release he was homeless and living underneath a bridge. The lack of basics such as a roof over his head became the

driver to re-offend. Fortunately the next time a practitioner noticed what he needed and he was re-housed.

Grumpz echoed the importance of having somewhere to go after prison for his own reasons. He described the meaning for him of gaining alternative accommodation:

"*You wouldn't go back to the problem you know. You'd be out of that situation; you wouldn't go back into a problem that could get you back into jail, you know, you don't want that.*"

The two young men highlight the care they need leaving prison. They demonstrate how important it is that services understand the triggers to offend, at an individual and at a community level. In the absence of these provisions, prison becomes a protective mechanism, providing warmth, shelter and safety. Therefore, good enough housing needs to be in place to facilitate the promotion of their resilient selves.

3.2.1.2 Being safe

All of the young men described dealing with environmental hazards growing up that impacted on their sense of belonging and safety. They would seek such mechanisms through gangs or dysfunctional relationships, and prison became an environment where they felt a sense of safety and being looked after for the first time.

Gaz was offered psychological and physical safety through Xtrax, which he accessed following an attempted suicide, and to him it was a valuable protective mechanism.

"*So I was, I just walked in and the first person I see was A and S and that and they just made me feel like all right straight away, Ah, they've just been a support, like everything. I don't know, it's like they haven't given up.*"

Marcus lacked a secure base growing up. His offending behaviour took place in an area where he was part of a gang which was in opposition with another local gang. Moving to Hastings was a significant resilient move as he felt safer within the town:

"*So it was like yeah I'm safe down here. It just takes all the pressure off, you know it just makes me feel more free, sort of you know what I mean, I'm a lot happier.*"

Both young men describe the importance of feeling safe. They point out the contribution that services and the community can have on their sense of freedom, taking the pressure off and making them feel happier. This also highlights the responsibility of the local community in providing safety.

3.2.1.3 Being free from prejudice and discrimination

There is a reciprocal challenge when young men leave prison, in order to enhance their resilience to reoffending: they need to re-integrate themselves back into conventional society, and society needs to accept them.

The young men highlighted the challenge of leaving prison and trying to make a new start, facing unemployment and getting a job with a criminal record. Chalkie explains how he dealt with this challenge to support his own resilience:

"*Then it was just trying to find a job. That was the killer. And I've got to be honest I, I lied in the end about my criminal record in the current job I've got because I think for every one I put down, and I applied for hundreds of jobs, for every one I put down that I had a criminal record I got no call backs. It was only the ones I lied about, I got called back for.*"

Grumpz recommended that a release from prison should include a job to go into:

"*And a job to go straight into. Just get you a job to go straight into. You don't get released unless they find you a job. Or if you get released they should give you a job.*"

3.2.1.4 Enough Money to live

Describing the importance of work and getting a job after they left prison, the young men touched on the importance of having enough money to live on.

Grumpz highlights why this was important to him and other young people:

"*But if there was more jobs there for us young people, just shoved in and paid 800 quid, a basic wage of £800 a week, no, no a month I mean. Make a job for everyone. It doesn't matter what it is, and that would be easy. It wouldn't be easy, but it'd be better because everyone could have a house maybe. Live nicer, a bit comfortable in your life. Us young people wouldn't be out of a job. We wouldn't have to go and fight crimes. We wouldn't have to beat the crap out of people.*"

I asked him what it meant to him to have a job and he replied:

"*It keeps your mind out of trouble. It keeps you off trouble. Because all you do is go to work, go back home, rest, go to sleep. But if you don't have a job you're gonna have more time to go out kicking the crap or getting into a fight. It gives me income and a life, that's the only main objective to me to have a job so that I can live. And when I have that I am happy, I can do what I want instead of being limited to what I can do.*"

The young men emphasised the importance of having opportunities to earn money following prison and challenges they encountered as a result of their criminal

history. Grumpz describes how having enough money to live offers a sense of freedom and a valuable distraction.

3.2.1.5 Play and leisure opportunities

Interestingly, play and leisure opportunities didn't feature as a protective mechanism for the young men except for Grumpz, who identified having fun and somewhere safe as significant for him:

"*Happiest days, and that's what my brain likes. I just feel comfortable wanting to do it. Beautiful. Just playing about, piss-arsing around in here instead of on the streets where it's dangerous because someone could take it the wrong way.*"

Marcus illustrated the impact of having nothing to do on the community he lived in:

"*That's I think, that's probably why all this stuff started, all this gang crap really. It all started because we was bored, we had nothing to do*"

Marcus and Grumpz show how positive activities within the community are important protective mechanisms. Whereas the young men didn't directly mention play, there was a strong emphasis of the importance of spending time with closest friends, and the organisations accessed provided a leisure activity through having somewhere to go. I will return to the importance of friendships under *helping the young person make friends and mix with other young people.*

3.2.2 Core Self

The young men's narratives highlighted journeys involving setbacks due to them being unprepared developmentally and socially. They all utilised opportunities to reflect and learn, including negative ones. Of interest is the way their selves evolve through experiences and service intervention. In each of their stories (naturally varying for each young man) there is a search for external acceptance, explaining

their involvement in gangs and peer-led behaviours to gain approval. Self-acceptance is accelerated through interaction with services, alongside self-understanding, an increase in their internal locus of control, self-esteem and self-worth. The core self mechanisms impacting on their resilience to reoffending included: *help the young person know her/himself*, *help the young person take responsibility for her/himself*, *foster their talents* and *instil a sense of hope*.

3.2.2.1   Helping the young person know her/himself

Understanding what happened in their past, how that impacted on their present experience, their behaviour, and what they could do differently was paramount in supporting the young men's resilience to reoffending.

Through accessing the YMHW, Mouse gained the following:

"I realise the things I had done in my past wasn't exactly the best way to go about it, and wasn't the best thing to have ever done in my life and get involved with the police was probably my most fatal mistakes, but it happened and I can't change it, and I wouldn't change it as it has made me who I am. I am grateful for the things that have gone wrong and for the things that went right cause then that's just made me a stronger and better person I believe in myself. "

The services the young men accessed made a valuable contribution to helping them understand themselves, what had happened in their lives and where they needed to make changes.

Chalkie highlights his experience:

"*Um, they just helped me to identify problem areas in my life and what I should change and how I should try and be and how I should react to things and you know they said this exactly what T said, you should always have to think about something,*

never react on an impulse. Um, but through doing the work with them, not just sort of admitting what I'd done but accepting what I'd done and trying to, trying to move on from it."

The services provided the young men with the ability to self-reflect, to understand the reasons for their behaviour and consider alternative functional strategies for managing in the future.

3.2.2.2 Help the young person take responsibility for her/himself

The resilience research base has highlighted how self-management and self-regulation can support the reduction of challenging behaviours, improve an individual's self-esteem and enhance academic achievements (Werner and Smith, 2001). Within the context of the RT framework, self-responsibility also includes supporting the child to foster their independence alongside increasing their moral development.

Hits Man described his ability to self-reflect as his "level". This was his internal boundary guiding his behaviour and choice of peer relationships.

"Yeah it keeps you on the ground, keeps your feet on the ground. You don't get to do stupid shit because you know what you're doing because you've got that level and that routine you know what you're doing; obviously, I never used to understand that."

In terms of supporting their self-management, Jake and Mouse identified that support to manage independently was missing. Mouse described missing an understanding of the value of money and how to manage money responsibly. He described the negative impact:

"*Cause for me when I was a kid I didn't realise that you had to go out to work to get money to pay the bills, I didn't realise that you had to pay rent or gas or electric, or anything like that, and once I started working, I noticed that I had money, but I had nothing to spend my money on and for a long time I was just sitting there with money and what do I do with it, I've got 400 and I don't know what to do and then when I left home I ended up wasting the lot on drink.*"

He described how this resulted in him losing his accommodation, ending up on the streets and being involved in crime. Where he lacked supportive mechanisms to cope, he also lacked skills to manage independently, resulting in challenging consequences.

To summarise, a snapshot of the narratives illustrates the challenges young men such as Mouse face, facilitating a negative chain reaction. Their stories demonstrate the contribution counselling psychologists can make through providing support, increasing their self-awareness, and creating opportunities, helping them to manage independently and to understand and take responsibility for their behaviour.

3.2.2.3 Foster their talents

All of the young men interviewed had a talent, from music to cooking, skateboarding and teaching. The talent exposed them to other mechanisms such as self-expression. Musically talented Hits Man and Marcus described it as a vehicle for being heard, and for Marcus it supported his emotional regulation.

Hits Man discovered writing music at 15 and describes the impact on his life:

"*Yeah, it's the music that's saved me, man – music has saved me – I could be doing anything right now. You know what I mean I could be fucking like half the dickheads out there shotting weed, beating people up and robbing them for their money.*"

Mouse discovered cooking was a way both to distract from and express his feelings:

"*Yea, it's the one thing that I can sit there and say I'll always be passionate about because it takes my mind off everything and forget all the problems I've got and focus on the cooking and making something that looks and tastes amazing.*"

Marcus described how discovering that he was good at music was an acknowledgment of his importance:

"*It just made me feel like I could do something properly and um it became a little dream, the only way I can word it is it just felt like I could do something. It was one thing that I didn't have to do but I wanted to, you know what I mean.*"

A talent is an important mechanism for their self-esteem, their contribution to society and themselves. In providing emotional regulation, there is overlap with the coping mechanism; Hits Man suggests it protects him from being involved in behaviours detrimental to his well-being.

3.2.2.4   Instil a sense of hope

All of the young men had experiences that left them feeling despair, amongst them being placed in foster care at an early age, the death of a mother, the family home being burnt down, and being put into prison. How they described the ending of their film expressed a hope for the future.

Chalkie described the ending of his film as similar to Casablanca and this hopeful quote illustrates the meaning for him:

"*He's there, (Humphrey Bogart) and um, the love of his life has just got on a plane and flown away and er, the camera's looking at the sky and it kind of turns back to him and he walks off with this bent policeman. And even though he's just experienced great sadness, it's a happy ending because you know he's going on to*

do good things and he's gonna you know make his way in life. And I think that's how my movie would end because regardless of whether I experience sadness or pain or anything like that, then I'm still gonna have that ambition to, to move forward, drive on and achieve the maximum I can achieve in life with work, with friendship and family and relationship, and everything."

Through holding hope as a mechanism Chalkie is able to manage difficult times and move towards creating a positive future for himself.

Marcus described his film ending at Glastonbury, and he described the personal meaning in this way:

"It'll mean the world, it would mean the whole wide world because it's like I've done it sort of thing, you know what I mean. And um you know – and it'd be a comfortable wage which is partly the reason why I'd want to get it everywhere, get the music everywhere."

Marcus went on to say that whereas this was important, it would also enable him to provide for a family and ensure they were safe and secure, in contrast to his experience.

These quotes illustrate the interaction between self-determination and hope as mechanisms supporting one another. I will return to self-determination later with *Being Brave.*

Grumpz felt that his spiritual beliefs supported his level of hope for the future. When asked what he got out of his beliefs, he replied:

"Hope that I'm not gonna, you know when I die I'm going somewhere better. Much better than this world."

Despite adverse experiences the young men illustrated hope as a fundamental part of their resilient toolbox through their quest to take the maximum from life and transform their predestined fate.

3.2.3 Belonging

Jake, Chalkie, John and Marcus's sense of belonging was compromised in childhood, as they missed out on environments and individuals that could offer them consistency, predictability and secure attachments. There was an absence of family in all of the young men's narratives. Hits Man and Marcus described the presence of their mothers, yet an absent father. John lived with his father as his mother left at a young age; he was reunited with her a few months before she died, triggering his challenging trajectory. Jake was placed into care at a young age but longed to be part of his original family so rejected the care system. Chalkie, Mouse, Gaz and Grumpz felt unloved by their families, and as a result they continually searched for somewhere to belong. Engaging in gangs or going into prison temporarily served that need.

3.2.3.1 Finding somewhere for the young person to belong

A sense of belonging was achieved by accessing services; because of the type of approach on offer, the service becomes somewhere the young men can trust and feel safe enough to be themselves.

Accessing Xtrax Young People's Centre saved Gaz's life:

"*I just, it's quite weird yeah but I don't know because I think like if Xtrax didn't exist yeah, I don't think I'd be here either. Truthfully, I just don't because it's happened a few times it's been because of this place they've got me out of dark places innit.*"

Marcus described the impact of belonging to Respond Academy:

"*Well it's like another home really, you know what I mean, and er .. I just know I belong there because of the way I'm treated, you know what I mean. It's like I'm treated with respect, So it makes me want to go there even more really and er, even safety comes back in. It's just you know I know it's a safe friendly environment and that's what we need.*"

Finding belonging was a protective mechanism for the young men, contributing to their resilience to reoffending and their psychological safety. Services provided somewhere where they could be themselves, meet others who they could relate to and gain the support, security and protection that had been missing.

3.2.3.2 Tapping into good influences

John felt let down by adults and services, and was resistant to engage with the YMHW. Through the consistency and reliability offered he was able to restore trust, and through someone believing in him, he accessed his own self-belief and hope for the future:

"*It makes you want to do, it makes you want to sort of achieve for yourself. You give me a bit of sort of self-belief that I can do things for myself, that things are going to get better. It's not going to happen overnight but it will get better eventually.*"

When Xtrax prevented Jake from going into prison this was significant:

"*On a personal level it's nice innit really like, you know it's what we need more of in the world, like more open mindedness and caring. Yeah it felt good I suppose. When it actually worked as well and I didn't go to prison. And emotionally, I don't know, it did just make me feel relieved and happy that someone you know spent their time thinking about me and thinking you know about my characteristics and my personality and relaying that in a letter to the court.*"

Finding services or an adult to act as a positive role model, to be consistent and willing to go that extra mile, was significant: being believed in and committed to was internalised, enhancing the self-belief to try an alternative route.

3.2.3.3 Belonging involves obligations and responsibilities too

An important event in three of the young men's lives was becoming a father. This made an important contribution to their identity, providing a sense of purpose and a sense of their place in the world. The following extracts illustrate the impact on their resilience.

Mouse's partner was due to give birth when I interviewed him, and learning he was becoming a father was a significant turning point:

"*Knowing that there is going to be someone that needs my support, someone that is going to need me to look after them, so that set it up in my head, it's time to grow up, it's time to sort out what you need to sort out and move on. I've got a child on the way that needs my help, needs my support, and needs me there so, and that was it, now enough is enough!*"

For Grumpz a family was really important. He described how he felt becoming a father:

"*That, that done it. That kicked the bullet and that, you know having that interaction. Just seeing him. You don't want him being a kid, like you want him to be a kid but you want him to be a kid like him not you. You don't want him to see you acting like a prat because if he actually sees you acting like a prat you know he's gonna think it's normal at that age to do it when he gets older.*"

Becoming a father was a significant turning point, impacting on their sense of belonging. It provides a sense of responsibility and purpose, and fast-tracks their maturity. Having someone to believe in offers hope that life can and will be different.

3.2.3.4 Getting together people the young person can count on

Of great importance to all the young men was having a reliable and consistent other. The young men had varying experiences of the services they accessed whilst in prison: some found them of great value, linking them into positive support networks, while others felt they were treated unfairly and lacked any kind of support.

Mouse shared the impact that it had on him when others were there for him:

"*Support, and knowing that I don't have to go through it on my own, and knowing that there is someone there who always is willing to sit and listen, even if they don't have answers, there is always someone out there willing to listen to what you got to say, and I think that for me and for quite a few young people I know is the main thing, knowing that there is someone that is going to sit and listen."*

Mouse highlights how important it is to have a consistent and reliable service that listens, is committed to seeing things through and offers a different reparative experience.

3.2.3.5 Focus on good times and places

I described earlier the importance of geographical safety for Marcus. In London he was part of a gang and was subjected to a high level of physical risk from opposing gangs. He described how moving to Hastings was an important resilient move for him:

"*The town itself really, Hastings town itself. You know even I don't think of that all the time, it's probably the biggest thing in a way. Like I said I've spent quite a while*

down here now and er it feels like my home town not just an area that I live in. And um I know it's safe and it's just a nice, it's just a nice environment to be in, you know what I mean like. So yeah, the summers are quite good. But the winters are quite you know bad, but you know I'd rather be feeling cold than be worrying about if I'm gonna be killed or not."

This illustrates the connection between *Being Safe* within the place the young man lives. Marcus's narrative demonstrates how the mechanism of a safe community creates a spiral of other mechanisms such as freedom, happiness and contentment. He felt safe to access services such as Respond, facilitating a positive chain reaction which provided him with opportunities to increase his social capital, develop his talent for music and go to college. Hence, counselling psychology interventions, targeted at organisations and the local community, that support a young person's safety can have a fundamental influence on their resilient journeys, enhancing their experience of good times and places.

3.2.3.6 Help the young person make friends and mix with other young people

Hits Man and Mouse identified that a positive relationship supported their self-worth through feeling needed. Hits Man described his experience:

"*Do you know what, it's not about what impact he's had on me, to me it's about all the impact I've had on him. Yeah, it gives you like a good feeling, I don't know what the feeling is; it's like yeah, my happiness, it's just like enlightenment in a way, do you know what I mean, it's like yeah man. It's safe now, it's sorted, do you know what I mean it's cool."*

For Mouse, he described his partner as his best friend, and having someone to be there for had a similar impact on him:

"*It's knowing the fact that we still really really good friends, we are not just partners, we are the best of friends as well, and that is what makes it special that we are the best of friends also and I wouldn't change it for the world.*"

Through services, the young men are exposed to peers who have experienced similar adversity, yet these relationships present a positive opportunity to experience and create something different. It is important for counselling psychologists to explore the individual meaning of relationships, as Hits Man and Mouse highlight the significance of being needed. Once the need is identified, other ways of supporting the young man to nurture this through being a mentor, volunteering within the organisation, employment or looking after a pet can be explored.

3.2.4 Learning

The young men learnt through a variety of contexts and relationships. They were able to embrace both positive and negative experiences as opportunities to learn and grow.

The following quote from Hits Man nicely illustrates his learning:

"*That's the one main thing, like that's the main thing just learning. Learning is important – not in school, school's crap. Not in, nothing else, life experience learning. Life experience learning, I just broke down and learned by my mistakes. And I just look back and I thought fucking 'ell right, wow! – that's a learning curve, that's a learning curve 'cos everyone knows what learning is do you know what I mean, so I thought yeah that's learning, that's learning, that's learning, what else can I learn, do you know what I mean. I got to the stage where I am at now and I know there's more to learn.*"

I will now illustrate the learning mechanisms impacting on the young men's resilience to reoffending, and explore the implications for counselling psychology practice.

3.2.4.1 Engage mentors for young people

The services accessed both inside and after leaving prison exposed the young men to individuals who acted as mentors and supported their learning.

Marcus described how Respond encouraged the formalising of his talent into a qualification:

"*I'd rather to go to Respond than college, you know what I mean, because like once again in college you have to do, you have to, it's more like you have to, you know what I mean, where Respond is more of a kind of free environment.*"

Chalkie found a network of mentors in prison from the substance misuse team, counsellors, the prison guards and witnessing other prisoners' acceptance of their position. He used this as a motivation driver:

"*They're always there for you, they're always helping you and you can see them inside but you don't on the outside. So I mean the counsellors were there. A lot of the guards you were able to talk to and they help because you know they said, you know we'll get you through it and time will pass and you know every day is one day down and seeing other prisoners helped a lot, not for talking to them because the majority of them, it's a huge shame, but the majority of them really are sort of accepting the way their lives are. But that's why helping to see them made me think I don't want to be accepting of the way my life. I don't want my life to go this way. I was able to learn a lot of things that did help for when I got out.*"

Mentors acted as important change agents, helping young men to recognise their potential and equipping them with necessary learning, supporting their resilience to reoffending.

3.2.4.2 Map out career/life plan

Mouse and Chalkie described how aspirations contributed to their resilient outcomes. Having a sense of purpose also tapped into other resilience-promoting mechanisms such as obligations and responsibilities. As highlighted already, becoming a father provided a sense of purpose and supported their sense of belonging.

Mouse started working when he was 16 and this contributed to a positive sense of himself:

"*I loved every second of it cause it was being given a chance, someone saying okay this is your job now, you have got to do this. So when you get that opportunity into the working world and sit there and see it for all its glory and every fine little detail that goes into every job, it makes you sit back and it makes you feel wow, I know that I have got to do this one day.*"

Chalkie described how having a job was something to do that prevented him acting out, and he felt part of a community of people:

"*Er, the fact that it's keeping you busy, it's – you know boredom is so, such an evil thing because when you're bored is when you do things that are normally harmful to your health, for instance eating, smoking, getting in trouble or commit a crime or whatever. It gives you, it creates a small social network with your work colleagues.*"

Having a sense of purpose had a variety of meanings for the young men and whatever form the purpose took, it acted as a powerful motivator to engagement

and achievement on their own terms. As a further protective value, it provided something to do, a routine, and was a validation of their ability to achieve and somewhere they could go and participate in something with others.

3.2.4.3 Help the young person to organise him/herself

Both Hits Man and Chalkie described how they learnt to self-organise. Chalkie described how he organised himself when in prison:

"I made daily schedules for myself when I was out so I knew exactly how to keep my time plans, so I wouldn't get bored or misled or anything like that. I, I, I was just trying to – the whole time I was in there I was thinking about getting out, which most people do. But I was planning for getting out, I wasn't just hoping for it, if that makes sense."

Hits Man also described the importance of routine in keeping him organised:

"*Routines are good for me ain't it because they keep me in check, but if I know my routine and I know what I'm doing then it keeps me in check; it doesn't make me feel like, I don't know."*

Planning and having a routine are important mechanisms that support their self-organisation. They provide other mechanisms, such as coping, stability and security, as Hits Man describes knowing where he is. These highlight important considerations for counselling psychology practice in supporting the young man's self-organisation.

3.2.4.4 Develop Life Skills

Through accessing the YMHW, John developed a stronger self-belief, as he felt believed in. Following this intervention he secured a job as a chef and within three weeks he was promoted to supervisor.

"*It makes you want to do, it makes you want to sort of achieve for yourself. You give me a bit of sort of self-belief that I can do things for myself, that things are going to get better. I applied for a job, got that. Three weeks later promoted, ended up supervisor. Still that's nice after three weeks innit?*"

Grumpz got a job inside prison which taught him valuable skills, equipping him both with new skills and a new experience:

"*Er, I learned how to make stuff in there with plug sockets and that. Gives new experience. Inside you never stop learning.* "

Services the young men access, including prison, promote the opportunity to develop skills, which has an impact on their self-esteem, confidence and ability to manage. For young men experiencing constellated disadvantage, showing an interest and creating opportunities to thrive act as a portal to developing a range of skills, and offers a lifeline into a positive future.

3.2.5   Coping

The focus within the coping remedy is to increase protective mechanisms, helping the young men to insulate themselves against the risks and challenges that life can throw their way. I will highlight mechanisms from the RT framework which increase young men's capacity to cope.

