‘Overcoming the barriers to engagement’: A study of the relationships between Youth Justice Service caseworkers and young men who offend.

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Abstract

This thesis presents findings from an ESRC-funded doctoral study on the formation and ongoing maintenance of the relationship between local authority Youth Justice Service caseworkers and young men on their caseload. The dominant youth justice literature discusses community supervision as a technical and bureaucratic exercise but there is little attention paid to the emotional labour dynamics during face-to-face contacts.

Twenty participants; 9 young men and 11 caseworkers were interviewed for this study. A phenomenological approach was taken to guide conversations to reflect each participant's personal experiences of face-to-face contact. These personal reflective accounts of young men and caseworkers offered empirically informed insights into the concept of engagement through specific examples of real-life encounters. All participants were from one local authority youth justice service.

It will be shown that most young men started from a position of scepticism before the first contact but that they, largely, ended up working co-operatively and actively with their caseworker. In tracking this journey, it was found that securing engagement was a subtle process of interactions that directly affected the foundation from which behaviour changes can be attempted. During this process, specific behaviours were enacted that tested the commitment of caseworkers by implicitly demanding trust, genuineness and consistency.

The thesis concludes that the youth justice literature is not necessarily fully reflective of practice. To counter this, a more thorough understanding of emotional engagement during practice needs to be represented.

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CHAPTER 1 Introduction

> *If you get a long order and you don't, you don't get on then [exhale], you're best off going back to court. But if you get the relationship with the thingy you're sorted. Your whole order sorted. You're just nice really aren't you?* (*YP1*)

The above quote is taken from one of the young men who agreed to give his thoughts and opinions about the time he spent, face-to-face, with his caseworker over the duration of his court order. His words let us know in no uncertain terms the importance of having a positive relationship with his caseworker. However, despite the importance of this relationship, there is a lack of research and evidence-based youth justice literature guiding practitioners in developing effective engagement with young people in the criminal justice system (Bonta et al 2004; Mason and Prior 2008; Trotter and Evans 2010; Bateman and Hazel 2013).

Over the past 20 years, evidence-based practice has emerged as one of the corner stones of ensuring positive outcomes for young people: the *What Works* agenda (Stephenson et al 2011, p.1). This stipulates that work with young people should be based on findings from reliable research. The preoccupation with young people's behaviour has led to most research being focused on the content of offending behavioural programmes (Stephenson et al 2011, p.2). Yet it is recognised that delivery of offending behaviour programmes will not be successful without the engagement and motivation of the young person (Mason and Prior 2008; Wikström and Treiber 2008). This thesis is an attempt to bring the work of relationships back under the spotlight by exploring key elements involved in establishing and maintaining engagement.

The current literature-base in youth justice covers the need and subsequent benefits of effectively supervising offenders in the community (Baker 2005; McNeill 2009). There is also plenty of literature espousing the benefits of establishing a relationship with elements of genuineness, warmth and trust that offer a supportive environment (Trotter 2006; Farrow et al 2007; Bateman and Hazel 2013). Also, techniques for ensuring effective engagement and communication have been discussed in detail (Koprowska 2014; Ross 2016). Yet, there is a lack of research with young people who offend that identifies how specific concepts and theories are brought together and enacted during real-life face-to-face interactions. This raises basic questions such as; what does *trust* mean to a young person? How does a caseworker demonstrate *trust*? How do young people know that they can *trust* their caseworker? Does *trust* prevail indefinitely and unconditionally? Or can it be withdrawn?

To address these unknowns, this study aimed to develop an understanding of how caseworkers and young men establish and sustain relationships during face-to-face contacts. In pursuit of this the research objectives are to;

a) Describe participant's accounts of the processes of face-to-face engagement between caseworkers and young men.
b) Explore how young men experience face-to-face contacts with caseworkers.
c) Identify breakdowns in engagement and rupture in relationships experienced by young men during face-to-face contacts and the strategies they adopted to deal with them.
d) Explore how caseworkers experience face-to-face contacts with young men.
e) Identify how caseworkers respond to breakdowns and ruptures in the relationship enacted by young men.

f) Consider the implications of these findings for existing theories of engagement, rupture/breakdowns and repair in relationship-based practice.