3.2.5.1   Understand boundaries and keep within them

Marcus saw his step-father as a significant role model who helped him to understand right from wrong and who he respected. When Marcus was ten his step-father had a break-down, becoming violent, and was removed from his life. Because of the disruption, he missed his first year of secondary school and experienced a gap in learning the necessary boundaries, and in the youth detention centre this was something he craved:

"Oh like because I thought they would help you, I thought they would help you get out of you know that habit of whatever you're doing on the street, do you know what I mean. I thought there'd be people there to help. Well, they need to be shown, they need to be shown the right way by an adult, a proper adult really. I mean yeah I know, because like a lot of us you know we didn't really have like mums and dads there all the time, do you know what I mean. And you know if people are shown, like shows them the right way then you know they'll take it in. But I just think they need to be talked to really."

Marcus describes wanting guidance to understand his behaviour and how to move forward. He described what other young men illustrated earlier in terms of increasing their self-awareness. Having consistent reinforced messages from adults would have been helpful for Marcus to increase his internal locus of control and to support him to understand, negotiate and keep within boundaries.

3.2.5.2 Be Brave

Despite the adversity faced, the young men illustrated an innate drive, facing each of their challenges and continuing to move forward.

Mouse felt his drive and determination was fundamental to nurturing his resilience:

"I have been through alcohol, I've been through the drug problems, I've been through the anger problems, and I have still walked out of everything on the other side, still happy, still smiling, still ready to take on every challenge … knowing that with a little bit of drive and a little bit of determination, I am still able to do it. knowing I have just got to believe in myself first and foremost and I can do it, just need to believe in myself and that keeps me going."

I asked him whether he viewed himself as resilient, and he replied:

"*Erm, yea, yea I do. I take as many knocks as possible and still managed to find a way around it and dust myself off and carry on as if it didn't happen and that's hard.*"

Part of moving forward was recognising that he needed to be brave and do things differently. Chalkie also describes this:

"*I knew I had to be different to how I was before and I knew I had to really think about my responses and that I had to take a bit of time out to, to think about myself, And that if I did feel overwhelmed that I should walk away, deal with it before I come back it. It's not weak and it's not, it's not the wrong thing to do*"

The young men demonstrate drawing upon different internal resources and externally supporting them to *Be Brave.* Other mechanisms such as determination and risking doing things differently, together with services, make a valuable contribution to their capacity to be brave and continue on their resilient paths.

3.2.5.3 Solve problems

Until they accessed services the young men drew on strategies that created more problems, as they lacked optimal guidance.

Chalkie highlights how accessing the YMHW increased his problem-solving ability:

"*I think it was because – I mean the way I spoke earlier, um I said I could take a step back and look at things, which I've always been able to do but not in any way in which I've been able to since I saw T, who helped me so much it's unreal. I mean I'm so glad I met T. They just helped me to identify problem areas in my life and what I should change and how I should try and be and how I should react to things.*"

The type of problem-solving Chalkie gained from accessing the service concerned his reaction to situations that caused him difficulty in the past:

"*I had to be different to how I was before and I knew I had to really think about my responses and that I had to take a bit of time out to, to think about myself and not everyone else and kind of air my problems and that.*"

Chalkie demonstrates that despite poor role-modelling, his problem-solving capacity is expanded through service interaction. This interacts with his level of self-management and responsibility, enhancing his internal locus of control, as he has a choice regarding his behavioural responses.

3.2.5.4 Foster their interests

Fostering interests for the young men raised their aspirations, as Marcus and John illustrated earlier through music and cooking, providing a protective coping mechanism helping regulate their emotions. The narratives also illustrated that finding solace in activities such as music, cooking and skateboarding supported their independence. Having an interest increased access to other resilient mechanisms such as positive peer relationships.

Jake highlighted how activities offered him a temporary escape from his challenges:

"*When I was skateboarding I never used to think about anything other than skateboarding, or when I was playing football I'd never think of anything other than football. When I cook, I just think of cooking. And it's kind of just like a break from my brain ticking over all the time. Not even a release, just a relaxed time like, yeah. Because all that ticking is still going on but I just don't pay attention to it.*"

Mouse talked passionately about cooking, as a positive distraction:

"*Yea, it's the one thing that I can sit there and say I'll always be passionate about because it takes my mind off everything and forget all the problems I've got and focus on the cooking and making something that looks and tastes amazing.*"

Fostering their interests and talents provides the young men with an escape from everyday pressures and relaxation.

3.2.5.5 Calm him/herself down, self soothe

Chalkie coped in prison by writing letters to people. The mechanisms here were feeling connected, entertainment and expression.

"*Writing's fantastic because you can just, you can release so much, and it's such a – I found it a really, really helpful way, a really helpful thing to do. Ironically it gives you that, it gives you that sense of um ... of accompaniment. It makes you feel like that person's there for you. Maybe even more than when you were on the outside.*"

Marcus found emotional expression through music:

"*Like my feelings, like emotions and stuff, and things that I wanted to say but like I didn't just want to say them. I thought if I write some lyrics then it's not all like all up here, there's not too much going on up here, it sort of emptied some space in my head sort of thing. And it was like emotion really, sort of emotion do you know what I mean. It was happiness, it was anger, sad, love, stuff like that really. And um it was a way of getting everything out.*"

Both young men discovered strategies for managing and expressing their feelings to others. When isolated, the young men found creative ways to communicate, helping them to feel connected.

3.2.5.6 Help the young person to lean on others when necessary

The data has highlighted the importance of having adults who the young men can rely on, offering a consistent, informal and unconditional approach. I described how let down John felt by services; the consistency he was offered by services was

important, impacting on his trust, supporting him to lean on others, allowing his mature dependency to grow.

All the young men advised how daunting it was leaving prison, where they felt protected, received valuable service input, formed a network of peers they felt safe with, and, in John's case, were provided with somewhere to live. I asked the young men what support they needed leaving prison, and Chalkie suggested:

"I think there's got to be like almost like a prisoner support network um, I don't know if there is one, if I'm touching on something that already is but if you had like prisoners that were released that knew what it was like to be inside but had come out and stayed outside, but along with current prisoners and newly released prisoners, counsellors, a few counsellors as well."

To summarise, understanding a young person's historical experiences of services is important. The young men feel isolated and need further support when leaving prison, when they come up against societal barriers regarding education, employment and housing. The young men illustrated that receiving a service that is persistent, informal and offers them what they need can contribute to positive long-term resilient outcomes.

3.3   The Noble Truths

The RT Noble Truths represent its basic principles, and comprise the therapeutic stance through which RT interventions take place.

Throughout their stories, the young men described what they valued and needed from services in order to nurture their resilience, sharing what they had received and the significant contributors to their resilience to reoffending. I will now turn to the elements of their narratives that highlight the value of Commitment, Acceptance, Enlisting and Conserving.

3.3.1 Acceptance

The young men described an on-going search for acceptance, lacking accepting relationships in their lives. A few of them described how services demonstrated acceptance through treating them as an adult and not judging them.

Chalkie described having a positive experience from services he accessed in and outside of prison:

"*They're very non-judgemental. They were, they were very calm. They spoke to you like a person rather than like a prisoner. T and I mean from the first session with him, you could tell he was such a nice person, so unjudging, he just, he listened to you and he would give you his opinion but only if you wanted to hear it. He wouldn't, it wasn't judging at all, real acceptance is happiness for me.*"

Gaz described the acceptance from Xtrax as being like that of an unconditional parent. He described how he felt able to come and go, to mess up and still be accepted:

"*Just like everyone used to help me out and that and I used to be like a dick. I was kicking off and stuff still and like, obviously I've kicked off before and that and where other people have got barred for it for like a month and that, I'd like leave and come back tomorrow and I'd still be allowed in and that.*"

He talked about the impact that it had on him:

"*Then, at the time yeah, I thought like I was untouchable you know, like fuck it I'm just gonna have to do whatever. And now I just realise yeah they could just see like I was quite bright and that. I know I'm just not as bad as I make out to be most of the time you know.*"

He describes the fine line between acceptance and boundaries. However, his interpretation of this acceptance was that they saw his potential and he accessed this within himself.

The young men describe how receiving acceptance begins to transform something internally. They feel "better", "happier", they believe they have potential, they are acceptable as individuals, and thereby receive an important missing mechanism, diluting the need to ascertain it through other means.

3.3.2 Commitment

The young men described experiences of relationships with parents or services where they felt let down, or for some, left. Terms such as "loyalty", "consistency", "being stayed with" and "security" were emphasised in their narratives.

John disengaged from the service that he was accessing for fear of receiving a similar experience, and it was the tenacity and commitment offered that had an impact on his own motivation:

"*It makes you want to do, it makes you want to sort of achieve for yourself. You give me a bit of sort of self-belief that I can do things for myself, that things are going to get better. It's not going to happen overnight but it will get better eventually.*"

He was able to internalise the value received from the service, developing a commitment and self-belief that there was hope for things to improve.

Sometimes young people do not directly articulate what they need, communicating in other ways instead, and this is important to be alert to. As a result of his parents splitting up, Grumpz expressed the importance of loyalty and felt a law should be developed where parents stayed with their children. The following quote passionately emphasises this:

"Yeah, that should be a law with the government. If David Cameron could get hold of that and make it possible. Human rights are human rights, but that's one human right you shouldn't, you know, you should have a human right that no human right on that, It should be, you stay with that man or that woman stays with a man, you know what I mean. And you have a kid, whatever. Five to six years, ten at the most before you can even consider leaving."

I asked him what loyalty meant to him:

"Happiness, just happiness. It's the drink I really need you know."

Commitment is an important mechanism in nurturing the young men's resilience. It takes the pressure off, enabling them to feel safe and held onto, providing them with care and contributing to their happiness. Furthermore, they internalise this commitment, impacting on the loyalty and stability they offer themselves, and as a result of being stayed with their self-worth increases.

3.3.2.1 Trust

The positive consequence of commitment was trust. Having trust was a unique, reparative experience supporting young men to thrive.

John described his key service ingredients:

"Well a lot of it … trust. You need to have trust in the service, and consistency. Yeah. If service says they're going to do something, the need to sort of crack on and not let you down."

Accessing and trusting in the service was a key turning point for John:

"Well, it's a mix really. There's T, finally being able to trust in a service, it makes you more motivated to do things yourself. I tried doing everything myself and it wasn't

happening. And then when T started doing it, and things did start sort of rolling into place, it give me the motivation to do things myself."

Chalkie described how the YMHW facilitated trust by giving him space:

"If you're with someone that you're you know he creates that trust so quickly and so easily and if you're with someone that you don't trust you don't tell them everything, you don't open up. I told him more than I probably would have if somebody wanted to find out something about me."

Through the consistency and the approach offered, both young men felt able to open up, feeling safe enough due to the reciprocal trust established. The approach offered by the services was also important; in this context, the discussion moves onto enlisting.

3.3.3   Enlisting

The young men were proactive agents, enlisting services required, and other people in their lives recognised what they needed; Mouse's girlfriend recommending anger management, Chalkie's probation officer referring him to the YMHW and for John, the YMHW enlisted other important services:

"He'd sorted out a dentist, a doctor. He'd got me an information pack for the college and all the rest of it. He done more than any other service I've been using for months, in one day."

There wasn't a strong emphasis on service enlisting; important was the enlisting of a different approach. The way the service engaged the young man influenced his level of investment. The young men highlighted the value of an informal approach.

Chalkie described the value to him:

"I was able to touch on the problems I wanted to touch on. Um, um, you know if I – you know it's funny isn't it, he takes an informal approach and I work, I want to steam through stuff with him, but someone takes a formal approach and wants to deal with the problems, I don't want to even step, step near it say. I don't know, informality it's just friendly isn't it, it's just, again it creates that feeling that someone's there."

John also valued the informality offered. The creative way the YMHW chose to conduct sessions with John meant he felt safe to open up:

"It was different from every other service as well because I wasn't stuck in a room like this. It's too formal in a room like this innit, whereas we used to just go for a walk down you know some park. He was like a counsellor as well. You know I started to trust him and talk to him about stuff which I hadn't told anybody else, not my doctors or anyone else."

Marcus illustrated earlier the informal approach offered by Respond and the value to his learning. The young men illustrate that an informal approach gives them space to step into the service and receive what is on offer. The services appear real, they felt treated with respect, safe to open up, they can be how they want and reveal what they want to.

3.3.4   Conserving

The services accessed illustrated examples of conserving, supporting the young man to preserve and build on internal resources and experiences to best effect.

Foster care had been challenging for Jake, yet he was able to appreciate how it informed who he was:

"Er … I think it's made me very, an independent thinker. Er … it's given me a good moral compass. Right so I really do know what's right and wrong like. And I care a lot for the world. I suppose what it's made me turn out like."

Xtrax Young People's Centre created a cooking project which provided Gaz and Jake with paid work. *Bad Boys Food Co.* provided Jake with work as a chef and he describes the impact:

"Well I love cooking anyway so like when I see people eating the food that I cooked and they like it and they want more, it just makes me feel good really. Just the fact that I know they're eating something that tastes good, makes them feel good. You know it's just about sharing really, sharing your skills or whatever if you can do it."

When he was struggling in mainstream education, Marcus was referred to Respond by the Connexions service. Respond encouraged him to conserve and build on what he was good at, his music. This gave him something to be proud of:

"*Well um, it was something to be really proud of really because um you know where we was all young, um it was like we done something quite amazing really you know."*

The young men illustrate the importance of building on their potential, acknowledging who they are, the skills and characteristics developed despite their adverse experiences. This is further encouraged through service provision in creative ways. Through their response to adversity, the young men also "conserved" such encounters, transforming them into resilient moves.

3.3.5   Section Summary

The young men's data corroborates the evidence base that underpins RT, highlighting present and missing mechanisms. Applying RT to the data

retrospectively allowed the relationship to emerge organically, reflecting both the strengths and limitations of the research; I will attend to this within the limitations section.

The data also reinforces the ethos underpinning RT. The process of individual level experiences is located within social relations, societal discourses and ideological positions. Working across all domains promotes the achievement of improved resources for disadvantaged young men, which is acknowledged at the social, community and individual level. This is a protective process that supports young men to be engaged in society rather than isolating themselves through prison or engaging in behaviour that limits their ability to thrive. This is significant for counselling psychology practice, emphasising the importance of an approach targeting the internal and external processes fundamental to a young man's resilience.

4   Findings Part II: Enhancing RT

The aim of this research was to understand mechanisms that nurture resilience to reoffending. Findings Part I illustrated mechanisms within the RT framework pertinent to this process; the data reinforced the evidence underpinning RT. The aim within this extended findings section is to highlight additional mechanisms illustrated within the data that are not currently part of RT, but which add value to the framework, some of which RT authors have hinted at but not yet fully articulated.

Table 4 (overleaf) illustrates the mechanisms I am proposing as revisions to the RT framework. To Basics I have added clothes; to Belonging and Coping, humour. I will highlight the data that informs my revisions, and in the discussion section explore the literature within counselling psychology, resilience research and criminology to support my rationale.

Basics	Belonging	Learning	Coping	Core Self
Being Safe	Help the young person understand his or her place in the world	Engage mentors for young people	Understand boundaries and keep within them	Help the young person take responsibility for her/himself
Being free from prejudice and discrimination	Tapping into good influences	Understand boundaries and keep within them	Be brave	Instil a sense of hope
Play and Leisure opportunities	Get together people the young person can count on	Help the young person to organise him/herself	Solve problems	Foster their talents
Good enough housing	Responsibilities and obligations too	Develop life skills	Foster their interests	Help the young person know him/herself
Enough money to live	Focus on good times and places	Map out career/life plan	Calm him/herself down – self soothe	
	Help the young person make friends and mix with other young people		Help the young person lean on others when necessary	
Clothes	Humour		Humour	
Noble Truths Acceptance Commitment Conserving Enlisting				

Table 4: Revised RT Framework, to include clothes and humour.

4.1   Back to Basics: Clothes

In the findings section I highlighted different aspects of the Basics compartment. The data emphasised the importance of basics to the young men's resilient paths. The work informing RT's practice has been conducted with children and families.

This research focusing on young men illuminated clothes as an important contributor to their basic needs. I am aware this was important for one young man; therefore the applicability is limited. However, the RT team are now receiving feedback regarding essentials such as clothes and mobile phones, and the importance of these basic requirements. The post-research focus group confirmed clothes as an important resilient mechanism.

Clothes were not a resource John could afford, living in supported accommodation, unemployed and drinking following his mother's death. It was an important resilient move on the part of the YMHW to identify that John had been wearing the same clothes for months:

But um, yeah, he was quite different actually because I said to him I ain't got no clothes, I've been wearing the same clothes for a couple of months sort of thing. And yeah, within, well the next morning he'd brung up two bags of clothes."

The timing was significant. John had lost faith in services and needed nurturing. Clothes were an expression of this nurturing and supported his trust. Through developing trust he opened up and accessed the support and advice he needed:

"*I started to trust him and talk to him about stuff which I hadn't told anybody else, not my doctors or anyone else. But I talked to him about it. He had some good advice. But you know he has got good advice and helped me through it."*

4.2   Nurturing Belonging and Coping: Humour

I have engaged in discussions with the RT team debating feedback from practitioners regarding RT and what they feel is missing. Humour was a mechanism identified by the team as important and this was reinforced through the communities of practice (CoPs). Therefore, being aware of humour as a resilient mechanism I was alert to it appearing in the young men's narratives. I didn't actively invite

humour through my questioning, but explored it when it emerged. I will now illustrate the importance of humour for the young men.

Grumpz felt humour was an important way for him to feel happy; he also advised that through the use of humour he was also sharing happiness, providing a lighter perspective on life:

I: And what do you get out of being funny do you think?

R: People laughing. People being happy.

I: And then how does that impact on you?

R: It makes me happy. It makes me funny. It just makes me laugh at myself and life.

This quote illustrates how humour brings him closer to others and a way of viewing life through a lighter lens. In relation to RT humour supports his ability to *make friends and mix with other young people*. Of note within his narrative was the impact it had on him when his parents divorced: what I noticed was how other people's happiness may also offer him a sense of security.

Chalkie described learning to use humour as a coping mechanism from an early age and how this supported his perception:

"It gives you time to step back and actually assess the way you're properly feeling. Comedy doesn't mean you're, you're disguising your pain so much as you're just trying to deal with it so more helpful."

Using humour as a mechanism enables him to distance the pain and increases his objectivity. He adds that comedy is not avoidance, but provides a mechanism to cope.

Gaz longed to belong and fit in. His "clown" persona was an attempt to be more attractive to his peers and hide his lack of confidence.

"*Humour is just a big barrier because people always think Gaz you're so confident. I don't think I am that confident really. I know I like come across as it sometimes. But it actually will come down to like a serious situation like having to do something, proper sit, like I can't do anything like that. If there's something to be made a joke out of and that, then I'm good at doing that you know.*"

Humour was both a protective mechanism against his own insecurities and a way of coping with challenging situations. Gaz demonstrates his capacity to generate humour under conditions of internal or external threat, serving the function of self-reassurance.

The young men describe using humour in different ways, to cope and as a means of affiliation. As it provides a dual function I have included it within both coping and belonging compartments.

4.3   Core self: The importance of understanding himself

A key element of RT is transforming the core self. This includes such work as developing new meanings, injecting hope, intervening in a way that promotes a new personal paradigm, altering the individual's negative trajectory. Of particular significance for the young men was self-understanding. Acquiring this understanding in a variety of ways and contexts had varying impacts on their resilience to reoffending. The strong emphasis of this in the data, illustrated in the findings section, demonstrates the importance of this work when nurturing resilience. This is useful for the RT framework, as my intention here is to add value and prominence to the existing potion, particularly when working with vulnerable young men.

The effect of understanding themselves impacted on the young men in different ways. For a few young men their stories suggested an increased internal locus of control: two of the young men altered their self-narrative and one young man described a growing self-acceptance. These shifts in their paradigms represent the aims of the core self remedy. I will now illustrate extracts from the young men's narratives that illustrate the impact of self-understanding and the importance of the potion "know himself" within RT.

Describing the importance of being true to himself, Hits Man was energised and passionate:

Hits Man: *It's like the biggest truth I've ever heard in my life, do you know what I mean, like how true do you need to be apart from being true to yourself. And that's all there is. Stop trying to go places and just learn to be, just learn to be you sort of thing…*

I: And what does it give you, being true to yourself?

Hits man: *Happiness, stability, security, everything I've ever looked for, I found by being me, do you know what I mean, because I know what I can, what I can't do; where I can go, where I can't go; what I'm possible of, what I'm not possible of.*

Being true and accepting himself elicits protective mechanisms such as happiness, stability and security. Hits Man speaks of a freedom to guide his own life away from worrying what others are doing, due to his personal contentment.

Evident from the young men's tales was that they now had a choice concerning their behaviour, rather than being driven by external influences.

Grumpz described how in jail he recognised he was in control and had a choice about returning or not:

"When I was in jail that was the most important thing to me that I've learned that I don't need to go back. It just proves that even if you do want to go back, then – with me, I don't want to go back and I haven't. And people going loads of things to make me re-offend and I have just have not. If I wanted to go back I just could to prove that it's in most of them people's heads.

Grumpz demonstrates operating from an internal locus of control, recognising his choices. This also crosses over with RT's obligations and responsibilities vis-à-vis supporting the young man in taking responsibility for his actions.

Gaz described his involvement with criminal behaviour as a means of gaining approval, being part of the crowd and the joker. He recognised the short- and long-term consequences and was motivated to be himself:

"*No more like, there's no need for it any more to be like to be a clown because none of that matters any more you know. Now, in this time yeah, like what other people think and that, if they don't like me, they don't like me, it's simple.*"

Gaz highlights no longer requiring the approval of others, a position which altered through becoming a father and gaining awareness that his behaviour had consequences and didn't elicit what he needed. There is a crossover here with maturity and the development of moral reasoning and temperance, which I will return to in the discussion section on maturity.

Chalkie was able to change his own narrative, impacting on his resilient path:

"I see my life as better than that now. The support made me able to, able to see that things in my life weren't right and I could change them if, if I took time I could, I could change my path."

The services in prison and the YMHW service offered Chalkie the companionship he had missed from his parents, helping him to understand who he was, reasons for his behaviour, and how to manage differently. He described an active testing of the advice, fuelling his belief that things could be different:

"*And I mean any time he did suggest for me to try something or do something I did, I tried it and um it always worked, every time whether it was suggesting how I felt towards my parents, I tried it and it worked. And anything he ever said to me I took it to heart and I tried it and it, it really worked. You know he's like one of the three wise men, you know he's always bang on."*

Chalkie is also demonstrating a pro-active use of his learning and applying the learning within his environment, an important part of the transforming process.

Mouse accessed the same service. Previously, he had felt judged by society as a deviant young man who drank, got into drugs and became a young father. Accessing this service, where he felt acknowledged and accepted for who he was, enabled him to offer acceptance to himself and changed his self-perception. He described the impact on his life trajectory:

"*I did the anger management which in turn give me the confidence that I had inside of me already to go out and pursue my dream and that's now the main focus of everything."*

He changed his perception of himself as a deviant young man into a resilient individual:

"I think it's just knowing the problems that I have been through and I am still here. I have been through alcohol, I've been through the drug problems, I've been through the anger problems, and I have still walked out of everything on the other side, still happy, still smiling, still ready to take on every challenge."

The young men's vignettes illustrate the importance of increasing the young man's self-awareness and the potential impact on his self-esteem, self-identity and self-acceptance. The intrinsic negativity is gradually chipped away through reality testing, replaced by a willingness to engage with himself in a way that perpetuates growth. The development of an internal locus of control and a new self-story has a knock-on effect to other positive mechanisms such as happiness, stability and security.