In pursuit of these objectives, ethical approval to collect data was granted by the University of Nottingham ethics committee. Following on, one of the 157 local authority Youth Justice Services in England and Wales were approached and asked if they would be willing to participate by providing access to relevant caseworkers and young men aged 16 to 18 years old.

The method for collecting data used qualitative, semi-structured interviews with 9 young men aged 16 to 18 along with 11 local authority Youth Justice Service caseworkers. The questions asked them to reflect on their experiences of face-to-face contacts. As will be explained, the young men and caseworkers were not matching-pairs in a relationship with one another. Instead, the focus was on individual experiences of casework in general.

This thesis adds knowledge to the existing youth justice literature-base in five ways. First of all, it brings back into the spotlight the emotional labour reported by caseworkers to establish and maintain relationships and engagement over the course of a court order. Second, it raises awareness of the relational processes through which young men's negative perceptions of their caseworkers are changed whereby they assent legitimacy to the presence of their caseworker and engage constructively. Third, it challenges the dominant approach to relationships as a law enforcement mechanism, showing that the use of self through a helping and mutual approach is a key element in establishing engagement. Fourth, breakdowns or ruptures during engagement are shown to be a naturally occurring phenomenon that can offer opportunities to further strengthen the relationship. Fifth, caseworkers tended to address the factors that lead to people out of crime; desistance, in

preference to addressing factors that lead a young person into crime. It is further suggested that this new knowledge can be used to establish a foundation for further research on specific elements of face-to-face interactions to be conducted.

The thesis structure comprises chapters that: explores the youth justice system in terms of how children and young people have been constructed and how society should respond to deviant behaviour; critically review the relationship, engagement and communication literature-base; outlines the methodology used for collecting and analysing the data; identifies findings from the data that is relevant to relationship development and, finally, discuss the contribution to knowledge along with implications for theory.

Following on from this Introduction, Chapter 2 will provide the context for understanding this research project. It will critically explore the social construction of children and childhood to identify some of the influences that have shaped how society and governments have responded to young people displaying unlawful and/or unacceptable behaviour. Over the past 200 years, governments have created legislation attempting to curb such behaviour in order to appease certain sections of society. This legislation has oscillated between attending to behaviour (justice approach as a *child in trouble*) and attending to personal unmet needs (welfare approach as a *troubled child*). This chapter draws out the manner in which differing members of society have defined elements of children and childhood that have framed the justice/welfare debate. Following on, in dealing with young people who offend, some philosophical underpinnings and theories will be examined around rehabilitative attempts to prevent reoffending. Finally, no matter what is done with or on young people, the relationship is the fundamental vehicle on which work is predicated. The last section will critically explore aspects of how the relationship is defined and viewed

within the literature-base. It will conclude that current policy and guidance subjugates relationship work in preference to technical and bureaucratic aspects. This is in spite of the acknowledged importance of relational work in establishing engagement during community supervision (Mason and Prior 2008; Stephenson et al 2011; Bateman and Hazel 2013).

Chapter 3 critically reviews the research that has been carried out on relationship-based practice in the criminal justice system. Since there is a paucity of literature concerning the youth justice system, it was necessary to also draw on the adult probation literature and the social work and psychotherapy literature. This chapter outlines a path starting with community supervision as the modus operandi for addressing offending behaviour. This is followed by reviewing studies on working relationships, engagement and, finally, communication. Each component explored revealed a weak evidence-base concerning interactional work with young people who offend. This chapter will conclude by suggesting that face-to-face work with young offenders during supervision is under-researched in terms of the mechanisms of communication that underpins engagement and relationships. Whilst it is recognised that behaviourally focused programmes do work in the presence of a functional working relationship, the mechanisms by which face-to-face interactions operate remain unclear.

Chapter 4 covers the methodology for the study and how the data was collected and analysed. The choice to use a phenomenological approach is explained. This is followed by setting out the case study design along with critically exploring approaches to collecting data from young people in the criminal justice system in particular. Ethical issues, sample recruitment and data collection are also discussed. Finally, the chapter explores the

approach taken to analyse the data to generate and present findings in line with the research aims and objectives.

Chapters 5 to chapter 8 present findings from the data that bring to light the talk, thinking, emotions and dynamics through which initial negative perceptions are managed and positive working relationships developed. It will be shown that the process starts before the first face-to-face contact. All of the sample of young men reported that they eventually formed a positive working relationship with their caseworker, while the caseworkers reported that not all relationships are formed positively.

The experiences of initial face-to-face contact for young men (chapter 5) and caseworkers (chapter 6) are covered separately. Chapter 5 will show the changing of negative assumptions held by all but one of the young men prior to the first contact. This was caused by anxieties or resentment in preparation that were rooted in past experiences with authoritarian people. The young men said they expected to be treated in a strict manner as a response to their offending behaviour. It was with this anticipation that barriers were created to protect from further emotional harm. However, instead of being treated as offenders, they said they wanted to be treated as “normal people”. Going into the first face-to-face contact, young men’s responses to the initial presentation of the caseworker will be explored. Some of the defences enacted by young men will be brought to light to demonstrate the concerns they had around safety and trust. Following on, the interactions and manner of the caseworkers’ responses to the defences enacted by the young men will be explored. Finally, it will be concluded that establishing an emotional engagement in the first instance has the potential to create an affective turn that encourages a young man to settle more quickly into the relationship.

Caseworker experiences reported in chapter 6 show they use dual roles when interacting with young men. One of these was authoritative law enforcement role and the other was a friendlier helping role. It will be shown that caseworkers switched between these roles depending on the message they wanted to get over to the young man. In the first instance, caseworkers reported constructing an image of each young person in preparation for the first contact. However, the sources of their information were police and social care databases which held reports that were incomplete and skewed in terms of negative behaviour. Their narratives show that they resisted the temptation to form opinions based on these reports, instead trying to be open-minded and allow direct experience of the young person to enable a more balanced image. Furthermore, caseworkers reported the importance of establishing emotional engagement in preference to starting intervention work. It was through emotional engagement that the young men opened up and spoke about their life situation. However, achieving this does take time and effort. In-line with the literature, caseworkers reported communication difficulties of young people that are rooted in previous experiences of relationship difficulties that have been normalised.

Chapters 7 and 8 will explore some of the experiences of face-to-face contacts after the initial engagement. The young men's experiences in chapter 7 will show how working from their perspective and taking the role of a helper engages them more effectively. One component was they all wanted to be treated as unique individual human beings which comprised of three specific elements. One element was a caseworker acknowledging what was important in their life. Another element was working within the limits of their capabilities. The third element was being in tune with current thoughts and feelings followed by adapting interactions and conversations accordingly. It will be shown that young

men are at risk of withdrawing from engagement if they are subjected to tasks that ask too much of them and take them out of their comfort zone. Markers for this predicament were found to be emotional behaviours of stress and anxiety. The importance of these points will be demonstrated by suggesting that passion is embedded in their interests, hobbies and aspirations. This can be tapped into to release energies and motivation that serve as fuel for improving the life situation of a young man. Also, it will be shown that interactions during contacts do not always run smoothly. Young men reported events happening before and during contacts had an impact on the quality of their engagement. It was the manner in which a caseworker adapted the contact to these emotions that helped young men to engage more effectively.

Following on, the second component of this chapter was elements of a process through which young men reported becoming emotionally closer to their caseworker. There were five elements that appeared to support this process. It will be shown that having a lack of imminent threats gave the young men a feeling of being safe when in the presence of their caseworker. This feeling of being safe was underpinned by trust. It will be further shown that young men understood trust to be enacted by truth, honesty and consistency. Furthermore, any advice or action has to be sincere and seen to have a positive impact on their life situation. These were noted as markers of integrity and competency. Also, it will be shown that breakdowns are a natural part of relationships and must be embraced as a tool for identifying relational weaknesses and as an opportunity for strengthening the relationship going forward.