4.4   Learning: Causal chain effects and turning points

RT highlights the significance of turning points as a mechanism in nurturing resilience and cites Rutter's (1999) research to illustrate how such turning point effects can alter the life trajectory. However, turning points are not included as part of the resilience framework. The young men's narratives illustrated negative causal chains early on, facilitating attitudes and characteristics such as low self-esteem, poor sense of self-efficacy and lack of boundaries, leading to antisocial behaviour. They identified crucial turning points where decisions were made that interrupted the flow of chain effects. Organisations played a significant role in the turning points, influencing the young men's resilient outcomes.

Rutter's research fed into my understanding of turning points and the impact of negative chain reactions as a characteristic of the young men's disadvantage; however, it only took me so far. Exploring their stories, I realised the young man's response to the turning point was also important. I discovered further research on

resilience conducted by Drapeau et al. (2007), in which they identified three types of turning points that trigger a change, Action, Relation and Reflection. Drapeau's (2007) research gave further meaning to the young men's experience. Integrating this research, I will now highlight two cases, of Mouse and Hits Man, to illustrate how negative chain effects can be interrupted by positive turning points and chain reactions.

4.4.1 Mouse

Mouse had a challenging childhood and adolescence, but despite witnessing his father drinking and being rendered homeless at the age of 15, he developed behaviours, attitudes and characteristics associated with resilience. When I asked him which actor would play him in the movie of his life, he chose Vin Diesel:

"*Purely because every film he participates in he always has a challenge or something he's got to overcome so I feel he would be quite a good choice.*"

The first negative chain reaction was witnessing his father drinking, which left him without a supportive role model. When his father kicked him out at 15, alcohol became a way for him to regulate his emotions:

"*it was the easy option, it was the quick way out of it, it saved me having to sit down and think about it and acknowledge what had gone wrong and where it had gone wrong, it was easy and I was comfortable with it.*"

As a result of drinking he lost his accommodation. The chain reaction of his drinking and being homeless meant that he got into a fight, and ended up in court. The judge acted as a positive role model, triggering a significant chain of events for him:

"*The judge said to me look "you are lucky" and I said "why" and he said "because I was going to put you in prison". And that was it, I really really was terrified of that*

one, and ever since then, once I finished my youth offending, I stayed out of trouble

because I was like no way, next time I will end up going to prison."

Drapeau et al. (2007) describe Reflection as a key mechanism towards resilience. The judge prompted Mouse to reflect on the potential consequences:

"I just realised that it was wrong and I was being stupid and I was trying to impress people and there are so many other ways I could have done it, and I just chose the wrong route."

The Action turning point illustrated within Drapeau et al.'s (2007) research relates to achievement. I noticed that for Mouse, Gaz and Grumpz, the turning point of becoming a father prompted different actions, due to the sense of achievement this provided. Mouse describes his response:

"You hear that one little bit of news that kind of wakes you up and you think forget that, that's the past and you move on from that and look to the future, and that's what I did."

He turned the negative experience with his father into a drive to do it differently:

"It was a big big significant point, and sat there and kicked me in the face and said grow up, you need to now as you are going to be a dad, and I want to give him what I never had."

The final turning point in Drapeau et al.'s (2007) research is Relationship, which is associated with meeting someone new or creating a positive relationship. For Mouse, this created a positive chain reaction, as his partner encouraged him to access anger management, which led to another positive relationship:

"*When my current partner asked me to because I was a little bit stressy, she asked me to do anger management, and through completing my anger management I have changed a lot in myself, I'm calmer, I'm more confident and I don't sit there and think about drugs and drink in that way, it's just a no go, I have a kid on the way so it's out the window no!*"

The relationship itself also had a positive impact on his life:

"*Erm makes her feel like she needs me, so there are things that she can't do now so I need to do it.*"

Having the responsibility of a child, and a partner who cared for him and recommended support, gave Mouse a sense of purpose and reasons to change his behaviour. This created the chain effect of starting his own family where he would belong. Instead of a negative chain effect, this turning point changed his trajectory, making his experience with his father into a protective mechanism with his own child.

4.4.2   Hits Man

Hits Man grew up in London and a significant negative chain reaction for him was moving home. He was out of his routine, feeling he didn't belong and had to prove himself, to fit in and gain the self-acceptance he was searching for.

"*Because it broke the routine me moving away, so obviously I didn't have the things I want to do on a daily basis; I just felt like when I went up there I had to show people where I stood, so obviously nobody takes me as some sort of dickhead do you know what I mean?*"

He got involved with people who he described as the "wrong crowd". A significant reflection turning point came when smoking weed one evening; his step-dad beat up

his mum, and because he was stoned he felt unable to do anything. He describes it in his own words:

"*I say babysitting, what I mean by babysitting was sitting smoking weed with my mate. And this was what got me off the drugs thing as well because I used to be on weed, obviously we were in a good mood, all drugged up and that. The only thing that I can really remember about that is walking into the front door and then just seeing my mum laying on the floor, like, and I just remember seeing my mum there with paramedics. And then after that the only thing I remember after that was a tackle by four police officers and then sitting at the back of a police car.*"

I explored the significance and impact of this event:

"*You know what. Everyone might think that that would fuck you up, but no, that sorted me out, that proper sorted – drugs-wise anyway – that sorted me out. Because I thought but thinking about it three weeks later I just thought, do you know what, if I didn't go round to sit there and blaze weed like a dickhead, I might have been there to prevent the situation from occurring.*"

Hits Man demonstrates how following this event, he reflected on his behaviour and stopped smoking weed, a negative event that he turned into a positive. This also touches on inoculated resilience which I will discuss in the next section.

An important Action turning point for Hits Man was discovering music. As noted in the findings, Hits Man described music as saving his life. It also provided a route to self-acceptance, through being listened to:

"*Yeah, it's given me a voice. Yeah. It's allowed me to be me and allowed everybody to hear me being me.*"

Being involved in music triggered a relational turning point that had a significant impact on his life. He described how being there for someone else gave him a sense of happiness:

"*Do you know what, it's not about what impact he's had on me, to me it's about all the impact I've had on him.*"

The narratives highlight how the turning point set off a chain of events that affected their environmental conditions, lifestyles, self-perceptions and hope for the future. Of importance was the subjective meaning, the individual's response to the turning point and how it provided the necessary impulse for a change in direction. The turning point in itself does not represent the fork in the road towards resilience; however it creates the impetus that sets the change in motion.

4.5   Learning: Strengthening the case for Inoculated Resilience

Resilient Therapy (RT) identifies three main trends representing resilience and the third category is "inoculated resilience" (Hart and Blincow, 2007). This concept takes into account the complexity of resilience as a process, recognising how challenging experiences can be opportunities for change; adversity can result in optimal outcomes. The intricate relationship between resilience and adversity was pertinent for the young men, revealing challenging experiences as valuable informants to their learning. The following abstracts from the young men's stories illuminate the value of inoculated resilience.

Mouse described how he was grateful for the things that had gone wrong in his life because they gave him insight and clarity:

"*It's been an amazing rollercoaster of a ride and I wouldn't have changed it for the world, not even slightly, it's been absolutely fantastic, this whole experience, going*

through everything I have been through, one loop after another, it's put me onto a track now where I can say yea this is what I want from my life, this is how I am going to go about it and this is what I'm gonna do."

Hits Man describes the contribution to his resilience:

"Everything. Every part of my life I've been like… anything from to this day backwards, bad and good that's happened, it's helped me be where I am now and the guy that I am now, and the guy that I'm now happy with is probably the guy that I'll say, but I'll say that."

Gaz gained valuable learning about his life's direction from prison:

"Yeah, it's the whole like going I don't know into prison like actually made me grow as well innit. Listening to my cell mate go on about he was in there for eight years, he's got two kids and that and I don't know a lot of stuff like, like a reality check with other people are saying, look you've got a good chance to do something right here, don't fucking slip up like half of us in here and to have them all say that and things and like."

Chalkie advised the contribution of all his experiences:

"Funnily enough it's actually the bad situations more than the good ones. Um, it's like … going to prison, it didn't, I didn't obviously enjoy the experience while I'm there, but where I said like I stand back and I try and judge the situation, I think that gave me months of time to really, really think about where I was going wrong in life and where I wanted to be and stuff. And it made me able to, able to see that things in my life weren't right and I could change them if, if I took time I could, I could change my path."

The young men used the challenges as opportunities to learn and grow. Services enabled them to appreciate the challenges as valuable contributors to their narrative and develop a new self-story, illustrated earlier.

4.6   Core Self: Maturity

The accounts provided by the young men illustrated that maturity or "growing up", while it didn't offer a simple fix, was influential in supporting their resilience to reoffending. In my follow-up with Gaz, I asked him what stood out and he said*: "I just realised I needed to grow up."*

The RT framework doesn't explicitly promote maturity, yet it describes nurturing the child's developmental stage, autonomy and sense of responsibility. The literature identifies three main psychosocial factors influencing maturity that inform young people's judgement of situations and behavioural decisions, particularly in relation to offending behaviour: responsibility, temperance and perspective (Steinberg and Cauffman, 1996; Cauffman and Steinberg 2000; Cruise et al. 2008; Bryan-Hancock and Casey, 2010). These three factors do have their corresponding interventions within the RT frame; therefore, when working with vulnerable young men it is useful to look at the connection between RT and the promotion of maturity. I will return to this in the discussion section. The first factor, responsibility, relates to characteristics of self-reliance, identity and independence. The second factor, perspective, relates to the ability to examine multiple viewpoints and evaluate both short- and long-term consequences. Finally, temperance refers to the ability to modulate impulsivity, considering the consequences before acting. I will now illustrate how they featured within the young men's tales.

The young men's narratives demonstrated how such psychosocial abilities developed through service interaction. Accessing the anger management service was significant in supporting Mouse to increase his level of temperance:

"*I realised that sometimes it's easier to sit down and think about the situation, take the consequences of every action that you could do because of that situation and see what the logical thing is to do."*

Chalkie highlighted how his temperance increased:

"*They just helped me to identify problem areas in my life and what I should change and how I should try and be and how I should react to things, through doing the work with them, not just sort of admitting what I'd done but accepting what I'd done and trying to, trying to move on from it."*

This quote illustrates the interdependence of psychosocial abilities: engaging with services, his sense of responsibility increased; he acknowledged what happened, his part in it and how to move forward.

Marcus advised how his perspective developed as he moved into young adulthood:

"*We went to a couple of shops once and like took a load of money and stuff. I know that it's terrible like. I'm nothing like that anymore, do you know what I mean. But then it was like, oh well we'll do it because we can. But you know we didn't think of, we didn't think of how that person might have felt, you know what I mean. Um it was only when I got older. I mean I knew it was wrong, you know what I mean."*

Hits Man felt that his sense of responsibility developed from an early age. An aspect of responsibility that protected him was the responsibility to safeguard his mother. When she was beaten up, this was a significant learning event which strengthened

his sense of responsibility and reinforced his core values. His *level* represented his core values.

"I left my level. Exactly that, exactly that. That's like, yeah. And that's what brought me back down to my level at that stage."

The young men's stories illustrated how their level of maturity was influenced by services, their own life experiences and their response to such experiences. There was variation in the levels of psychosocial maturity amongst the young men and this variation extended to the part it played to their resilience to reoffending. Of further importance is the influence of wider social interactions, and this is the focus of my next point.

4.7   Enhancing belonging through Social Capital

As a concept, social capital extends the mechanism of belonging, currently illustrated within the RT framework. I provide more detail of this in the discussion section, looking at how the two concepts come together, the contribution of the RT framework in nurturing social capital and important considerations pertaining to access, the political influence social capital provides and the value of enhancing RT through a social capital lens. Social capital is defined here as "features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action" (Putnam, 1993, p.167). Putnam (2000) offers a further distinction between "bonding" and "bridging" social capital, bridging as inclusive and bonding as exclusive networks. Within this distinction he argues that social capital aids access to resources. Bonding social capital resides in family relationships, friendship and peer groups, providing a sense of belonging.

Chalkie illustrated the importance of having a job and how this supported both his bonding and bridging social capital and illustrates the importance of RT's *Obligations and Responsibilities*:

"Yeah so it gives you something to do, it gives you that financial benefit, which then means you can do things after work. It gives you, it creates a small social network with your work colleagues."

Mouse demonstrated how his bonding and bridging social capital worked together to support him when his girlfriend encouraged him to access the YMHW service:

"*she asked me to do anger management, and it wasn't until I did that, that I actually thought about my past and the things that I had done, the things people had done to me, and actually sat there and thought about it, properly talked about it, and spent a good amount of time and realised that sometimes it's easier to sit down and think about the situation, take the consequences of every action that you could do because of that situation and see what the logical thing is to do."*

The concept of social capital also illustrates the complexity of young people's networks and how their bonding social capital can restrict pathways and choices. Marcus illustrated this through his struggle in moving from the gang he was part of in London to Hastings:

"*It was just all that partly made me want to go back to London, because I knew I was wanted, I knew my friends liked me, you know what I mean. It was like for the first time people were sad to see me go, so then I realised oh yeah you lot do actually kind of love me sort of thing and we all care about each other. "*

This quote illustrates how bonding social capital can have both a positive and negative impact.

The social capital of the young men's networks is instrumental to their resilience as offering essential accessible resources within conditions of adversity. Important resources that are made available by friends, neighbourhood networks and community organisations provided a buffer to adverse conditions and supported their resilience to re-offending. As conduits to information and social benefits provided by local agencies, the networks facilitate the young men's individual agency towards realising aspirations. The norms within the young men's networks emphasise loyalty and care. The young men begin to experience the way in which trusted friends and social networks and significant practitioners can be relied on to help in difficult times, and this becomes a guide to their own helping behaviour within themselves and towards others. The narratives present hope. When there have been insecure attachments and a lack of early intervention, holding a longer-term perspective shows that there is an opportunity to turn things around, a second chance to create social networks and institutions where they feel they belong.

4.8 Section Summary

To summarise, the first aim of this extended findings section was to highlight additional resilient mechanisms that emerged from the data, namely clothes and humour. In addition, the young men's narratives reiterated the importance of inoculated resilience and highlighted how the young men were able to take the adversity they faced and turn it into success. Turning points provided a valuable learning mechanism for the young men, due to their response to such opportunities. Concepts such as inoculated resilience and turning points illustrate the intricate relationship between adversity and resilience, and show how, depending on the young man's response, adversity in itself can nurture resilience. Maturity has been seen within the criminology literature as important in nurturing desistance, and the data highlighted the development of the psychosocial abilities of temperance,

responsibility and perspective, the varying influence on their journeys of resilience and the acceleration through service interaction.

Finally, social capital emerged as an important mechanism in nurturing young men's resilience to reoffending. The data illustrated how perspectives offered by Hits Man, Mouse, Marcus, Chalkie, Grumpz, Jake, John and Gaz are shaped by their sense of place, friendships, their experience of community and local influences. Their bonding social capital was enhanced through friendship groups, providing limiting and empowering opportunities, and there was interplay between their bonding and bridging social capital.

5   Discussion

The aim of this practitioner doctorate has been to explore the processes which nurture young people's resilience to reoffending, and to understand the mechanisms that underpin those processes. The findings emerged under key themes corresponding to the RT framework and additional mechanisms corresponding to the RT compartments, Basics, Belonging, Learning and Core Self. I will now provide a discussion of the findings under the following four headings: personal reflections;

RT and resilience to reoffending; enhancing RT; and implications for counselling psychology and psychotherapy.

5.1   Personal reflections

Completing the research has been a personal and professional journey, challenging my presuppositions and biases, and overcoming my own negative capability. The research comprises the social justice component of my counselling psychology training. Completing the research has strengthened the application of my Marxist values which I lost throughout my training. I worked at a social justice level as manager of Pulse, which was the first project in Hastings to create paid work for young people, recognising its value for their sense of empowerment, aspirations, community development and moving away from tokenistic ways of involvement. Training as a psychological therapist, I idealised the profession, placing significance on the power of the therapeutic relationship, and I felt confused as to how to integrate such values into my practice. A significant turning point came when I read a critique of Michael Ungar's (2004) narrative therapy approach by Botrell (2009), and recognised the limitation of purely working at an individualised level. Despite being exposed to RT, the significance of the social justice contribution had not registered until this point. I think this reflects a parallel with the young men's stories, with the importance of the individual and environmental processes working together; RT promotes working at the community and social justice level, and I also needed to be in a position professionally to integrate the philosophy. In terms of my practice this leaves me with a professional dilemma. Since qualifying, I have joined structures that contradict working at a social justice level, such as a private psychiatric hospital. I value my work in the hospital and remain fascinated by the impact of the therapeutic endeavour. Completing my research has challenged my sense of belonging within the organisation, as my individual values conflict with

those of the organisation. Through this process I have appropriately transformed my idealisation and have internalised a new professional self that recognises the value of both proximal and distal working. I have recognised that I need to be more humble as a counselling psychologist and appreciate the limitations of working solely at a proximal level. This research makes a pledge to psychological therapists to move away from an individualised way of working. I have learnt that this only serves to maintain the structures and discourses that perpetuate inequalities, and limits the possibilities for intervention and social change.

5.2 RT and resilience to reoffending

RT can provide a valuable contribution to counselling psychology and psychotherapy training, promoting work at a systemic level and with young people. RT recognises adversity as a collective experience, and achievement of improved resources for disadvantaged groups is acknowledged at the social, community and individual level (Hart and Blincow, 2007). It is a protective process that involves reducing adversity and enabling positive directions for young people's resilience. I described how the systemic emphasis did not immediately capture my attention, and acknowledged the contribution of my own process. However, an important practice implication for RT may be to strengthen the emphasis on targeting collective processes, highlighting the limitation of individualised approaches.

Analysis of the RT framework illustrated how mechanisms that work at a social, structural and individual level are influential in supporting resilience to reoffending. The young men's narratives highlighted the on-going interaction between internal and external mechanisms, creating a positive difference, enabling them to thrive. The research also reinforced the idea that the individual and his environment are mutually interacting systems that adapt to any changes they each undergo (Bronfenbenner, 1979). John adapted to the realisation that he was homeless by

creating a safe place for himself in prison; Chalkie overcame his challenge of getting a job due to his criminal record by accessing his own creative agency. The young men demonstrated adaptation to challenges they encountered, not always facilitating their growth, yet representing important resilient moves. This supports Kaplan's (1999) view that it is important to look beyond a normative view of resilience and recognise that behaviour considered "unconventional" for the individual within their social context may subjectively be an expression of their resilience.

Mechanisms within the RT framework located in Basics, Belonging, Core Self and Learning were relevant in the lives of these eight young men in promoting their resilience to reoffending, strengthening the evidence base underpinning the framework. I will now outline each of the compartments and the contribution of each to the young men's resilience to reoffending and the implications for psychological therapies.

5.2.1 Basics

The young men's stories highlight the importance of attending to basics within counselling psychology practice, and demonstrate young men's resourcefulness when faced with societal challenges. Basics such as housing, enough money to live, being safe and free from discrimination and prejudice are important mechanisms that needed to be in place following prison. When the environment fails to meet their basic needs their resilient moves are limited and they make adaptive choices. When services intervene they are exposed to alternative routes, feel safe, have greater opportunities and their resilience can thrive. This strengthens the position that for vulnerable young men proximal caring is insufficient, and a balance of distal and proximal caring is essential (Prilleltensky, 2005). For counselling psychologists this

may require the use of "an inequalities imagination" (Hall and Hart, 2004), working creatively to support young men. Interventions could include:

- Offering volunteer and paid work, increasing their likelihood of obtaining work and *having enough money to live*.

- Counselling psychologists working with local organisations to create opportunities and reducing barriers to prejudice and discrimination following prison.

- Consideration of the circumstances and personal journey of the individual, including a realistic risk assessment of risk to protect the individual and those with whom he comes into contact.

- Advocacy support in finding work and dealing with such challenges.

- Start-up funds equipping the young men with the basics.

- *Enlisting* other services supporting the meeting of basic needs.

Creating employment opportunities empowers young people to take responsibility for their basic needs and offers them a choice on their route towards resilience. In a report produced by the Transition to Adulthood Alliance (2011), stable accommodation, good health and sustained employment were the three main elements that made the biggest difference to reducing reoffending rates. Furthermore, the Ministry of Justice carried out a crime reduction prisoner survey in 2008. The results highlighted that two in five prisoners (37%) reported needing help finding a place to live when they were released, and of these, 84% reported needing a lot of help. Finally, three fifths of prisoners (60%) believed that having a place to live was important in stopping them reoffending in the future. In addition, the young men's stories illustrate the consequences of the current economic crisis. High levels of unemployment and a criminal record impact on their opportunity to contribute within society. This has a bearing on their ability to provide for their own basic

needs. Therefore, the recession has adverse consequences both for steering young men away from crime and for helping them to rehabilitate after custody. This is of concern, as evidence provided by the Transition to Adulthood Alliance (T2A) shows a link between stable employment and reoffending rates (T2A, 2009).

5.2.2 Belonging

The importance of belonging reinforces how resilience to reoffending is grounded within individual and community exchanges. Belonging somewhere (through accessing a service, living in the town, becoming a father and creating a family) compensated for their loss experienced through the absence of family. Such interactions within services, friendships, and intimate relationships were instrumental at nurturing shifts within their core selves. For counselling psychologists, working with communities and services to ensure they are safe, accessible environments where young people feel accepted and encouraged is paramount. Additionally, the counselling psychologist has an opportunity to support the young man's increase in social capital by making links with services, groups and employers, exposing him to broader social networks and opportunities to develop his sense of responsibility. Fundamentally, the stories demonstrate the importance for the counselling psychologist of offering a consistent, reliable and persistent service working beyond limitations. The culmination of these mechanisms can lead young men on a path towards opportunity and growth.

5.2.3 Learning

The data reinforced RT's philosophy of seeing learning, rather than education, as a mechanism (Hart and Blincow, 2007). Learning took place in a variety of ways and contexts for these young men. Where institutions such as family and school had failed to provide the necessary life lessons, they sought such learning elsewhere. Their experiences of learning were not conventional, yet they embraced the

challenging situations encountered as opportunities to learn; alongside services such experiences inoculated their ability to cope and progress. Psychological therapists have an opportunity to enhance resilience in young men by providing chances to develop key life skills, creating systems that celebrate and praise achievements, highlighting behavioural choices available and introducing functional strategies to support those choices. The work needs to provide a stable context for experimenting with strategies to reinforce learning and new benefits. The challenge for the counselling psychologist is to identify mechanisms of learning appropriate for the young man, and the support needed to engage fully. For example, Marcus commented that he preferred an informal learning environment, as he had struggled at school, yet with support and encouragement he went to college. It is important as counselling psychologists that we make learning work in such a way that young men can reap the benefits on offer. Finally, I myself have certainly learnt through undertaking this research that we also need to remain open to learning, embracing complexity, as this provides opportunities to make resilient mechanisms work to their best effect.

5.2.4   Coping

Coping is any response to a stressful situation (Compas, 1987) and can be defined as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984, p.141). The choices young people make after risk are forms of coping and can influence their resilience by protecting or buffering them from negative outcomes associated with risk (Compas, 1987). Definitions such as these would have posed quite tall orders for the young men, especially when they lacked the environments that would equip them with the resources to cope.