The caseworkers' experiences are covered in chapter 8, which will show how promoting mutuality is an inescapable element of constructive engagement, with three components

emerging from the data. One component was initiating participation in mutuality by encouraging the voice of the young man. Another component was establishing mutuality by working collaboratively. The third component was ensuring on-going mutuality by recognising and responding to withdrawals of engagement. It will be shown that bringing together these three components of mutuality formed the bedrock of achieving compliance from the young men.

Finally, chapter 9 returns to the research aim and objectives to evaluate how they have been addressed. Contributions to knowledge will be discussed. The implications of these findings for existing theory, and policy and practice will be considered along with the study's limitations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2 Youth Justice System

The current youth justice system did not appear from 'blue sky' thinking – from a blank canvas - even though the New Labour government laid stake to this claim back in 1998 (Stephenson et al, 2011, p.2). Rather, as will be argued in this chapter, the current youth justice system evolved in response to varying, and sometimes conflicting, constructions and reconstructions of children and childhood dating back to at least the early 1800s (Hendrick, 2002, p.41). To understand the current youth justice system it is necessary to look back through time to gauge its path of development.

In the latest statistics detailing youth offending for England and Wales in 2016/17, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ, 2018) reported that 74,784 arrests made in England and Wales were of young people aged 10-17 years or 10% of the total arrests for notifiable offences. This was a reduction of 13% compared to the previous year. From those arrested, the number of proven offences committed was 73,000. Of these, 28,400 were sentenced: 1,600 were sent to immediate custody, 17,500 young people received a community sentence and 7,923 received other sentences (MoJ, 2018). For those receiving a community sentence; 11,200 received a Referral Order and 6,200 received a Youth Rehabilitation Order (MoJ, 2016, p.17). In the same statistics there were claims of a 70% reduction in young people entering the Youth Justice System since March 2007. However, there are still concerns about the stubbornness of reoffending rates to fall. It was reported that 42.2% of young people had reoffended since the previous year which is a rise of 4.0 percentage points since March 2008. This suggests those remaining in the Youth Justice System are increasingly likely to reoffend therefore could be more challenging to work with.

This thesis is largely concerned with the efficacy of community sentences and the manner young people are dealt with in the community rather than within a secure environment. During the time a young person is serving their sentence in the community they are required to attend regular face-to-face contacts with their caseworker. This process is heavily prescribed by the YJB through the Scaled Approach (MoJ, 2014): meaning that the number of contacts is dictated by the risks posed by a young person.

As this research project focuses on face-to-face contacts during supervision it is helpful to understand the number of supervisions between young people and caseworkers in England and Wales during 2016/17. Whilst the Ministry of Justice provide comprehensive data concerning many aspects of youth justice, the types of crime committed and sentences received, there is no data available on the quantity or duration of community-based court orders. To approximate the number of face-to-face supervisions it will be presumed that the average community-based order is 9 months during. This assumption is made on the basis that the shortest court order is 3 months and the longest is 12 months for a Referral Order and 36 months for a Youth Rehabilitation Order. Also, the number of times a young person meets with their caseworker is variable depending upon level of risk as defined in the AssetPlus assessment. High risk young people meet with their caseworker up to five times per week whilst low risk young people meet up twice per month. It will be assumed contacts average twice per month. Using these assumptions, approximately 315,000 (17,500*9*2) face-to-face supervision sessions would have occurred during 2014/15 throughout England and Wales.

Whilst the number of face-to-face contacts appears to be very high from an annual perspective, there is little known about what happens during these interactions (Grant and

McNeill 2015). This "black box" of processes and procedures during supervision (Bonta et al 2008, p.256) is the focus of this thesis with the aim of shedding further light on this important component of community supervision.

2.1 Justice vs Welfare through Constructions of the Child

"It is noted that at the level of policy, it has repeatedly been argued that responding to the offences of children and providing for their welfare are inseparable. However, this apparent consensus has resulted in a range of different service structures and delivery systems over the years, characterised by 'turf wars' amongst policy-makers and practitioners, and unintended consequences in terms of damaging outcomes for children.

(Smith, 2006, p.3)

Much literature has discussed in great detail government responses to youth behaviour that has been deemed a problem to public order and social control (Thorpe et al 1980; Pitts 1990; Brown 2005; Hendrick 2015). There are many examples of how children's behaviours have been negatively framed and labelled over the years (Pearson 1983; Brown 2005; Muncie 2015). As a response, the ever-changing landscape of youth offending legislation has been shaped by the reactions of governments and society to problematic youth behaviour. Furthermore, governments have attempted to legitimise intervening in the lives of individuals by restricting liberties and autonomy to maintain public order and social control (Kraska 2006; Dubber 2007; Tankebe and Liebling 2013; Nivette 2014)

Whilst youthful behaviour is on display for all to see, it is the interpretation of these causes and meaning of the behaviour by the influential and the powerful that paved the way for

governmental and societal responses. These interpretations were, and still are, understood through competing political and ideological assumptions by academics, politicians and social reformers. One of the tensions raised through these competing assumptions is the prioritising of either the young person (their needs) or the behaviour (their deeds). This chapter critically explores how this tension is embedded within a rights (of the young person and of the victims) and responsibilities (of the young person and wider society) framework and how it has been used to gain political advantage to influence and legitimise policy and practice. Starting off, this chapter will define the essence of the justice/welfare critical debate. This will then be used as a platform for a discussion to highlighting the tensions in responses to youthful behaviour. Then both perspectives will be explored explaining how each have, at different times, taken the lead in informing policy and practice to maintain public order using the vehicle of constructions of childhood and children. Following on, the concept of the rights of the child will be introduced and how it influenced the justice/welfare debate as each perspective battled for the moral high ground. Finally, attention will end on the current academic debate of legitimisation by the criminal justice system to justify intervening in the lives of young offenders in attempts to achieve compliance with the law.

One of the key debates underpinning youthful offending behaviour is whether services should be responding to the behaviour/deeds of an individual or the personal circumstance/needs of an individual. From one perspective, young offenders are considered to be 'depraved' children who are capable of evil and wicked acts (Thorpre et al 1980; Taylor 2016) whereby responses have targeted the *deeds* and *behaviour* of the young person. This is called the justice approach because it focuses on a 'fair and just' response for victims of

crime (Scanlon 1998). Accordingly, the justice approach is based on culpability and responsibility and in doing so, addresses the behaviour of a young person to prevent further offending (Pickford and Dugmore 2012, p.18). This argues that young people are responsible for their actions and, therefore, should be made accountable (Smith, 2005; Pickford and Dugmore 2012, p.3). In response, the use of punishments as a state intervention is legitimised as a deterrent for the protection of the public (Dubber 2007). Furthermore, it is argued that addressing offending behaviour promotes a child's welfare therefore improving life circumstances (Smith 2005, p.9).

The alternative perspective considers young offenders to be 'deprived' children who are drawn into deviant behaviour as a consequence of their social and familial circumstances (Smith 2005). Responses should, therefore, focus on the *needs* of the individual to help them improve their life situation: the welfare approach focuses on the circumstances the young person finds themselves in (Thorpe et al 1980). This assumes that each young person who breaks the law have a set of unmet needs within their social and familial environment that influenced their offending behaviour. This further suggests that people have limited responsibility for their behaviour which mitigates court disposals to "fit the offender, rather than the offence" (Pickford and Dugmore 2012, p.18). The premise of the welfare approach argues that addressing unmet needs of children naturally changes their behaviour and therefore reduces the risk of offending (Smith 2005, p.10; Pickford and Dugmore 2012, p.3).