However, the young men demonstrate considerable resources of their own which support their bravery during challenging times. Life experiences contributed to their skills to manage adversity in the future; in the cases of Mouse and Chalkie in particular, through reflecting on such experiences they were able to make informed choices about risk in the future. The lessons they all learnt played a key part in contributing to their maturity, increasing their ability to problem-solve and rationalise their behaviour. Previous mechanisms for coping were relinquished as they learnt new ways of regulating their feelings and their behaviour that were supportive of their growth. Receiving external support is crucial in accelerating this. Developing young men's own interests gives them pleasure and control of their lives, providing a route to success and increased self-esteem. In addition it offers comfort and a channel of expression. An important goal for the counselling psychologist is encouraging young men to develop nurturing ways of managing, supporting the development of their internal locus of control, to allow them to negotiate and navigate through life and create their own progressive destinies.

5.2.5 Core Self

The young men's narratives highlighted how from childhood to young adulthood they are on a journey of functioning from what appears to be an adapted self, defending against their real self as they cannot guarantee acceptance. Interventions can allow them to begin to recognise who they really are, their sense of value and importance, and life begins to be determined internally rather than externally.

Reading their transcripts, I could identify those young men (such as John, Chalkie and Mouse) who had a greater level of core self work, as this impacted on their narrative articulation. Other young men, in particular Gaz, Grumpz and Marcus, would have benefited from further core self work. Jake and Hits Man had not received this type of work, yet they had an intrinsic sense of awareness which was

built on through their experiences, and also required and profited from external input. Such assessment informs counselling psychologists as to the young man's resilient capacities and what requires nurturing.

Maruna (2000) explored the narratives of active offenders and ex-offenders. He discovered that the ex-offenders spoke from a "redemption script." A characteristic of Maruna's (2000) redemption script is the narrator's strong sense of control of his or her destiny. In resilience research this has been described as a shift from an external locus of control to an internal locus of control. As illustrated in the Findings Part II section, as a result of developing their self-understanding through a positive relationship, the young men were able to begin to take control of their destinies due to having an increased sense of awareness about their behaviour, a sense of value that they were worth pursuing the alternative route, and the confidence to try it out. This indicates a move from an external to an internal locus of control, corroborating Maruna's research.

A further characteristic of the redemption script used by desisting interviewees is the notion of a "core self" or "real me" that is distinct from the party responsible for committing the crimes in the narrator's past: the past and criminal behaviour has been bracketed off or disowned by the narrator. The young men I interviewed were honest about what happened and took responsibility and ownership for their behaviour, and at times they acknowledged that they were no longer who they were back then, as Marcus illustrated in his earlier example of stealing from others. This research both confirmed and challenged the notion of the redemption script.

The importance of developing a new self-story was illustrated in the narratives of Chalkie and Mouse. The YMHW provided one-to-one support, offering listening, advice and guidance in a therapeutic way, in line with Ungar's (2011) narrative

therapy, highlighted in the introduction. Chalkie and Mouse illustrate the importance of Ungar's (2011) approach, and the contribution made by supporting new self-identities that are empowering and life-changing. Rather than judging themselves, they were given the opportunity to understand what happened, the reasoning behind events, changing their perception of themselves and their future lives. I am sure the interventions were not exactly as Ungar (2011) prescribes, yet they told their story, it was heard, understood, validated and accepted, transforming their own identity.

Within counselling psychology and psychotherapy, research literature highlights the importance of receiving a relational context through which the individual can form a sense of themselves. Bowlby (1969) suggests that the dyadic experiences received within relationships are internalised as "internal working models", becoming blueprints for future relationships. For the first time, the young men experience a positive relational experience, internalising the characteristics offered to them. Consequently the relationship they offer themselves is more secure, fulfilling and meaningful. Furthermore, Rogers (1959) emphasises the importance of core conditions, the therapeutic principles acting as prerequisites for this relational meeting to take place and for transformation to occur; these conditions have informed the Noble Truths within RT. Through conditions such as empathy, acceptance and congruence the young man acquires a secure base where growth and healing can begin to take place. What is being offered to the young man is "internally transmuted", as prescribed by Kohut (1971), fostering self-esteem, acceptance and self-worth. Counselling psychology interventions and the philosophy of the work need to include helping the young man not only to understand who he is and to enhance how he feels about himself (self-esteem), but also how to live his life and behave in a way that is congruent with his own values and standards, rather than being driven by others. This will involve targeting social

and individual conditions, ensuring his needs are met at both levels. Finally, it is unequivocally important for the counselling psychologist to maintain a sense of hope in the midst of adversity and challenging times, and uphold the belief that the negative trajectory can be interrupted. The hope is that this will flow through the work and be internally transmuted by the young man, allowing both to create something transforming. This was illustrated when the young men felt believed in by professionals, and the belief was internalised.

5.2.6   The Noble Truths

Through the provision of the Noble Truths and the use of their "inequalities imagination" (Hall and Hart, 2004), services were pivotal at changing the trajectory in these young men's lives. The Noble Truths represented key mechanisms that resulted in the young man developing a commitment to his own development and a lasting engagement with the service. The data highlighted the importance of enlisting, to ensure young men have access to a range of mechanisms, as well as enlisting an informal approach. The young men acted as creative agents within their own lives; there is an opportunity to further develop their own "inequalities imagination", creating empowering conditions to challenge the oppression and inequalities they and other young men are faced with. This gives a voice to their experiences, develops their aspirations and moves towards improving their lives. Conserving was important in encouraging the young man to transform his perception of himself and feel proud of who he is. Conserving also relates to the counselling psychologist as a practitioner, in making use of professional forums such as supervision and peer supervision to look after, develop, and engage with the experiences and emotions that the work presents, as a key part of nurturing professional resilience. Furthermore, using this professional space to increase our "inequalities imagination" (Hall and Hart, 2004) helps us to step outside of the work,

to explore how adversity can be conserved and thus transformed into resilient moves.

Considering Noble Truths as part of a counselling psychologist's practice has important implications for the young man's engagement. A cumulative effect occurs in terms of him receiving and experiencing other aspects of the service, impacting on his sense of self and resilience to reoffending. It provides the professional relationship with a hopeful beginning. The young man is receiving something different, enabling him to engage differently with the service. As highlighted, young people may not always be able to articulate what they need. Through understanding their histories, what has been missing, counselling psychologists can form a picture of what needs to be different, transforming their experience of themselves and of others. The Noble Truths are simple service ingredients that, as the stories illustrate, can have a significant effect on the young man and his route towards resilience.

As I begin to close this section on the RT framework, it feels important to attend to the debate that exists within the RT community concerning the use of the term "therapy" in the title. As my research has evolved, the RT team has relinquished the use of the term, and two versions of the framework are available for use, one of which is simply entitled "The Resilience Framework." The other implication highlighted in the introduction is that any practitioner can deliver the RT framework without any professional therapeutic qualification. From a counselling psychologist perspective, I am proposing an integration of the aspects of the framework that complement the approach offered within the psychological therapies such as the systemic and social/political approach offered within RT. My stance is that it is important to retain the value of our technical theoretical and practical knowledge as counselling psychologists and transfer it into practice that is liberating, to make concepts and practices accessible and to develop participatory, empowering and

equal relationships between professionals and individuals. As part of a moral and political plea to deconstruct the elitist discourse that exists within the psychological therapies, the aim of RT is to offer an approach that is accessible to all professionals, parents and carers, and therefore to children and young people. To entitle the approach "therapy" could compromise this moral stance and limit its accessibility and transferability to a range of communities and contexts. On the other hand I can see the value of using the term "therapy", as the approach has been inspired by a range of therapeutic approaches, and using this term could make it more accessible to professionals within the therapeutic communities. RT encourages creativity within the psychological therapies, and presents the opportunity to move away from the constraints of traditional therapeutic approaches – while conserving what works – and building on valuable therapeutic skills and principles. I would also appreciate being part of a dialogue that encourages further consultation and exploration regarding this issue amongst communities such as vulnerable young men, to understand their position regarding the term "therapy". My experience of promoting health initiatives to young people in the past has highlighted that labelling an intervention as "health" or "therapy" immediately precipitates a barrier to engagement, contributing to their marginalisation. As a psychological therapist I have a professional responsibility to ensure services are equitable and to support young people's integration. If this can be achieved through a renouncing of the term "therapy" then it feels like a worthwhile compromise.

To summarise, applied to the data retrospectively, the approach advocated within RT promotes mechanisms that nurture resilience to reoffending. RT appreciates the complexity of the young man within his historical and present context, offering the counselling psychologist a progressive course of action. It involves a shift in mind-set for the counselling psychologist, to become at ease with being uncomfortable

and to recognise work within the social context as providing greater opportunity for therapeutic success. I will now outline the mechanisms additional to RT that emerged during the course of this research, together with the corresponding literature, demonstrating the connection and value of integrating such mechanisms into young men's resilience to reoffending.

5.3   Enhancing the RT framework

5.3.1   Back to basics: Clothes

Trawling the literature for research illustrating clothes as a resilient mechanism was interesting. The research focus has been on adolescents' use of clothing. Laughlin (1996) identified the comparison with peers, to express solidarity with significant others and communicate self-importance. Daters (1990) saw clothes as a means of emotional expression, modesty and a way of "fitting in". As a mechanism that impacts on belonging, identity and core self, clothing can provide counselling psychologists with significant insights There are links with social capital, which is important for resilience, and I will attend to that later in this discussion. Yet it had a different meaning for John, for whom the provision of new clothes created a positive chain reaction impacting on his attachment relationships and service engagement.

This research has emphasised the importance of the young man's context. Young people are bombarded with media images of what looks good and how to dress. Social networking sites reinforce such messages and influence young people's identity. Furthermore, what is considered to be basic provision is changing within contemporary society. For example, a mobile phone, iPad, Sky television and Blu-ray DVD player is becoming basic cultural equipment, and the costs of owning such items is increasing, widening the poverty gap. For a young person, their acquisition may impact on their basic needs for belonging, affirmation, respect and regard

amongst their peer community. As a counselling psychologist it is important to be aware of such contextual influences, the subjective meaning and value to the individual of such assets, and their contribution to young people's resilience. Alongside this, adopting Garbarino's (1995) approach and supporting the young person to cope with these personal challenges in a way that maintains their integration enhances their resources and the opportunities available to them in a way that counterbalances the risk. I feel it is important to work with young people collectively to empower them to challenge the importance of such social norms within their peer community, and to define what possessions and qualities are of value in creating meaningful friendships that offer validation and acceptance. At a social level it reinforces the need within the community, through the provision of basic needs such as housing, universal access to employment and service provision, to nurture the young person's social inclusion and create alternative ways of accessing those non-monetary resources that verify their sense of self.

John's example reminds us of the importance of the subjective meaning. Being provided with new clothes was an expression of being cared for and a timely intervention that challenged his perception and trust of services. This example illustrates the importance of clothes, as well as potions such as *tapping into good influences*, *getting together people the young person can count on* and the potential impact on his social capital due to his new presentation.

This may be better understood in terms of complexity theory. Authors of complexity theory such as Hudson (2000) and Litaker et al. (2006) argue that small inputs can have disproportionately large effects. In the case of John, complexity theory helps us understand unintended outcomes from interventions. As counselling psychologists, this offers a reminder that this non-proportional relationship between cause and effect challenges us to be cautious about thinking there may be a single

or limited number of mechanisms that contribute to resilience, and changes are not necessarily directly proportional to the effort required to create them.

5.3.2   Nurturing coping and belonging: Humour

Humour emerged as an important mechanism nurturing young men's resilience to reoffending. Freudian analysts were the first to recognise humour and creativity as related resiliencies with the power to invert reality. Freud (1927) noted the power of humour to reduce something to nothing. He regarded a joke as a mirror in which you see your hardships shrink and yourself become larger than life. In his 1927 paper on humour, Freud attributes to the superego a loving and comforting function – humour exemplifies this function. He suggests that in humour, the superego is comforting the ego in the face of stresses reality imposes by fostering a temporary illusion. The superego assumes a parental function relating to the ego as if it were a child that needs comforting. Freud's perspective resonates with the young men's experience: humour was an important and valuable mechanism for them, supporting their affiliation and coping mechanisms and therefore crossing the Belonging and Coping remedies within RT. When interviewing, I noticed the young men would use humour as way of coping with re-visiting their experiences. Three of the young men demonstrated their creative agency through humour to manage major locational and psychosocial transitions relatively lightly. Their narratives reflect how they negotiated these situations with respect to the deployment of humour.

Chalkie's use of humour as a way of coping corroborates May's (1953) research which argued that humour serves the function of "preserving the sense of self. It is the healthy way of feeling a 'distance' between one's self and the problem, a way of standing off and looking at one's problems with perspective" (1953, p.61). Gaz's story demonstrates his capacity to generate humour under conditions of internal or external threat, serving the function of self-reassurance. Little research within the

resilience literature has explored the mechanisms underpinning humour. Within the CBT model, Padesky's (2009) fifth area of competence involves employing creativity and humour to one's benefit. In addition, Padesky also advocates that the therapist displays an active use of smiling as part of the therapeutic relationship. The overall research focus has been on improving positive mental health and stress reduction, rather than resilience per se, when looking at humour. This research also provides value to counselling psychologists working to promote resilience amongst vulnerable young men, providing understanding of the health benefits of humour, its function, and beneficial interventions. I found Martin's (2001) research on mechanisms underpinning humour to concur with the young men's experience.

Martin (2001) describes four theoretical mechanisms involving humour. The first mechanism is physiological. Martin cites both theory and research indicating that laughter may produce changes in numerous physiological systems (musculoskeletal, cardiovascular, endocrine, immunological, etc.) that have beneficial effects on physical health. If a sense of humour inclines a person to laughter, it could contribute to such beneficial effects, which the young men may not even be aware of. The second mechanism relating humour to well-being is via positive emotional states that accompany humour. Positive emotions may contribute to physical health in several ways (e.g. through analgesic immune-enhancing effects), but they also directly affect psychological well-being, making people feel better. This conceptualisation of humour predicts that it should be positively related to measures of positive affect (including happiness) and negatively related to measures of negative affect (namely depression), linked to how Chalkie experiences his use of humour.

Martin's (2001) third mechanism is stress. The basic idea is that humour might interact with stress by reducing the magnitude of the negative relation between

stressful life events and well-being. A sense of humour is explicitly mentioned as a possible stress-moderating variable. The mechanism is thought to be cognitive, in that a humorous outlook leads to positive interpretations or appraisal of stressful situations, thereby weakening the negative relation between stress and well-being. This chimes with the young men's experience, given their emphasis on humour as a coping mechanism.

The final mechanism Martin (2001) highlights is social support. He notes that "individuals with a greater sense of humour may be more socially competent and interpersonally attractive …, resulting in greater intimacy … and potentially more numerous and more satisfying social relationships" (Martin, 2001). He stresses that "this view focuses on tendencies to use humour in a socially facilitative manner." This seems a particularly important function of humour for vulnerable young men, and one that Gaz described as a way of enhancing his relational attachments.

This is also evident in the research offered by Cameron et al. (2010), which focused on adolescents aged 13–16 and used "day in the life" methodology to explore what types of humour they employed in their daily lives and its function. The findings demonstrated that humour played a large part in their lives: for the young women, humour was an important part of their interpersonal relationships, enhancing and instantiating their effective socioemotional functioning; the young men used humour as a way of affiliating with their peers. Through the common bond of shared jokes, they were able to express how much they enjoyed each other's company without explicitly saying so.

My research highlights how humour serves multiple functions. Humour serves both intrapsychic (coping) and interpersonal (belonging) needs. It is my belief that the young men feel comforted, safe and reassured through humorous interaction

because humour rekindles the early experience of the "we" (Stern, 1985). The self–other fusion is the background state to which the very young baby returns, whilst separateness is allowed to gradually develop. I think the way in which Chalkie, Gaz and Grumpz used humour corresponds with Chasseguet-Smirgel's (1988) insightful research suggesting that the humourist acts as a "good enough parent" to himself. She proposes that the moment at which the humourist produces humour he is protecting himself against the ultimate narcissistic injury, namely the loss of love. This was definitely the case for these young men.

Lemma (2000) asserts that the use of humour in psychotherapy is generally thought best avoided due to confusion between doing serious work and being serious. However, Mearns and Cooper (2005) propose that humour is a fundamental ingredient in supporting a deep relational encounter. The young men are communicating the need for a relationship that offers a sense of safety and comfort and the internalisation of the "good enough parent". As counselling psychologists we need to know the function humour may serve for the young man in expressing some of his innermost wishes or fears, so we can support him to take the necessary action that may foster change. The importance for counselling psychology practice is to introduce interventions that serve to boost the young person's positive affect, and humour represents a valuable tool in this context.

5.3.3 Learning: A Creative Turning Point

Rutter (1999) notes that negative experiences tend to cluster and be interrelated and that individuals' exposure to risk is influenced through societal circumstances and the individual response to risk. He also advised that such chain effects can be interrupted by "turning point effects", mechanisms that alter the life trajectory.

The data illustrated how such mechanisms act as "turning points", creating a new life trajectory. Of importance was the subjective meaning and how it provided the necessary impulse for a change in direction. The turning point set off a chain of events that affected their environmental conditions, lifestyles, self-perceptions and hope for the future. Their narratives highlighted that the turning point in itself does not represent the fork in the road towards resilience; however it creates the impetus that sets the change in motion. The process that follows when a turning point occurs reinforces the initial impulse, consolidating the change. These stories corroborate Drapeau et al.'s (2007) research that nothing inherent in the event makes it a turning point, but how the young man interprets the turning point is facilitative of change. The two stories add value to Rutter's (1999) research, which suggests that positive and negative chain effects often have their starting points in random, even accidental events. Opportunities for disrupting these sequences come at different times and through different sources, including individuals and agencies; in a variety of ways psychological therapists can disrupt the negative chain effects that bedevil young men's lives.

The extracts alert me as a psychological therapist to the importance of understanding the subjective meaning of the turning point, how it can or did provide the necessary impulse for change. By exploring the young men's histories, we understand what is important. For Hits Man, for example, being there for others, having a sense of purpose, music, and being heard and accepted were all fundamental resilient mechanisms. Responsibility, being valued, the judge acting as a mentor, and the anger management service were significant for Mouse. Once these young men's lives are understood, it provides psychological therapists with a richer perception of how to intervene, ensuring that accessing a service represents a positive turning point.

The excerpts also illustrate the complexity of turning points, rather than them being simply positive or negative. They may be better understood in terms of complexity theory. The turning point concept is mechanistic, which limits understanding, as people's lives are evidently more complex than this. For Mouse, Gaz and Grumpz, becoming a young father is a paradox: it has positive resilience-building potential, yet research demonstrates the negative consequences; young parents live in poverty, and a child of a teenage parent is one and a half times more likely to become a teenage parent themselves (Department for Education, 2010). As psychological therapists, looking at the turning point in isolation masks the negative potential. Risk and change need to be viewed from a range of perspectives. By working to understand the paradoxes, we understand the range of outcomes and therefore identify optimal places to direct efforts for a positive impact. The importance for RT is the development of turning points into a resilient move following further consultation with parents, carers and professionals.

5.3.4   Learning: Strengthening the case for Inoculation

Resilience research highlights how in some circumstances the experience of stress or adversity can strengthen resistance to later stress (Rutter, 1981). Rutter termed this a "steeling" effect. He writes that the impact of the stress depends on how the individual experiences it, and states that protection from adverse sequelae resides in successful engagement with the risk rather than avoidance of it.

Hart and Blincow (2007) termed this "inoculated resilience". Inoculated resilience is a process of transforming the adversity into a resource or protective mechanism. I didn't anticipate prison being an environment that would offer any value, yet for these young men it supported their sense of belonging, offered them a place of safety, increased their capacity for learning and taught them life skills that had been missing, enhancing their self-efficacy. Prison acted as a vehicle for a positive turning

point in their lives due to their response. Naturally, I am not advocating prison as an intervention, yet concepts such as inoculated resilience and the young men's stories have fuelled my capacity to remain open to the complexity of human experience, looking beyond assumptions and across the boundaries of accepted knowledge of what will be supportive. These examples illustrate Rutter's (1990; 1995) convincing argument that it is important to think of resilience as a process. Of significance is Rutter's (1981) point regarding how the individual engages with the risk. The young men used the challenges as opportunities to learn and grow. Services enabled them to appreciate the challenges as valuable contributors to their narrative and develop a new self-story, illustrated earlier.

Inoculated resilience presents an interesting challenge to counselling psychology and psychotherapy practice, taking us further into uncertainty. The young men's storylines challenge the discourse, showing that prison can in fact be beneficial; an unexpected outcome, reinforcing the importance of subjective truth. Their stories are a reminder of the complexity of human processes and the limitations of research in providing complete clarity. They reinforce the value of inoculated resilience within the RT frame, and for psychological therapists, the importance of staying open, being with our own insecurities, while maintaining hope that by looking beyond obvious causal processes, unexpected mechanisms may prove beneficial.

5.3.5 Core Self: Maturation

Within this research, maturity was one of a range of processes that nurtured resilience to reoffending. I will now look at the three psychosocial factors and the corresponding mechanisms within RT. I will illustrate the value of the research on maturity and how it can support Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy practice with young men vulnerable to offending behaviour.

The first factor, responsibility, In the context of the RT framework, is promoted throughout. Basics equip the young man with the essentials for self-reliance. Identity and independence is attended to within core self, through *supporting the young person to take responsibility for himself*. *Teaching the young person to understand other's feelings* within RT sponsors the development of perspective, alongside potions such as *obligations and responsibilities* and *understand boundaries and keep within them*. The third factor, temperance, refers to the ability to modulate impulsivity, considering the consequences before acting. This is encouraged through RT's *problem solving*, highlighted in the young men's narratives as an important behavioural regulator.

Research studies in this area (Cauffman and Steinberg, 2000; Modecki, 2008; Cruise et al., 2008) are explicitly concerned with the relationship between the level of maturity exhibited by individuals and their propensity to engage in crime, and conclude that lack of full psychosocial development generates a greater likelihood of "immature judgment" or decisions to engage in offending behaviour, extending into young adulthood. Therefore, Modecki (2008, p.89) offers the general observation that "young adults may be more akin to adolescents than adults in their inclination to engage in antisocial decision-making". Moreover, research suggests that responsibility, temperance and perspective develop towards maturity (leading to less likelihood of influencing decisions to offend) at different rates: responsibility and perspective become relatively settled after around 18 years, while emotional factors may continue to influence the ability to exercise temperance in decision-making into the mid to late twenties (Modecki, 2008). In a major study of convicted young people aged 11–17 years in the US, Cruise et al. (2008) also highlighted the importance of "temperance" in influencing offending behaviour. They found that this was the "significant maturity variable in predicting violent, non-violent and total delinquent

behaviour for boys and holds promise as a significant predictor of similar behaviour among girls" (2008, p.189).

While these research studies appear to move towards a clearer definition of "maturity", some ambiguity remains. Some of the factors evidently also involve cognitive processes and there is an inter-relationship. For example, the ability to appreciate the long-term consequence of an action is an important element of perspective, and requires the cognitive ability to weigh risks and benefits, which is related to the ability to forego immediate gratification, an element of temperance (Cauffman and Steinberg, 2000). Of importance within this research is the inclusion of family, social and cultural processes in influencing maturity. Modecki (2008) states that maturity of judgment varies according to the social context at the time of making a decision to act. This corresponds with Steinberg and Cauffman (1996) who highlighted that people may exhibit varying levels on each of the psychosocial processes, depending on the situation or context. As illustrated earlier, for young men such as Marcus the context supported the development and application of his maturity.

My research demonstrates the variation in the levels of psychosocial maturity and the contribution maturity has on the young men's resilience to reoffending, corresponding with the literature. The research on maturity is valuable when considered alongside familial, social and contextual processes. Due to the focus on "factors", I approach Steinberg and Cauffman's (2000) model tentatively, having demonstrated in the introduction how factors limit understanding of the process. I look to RT in offering clarity and practice guidance as to the processes and mechanisms that support growth and maturity.

For psychological therapists, understanding maturity and its contribution to resilience to reoffending is important to help young people understand the hope that maturation can provide for their future, as part of self-understanding. The research on maturity also highlights an interesting debate as to whether the young men would have naturally grown out of offending, or whether service intervention accelerated this process: the challenge is that we don't really know. As psychological therapists, this causes us to work on hunches as we don't know all the answers, emphasising the importance of being open and more humble when responding to such hunches, and embracing the fluidity and complexity of human processes. Of further importance is the influence of wider social interactions, and this is the focus of my next discussion point.

5.3.6   Belonging: Consideration of Social Capital

Since the development of the RT framework, the research literature has augmented to include explorations of social capital and its impact on resilience. Despite the significance of place, attachment or sense of belonging in the environmental psychology literature (Chawla 1992; Low and Altman 1992; Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff, 1983), this concept has gained very little recognition in the social capital literature. Putnam mentions the sense of belonging to a community in his definition (Putnam 1993), but neglects to explain or integrate this concept into his overall theory. Defined here, a sense of belonging is human beings having a sense of where they fit in with others, including their immediate family, friends, wider community, school and wider circumstances. Having a sense of belonging includes culture and geography as important considerations (Hart and Blincow, 2007). Spencer and Woolley (1998) suggested that a sense of belonging to a place such as a community influenced child development, helping children to form their identity. Derr (2002, p.127) found in her research that children as early as middle childhood

(9 to 11 years) mention that it is important to "feel at home". Additionally, Edwards and Mullis (2001) attributed academic success to a sense of belonging at school, and found that violent behaviour is prevalent in schools where children do not feel they belong.

Illustrating how social capital is different to belonging and the value that understanding social capital can have on resilience to reoffending and RT are considerations I will explore in the following section. I begin by exploring research focusing on resilience and social capital, continue by examining the relationship between social capital, belonging and the RT framework, and go on to highlight the importance of inequalities and social capital, regarding in particular young people's access to social capital. I conclude by showing how social capital can add value to the belonging compartment, and, more generally, to psychological therapists' work with vulnerable young men.

5.3.6.1   Resilience and social capital

Bassani (2007) indicated that the relationship between social capital, young people and resilience is under-researched. Vinson (2004) posited that social capital acts as a buffer to the adverse effects of disadvantage. Cox and Caldwell (2000) saw resilience as an indicator of social capital. Bottrell (2009) demonstrated the importance of social capital and the impact on resilience for young women's networks within a deprived housing estate in Sydney. Her study describes the dynamics between how young people's social capital is perceived from outside and how young people perceive it. Whilst seen as "problematic" for outsiders, for the young women, the "youth network constitutes an enhancement of resources, trust, reciprocity, and recognition" (2009, p.23).

Abelev's (2009) study highlighted the importance of key mentors in supporting young people "at risk" to advance out of poverty, encouraging a resilient educational outcome. Conducting life interviews with 48 educationally resilient African-American children considered "at risk", the study highlighted the protective processes supporting respondent's social mobility. Abelev (2009) demonstrates how young people gain a resilient outcome due to gaining access to middle class habitus through supportive mentors. This corresponds with my experience as mentioned in the introduction, having a mentor who funded my counselling psychology training. *Habitus*, as defined by Bourdieu (1977), is a person's worldview and a function of the fields of which he is a part. When considered in the arena of social class and education, Lareau (2003) asserted that different classes have different habitus, and these differences result in different interactions between families, schools and other institutions. Lareau (2003) proposed that such institutions require the middle class habitus, leaving others at an interactional disadvantage. Access to the middle class habitus for young people in Abelev's (2009) study happened in three ways. First, respondents got into high-performing schools instead of attending their low-performing neighbourhood schools; second, the education was covered by scholarship or paid for by mentors; a third category was customised education plans, developed by middle-class mentors, that acted as important buffers against "at risk" behaviours, especially unplanned pregnancy and school exclusions. In each case, the respondent gained access to the middle class social milieu and its habitus. This included knowledge of resources, an understanding of how to access them, and importantly an expectation of the entitlement to those resources, which facilitated their resilience. The young men within this research didn't have access to such opportunities; this highlights the potential valuable contribution of the counselling psychologist, who can enlist important local mentors to provide access

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to such opportunities, working with services and local authorities to create openings for young people to support their route towards success.

With reference to offending, Kemshall et al. (2006) found that peer networks may help young people to navigate risks associated with circumstances of offending. However the authors suggest that different characteristics of networks may influence young people's "situational agency" in different directions. Different types of social capital are evident in "restricted or diverse, closed or linking; and in the type of outlook and potential such networks afford young people" (2006, p.362). The implication here is that social capital can have positive or negative effects and may support or curtail risk navigation and access to opportunities and social resources. This was particularly evident for the young men in this research, whose bonding social capital had both a positive and negative impact: it conferred a sense of belonging, yet limited their opportunities to thrive and gain access to empowering networks and resources. I will now look to the literature to highlight belonging and social capital as distinct and interrelated concepts, indicating how social capital can enhance the belonging compartment within RT.

5.3.6.2   Belonging, social capital and the Resilient Therapy framework

Belonging has been identified as a measurement of social capital, although the two are distinct concepts. Social capital has been defined variously, and typically refers to social networks built around trust and shared norms, both conduits for resourcing members (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2001). Social capital is a feature of the social structure rather than the individuals within the structure; it is an ecological characteristic, while belonging operates at the individual level within the social structure. Both elements are important: a sense of feeling part of a group or environment, and influence in the sense that the individual matters to the group. Measuring social capital becomes more complex as authors differentiate

between structural and cognitive social capital (Morrow, 1999). Here, belonging and social capital begin to separate. Structural social capital reflects the connectedness of individuals within a given community (participation in organisations and networks, etc.), whereas cognitive social capital refers to the feelings of a sense of community (perceptions of belonging, reciprocity, norms, trust, etc.)

A further distinction is between bonding and bridging social capital, which Putnam (2000) considers of crucial importance, referring to bridging as inclusive and bonding as exclusive networks. Within this distinction, he argues that social capital aids access to resources. Bonding social capital resides in family relationships, friendship and peer groups, providing a sense of belonging. Bridging social capital involves creating links with people outside of immediate family and friendship circles, important for broadening people's opportunities and horizons. He also states what he considers to be some of their consequences: "Bonding social capital is good for 'getting by' but bridging social capital is crucial for 'getting ahead'" (Putnam, 2000, p.22–23). Thus, bridging social capital is seen to generate broader identities and reciprocity, whereas bonding social capital bolsters our narrower selves.

As part of the exploration between social capital, belonging and RT, it feels important to highlight where RT corresponds to concepts such as cognitive, structural, bonding, and bridging social capital. My aim has not been to propose causal links as this was not the intention of this research and I do not have enough evidence to support such assertions. Instead, I propose where RT has the opportunity to impact on such processes through the mechanisms employed, illustrating the connection between social capital and belonging within RT.

Belonging Intervention	Structural/Cognitive	Bonding/Bridging
Tapping into good influences	Structural	Bonding/Bridging

Find somewhere for the child to belong	Cognitive	Bonding/Bridging
Belonging involves obligations and responsibilities too	Structural	Bonding/Bridging
Help young person to make friends and mix with other young people	Structural	Bonding
Focus on good times and places	Cognitive	Bonding
Make sense of where a young person has come from	Cognitive	Bonding
Get together people the young person can count on	Structural	Bonding/Bridging
Predict a good experience of someone/something new	Structural	Bonding/Bridging
Help the young person understand his or her place in the world	Cognitive	Bonding
Belonging is not just about people	Structural	Bridging

Table 5: Potions in RT's Belonging remedy, and aspects corresponding to structural, cognitive and bonding, bridging social capital.

The table illustrates how the Belonging remedy works to support both structural and cognitive social capital. Within this present research, structural social capital refers to the young men's use of their networks to access community services. Their cognitive social capital refers to their sense of belonging, perceived level of trust, and mutuality within their immediate and external communities. The relationship between the two is interdependent. The young men's narratives demonstrated high levels of structural social capital, as they were pro-active at enlisting professionals. Their level of cognitive social capital increased as a result of their engagement with services. As illustrated previously, for Gaz, Grumpz and Mouse, becoming a father was an important structural mechanism, facilitating responsibility and sense of belonging. This highlights the reciprocal nature between structural and cognitive

social capital and the impact on belonging. The Noble Truth *Enlisting* corresponds to bridging social capital.

There is an interactive relationship between bonding and bridging social capital, and mechanisms within RT nurture both aspects. For example RT potions such as *finding somewhere for the young person to belong*: when accessing a service the young men created positive friendships alongside moving forward, both bridging and bonding. *Predict a good experience of someone/something new* can work across both bonding and bridging social capital, involving a new friendship or intimate relationship and/or a professional relationship. Mouse's example earlier illustrated how his relationship with his partner prompted a new professional relationship, a demonstration of bonding and bridging social capital working together. *Belonging involves obligations and responsibilities* also has the potential to work across both, as Chalkie illustrated earlier in his example of getting a job, helping him to get ahead and increasing his social network.

Predict an experience of someone/something new impacts on both bonding and bridging social capital. Marcus's story illustrates how his move to a different town impacted on his bridging social capital by giving him access to Respond. This encouraged the meeting of his new friend, who had a positive impact. I also appreciate that when working with young men who live risky and chaotic lives there is more to consider when applying such concepts. Kemshall's (2008) research shows how young people seen as "at risk" tend to be "risk averse", in the sense of being unable or willing to take the risk of leaving their immediate network and locale. This was the case for Marcus, knowing he wanted to move on and fearful about leaving his friends. This might restrain horizons and lead to a pathway of restricted choice. Having a strong bonding social capital can provide young people with a sense of belonging, security and safety, but with few empowering interactions. Such

interactions include peers generating new, informal, and practical knowledge, as was the case for Marcus when he settled in Hastings. He was able to let go of the constraints in his life and thus gain access to new material, cultural and social resources.

There is clearly a relationship between social capital and belonging, and RT makes a contribution in supporting both processes. I will now explore the relationship between resilience and social capital, inequality of access to social capital and, briefly, how social capital is politically framed. Acknowledging these considerations offers a useful contribution to consultations or discussions within the RT team pertaining to the value of including social capital as part of the RT framework, and to psychological therapists when working with vulnerable young people.

5.3.6.3 The importance of access to social capital

I have illustrated throughout this research how young men's navigation is impacted by the economic, political and social conditions that shape their experiences. The social capital literature reinforces this and highlights that young people's ability to access and draw on social capital's "use" and "exchange value" is influenced by gender, class, family background, income, ethnicity and locality. To purely focus on individualised therapeutic interventions neglects both individual and collective needs and as psychological therapists we become part of maintaining the oppression young people are subjected to.

A young person's class position influences access to the diverse resources that social capital can give. Furlong and Cartmel (2007, p.2) assert: "life chances and experiences can still largely be predicted using knowledge of an individual's location within social structures: despite arguments to the contrary, class and gender divisions remain central to an understanding of life experiences." Elsewhere,

Webster et al. (2005) argue that in order to understand growing up in disadvantaged areas "neither 'deficient' parenting nor lack of opportunity alone sufficiently explains experiences of poor transitions"; they identify that for many young people the structural context "provides few resources to resolve crises or overcome contingency and that constrains choice" (2005, p.2). This distinctively distances itself from a construction of working-class families "as lacking in personal skills and moral responsibility, destined to transfer disadvantage to their children in a 'cycle of deprivation'" (Gilllies 2005, p.835).

For young people from disadvantaged areas such as Hastings, research by Walther et al. (2005) demonstrates how access to different "leisure activities", opportunities to travel and having a diverse access to different groups is denied through class position. This access is not only financial but also dependent on the localities. Many deprived areas, like Hastings, lack leisure amenities and young people either choose to be at home or acting out, not because they do not want to participate, but because they cannot afford or do not have access to these activities. In my position as Pulse manager, I set up a "gym and swim" card initiative. This enabled young people to access free gym and swimming services with local providers commissioned to offer a budget service. Due to the lack of amenities and the success of the programme, we extended this to include cinema, bowling, hairdressing and catering providers, to support young people's bridging and bonding social capital.

Politically, increasing social capital is high on the agenda through the coalition government's Big Society policy (Cabinet Office, May 2010). The purpose of the Big Society is to give families, groups, networks, neighbourhoods and local communities more power and responsibility. Particularly relevant to youth policy is the aim to encourage people to take an active role in their communities. In order to achieve

this, the government has introduced a National Citizen Service (NCS) and an International Citizen Service, whose aim is to engage young people, giving them a sense of purpose, optimism and belonging, and allowing them to become active and responsible citizens, to mix with people from different backgrounds, and start getting involved in their own communities. In my view, the Big Society seems to continue an agenda that seeks subtle ways of regulating disadvantaged young people and their communities. It appears to me that these normative and integrationist policies, which seek to "manufacture" the civic society through "techniques of social regulation", will perpetuate the existing discourses of responsibilisation already heavily prevalent in youth debates, and abdicate any societal responsibility in promoting young people's empowerment and integration.

Therefore, does social capital add value to the Belonging remedy? Both interrelated concepts offer useful insights in understanding the importance of social relations. Social capital research explains differential access to resources and opportunities resulting from social connections. It reiterates the importance of the social context in maintaining and reinforcing the inequalities young people are faced with. As a counselling psychologist I have an opportunity to support young people to utilise and extend their social capital, offering benefit to disadvantaged and marginalised communities in promoting their resilience. I appreciate that I am part of the structures set up by the government, and by working at an individual and societal level I can be critical and work to promote structural, political and cultural change. Young people's maintenance and enhancement of social capital is a process which has to be negotiated in a continuous interaction between self, situated activity, social settings and context. Thinking in terms of social capital provides a political edge to the existing Belonging remedy and the understanding of young people's social relations which could be influential for the commissioning of RT. I also

recognise that the development of RT has evolved through consultation with parents and carers and therefore more consultation would be necessary to consider the integration of social capital within the RT framework, in a way that maintains the value of the Belonging remedy and its consideration of attachment, which is not recognised within the social capital concept. Furthermore, social capital is an academic concept and to support its inclusion into the RT framework it would need to be converted into a resilience move, and therefore this requires further consultation.

A focus on social capital for psychological therapists as a resource and as the social context within which people negotiate everyday life would involve paying attention to community and locale, peers, networks and young people's access to social resources. This moves away from an individualist explanation of youth transition, so prevalent in youth policy and interventions – acknowledging that actions made by young people are not completely open and free. Choices are often constrained by a practical knowledge and understanding of what is possible – a knowledge that is clearly mediated by locality, gender, class and ethnicity.

5.3.7 A second chance to make an impression

The research reinforces Rutter's (1990) proposal that resilience is an on-going process. When early experiences and opportunities have compromised the young men's potential there is an opportunity to create necessary conditions to facilitate their growth. This is supported in research such as that of Sroufe et al. (1999), who challenged the fundamental contribution of attachment alone, revealing that adolescents with insecure attachment histories were amenable to positive change, as well as those who were doing well in middle childhood and also functioning fairly well in adolescence. This confirmed the idea that resilience and vulnerability should be viewed in process terms and as a lifelong experience (Egeland, Carelson and

Sroufe, 1993). Sroufe proposed that the individual is the product of all his or her experiences, not just early experiences alone (Sroufe, 1978). This message is also emerging from other resilience research, advocating the importance of intervening at all developmental transitions and not just in the early years (Luthar and Cicchetti, 2000). Early childhood interventions are obviously of preventative value, yet my research also illustrates the fallacy of assuming that once interventions are offered in early childhood, nothing further is required or can make any difference. If this had been the case for the young men interviewed then their futures would have been seriously compromised. Chalkie, Jake and Mouse illustrated opportunities in their early childhood to adolescence where they accessed services and felt disappointed. Their stories highlighted the importance of timing, their readiness to engage with the services and organisations that could provide them with missing mechanisms. Resilience research by Masten et al. (2006) suggests that recovery and positive change evident during the transition to adulthood may reflect changes in fundamental but powerful adaptive systems, both within the person and in their interactions with the environment, that generate a new capacity for change; this was corroborated in the present research. I will now consider the overall implications for psychological therapies.

5.4 Implications for Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy

I began by advocating the importance of both collective and individual work within counselling psychology and psychotherapy. Individual work was significant to the young men's resilience to reoffending; it was important to access individual support and resources through their networks and develop a new narrative to describe their experience. In addition they valued the importance of a "different" response from individuals and organisations within their community, where organisations shifted

their practices and interventions in a way which supported resilience beyond the individual level.

Mechanisms within the young man's context clearly played an important part in contributing to their resilience to reoffending. Contexts of constelled disadvantage have an impact on the young person's access to mechanisms and resources that enable the building of resilience. Features of the context at an individual level include socioeconomic status, psychological health, gender, disability, ethnicity, sexuality and geographical location. Such inequalities are interrelated and can create new patterns of disadvantage, each with varying consequences, including negative chain reactions as illustrated through Rutter's (1999) research. In addition, young people within the 18–25 age group – the current context – are faced with societal challenges such as high levels of unemployment and reduction in benefits and service provision. Such inequalities can be manifested in a young person's sense of belonging, their experience of themselves, their capacity to learn, their sense of safety and trust, self-efficacy, access to social capital, and all these need to be taken into account when understanding young people's pathways towards resilience.

Together, this reinforces the importance of attending to both social and individual processes within the psychological therapies for all clients, not just vulnerable young men. Individual work can be empowering, yet the danger is the reinforcement of social and cultural relations as "individual challenges", and making a priority of solving those challenges intra-psychically to facilitate personal growth. What can be lost through this process is young people's genuine critique or "voice" that describes their collective experience of institutions and communities. It could also promote an energy of change which is located within the person rather than within organisations that are designed to accommodate and support young people.

The vision I am proposing for the psychological therapies is a fusion between the understanding, analysis, technical knowledge and skills present in Counselling Psychology and the principles of community development. Community Development connects locally based solutions to wider issues of power, participation and social and economic justice, moving away from individualised interventions, which are at best ameliorative and tacitly support existing oppressive structures. RT already works in this way by harnessing the broadest range of therapeutic approaches and integrating them with social and welfare initiatives. Then, through RT, this context of inequality and social exclusion is worked through as a specific focus, to prevent the practitioner's work being undermined and overwhelmed by it. Psychological health is fundamental for community development, and successful psychological well-being policies and practices must also be grounded in principles of community development. Through integrating Psychological therapies as part of a community development framework, the psychological therapist is in a better position to facilitate the bringing of people together through professional and public forums, helping them connect with others, increasing the opportunity for change. Through being integrated into the community the psychological therapist has the opportunity to challenge the way dominant narratives legitimise the status quo, to give space to existing minority narratives and hopes, and champion action and change.

This way of working is currently endorsed by Critical and Community Psychologists such as Prilleltensky and Nelson (2002) and Counselling Psychologists Vera and Speight (2003) who advocate a social justice agenda in Psychology. They make specific recommendations for working critically in school, health, clinical, work and community settings. Community Psychology has also been highly influential in fostering social change, prevention, cultural diversity and empowerment for the last four decades (Prilleltensky and Prilleltensky, 2005).

I recognise the challenge for psychological therapists working systemically. I highlighted in the introduction how working at a social justice level within a private organisation has presented a challenge for me. This important work is not financially supported, so as a self-employed psychological therapist it is a personal and professional choice to do the work pro bono. Therefore, failure to take on a social justice role may not be as a result of a lack of moral fibre among psychological therapists, but rather because of a need to sustain themselves in human service organisations and systems that are not necessarily responsive to social justice interventions. Also, within our capitalist society there appears to be a philosophy of looking to individuals to adapt to existing structures rather than encouraging society to change. An example of this was highlighted in the riots of summer 2011, which ironically took place whilst I was conducting one of my interviews. Following the riots, David Cameron highlighted that we were living in a "broken society". His proposed solution was to enforce harsher sentences and tackle "troubled" individuals and families, solutions which were targeted at the micro rather than macro level (Sparrow, 2011). This reflects a dominant political and ideological preference to reduce crime through an individual remedy, excluding the social contribution. I have recognised through the process of doing this research that by not considering the collective, I am unintentionally part of such solutions that justify social inequity and contribute to the oppression of marginalised young men. My value of the therapeutic relationship remains, yet professionally I have grown, realising that focusing on a sole value such as proximal care undermines the existence of that value, as it cannot thrive in the absence of others.

Therefore, whilst it may be a challenge to carry out communitarian social justice work within a capitalist society and organisations focused on economic growth, I do believe that the implementation of individual and collective values needs to be

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incorporated as part of the perspective that guides counselling psychology and psychotherapy. Presumably, social justice psychological therapists could choose the perspectives and strategies with the best cost–benefit ratio in the settings and the levels at which they work. This would enable a moral commitment to the work without promoting their economic self-destruction. As a young woman experiencing disadvantage who was given the opportunity to train as a psychological therapist, I believe the profession and training institutions have a responsibility to create opportunities to train individuals from lower socio-economic families, creating diversity within the profession and tackling social inequalities from an individual and collective premise.

Kasket (2012) identifies that a key aspect of counselling psychology doctoral research is dissemination. In support of this I have recently put in a funding bid to work with the referring organisations and the young men to develop a resource that will promote these findings to front-line workers, counselling psychologists and psychotherapists. This bid has been successful, and work is underway with the organisations and young men. It is also providing work for the young men as they will be paid for their involvement. This is my attempt to continue to raise the profile of such organisations and highlight the valuable work that they are doing, and to involve the young men in the dissemination of the research whilst promoting their resilience. The organisations form part of the marginalised community that the young people are part of and therefore, in the spirit of RT, I see championing and elevating practice to its proper status as a key part of working at a political, structural and cultural level to influence change.

Research such as this can be enlightening, providing psychological therapists with a dynamic view of how young people's life trajectories are constructed, providing more insight into what might be done to alter the situation. However, this outlook can also

lead us into further questioning. For example, why did one young man change his trajectory after becoming involved with services, while another young man carried on engaging in antisocial behaviour? Likewise, why does a young man realise something at one point in his life and not two years earlier? However far we explore this complex phenomenon, do we come closer to decoding its contents? There is no guarantee that any model can foresee who will change trajectories and when they will do it. To adopt Werner's (2005) image, a better understanding of resilience does not mean we will find a "magic potion" that will affect everyone in the same way. I recognise that the type of practice advocated here does not guarantee a change of course, yet it may increase its likelihood.