However, academics have argued that tensions within the youth justice system are caused by the inability of successive governments and public opinion to appropriately synthesise both approaches in a way that simultaneously prevents reoffending and improve the life outcomes (Thorpe et al 1980; Pitts 1999; p.4; Haines and Case 2015). Furthermore, it has

been argued that the justice system has been purposely designed to enhance the procedures of social control to the benefit of the more powerful elements of society (Platt 2009). Moreover, doing this benefits the needs of the social controllers rather than the needs of the individual young person. From a theory perspective, whilst the 'justice' and 'welfare' positions are presented in opposition, it is clear that they can also be mutually supportive (Pickford and Dugmore 2012, p.3). It has also been pointed out that, actually, both responses co-exist in practice, it is just a matter of which one has priority at any given point in time (Thorpe et al 1980; Smith 2005).

An alternative critical debate on these tensions around welfare and justice is focusing on issues being played out in a political context as rights and responsibilities from one perspective; and autonomy and liberties from the other perspective (Dubber 2007). In this construction, the state has given itself the 'right to rule' and exercises its authority through law in return for the individual's 'right to autonomy and liberty' (Dubber 2007). Therefore, the state has the responsibility to maintain social control, public order and prosperity of the country whilst individuals have a responsibility to obey the law and contribute to the prosperity of the country. In response to individuals transgressing the law, the state enforces its authority through direct and indirect means (Bottoms 2002). Social control is then maintained indirectly through the criminal justice system by agents of the state such as probation workers and YJS caseworkers. The driving force for responses by the state to youthful offending behaviour is therefore defined, in the main, through expectations of youth for the purpose of the economy of the country, public order, social control and development of the family unit (Hendrick 2002; Taylor 2016). While the legitimacy of the state is assumed by the individual, because the state has the right to enforce the law, there

also needs to be considerations of opinions of the individual with regards to valid approaches to morality and social control (Nivette 2014). Herein lay the foundation of tensions between the state and the individual that have persisted within the criminal justice system.

During the 1800s the law considered children over the age of 6 to be adults and treated them as such by giving them full autonomy to interact as they saw fit within society (May 2002, p.99; Nivette 2014). They were legally made available to industry and treated as free agents for the purpose of employment therefore making them useful for the country's economy: the *factory child* (Hendrick 2002; Taylor 2016). The purpose was to ease the burgeoning pressures on the need for labour in a context of rapid industrialisation (Taylor 2016). Furthermore, courts treated children as equal to adults, with corporal punishment and imprisonment being delivered alongside adults. Therefore, childhood was considered to end on the 7th birthday because of the need for the child to make an economic contribution to the country and to the family whilst fully adhering to norms of society: the *adult child* (Hagell 2005; Taylor 2016).

However, gradually, the welfare of the child became an increasing consideration through responses to youth offending. The Youthful Offenders Act (1854) recognised the immaturity of adolescents by raising the upper limit of childhood from 7 to 16 years of age. This meant that autonomy was withdrawn along with rights and responsibilities associated with adulthood but the state also instigated a remedial approach to youth justice by instructing courts to consider the welfare of the child during the sentencing procedure. The courts now had to separate the child in trouble (the 'depraved child') from the troubled child (the 'deprived child'). At the same time, to fill the void created by restricting employment

opportunities, children going through the courts had to be remoralised and nurtured in preparation for adulthood. For the first time, the welfare of the child had to be considered alongside any punitive suggestions when responding to youth offending. This Act stipulated that the depraved should be sent to Reformatory schools for behavioural reasons and the deprived should be sent to Industrial schools for welfare reasons. Also, it was the first time the state claimed a stake in the development of the child through a vision of childhood informed by the ideals that could be achieved through the schooling process (Hendrick 2002, p.28). The welfare of the child was now not just the responsibility of the family but also of the state in an attempt to improve the national well-being (Clarke, 2004a, p.10).