5.5   Research Limitations

Whilst overall I feel that I have conducted the research in a way that is thorough and rigorous, I am also aware of some of its limitations, areas for improvement and further investigation.

Even though the wealth and depth of the data stemming from this relatively small sample could lend certain transferability to the mechanisms explored here, I feel it is important to clarify that it was not my intention to generalise my findings to all young men who have offended.

Concerning the composition of the sample, I am aware that all the young men that I interviewed were white and working class, and therefore there was little representation of ethnic minorities and different classes that make up the criminal justice system.   A wider sample could have provided insight into different mechanisms of importance within a range of communities and a diverse perspective in relation to the social, cultural and economic processes involved. This would have

offered a greater representation of the youth offending population and a wider transferability of practice implications.

I was challenged at a counselling psychology conference last year as to the value of my research because I hadn't explored the narratives of young men who were still offending, as has been done by other scholars (Maruna, 2000; Murray, 2010). Reflecting on this feedback, I appreciate that this research could be further enhanced by understanding the narratives of young men who are still offending, as this may shed further light on mechanisms that are important in nurturing their resilience. Of importance is that the definition of resilience subscribed to within this research is not located within social or normative judgments based on the presence of expected competencies in young people considered at risk, such as offending or non-offending. I am not defining young people who are offending or not offending as either resilient or non-resilient; rather, I was more interested in the subjective and constructed meaning of resilience. I also recognise the value in focusing purely on young men who were no longer offending. My view is that it provides a richer description of the experience of a homogenous sample of young men whose stories provide a valuable contribution to practice within counselling psychology and psychotherapy.

A further strength – and limitation – of the research was the retrospective application of the RT framework to my data. The first desirable attribute of applying the framework retrospectively was that the emerging data was organic, and therefore may reflect a truer account of the young men's experiences. For example, the young men spontaneously shared the internal and external mechanisms of value, enhancing their validity as the questioning was not contaminated by my guidance. A further strength is that in the absence of prompting, I may be receiving a valid representation of the gaps within those services in terms of the mechanisms

provided, presenting an opportunity for service development. However, the validity may also be compromised, since by not applying the frame through the interview process I may have missed opportunities within the narratives to explore further mechanisms that were significant and to support the young men in articulating those experiences. In addition, I applied the RT framework to services that had not received RT training, and therefore young men had not intentionally received the interventions. An opportunity for development would be to pilot the RT framework with young men who have offended and explore the impact of the mechanisms following a direct RT intervention.

I am aware that the research represents a moment in time and the individual and structural mechanisms are indicative of that time. Such mechanisms will change and evolve, which will also impact on the relevance and applicability of my research findings.

Since the research is linked to a particular context, namely Hastings in south-east England, the findings are limited in their transferability to other contexts. Despite this limitation, however, they will be of benefit to the context where the data was gathered. Further research could be conducted to assess the utility of these findings among other populations and contexts.

6 Final Reflections and Conclusion

As I have reflected on the process of my doctoral research and my role as a researcher, I feel that it is important to illustrate my choices, experiences and actions throughout the process, and to recognise the impact on myself, the participants and the research itself. I will present these final reflections under the headings representation and dissemination.

6.1 Research Representation: The Search for Personal Authority

A theme that has been a key learning throughout my research journey has been the search for my own personal authority. I recall seminars at Metanoia in which tutors advised the importance of stating and owning our authority, and at the time it seemed such an abstract term, existing outside of myself: I felt uncertain as to what this meant in practice and how I could set about achieving it. There was also a process of negotiating different authorities, for example having an external supervisor who was not linked to Metanoia and was unaware of the standards and expectations, as well as an internal supervisor, and the different parameters that these individuals held. Such structures partially determined my research route. Furthermore, during my training the institution went through a significant process of change with regard to starting the Doctoral programme, and we were transferred from the MSC to the DCPSYCH in Counselling Psychology at the same time as the course underwent this change. I recognise that a professional doctorate involves a tension between inputs from tutors and self-directed learning, and negotiating this, along with managing internal and external supervision, was a challenge. Methodological attention to detail may have "fallen through the gaps" in this process with respect to various aspects of narrative inquiry, which I will describe later.

Completing this piece of research has supported the beginnings of my ownership of my authority, and on reflection I recognise that there have been times throughout

the process when I returned to my old narrative of not feeling good enough, lacking the confidence to make certain decisions, which has impacted on choices I have made throughout the completion of the research.

The first of these choices was in relation to data collection in the context of a narrative inquiry methodology. My aim was to elicit mechanisms at an individual and societal level that were impacting on the young men's transformative trajectories. I wanted to understand the lived experiences of the young men, and from that, understand their narrative in relation to the mechanisms that supported their resilience to reoffending, and the wider narratives that exist in society which are part of those processes and mechanisms. Narrative inquiry supports this process. I also felt that inviting young men to tell their stories would achieve a depth within the dialogue that would support the retrieval of such mechanisms within their tales. It was important to "dig deep", or to be like "a dog with a bone" as Chalkie described it, to really ascertain the processes and mechanisms of value and why such mechanisms held importance. Narrative inquiry was considered appropriate as it attempts to understand how people think through events, what they value as important throughout that process through an in-depth engagement. Additionally, narrative inquiry starts from the point of the storyteller. Adopting narrative inquiry enabled me to provide the young men with the opportunity to tell their story, to give voice to their marginalised experiences. Hearing their stories illuminated the importance of mechanisms that nurtured their resilience, and I could see what had been missing in their histories and therefore why such mechanisms were of value. To manage my anxieties about gathering stories that were sufficiently rich and in-depth, I veered towards gathering more data than is typically needed within a narrative enquiry approach. This resulted in feeling overwhelmed as I approached the data analysis stage, as I had a considerable amount of data.

This also presented another challenge as initially I struggled to gain the desired number of participants since I was only recruiting from one service, and it was challenging to identify young men who were no longer offending. This prompted the reduction to eight young men.

Completing the interviews also represented a significant learning curve. I prepared an interview guide with a list of questions ahead of the interviews; this was to support my own anxiety as a new researcher, as I was concerned that I would come unstuck and lost for questions. Completing the guide in itself settled my anxiety and I didn't refer to it in the narrative interviews. Producing a semi-structured guide also jars with the narrative inquiry approach as the imposition of questions intrudes on what may spontaneously emerge between the researcher and researched. It was important that the structure and process of the interview was flexible and co-created by me and the young men, as opposed to me leading with a series of questions. Therefore, I merely began with an introduction inviting them to create the film of their life, which supported them to take the process in their own direction and co-create the shape of the interview. This enabled both of us to respond to new ideas, thoughts and reflections that emerged throughout.

A further learning has been the way in which I have told my story of my own process within this thesis concerning the interview process. I described "bracketing my own assumptions" as I felt that this was what was required of me and a fear of others' perceptions if I were transparent about my assumptions. Some of my assumptions before going into the research were based on previous encounters with young men in former professional roles. I assumed that the interview process would be quite difficult in the sense that the young men would struggle to articulate their stories and it would be a challenge to ascertain the data that I was looking for. An extract from

my reflective journal below illustrates how I felt after completing my first interview with Hits Man:

"Wow, how amazing!! I am feeling inspired after just completing my first interview. The young man was so articulate and the way in which he described his experiences and told his story has gone beyond my expectations! What were my expectations? I think following my pilot interviews, I can see that I was expecting today to be difficult and that getting any data from the young men would be tough as I felt so demoralised after the pilot. This also feels rubbish as I feel as if I have done the young men a disservice through my expectation of them."

This was an important moment in recognising the negative projections that I was placing on the young men, in a similar vein to the prejudices of society towards young men who have been involved in crime. Noting this negative bias was useful in enabling me to be more open in the interviews that followed, and I recognise that such assumptions may have impacted on my experience of the pilot interviews, where I struggled to elicit data that answered my research question. I am taking risks in other areas of my professional life now in terms of being honest and transparent about what I am feeling and the assumptions I hold. This is supporting my connection to the work and enhancing my learning as a reflective practitioner as I pay attention to what I see, hear, and feel in my body and how I transfer this into my practice.

Narrative inquiry is useful for exploring the richness, depth and complexity of stories which is then transformed into a narrative through the analysis of those stories. Reducing the number of participants would have been a more suitable and less ambitious choice, consistent with the narrative method. I also recognise that the more people you work with, the less you may see. I was aware as I continued

through the interviews that I was seeing similarities across themes within the young men's stories and perhaps the uniqueness of their tales was being diluted due to the volume I was exposed too, as well as the similarities that naturally exist. On reflection, however, as the research continued to evolve in the direction it did (which I will allude to next in the dissemination section), I am pleased that I interviewed all eight young men as they have co-created this research as it presently stands and evolved as participants.

As a novice researcher approaching the analysis stage with eight participants, I saw the consequences of my decision, feeling overwhelmed with the enormity of data. This was another turning point in the research process, resulting in a slippage from the narrative inquiry method which I will now attend to.

I recognise that my research has evolved to a place where it is informed by the narrative inquiry method. Through utilising a content analysis approach to the stories, I have departed from a traditional narrative inquiry. Narrative analysis focuses on keeping the story intact for interpretive purposes, rather than extracting segments of data to build a set of themes to describe the phenomenon of interest, as with content analysis. I appreciate that my approach then lends the research to a more grounded theory analysis. However, within this research I was bringing ideas and concepts from the resilience research field into my data and therefore a pure grounded theory approach was not suitable.

When I arrived at supervision with my transcripts, ready to embark on Lieblich et al.'s (1998) holistic-content analysis, a discussion emerged with my supervisor. Angie Hart reminded me of my research question and asked whether the analysis approach I had chosen was the most suitable to elicit data in support of this question. I was embarking on looking at the tone of the story, the form of the

narrative, the organising themes, the supporting cast members and how the young men's narratives progressed over time. In this research I wanted insight into the mechanisms that support young men's resilient pathways, and returning to the question, I began to recognise that the important feature was the content of the narrative and the themes within the narrative pertaining to those mechanisms. Holding in mind my question and the quantity of data due to the number of participants, I began to review my choice of analysis within the supervisory space. We then returned to the context of the research and what was needed within this context. We reflected that there were many existing stories, particularly within the RT community of practice, that illustrated young men's stories of resilience. What was missing was a direct application of these stories into practice interventions. From this discussion we explored analysing my data using a content analysis approach to ascertain the key mechanisms and utilising the RT framework to categorise the data. At the time this felt exciting. As a new researcher it seemed a manageable way to analyse the data that would have a direct transfer into practice. As a previous commissioner, I saw the benefit of approaching services with a "how to" approach through the RT framework that was already endorsed locally, and could immediately be delivered as a training package. At this point I didn't foresee the limitations that this would place on the research in a way that I can appreciate now.

Bringing the question into focus in the analysis stage shifted the emphasis to the mechanisms and the RT framework rather than the storyteller. I recognise for the reader, the voices of the young men may have been lost; there is a contradiction between the title of the research, "young men's tales of overcoming adversity", and the mere representation of important themes across the individuals' experiences through the RT lens. Resulting from this learning process, I am proposing a new title

for the research: "Resilience to Reoffending: mechanisms supporting young men to overcome adversity."

The tension between inviting the young men to tell their stories and then transferring the data into themes was driven by the impetus to influence practice and provide the young men with a voice and sharing their stories with others. I hold this tension through the dissemination piece, which I have been passionate about from the start of the process. Feeling frustrated that so often young people are involved in research from the outset and this engagement is not maintained, I knew from the beginning of this process that I wanted to continue the sharing of such stories after the research had finished, and invited the young men at the beginning of their interviews to participate in a project to roll out the findings. Through this I can reconcile myself to losing some of the essence of the stories in the thesis, as I have continued to hold them and they are now being transferred into a film that the young men have co-produced. (I will return to this in the dissemination section.) I was passionate about answering the "so what" question that is often posed of academic research. As a practitioner sitting in professional forums and facing commissioners, I recognise that this is the question that service providers and deliverers so often want answering. If practitioners are able to alter their practice by integrating the recommendations that I am advocating and utilising the RT framework with young men at risk of offending, then this further justifies my decision to represent the data in this way.

I appreciate that through applying a narrative analysis to the data, I may have missed a range of different mechanisms due to the imposition of the framework on the data. For example, one young man's story rarely corresponded to aspects of the RT framework, and much of his story was therefore absent from the overall narrative that was presented. This was disappointing as I felt like a mother who was

neglecting one of her children, concerned that his voice would not be fully represented. This was another challenge following from interviewing eight young men: there was an on-going dance between how much I showed of myself, the theory and the young men's voices in the presentation of the thesis. I am also sure that there have been times when I have left out aspects of my own reflections, avoided bringing in parts of the young men's stories due to feeling that they are not of worth or not very interesting to hear. I really value Smith and Deemer's quote, provided by Kim Etherington (2008) in Becoming a Reflexive Researcher that reassures us " We are finite human beings who must learn to accept, for example, that anything we write must always and inevitably leave silences, that to speak at all must always and inevitably be to speak for someone else, and that we cannot make judgements and at the same time have a 'constantly moving speaking position that fixes neither subject or object' (Lather, 1993, p.685). To lament and search for solutions to these 'problems' is actually to lament and search for a solution to our human finitude. But that we are finite is something we can do nothing about" (Smith and Deemer, 2000, p.450).

My approach also helped me appreciate the limitations of the RT framework, and I am mindful that it will not necessarily support my work with all young people and I will need to draw on other resources. In view of this point, I acknowledge that if I were to do the research again I would use the framework loosely to support my data analysis, to allow the emergence of other mechanisms and case-analyse my data using fewer stories.

A further limitation of adopting a content analysis approach is that there is a lack of insight into contexts of practice because it fails to see the world through the eyes of the storyteller, and doesn't apply a theory of time (Riley and Hawe, 2005). I accept that the temporal nature of the young men's stories has been lost to the reader and

this may serve as a limitation in practice, through the lack of demonstration as to how the young men's narratives progress or regress, and how to work with such aspects in practice. Through hearing the stories myself, I was able to see why and how certain mechanisms were of value because I understood the temporal nature of their stories and what had been missing historically. Yet there wasn't room within the framework to convey these aspects, and such elements are perhaps lost to the reader. Yet through applying a narrative approach to gathering the stories I feel that I have been able to capture the importance of their context and the way in which the broader context has shaped their personal accounts. In my own interpretive commentary I have theorised about inequalities and broader social structures that weigh heavily on the young men's lives and influence their narratives of resilience.

There has also been a departure from narrative inquiry through the way in which I have presented the data within the thesis. My presentation was in line with my content analysis approach, merely representing aspects of the content/ mechanisms that had emerged, so the conversational way I chose to present it felt supportive of this at the time. Also as a new researcher I am learning more and more about how to integrate creativity into my research and my practice as a psychological therapist. Now, as an extension of the research I have been able to work with the young men about other ways of looking at presenting the data, and they have chosen to do this through the film, in line with the theme of the interviews.

There was another opportunity here that was lost due to my lack of authority. Because of the film theme that was emerging throughout the research, I initially wanted to present my thesis headings in line with film titles (such as opening credits, scene I, scene II, etc.), and have titles for each scene that corresponded with the data that was emerging within the research. Talking this through with my supervisor, she felt that this was risky and encouraged me to stay within the traditional headers,

which I accepted. With the luxury of hindsight, increased knowledge regarding presentation and a greater confidence to take my own risks, I will incorporate this from the start with any future research that I embark on. This leads nicely on to the reflections on the dissemination of the research.

6.2   Dissemination: A feminist participatory approach

Kasket (2012) identifies dissemination as a key aspect of counselling psychology doctoral research. In support of this I have recently put in a funding bid to work with the referring organisations and the young men to develop a resource that will promote these findings to front-line workers, counselling psychologists and psychotherapists. This bid has been successful, and work is underway with the organisations and young men. All of the young men who had been involved in the research were invited to take part. In addition there were other young men who had previously been involved in crime who were also engaged with Xtrax Young People's Centre who expressed an interest in participating. It is also providing work for the young men as they are being paid for their involvement. This is my attempt to continue to raise the profile of such organisations and highlight the valuable work that they are doing, and to involve the young men in the dissemination of the research whilst hopefully promoting their resilience. The organisations form part of the marginalised community that the young people are part of and therefore, in the spirit of RT, I see championing and elevating practice to its proper status as a key part of working at a political, structural and cultural level to influence change.

The spirit of the dissemination aspect of the research is in line with the ethos of feminist action research and other participatory approaches such as Ledwith's Participatory Practice Approach (2005). Feminist Action Research (FAR) is a conceptual and methodological research framework that is fundamentally about exploring and pursuing opportunities for social justice (Reid, 2004). The research

approach involves a social action process that is biased in favour of otherwise ignored women, men and groups, as within this research. Participatory researchers work "with" rather than "for" the researched, breaking down the distinction between researchers and the researched while legitimizing the knowledge people are capable of producing (Fals-Borda, 1991).

The film is being co-produced by the young men, drawing from the findings that they were part of creating within the research and working with them to develop a resource that can be used with community partners as a lever for promoting social justice and action. The film production is already bringing together partners that haven't ordinarily worked together such as the police and young people. The police are embracing the resource as a means of tackling the issue of offending in a pro-active way and are supporting the film-making process. The young men have evolved throughout the project too, transforming from participants in the research interviews to co-producers of the film. One young man, Marcus, has designed the backing track for the film and he described his involvement in this way: "This project is activity, support, learning and experience. It falls into all categories." There are further capacity-building opportunities for the young men as it is my intention to involve them in the delivery of joint training to disseminate the findings and practice application, delivered by myself and one young man at a time. This will provide the young man with paid employment alongside developing skills and knowledge that they can transfer into other experiences in their lives.

I appreciate how the values of FAR correspond to the values within my own research and yet at the same time I did not opt for FAR from the outset of my research. I have always been committed to the principles of participation through my youth work background and challenging the hierarchy implicit in the positivist researcher/participant relationship where the researcher is the sole producer of

knowledge. I think the reasons I didn't adopt this approach are twofold. I never anticipated or hoped from the beginning of the research process that my research would evolve with such a strong social justice component. I think my "not good enough" narrative doubted that my research had the potential to make such a contribution. I celebrate this now; completing the research has given me permission to be the psychological therapist that I want to be, and advocating for social justice is a key part of my professional value system. Secondly, as a novice researcher I didn't want to inflict my learner status on the young men as ethically this didn't sit comfortably with me. I believe that clarity and leadership are necessary when taking forward such a piece of research, as there is a particular level of responsibility involved when working with disadvantaged communities and I didn't feel confident enough within this research to approach it in this way. In addition, discussions with my supervisor highlighted that she did not feel comfortable supporting this decision due to her experience with disadvantaged communities and recognising the learning curve that I was on and my trainee researcher status. At the same time I appreciate that we could have learned together. I can see that this methodology might have been further empowering for the young men, as they would have been participating in the design of solutions to their needs. This participation would also assist in breaking down the dynamics of power and control so often present in the conceptualisation and delivery of services to young people, thereby offering them a corrective emotional experience. In addition, through the education component of participatory research, the participants develop more of an understanding of social issues, their causes and ways to overcome them, developing their own inequalities imagination and strategies for action.

A key component of FPAR is action, and now, with increased confidence developed as a result of conducting this research, I intend to embrace this component and use

the findings of my research to empower and transform communities of vulnerable young men wherever possible.

6.3   Conclusion

I feel this research offers hope, and emphasises the importance of maintaining hope through challenging times within the work. It demonstrates that when earlier experiences and services have failed to meet the young men's needs, there is a second opportunity to make a big impression. By maintaining hope, belief and commitment, the young men internalised such mechanisms from services and offered themselves a different relational experience. Their experiences demonstrated that hope can be found in the most unlikely of places, such as prison. Hope impacts on the ability to cope, self-esteem, self-worth and personal competence. Despite their array of challenging experiences, the young men's film endings demonstrated hope for the future, indicating the importance of this mechanism as part of the young man's and the psychological therapist's resilient toolbox. Resilience-promoting activities need to be diverse and require counselling psychologists to not only take action, but also to carefully observe responses, to see where the ripple effects go and how they establish themselves over time.

The research challenges some common discourses on "risk" and throws into question what is considered as "risky", underlining the importance of understanding the young man's subjective experience, to accept what is given and to honour the young man's world as an important value that needs to be adhered to within this work. The dynamic and fluid nature of complex systems requires that we think beyond traditional boundaries within our own profession, and also beyond the boundaries between other practitioners, young people, their families, friendships and their wider context.

To close, this research reinforced the definition of resilience as "the outcome from negotiations between individuals and their environments for the resources to define themselves as healthy amidst conditions collectively viewed as adverse" (Ungar, 2004a, p.32). Considering interactional processes, it was evident from the young men's stories that they were not always intentional actors directly shaping and controlling their direction through life. Equally, the locus of control did not solely reside in their environments and the people around them. They acted and responded to the contextual cues they received from their environments (including family, school, prison and services within the community), and equally these environments responded to them too. Within this system the young men demonstrated an active pursuit of resources around themselves to create the best possible, or the most stable, circumstances achievable in their lives at any one time. Mechanisms that appear to represent risk behaviour – for example prison – can in fact contribute to their resilience. For psychological therapists, approaching the nurturing of resilience through a lens of complexity theory positions young people as striving for balance and meaning, rather than as non-resilient, dysfunctional or beyond hope. Interactions shape the system, and the relationships between all the people who frequent young people's lives are important. The dynamic and fluid nature of complex systems requires that we think beyond traditional boundaries within our own profession and also the boundaries between other practitioners, young people, their families, friendships and their wider context.

Finally, my research has highlighted that across ecological, developmental and domain-based research, there is a range of operational definitions of (and varying emphasis on) vulnerability, adversity, protective processes and resilient outcomes for individuals. For the young men in this research and similarly disadvantaged young people, particular conceptualisations of resilience may represent a further

marginalising process, enhancing vulnerability. Qualitative research which centres young men's perspectives, such as this, is important in order to elaborate these concepts as lived experience, adding to our understanding of what fosters or inhibits their resilience.

Our world is unimaginably diverse; our experiences are full of paradoxes and we are multifaceted. Much depends on the contexts in which we are always, inescapably and relationally embedded. Much is unknown and will never be known, and very little can be reduced to bare fact or certainty. I believe counselling psychology's values embrace such complexities, and transferring these values into practice increases young men's odds in terms of their resilience calculations. Community change, not just personal change; political change, not just psychological change; justice, not just caring; all are urgently needed within a counselling psychology and psychotherapy approach.

Appendices

Appendix A: Ethical approval letter

METANOIA

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Claire Stubbs
347 Old London Road
Hastings
East Sussex
TN35 5BD

28th January 2011

Dear Claire,

RE: Resilience to re-offending: Young men's tales of overcoming adversity.

I am pleased to let you know that the above project has been granted ethical approval by Metanoia Research Ethics Committee. If in the course of carrying out the project there are any new developments that may have ethical implications, please discuss these with your research supervisor in the first instance, and inform the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee, Dr Patricia Moran.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Vanja Orlans
On behalf of the Chair of Metanoia Research Ethics Committee
Joint Head of Integrative Department and Programme Leader, DCPsych
Metanoia Institute

Registered in England at the
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Appendix B: Information sheet for young men

Research title: **Listen up: Stories from young men's lives of getting through difficult times.**

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide if you want to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

Why is this study being carried out?

The reason this research is being carried out is because we are still trying to understand what helps people get through difficult times in their lives. How do people survive when they have so many challenges thrown at them growing up and how do some people do better than others? This research wants to understand what makes a difference to young men, who at some point in their life have been involved in crime and how they managed to turn their lives around. The information will then help services to understand your needs better and what you might find helpful when things go wrong. Then that information can then be used to develop new projects or services that will help other young people when they are in a crisis.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you showed an interest in being part of the research and also because the research is looking to interview young men aged 18–25 who have been involved in crime and managed to turn their life around and you fit that criteria. There will be nine other young men who will also be interviewed.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part then you will be asked to participate in an interview. The interview will ask you to share your life story, times when things have been difficult for you and what has helped you get through those times. The interview could last up to three hours and you can decide if you want to do that in one go or over a couple of meetings. Once you have been interviewed then the interview will be sent to you to check over and make any changes if you want to or to take anything out if you have changed your mind about something. After that there will be an opportunity to have your say about how all the information that is gathered is used to support other young people and services and you can choose if you want to be part of that or not.

What are the disadvantages of taking part?

One of the disadvantages of taking part is that through telling your story you may learn something new about yourself that could be upsetting for you. If this happens then we can discuss with you what support you may need and help you to find that support.

What are the benefits of taking part?

Taking part will give you an opportunity to tell your story and it could also be a plus that you realise something new about yourself that you could use to your advantage or a different way of seeing your experience. Through telling your story you are helping us understand better what helps people get through when things are difficult and this information can be so helpful to people that are providing services to young people who have been in a similar situation to you. You will also show professionals the reality of young people's lives and how creative people can be when trying to get through difficult stuff and there may be surprises as to what is helpful that professionals were not aware of that they can then use in their work.

Will my information be kept confidential?

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you which is used will have your name and address removed so that you cannot be recognised from it. I will check with you beforehand if I would like to use a quote that you have made in the final report and I will use a fake name or your character name that you choose if you agree to me using this quote.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results will be published in a report for my coursework. This may then be published in journals, on websites or at conferences so that other professionals can benefit from the information. The results will not contain any personal information and your information will be strictly confidential and I will use fake names or a character name that you choose to give examples.

Who has checked/reviewed the research?

The college that I attend is called Metanoia Institute and they have a committee that agrees all research projects called the Metanoia Research Ethics Committee and they have agreed this research. Respond Academy has also given me permission to carry out the research here.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you would like to ask any questions please contact me, Claire Stubbs on 07539930824, if you send me a text then I can give you a call. Or my supervisor is Angie Hart and her email address is a.hart@bton.ac.uk

Who can I contact if I need to make a complaint?

If you would like to make a complaint about your experience of being involved with the research then you can contact my research supervisor and her email address is a.hart@bton.ac.uk

Thank you so much for taking part in this research!

Appendix C: DRAFT Interview Schedule

<u>Resilience to Re-offending: Young Men's Tales of Overcoming Adversity.</u>

Claire Stubbs

Location:

Interviewer:

Date:

<u>Introduction</u>

Thank you for coming along today and agreeing to take part in this interview. Let's work through the information sheet together and that will tell you everything you need to know before we start the interview.

Have you got any questions that you would like to ask?

The interview could last up to three hours so I will regularly check out with you how you are doing and if you want to have a break at any time and also let me know when you have had enough or want to stop and then we can arrange another time to complete the interview if we need to.

There will be an opportunity for us to chat at the end of the interview to see how you have found it, how you are feeling, any surprises and to make sure you are okay to leave at the end.

A counselling service is available if you feel that you would like further support after taking part in this research.

I would also like to contact everyone who has taken part once all the interviews have finished for your ideas on how the information that you all have given can be used to develop services or to support other young people in similar or different situations, how would you feel about being part of this? Yes No.

<u>Interview Guide:</u>

Do you have any questions about the research before we start the interview?

Okay we will now start the interview:

Every person's life can be written like a film, I would like you to think about your life now as if you were writing a film about it. First think about the different scenes within the film. I have a page here to help you in this task. Think about the significant scenes in your life and how old you were in each scene. You can use any number of scenes or stages that you find suitable for your own life. (Once this is completed), now think about the title you would give to each one of these scenes and write it in the next column. What title would you give to the film of your life? What actor would play you in your film and why? What would your character be called and why?

I will then ask you several questions about each stage that you have come up with. If we begin with the first stage, and the questions will start with:

- Please tell me about a specific/significant memory or event that you remember from this stage that would be the main feature of this scene?
- What helped you to get through this?
- What was the most important thing you needed?
- What was particularly helpful about that?
- What tricks did you develop yourself to support you?
- Who were important people during this time and why?
- What did your family look like, in terms of two brothers, one sister, mum etc.?
- What role did you play in the family?

- What was that like?

- What kind of person were you during this time?

- What hobbies or interests did you have during this time?

- What was school like during this time?

- Any significant school memories?

- What were you like as a pupil?

- What friendships did you have during this time?

- When you look back and see what happened during this time, how do you see yourself?

- What impact did it have on you? How did it shape you as a person?

- When were you at your best during this time?

- Were there any key moments or turning points during this time?

- How did you get involved with crime…what was it that meant you chose that path for yourself?

- What was going on for you at the time?

- What crime/s did you commit?

- Were you part of a group that was involved in crime?

- What did being part of that group give you? (What were the benefits for you?).

- What do you think you got out of choosing that path for yourself? What were the benefits for you?

- How did it make you feel?

- What enabled you to choose a different path?

- How have those experiences shaped you as a person?

- How do you see yourself as a result of those experiences now?

These questions are a guide and will be used for each stage and depending on the individual experience and story. The following questions will be asked once the stages have been completed:

The word resilience is often used to describe a person's ability to survive difficult experiences in their lives- what do you make of this word?

- How do you see yourself in terms of resilience?

- What would it mean to you to see yourself in this way?

- Is the term useful for young people?

- How could it be helpful/useful?

- What aspects of your story could be used to support other young people?

<u>Conclusion</u>

That brings us to the end of the interview and I would like to thank you for taking the time to take part and for being open and honest about your experiences and sharing your story.

- How have you found doing the interview?

- Would you like any further support as a result of participating in the research?

- Do you have any questions about the research before we end?

- Are there any comments that you have made during this interview that you would not wish to include in the research?

- Is there anything else that you would like to add before we close the interview?

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research.

Appendix D: Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: Listen up: Stories from young men lives of getting through difficult times.

Name of Researcher: Claire Stubbs

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated ……………for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. If I choose to withdraw, I can decide what happens to my information that I have provided.

3. I understand that my interview will be taped and subsequently transcribed.

4. I agree to take part in the above study.

5. I agree that this form that bears my name and signature may be seen by a designated auditor.

Name of participant   Date   Signature

Name of researcher   Date   Signature

One copy is for you and I will keep a copy for my records too.

Thanks for taking part in the research.

Claire Stubbs.

Appendix E: Resilient Therapy Magic Box

RESILIENT THERAPY MAGIC BOX SUMMARY					
POTIONS:	**BASICS**	**BELONGING**	**LEARNING**	**COPING**	**CORE SELF**
REMEDIES	Good enough housing	Find somewhere for the child to belong	Make school life work as well as possible	Understanding boundaries and keeping within them	Instil a sense of hope
	Enough money to live	Help child understand his/her place in the world	Engage mentors for children	Being brave	Teach the child to understand other people's feelings
	Being safe	Tap into good influences	Map out career or life plan	Solving problems	Help the child to know her/himself
	Access and transport	Keep relationships going	Help the child to organise her/himself	Putting on rose-tinted glasses	Help the child take responsibility for her/himself
	Healthy diet	The more healthy relationships the better	Highlight achievements	Fostering their interests	Foster their talents
	Exercise and fresh air	Take what you can from any relationship where there is some hope	Develop life skills	Calming down and self-soothing	There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems, use them
	Play and leisure opportunities	Get together people the child can count on		Remember tomorrow is another day	
		Responsibilities and obligations		Lean on others when necessary	
		Focus on good times and places			
		Make sense of where child has come from			
		Predict a good experience of someone or something new			
		Make friends and mix with other children			
NOBLE TRUTHS:					
	ACCEPTING	**CONSERVING**		**COMMITMENT**	**ENLISTING**

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Basics

The interventions within the Basics compartment include: *Good Enough Housing,* recognises the inequality young people experience regarding their housing situations and the importance of including this as part of a practitioner's resilience building approach. *Enough Money to Live* is as it's says on the tin and emphasises the importance of having enough money to provide the basics. *Being safe* comprises physical, psychological and environmental safety. *Access and Transport* acknowledges the relationship between access, transport and health inequalities and how this impacts on a young person's access to services, clubs, healthy food etc. *Healthy diet* acknowledges the importance of a healthy diet, *Exercise and Fresh Air* demonstrates the significance of exercise and fresh air as part of healthy living. *Play and Leisure Opportunities* focuses on the importance of play and leisure for young people and finally *Free from Prejudice and Discrimination* acknowledges how prejudice and discrimination can negatively affect a young person's life and the importance of considering and challenging the prejudice and discrimination that the young

person may be subjected to, and how they can be supported through this and later on perhaps challenge it too.

Belonging

The interventions within the Belonging compartment include *Finding somewhere for the child to belong*, which may include a community organisation, an activity, cultural or ethnic affiliations, school or even prison within the context of this research. *Tap into good influences* appreciates the importance of a positive adult who is consistent and stable throughout the young person's life. *Keep relationships going* values the importance of continuity in relationships for the young person, which is a challenge within organisations where funding and service structures can impact on retention of staff. *The more healthy relationships the better* highlights the importance of expanding young people's positive networks so they have a sense of belonging with a number of different people. *Take what you can from any relationship where there is hope* illustrates that even some of the most challenging relationships may present an opportunity for positive change or act in an inoculating way. *Getting together people the child can count on* emphasises the importance of coordinated care structures within multi-disciplinary teams that are providing care to the young person. *Belonging involves responsibilities and obligations too* accentuates the importance of providing young people with appropriate roles and responsibilities in order for them to begin to appreciate the importance of reciprocity in relationships, which is then associated with mechanisms that are associated with personal resilience (Hart and Blincow, 2007). *Focus on good times and places* does what it says on the tin and gives emphasis to the positive times that the young person may have had in their lives and the importance of revisiting these when times are tough. *Make sense of where a child has come from* supports the young person to create a narrative about their life with their family, incorporating their family history and highlights the skills and resources that they have utilised to adapt to the

challenges and changes they have faced; co-constructing a resilient tale. *Predict a good experience of someone/something new* is a pair for maximising healthy relationships and recognises the potential that creating new relationships or linking into new experiences can have on creating positive chain reactions and turning points in the young person's life. *Help child make friends and mix with other children* appreciates the importance of positive peer relationships. Finally, *Helping the child understand her/his place in the world* supports the young person to understand their identity and place within the wider societal context including spirituality and religion.

Learning

The interventions within the learning compartment which are *Make school life work as well as possible.* This recognises the contribution that school can make and focuses on the importance of utilising the range of resources that are available within the school. It also acknowledges the individual's challenges, personal context and ensuring the resources are tailored to the best effect. *Engage mentors for children,* appreciates the importance of the child having someone in their life who works beyond the realms of a teacher and who is also integrated into educational structures and processes. A mentor's role is to enhance the child's school life yet also recognising their wider context and what support is needed for the child to enhance their academic attainments. *Map out career/life plan* involves working with the young person to look at their possibilities in life beyond school to support them to formulate an idea of themselves in the future, both in terms of career preference and the type of adult that they want to be. *Help the child to organise him/herself* is an intervention that focuses on both the social and emotional aspects of learning through supporting the young person to self-manage. This intervention recognises how at times in life there are events and situations that occur that can feel beyond our control and this supports young people to identify where they have choices and in what ways they can take responsibility for their self-organisation amidst adversity. *Highlight achievements* appreciates the importance

of doing just this and the impact that this can have on their social and emotional learning and importantly resilient identities. Finally within the Learning toolbox, *Develop life skills* places attention on the importance of supporting young people to develop skills in areas that may be of interest to them such as cooking, music, budgeting etc. and how this also creates a positive doorway into wider connections and networks that may also facilitate prospects.

Coping

Within the coping compartment the following interventions are highlighted as containing important mechanisms. *Understand boundaries and keep within them* demonstrates the importance of supporting young people to recognise, negotiate and keep within boundaries so that they minimise the level of stress that they are subjected to. *Be brave* encourages young people to take healthy risks and adopt a stance of "fake it until you make it", acting as if and supporting them to see how the risks that they have taken and the bravery that was required can be utilised for positive effect. *Solve problems* enhances young people's problem solving capacity and provides them with techniques and advice on how to confront their own challenges and create solutions. *Put on rose tinted glasses* recognises the benefit of developing an illusory relationship with our own life experience, otherwise known as "cognitive re-appraisal". *Foster their interests'* values the importance of drawing out activities or interests that the young person has regardless of whether they are talented in this area as an important resilient strategy. *Calm him/her down, self-soothe* provides young people with strategies for managing their emotions during difficult times. *Remember that tomorrow is another day* cherishes the importance at times of supporting young people to move on from difficult experiences through thinking beyond the moment and planning how they want to be in the future. Lastly, *Help the child to lean on others when necessary* builds on the importance of others as highlighted in *Belonging* and appreciates how scary this may be for young people, particularly if they have insecure or disorganised attachment patterns, and

supporting young people to see what their internal barriers are and what they need to support them to overcome these.

Core Self

Core Self involves facilitating hope with the young person so they can start to believe that their life has the potential to change and progress forward; *Instil a sense of hope* is an intervention within Core Self that supports young people to see that life can be otherwise rather than following a predicted pattern. *Teach the child to understand other's feelings,* this reflects Buber's I–thou way of relating and supports the young person to develop their capacity to understand, interpret the other's feeling state and therefore increase their sensitivity to the others' experience. *Help the child know him/herself* supports young people to gain a better sense of who they are, how and why they behave in the way they do and to understand how to act in a way that promotes positive relationships. *Help the child take responsibility for her/himself* is interwoven with the previous intervention and enhances the young person's ability to self-manage and self-regulate which can have an impact on their engagement in problem behaviours. *Foster their talents* involves working with the young person to understand what activities represent their talents and supporting them to grow. *There are tried and tested treatments for specific problems use them* this intervention recognises that when working with a young person there may be challenges that they are facing in terms of their psychological health that require services such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services).

Appendix F: Resilience to Re-offending Coding Frame

Resilience to Re-offending Coding Frame, highlighting RT categories (RT), additional mechanisms (AM), and frequency within each participant's narrative.

Category and Description	P1 Hits Man	P2 Marcus	P3 Gaz	P4 Grumpz	P5 John	P6 Mouse	P7 Chalkie	P8 Jake
Basics (code RT1)								
Good enough housing (*RT 1.1 housing as a mechanism following offending*)	0	0	0	2	2	2	1	0
Enough money to live (*RT 1.2 having enough money to support living*)	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	2
Being safe (*RT 1.3 psychological and physical safety*)	2	2	2	1	2	0	1	0
Clothes (*AM 1 clothes as an important mechanism*)	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Access and transport (*RT 1.4 access to services*)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Healthy diet (*RT 1.5 access to healthy food*)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exercise and fresh air (*RT 1.6 exercise and fresh air*)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Play and leisure opportunities (*RT 1.7 access to play and recreational activities*)	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0

Being free from prejudice and discrimination (*RT 1.8 unfair access to jobs, services, as a result of criminal history*)	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0
Belonging (RT 2)								
Get together people the child can count on (*RT 2.1 consistent, reliable dependable individuals*)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Finding somewhere for the child to belong (*RT 2.2 a place, a service,clubs,activit es*)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Keep Relationships going (*RT 2.3 importance of continuity of relationships*)	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1
The more healthy relationships the better (*RT 2.4 a range of supportive relationships*)	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0
Take what you can from any relationship where there is hope (*RT 2.5 Opportunities and learning taken from relationships*)	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Get together people the young person can count on (*RT 2.6 continuous reliable healthy relationships offering protective mechanisms*)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Belonging involves responsibilities and obligations too (*RT 2.7 responsibilities and obligations supporting belonging*).	0	1	2	2	2	2	1	0
Focus on good times and places (*RT 2.8 memories of good times and places*)	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Make sense of where a child has come from (*RT 2.9 positive shared story making*)	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
Predict a good experience of someone/somethi ng new (*RT 2.10 Utilising existing relationships as a springboard into something or someone new*)	0	2	1	0	1	2	2	0
Help the young person understand his/her place in the world (*RT 2.11 cultural considerations& spirituality and religion*).	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
Help the young person make friends and mix with other young people (*RT 2.12 significant peer relationships*)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Humour (*AM 2 humour as a means of affiliation*)	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	0

Learning (RT 3)								
Make school life work as well as possible (*RT 3.1 making school work to best effect)*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Engage mentors for young people (*RT 3.2 important mentors offering valuable learning)*	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Map out career/life plan (*RT 3.3 ambitions, aspirations for the future and sense of purpose)*	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
Help the young person organise him/herself (*RT 3.4 self-management and self-organisation)*	2	2	0	0	2	2	2	1
Highlight achievements (*RT 3.5 positive appraisal of achievements)*	1	1	2	0	2	2	0	0
Develop life skills (*RT 3.6 learning and developing life skills)*	2	2	1	2	2	1	2	0
Turning points (*RT 3.7 events that act as a catapult for change)*	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	1
Inoculated Resilience (*RT 3.8 adversity that strengthens resilience)*	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Coping (RT 4)								
Understand boundaries and keep within them (*RT 4.1 understanding and knowing how to stay within boundaries*)	2	2	1	0	0	1	1	0
Be Brave (*RT 4.2 bravery and determination to keep going*)	1	2	2	2	0	2	2	0
Solve problems (*RT 4.3 problem solving capacities*)	2	0	0	0	2	2	2	0
Put on rose tinted glasses (*RT 4.4 developing an illusory perspective to manage*)	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Foster their interests (*RT 4.5 developing interests*)	2	2	1	0	2	2	2	2
Calm him/herself down, self-soothe (*RT 4.6 strategies of emotion regulation*)	2	2	0	0	1	2	2	1
Remember tomorrow is another day (*RT 4.7 moving away from challenges and looking to the future*)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Help the young person to lean on others when necessary (*RT 4.8 reaching out and leaning on others when required*).	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Humour (*AM 3 using humour as a way of coping with adversity*).	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	0
Core Self (RT 5)								
Instil a sense of hope (*RT 5.1 maintaining a sense of hope for the future*)	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2
Teach the young person to understand other's feelings (*RT 5.2 understanding how behaviour impacts on others*)	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	0
Help the young person know him/herself (*RT 5.3 understanding oneself*)	2	1	0	0	2	2	2	1
Help the young person take responsibility for him/herself (*RT 5.4 self-organisation and responsibility*)	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1
Foster their talents (*RT 5.5 developing YP talents*)	2	2	0	0	2	2	2	1
There are tried and tested treatments (*RT 5.6 referrals and treatment provided by specialist services*).	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

The Noble Truths (RT 6)								
Acceptance (*RT 6.1 accepting the young person for who they are)*	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	0
Commitment (*RT 6.2 on-going commitment to the YP*)	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
Trust (*RT 6.2.1 development of trust in the service*)	0	1	2	2	2	2	2	0
Enlisting (*RT 6.3 joined up working to best effect for the YP*)	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	0
Enlisting: Informal Approach (*RT 6.3.1 Informal approach to engagement*)	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	0
Conserving (*RT 6.4*)	0	2	1	0	2	2	2	2

Appendix G: Transcripts extracted from Chalkie's and Hits Man's narrative to illustrate transparency of the coding process.

Steps taken to generate the data into themes:

1. Developing the coding frame. This was divided into two processes: The first was concept-driven, and the concepts were informed by those that were part of the RT framework. The second aspect of developing the frame was data-driven, and involved identifying aspects of the data that didn't correspond with the RT framework concepts.

2. For the concept-driven process I reduced the content of each interview to mechanisms nurturing resilience to reoffending that corresponded to the RT framework concepts. A definition of each concept within the RT frame was produced (see coding frame) and confirmation of the definition was clarified with Angie Hart in supervision.

3. For the data driven aspects of the frame, the process involved reducing the data and limiting the analysis to aspects that were relevant to the research question, therefore the abstraction of data focused on:

   a. Mechanisms following offending that supported resilience
   b. The ways in which such mechanisms nurtured a resilience process.
   c. The categories needed to be concrete detailing the specifics of a mechanism to ensure its separateness from the RT framework.
   d. The data driven process was also informed by resilience and criminology research.
   e. I examined relevant passages for pertinent concepts. I examined whether the concept was new to the framework and if it was new then it was developed into a category.

I = Researcher

R = Interviewee

Chalkie: Basics: Being free from prejudice and discrimination

R: Um, and then it was just trying to find a job. That was the, that was the killer. A few of my mates had got jobs and er my mum had a job. My dad didn't but I was every day just

trying to find a job and it was so hard. And I've got to be honest I, I lied in the end about my criminal record in the current job I've got because I think for every one I put down, and I applied for hundreds of jobs, for every one I put down that I had a criminal record I got no call backs. It was only the ones I lied about, I got called back for. And –

I: You began to realise what you needed to do.

R: It was, it was so wrong because for a society that's meant to be so politically correct, so accepting you know, I'd been inside and I'd done my time and so it should be seen you know I have been rehabilitated or I'm being rehabilitated, I should be given the opportunities that anyone else has got. But I wasn't, so I had to lie about it. And you know it was after a while that I did finally get a job and I mean I'm lucky in that sense because even now it's still hard to get a job even if you don't have a criminal record and you know it's, oh God, if I haven't found a job by now I probably would be back inside because I don't know what I'd done. I'd be low on money and you know there was a lot of people, a lot of old friends and stuff that had judged me completely and it's, it's really, really difficult. Something needs to be there to, even if it's not work but something to help people coming out to, to get work.

Being free from prejudice and discrimination was further defined as equality of access to jobs, education, housing etc. Chalkie was illustrating here the prejudice and discrimination that he experienced in society as a result of his criminal history and how he overcame this.

Hits Man: Basics – Being Safe

Hits Man described how his mum was a constant presence in his life and he described what this gave him:

R: Ah yeah. Because she was always there in the background but like she didn't give me no pressure it was like I always had a safety zone *[Right, OK]*, I always had like the say-so. So I always had that, yeah, oh fuck, Ryan, sort of thing, I'm safe now cool – it's good now, like everything's blessed – that's the price she probably gave me for my say-so. My realisations are in my real world *[Right]*, my real world, so I could say rather than not having one.

I: *So a real sense of safety* [Yeah] *and also….*

R: Reality ain't it. *[Reality, yeah].* Keeping my feet on the ground through everything. Like now I keep my own feet on the ground but then, she kept my foot on the ground.

I: And what did that give you do you think having that?

R: Stability again, stability, back to stability, yeah, definitely; everything works in weird and wonderful ways.

He is describing the presence of his mother as a conferring a sense of safety and stability for him. I can see that there is an overlap here with the mechanism getting together people the young person can count on, yet due to the emphasis within his narrative of the term "safety", it felt that the importance within this section was being safe and how this provided a sense of security for him.

Chalkie: Belonging: Getting together people the young person can count on

Chalkie described the importance of this mechanism in the following extracts:

"Um, well obviously when you come out you're on probation. Um and I was really lucky because I got a really, she's a lovely, lovely um probation officer. Um, before obviously when I got done um the first time and I had to have probation I was really unlucky. I kept getting passed around and in the, I can't remember what it was, it was six or seven months that I was doing probation. I must have had about ten probation officers, so I never got used to anyone, I never felt connected to anyone like I was able to talk to them. But this time I came out I got a lovely woman, she was really nice, really easy to talk to. She was very helpful. And I said to her that I felt scared because when probation finished and I didn't have long on probation. I only had about two months of it. When it finished I was going, I was going to be in the same spot as before where I didn't have any help, I didn't have anyone to talk to, I didn't have anyone that can guide me in the right direction. And I asked her if I was able to carry on with probation after she'd finished. And she what she could do instead was obviously get me in touch with someone, um you know a young man's youth worker um and I'd be able to talk to him and you know he, he could be there and help me out and that because obviously probation's a lot different because they have set times and people that have to go and stuff. Um, so she got me in touch with T and I mean from the first session with him, you could tell he was such a nice person, so unjudging, he just, he listened to you and he would give you his opinion but only if you wanted to hear it. He wouldn't, it wasn't judging at all."

Getting together people the child can count on was further defined as consistent, reliable dependable individuals who the person gains support from and can trust. Chalkie described

here gaining this from both the probation worker who then signposted him onto the YMHW who he instantly gained a rapport with and felt he could trust.

Hits Man: Belonging: Tapping into good influences

Hits Man described the importance of "Tapping into good influences" within Respond Academy and how this mechanism nurtured his resilience process.

R: No, not really. It's only like in the last I would say since I jumped seriously two years ago, seriously since I responded two years ago. *[OK]*. Because I've had long chats with like Pablo and Islee and that. So, by talking to them, 'cos obviously they're experienced business heads and they obviously know a lot. It's alright talking to your mum about it or like talking to one of your friends about it or something, but they're just your mum and your friends, what do they really know. I mean, when you speak to someone that's experienced it and has gone down the line that you're planning to go down, *[Yeah]*, it's sort of like oh, so that's how you did it, so if I do it like how you did it but then just change bits so it's me, then I know that I'm going to get to where I want to be sort of thing. It's hard, I don't know, it's hard to come to grips, 'cos it's just a bundle of things.

I: So what do you think it's given you talking to those other people?

R: Being sensible

I: Being sensible?

R: Like the main thing, yeah, being sensible *[OK]* knowing where to go / where not to go. *[OK]*. Because like obviously when you just start like this if three people tell you one thing and everything's different and then three people tell another guy something; but he's already done it all, and then he can come back to you and tell you what he'd done, so you can make your decisions on doing what them three people told you to do.

I: So, it's helpful when you get…

R: The inside scoop. Yeah, having people, yeah, that's good, yeah sharing their experience with you so you know, as well as like obviously saying no two things are the same in the world *[Yeah]*. Like if they let you know how it went down for them *[Yeah]* then you can put that as a foundation for the cake, do you know what I mean, you can make a base for the cake *[Yeah]* and then just put your own ice and jam on it or whatever.

He describes the importance of "tapping into good influences" through the service that he accesses. He then goes onto describe the importance of this mechanism for him as it supports him to be sensible and as a foundation for his own life experiences which he then feels in a better position to add to through his own decisions.

Chalkie: Learning: Inoculated Resilience: Adverse experiences that strengthen resilience

I: Hmm. And what's been significant at supporting you to get to that point? What stands out to you?

R: Funnily enough it's actually the bad situations more than the good ones. Um, it's like .. going to prison, it didn't, I didn't obviously enjoy the experience while I'm there, but where I said like I stand back and I try and judge the situation, I think that gave me months of time to really, really think about where I was going wrong in life and where I wanted to be and stuff. And it made me able to, able to see that things in my life weren't right and I could change them if, if I took time I could, I could change my path. And er so I was grateful for that, that time out to think.

When asked what was most significant in supporting him to be where he is now, Chalkie is highlighting here how the bad experiences in life have taught him more than the good experiences. Through such experiences he was able to see how he needed to change his life and used such opportunities to learn. Therefore aspects such as these within his transcript corresponded to the definition of "Inoculated resilience" where negative experiences can be used to best effect and were coded accordingly.

Hits Man Learning: Turning Points

Hits Man described the importance of key turning points in his life:

R: And how did you come to that awareness?

I: I don't know. I had a massive stage in my life where I just broke down, like, I broke down. Life just stopped.

R: When did that happen?

I: This was like, this was like, I don't know, not even longer – thirteen months ago, thirteen/fourteen months ago that it happened and I was just fucked. Like when I was with this girl and we broke and that's what like started the process of leaving that girl 'cos

I broke down and I literally was at the rockiest point. I didn't give a fuck. As far as I was concerned, I was ready to jump off a cliff, do you know what I mean, 'cos there was nothing, as far as I was concerned there was nothing, nothing worth being about for because everything was a bullcrap in my eyes. But because that basically took me down. So imagine my life as a book full of lyrics, and then at that point all the lyrics got ripped out, so I was able to start again [Right] sort of thing. So I was able to take another view on it, and it was my mum, right, my mum I had to ask my mum and me and my mum sat down one day and she was like, she gave me an insight as well and said look, at the end of the day, stop worrying, do you know what I mean, stop worrying, and that's what stuck in my head, stop fucking worrying. Let's just be yourself with you. As long as you know you're being true to yourself, then you know you're being true and that's what stuck in my head since then. And since then, all I've done is to concentrate on putting my life on positive steps instead of having to be at a negative and go to a positive, making sure that I'm always going from positive, positive, positive. That just helps me get through bad things like. When you hear that, I don't know. Relationship-wise anyway, relationship-wise it's definitely helped me because I hear people and they're like oh my girlfriend is this and that and I'm like bruv shut the fuck up; you're like eighteen, bruv, grow up. If you don't like being with her then don't be with her; if you do stay with her; if not, then shut up, do you know what I mean. It angers me sometimes because people talk to me and the whole time I'm just sitting there thinking, do you know what, if you could hear yourself talking to you, then you would just be thinking shut-up, just stop gassing – it's just stuff that don't need to be chatted about and stuff that don't need to be angered about. There are so many bigger things going on in the world – so much big stuff going on in the world and why are you talking about such petty rules yeah, do you know what I mean. And I stop that. And every time someone does that to me I think well, fair enough, that's cool and I'm not doing that so that's all good, do you know what I mean.

But it wasn't until the point when I got broken down: I was then able to build myself back up to be me and still have everything.

I: So that was quite a significant turning point?

R: That was a massive turning point – that was the biggest turning point I've ever had in my life like. That will stay with me for the rest of my life – from when it happened to the day I die.

I: Why was that so significant do you think?

R: Just because it gave me such an opening, an eye-opener like you wouldn't believe, like that enabled me to see. I don't know it was just weird like – it's so fucking strange, the brain – the mind is an amazing thing; it's just an amazing thing and to have to, the way that I look back on my life now I think RAH, now I think Jesus Christ, like fucking 'ell I'm a busy bunny. But then I think but now, I'm happy, do you know what I mean, I've got a place I enjoy living at; if a girl comes along a girl comes along; if she don't, she don't. I've got music that I enjoy doing; my mum's happy, and that's all from just being me, realising I need to be me and not someone else or who someone else is meant to be. Stuff like. It's a strange thing, I don't know, it's like one of them sort of, you see them in films like oh them halo moments when they play that music and shit it's like one of them and then the light bulb comes on, bing, and it's just like that. So it's like…

Hits Man describes how having such an emotional time served as a valuable turning point in his life. The turning point acted as a valuable mechanism in supporting him to gain clarity on what was happening and space to think about his future. He identifies it as a key moment in his life, supporting the rationale for the coding; "turning point."

<u>Chalkie: Coping: Calm himself down/self soothe</u>

Chalkie described how he coped in prison and he used writing to others as a mechanism of coping.

I: How did it help you writing to people?

R: Because most definitely it's so much easier to say the way you're feeling when you don't have to look someone in the eyes. And writing's perfect because not only do you not have to look at the person, you don't have to be in the same room as them. I mean you could say, you can really put how sorry you are because you can, I mean you've got time to think about what you're gonna say. You don't, when you're in a conversation like I'm with you now, every word is coming after each other. When it's a bit of pen and paper you can think about every word, about how you want to put it, exactly how you're feeling. You don't, if they are going to judge you or you're worried about them judging you, you don't have to be with that person as it's happening, and writing's fantastic because you can just, you can release so much, and it's such a – I found it a really, really helpful way, a really helpful thing to do. Um because you could, you could put what you wanted, you could put whatever you wanted.

I: So you could, yeah, you had that kind of freedom to say what you wanted to say. And what did it mean to you to let other people know outside what you were going through and what you were feeling?

R: It made me feel more connected to the outer world. In fact it made me feel more connected to the outside world than it did when I even received a letter in and people were saying what they were doing because they could say they're going to the cinema, which is lovely to hear when you're inside, but um .. it doesn't mean that you feel like going to the cinema. But if you're writing about when you were last with them and you went to the cinema because you were thinking about those emotions because you're thinking about how you felt then, you feel more like you were, you're on the outside, like you have that freedom. And I'm really sorry I've got totally lost track of the question you asked me so I'm going to get off the point.

I: No, you did answer it. I said what did it mean to you to um let people know how you were feeling. And you said it helped you feel connected. And then what does it give you when you feel connected?

R: Ironically it gives you that, it gives you that sense of um .. of accompaniment. It, it does because even though, you know if the person because you're putting down what you want to put down and they're putting down what they want to put down, you're being, you're being like with them and they … it makes you feel like that person's there for you. Maybe even more than when you were on the outside. Um, and it's amazing how people always gather round at a time of crisis, whereas they might not be there for the good times, but when the shit hits the fan for some reason people gather round. And so … I don't know if other people feel like that, but I just know that writing helped… Er, I don't want it to sound like really hippyish, um or incredibly liberal, but um it gives you like inner peace, it gives you happiness with everything, not with everything but with your life and the way it's going and –

I: And you were saying earlier because when you're happy, that's when you don't feel by yourself, you feel like you've got a companion, there's someone there alongside you.

R: Yeah.

I: Yeah. And what does inner peace give you?

R: The same and the sense, a sense of calm. Um, yeah it's the opposite of that stress, that stress that just gets to you and grinds into that, that peace and that release. Just there's no worries.

In terms of the coding process, there was a strong illustration here of writing being a mechanism that supported him to regulate his feelings through communicating them to others. In addition he also illustrates how this mechanism supports him to cope (research question b) as it provides a sense of companionship and when he feels he has this, he feels a sense of inner peace and calm. Therefore supporting the definition of emotion regulation and RTs calm himself down and self-soothing.

Hits Man: Foster their interests

Fostering their interests was further defined as an area of interest in the young man's live that nurtured his ability to manage. An important mechanism for Hits Man was his interest in music and it was coded as "fostering their interests" as it was simply an interest that as his narrative suggests clearly nurtured his resilience process.

I: So music's been quite important for you?

R: Yeah, it's the music that's saved me, man – music has saved me – I could be doing anything right now. You know what I mean I could be fucking like half the dickheads out there shotting weed, beating people up and robbing them for their money, blah blah blah, but I'm not because I have something to do. 'Cos I know what I want to do, and what I want to do is music. And music, every time I write a song, it's fully me, do you know what I mean, that is me.

I: You said it saved you?

R: Yeah, it did save me because like before music I was into like how the fuck am I going to make money, what am I going to do with my life, blah blah blah, blah blah blah. I'm at college; I'm two years in mechanics and then it was just dead and that was fucking swag; that was a wasted two years of my life. I've got qualifications; don't get me wrong, that's my fallback. Like music, like me and Luke out there, you met, I done an interview with, but he's the guy that makes all the instrumentals / all the things that I'm MC over, I rap over – he makes them all, so it's like; I can relate to him anyway, me and him, as I've had a similar lifestyle, a very similar lifestyle even though we're at completely different ends, and that's the one thing that I love about coming to here, coming to Hastings, 'cos in London, if I'd met him, we wouldn't have been able to jam 'cos there's always rivalry,

different ends like, you can't jam with someone with no ends do you know what I mean [OK] but moving up here has allowed that to happen, which has allowed the music to happen, which has allowed me to be me. So that's the one grateful thing. I know Hastings is fucking shit – there is nothing to do – right, if I weren't doing music then I would have to be, I don't know, fucking shotting weed or something 'cos there's nothing about. So when people come up to me and say I shot weed, I don't judge them because I understand they ain't got nothing else to do, so they have to do that to live, if you don't do that, right. OK, if they don't try to get drugs, they haven't been to college; if they've dropped out of school and they're still selling weed then they're a dickhead because they ain't tried, but if they've tried and they're still having to shot weed then I say, OK, fair enough. Or shot whatever, whatever it may be, but like.

Chalkie: Humour as a coping mechanism

Chalkie also identified that humour served as a valuable coping mechanism for him and his narrative was part of informing the new code: Humour within the coping remedy.

I: Mmm, mmm. And how does comedy help you get through that? What does it give you?

R: The same as when I was younger. It makes, it makes light of hard situations. Sorry.

I: I was going to say what does making light of hard situations give you?

R: It gives you time to step back and actually assess the way you're properly feeling. Um, to think about it's not just yourself at first, um there's plenty of people that might – I'm trying to think of an example now – in the fire, my house fire. You know if I think if I'd have been away – and I don't, I don't regret the house fire because it's made me who I am, I'm happy in who I am, but if I'd have been the same emotionally that I am now, and obviously the same maturity, which would be a bit weird for the age I was, but if I was like that, then I think I could have, I could have stepped back, kind of laugh at the situation but then sort of assessed it in the fact that all my family is still alive, no-one was hurt, it was only belongings that were lost. Yeah, there's photos and there's memories but you can always make more. I would have realised that the rest of my family were going through it as much as I was and I could have been there for them. Um … no comedy doesn't mean you're, you're disguising your pain so much as you're just trying to deal with so more helpful. Um, I don't think that I try and avoid the realities or harshness of what life can be like, just .. almost accepting of what's gonna happen and more willing to experience the better feelings like.

I: Mmm, mmm. And comedy enables you to do that? Because you said it enables you to take a step back a little bit, yeah.

R: Absolutely. Well, for in times in the past and stuff I'd have, especially with my anger and stuff, I would have, the way my anger used to be, I'd immediately jump to the conclusion or you know your reactions would, would pick up on something someone said or what had happened and that and you immediately react back to it. But .. to, to use comedy or to use an open view of life and just think for a second it, it makes you, it gives you a far better understanding of why what happened, what's the better way of going about it, um and realistically what you shouldn't be doing, which a lot of times is what happens when you immediately react to a situation.

Chalkie describes the importance of humour as a mechanism of coping. His and other young men's illustration was specific and distinct enough to support the development of a new category, rather than including humour as part of calming down or self soothing, as there is clearly a link here. It also was evident that the purpose of humour was as a means of coping with difficult situations informing its inclusion within the Coping remedy. Whereas other young men such as Gaz, humour was also a means of affiliation and conferring a sense of belonging.

Hits Man-Core Self: Helping the young person know him/herself

Hits Man described his self-understanding as "his level" The rationale for coding sentences where he described "his level" was due to the importance and value of the mechanism that this self-understanding provided him with. As the following extract illustrates:

I: So what do you think / how does knowing where you are within yourself, how does that help you?

R: It stops me being a dickhead. [Right]. It stops me like, keeps me sensible as they say [Yeah]. Like, to a certain extent, it keeps me on a level.

I: OK, so what I really want to know is how does knowing what you are stop you from being a dickhead / how does it do that?

R: Because if you know where you are, when someone comes up to you and they don't know where they are and they want you to do stupid shit; you could say inside yourself like, who is this guy sort of thing [Yeah] like what's he doing. You could say to yourself,

you know what you're doing, Ryan, so why get involved with someone who doesn't know what they're doing.

I: So almost like it sort of centres, you like grounds you.

R: Yeah it keeps you on the ground, keeps your feet on the ground. You don't get to do stupid shit because you know what you're doing because you've got that level and that routine you know what you're doing; [Yeah] they don't know what they're doing; you don't want to get involved with them because they're obviously not in the same wavelength as you and they're obviously bad. [OK]. Do you know what I mean, it's obviously a bad stage to be at. Obviously, I never used to understand that.

I: I want to know what your level is and how you find that?

R: My level's like (there's a whole lot of things – I don't know, it's weird – I've never really thought about it) you just know ain't it, if every one's asking you it's different. My level's like, I don't know, keep stable, like, make sure I always know where I'm going, always know what I'm doing but I still allow myself to be involved with other things. So, I don't know, I don't know. Say if, I know I've got a tune to do [Yeah], then I know that I've got to do that tune and I know when I've got to do that tune by, but on the way, I know that there's still space to do other tunes if that makes sense [Yeah] that sort of metaphoric.

I: So then that experience then is sort of like I've got to come back to my centre.

R: To my level. Exactly that, exactly that.

Helping the young person understand him/herself was defined as the young person's level of self-understanding. The way Hits Man described his level corresponded with his self-understanding and aspects of core values. All his life experiences added to his level and informed this aspect of his self-understanding. The way in which the mechanism nurtured his resilience to reoffending was as it acted as a guide to his future behaviour and he knew where he was in relation to others. Therefore it corresponded to the mechanism "supporting the young person to know himself."

Chalkie: Core Self: Instil a sense of hope

Instil a sense of hope was further defined as maintaining a sense of hope for the future. Chalkie's description of the ending of his film clearly conveyed the level of hope that he had for the future and the importance of hope as a mechanism for him. Therefore the following extract was coded as "instil a sense of hope"

"But it's a good film. Um, Casablanca, yeah and you've got Humphrey Bogart right, he's obviously the main guy in it. How old do I sound that I know the actor. He's there, and um, the love of his life has just got on a plane and flown away and er, the camera's looking at the sky and it kind of turns back to him and he walks off with this bent policeman and er he's going to walk into the background and it's like oh it was the beginning of a beautiful relationship and er – it kind of, you know it leaves it open. And even though he's just experienced great sadness, it's a happy ending because you know he's going on to do good things and he's gonna you know make his way in life. I don't want to ruin the film for you, but yeah – you probably won't watch it – er, and make his way in life. And I think that's how my movie would end because regardless of whether I experience sadness or pain or anything like that, then I'm still gonna have that ambition to, to move forward, drive on and achieve the maximum I can achieve in life with work, with friendship and family and relationship, and everything. So I think next for me really is just I've got to fully emotionally deal with this break up, um and I need to push on because I want to do a course er, like a fitness instructor course. Um, so I need to get my Level 2 gym instructor course and go on to my Level 3. So that's definitely what's next for me in actual terms."

Chalkie doesn't mention hope explicitly here yet the way that he describes the ending of his own film in comparison to Casablanca implies a hope for the future.

<u>Chalkie: The Noble Truths: Trust</u>

Trust was defined as "a development of trust in the service" Chalkie illustrates the trust he had in the YMHW and explicitly mentions trust as a mechanism. Therefore the following excerpt was coded as Trust.
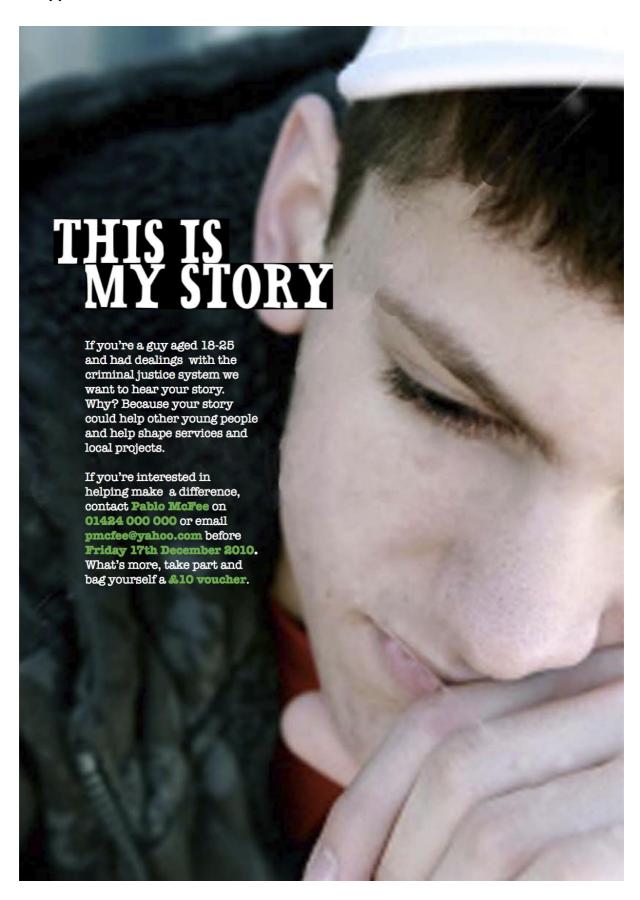
R: If you're with someone that you're you know he creates that trust so quickly and so easily and if you're with someone that you don't trust you don't tell them everything, you don't open up. And he, he never pushes you for anything and because he never pushed you for anything, sorry pushed me for anything, sorry I'm doing generalisation, because he never pushed me for anything I, I told him more than I probably would have if somebody wanted to find out something about me.

I: Mmm, mmm. And what was it he did that created that trust with you? How did he manage to do that so quickly do you think?

R: Um …. I'm trying to think back to my first session with him. Um ….. I suppose he never me feel like, this might sound wrong, but he never made me feel like he was giving me

help, it always felt like I was, I was just talking to someone and that, you know he'd ask me how my day was and er asked me little questions about possibly what clothes I was wearing or how I got on. And little things, just those little things, you know you just think well. It's like I've got like experience with that therapist and it was so formal, you know it was so formal that I never connected with him whereas T was so informal and friendly without going over the boundaries that the trust came there because .. he just created a safe environment and I can't fully describe it because I don't know how he does it myself, but he does, he creates that, that safe environment for you.

Informality is also illustrated here and this also emerged as an important mechanism and is further demonstrated in the following piece as to why informality is also an important service mechanism:

"They're withdrawn aren't they? When, if someone's informal then it's, it's less about you and more about I don't know what they want to do or what they want to find out. Um, in regards to me I suppose I find it hard because like my parents were informal with me when I was younger. You know I didn't have that great emotional bond with them and so I couldn't have it with, I couldn't have it with therapists, I couldn't have it with the counsellors the same way. Um, probably really not getting to the point of the core bit which you want to get to, but I don't know, informality it's just friendly isn't it, it's just, again it creates that feeling that someone's there, that someone is … even though it was his job, it felt like he cared and because it felt like he cared and that, it felt like someone was there."

Appendix H: Recruitment Poster

THIS IS MY STORY

If you're a guy aged 18-25 and had dealings with the criminal justice system we want to hear your story. Why? Because your story could help other young people and help shape services and local projects.

If you're interested in helping make a difference, contact **Pablo McFee** on **01424 000 000** or email **pmcfee@yahoo.com** before **Friday 17th December 2010**. What's more, take part and bag yourself a **£10 voucher**.

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