Furthermore, the 'welfare intensive' years from the 1930s through to the 1970s started with the enactment of the Children and Young Person Act 1933. It was s.44(1) that truly embedded *welfare* into law by introducing the phrase "the welfare of the child or young person". This clause instructed the youth courts to have primary regard to *the welfare* of both the depraved and the deprived child (Curtis 2005). There was now a clear focus upon the *needs* of the young person as well as their *deeds*. Young offenders were to be treated on the basis of individual circumstances with the respect of rights for each individual (Garland 2002; Leonard 2003). However, the term *welfare* was never fully defined and interventions to serve the interests of the child were left to the professional discretion of local authority welfare officers and social workers (Curtis 2005); problems in the definition of the goal of rehabilitation remained largely ambiguous and unresolved (Hudson 2002); the concept of the rights of children remained under-developed.

In the middle years of the 20th century, partly as a consequence of two world wars, limited attention was paid to youth justice. The exception to this was the Children Act 1948, which

gave local authorities the assumption of parental rights for children under their care. This paved the way for local authorities to take into care and provide for orphans, children with mental conditions (mental deficiencies and lunacy) and deserted children (Younghusband 1949). There then followed a brief period of relative stasis until the 'problem of youth' re-emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s, driven by the emergence of the 'teenager' and gang culture (Pearson 2011).

Work with young offenders during the 1960s started from a premise that crime stems from social inequality and poverty which creates crises of personal contingencies and dysfunctionality (Schur 1973, p.23; Garland 1996; Pitts 2002). Under the welfare approach, the state owes young people entitlements in pursuit of better futures (Rogowski 2014; Smith 2014). Through the Children and Young Persons Act 1969, sentencing moved away from 'delinquency and the individual' towards a greater focus on issues around the consequences to the young person of offending (Thorpe et al 1980, p.16). This Act introduced care orders for the first time to ameliorate the negative effects of detrimental family conditions; this allowed the courts to issue orders to remove children from their family and put them into local authority care for both criminal and non-criminal reasons. It was suggested that the welfare needs of young people could be addressed more effectively by removing them from their social environment and placing them in local authority homes (Thorpe et al 1980; Pitts 1990).

However, despite its good intentions, it has been demonstrated that the further strengthening of the welfare approach in law through the Children and Young Persons Act 1969 had dire consequences for young people (Thorpe et al 1980; Pitts 2005). Due to an over-stretched administrative system, it was non-specialist welfare professionals with a lack

of expertise who took over the work with young offenders. At the same time, court magistrates made the most of residential options and consigned ever increasing number of young people to Borstals and Detention Centres (Pitts 2002). These factors had the unintended consequence of increasing state intervention under the guise of welfarism whereby more delinquent and neglected children were brought into the criminal justice system so that they could be "treated" by the state (Muncie 2015). This hybrid approach of welfare and retribution during the 1960s and 1970s had the effect of bringing more youths into the criminal system and into secure custody. Children were now being punished for their background rather than their behaviour (Thorpe et al 1980). The number of cautions increased from 200 in 1965 to 11,200 in 1977 and the proportion of those sentenced that were sent to custody rose from 21% to 38% (Pitts 1988 in Pitts 2005). In 1974, 8,000 care orders were issued under criminal proceedings (Curtis 2005).

Running parallel to the institutional custody approach was the increased management of young offenders within the community. This new approach was framed as allowing the child to remain within their home environment, but they needed to be brought into contact with different and more positive environments to encourage growth and maturity (Thorpe et al 1980, p.6). This was termed an intermediate mode of treatment, a half-way house between custody and full liberty. Using a welfare approach, experiences were offered to young offenders to compensate for the damage caused by social inequality and poverty (Thorpe et al 1980; Pitts 2002, p.7). The aim was to encourage young offenders to take advantage of legitimate social opportunities to better themselves rather than pursuing illegal means for personal gain. These programmes attempted to protect the child's rights to education,

healthcare and accommodation therefore creating a progressive movement away from crime towards social inclusion (Pitts 2002).

However, those critical of welfare-based interventions have argued that this approach left best interests of the child to the discretion of so called experts with scant regard to views of parents who would have had greater insight of their child (Muncie 2015, p.287). The over use of interventions by social workers did not lead to more equitable use of justice. Instead, the rights of the child were seriously eroded and interventions were not necessarily in the best interests of the child. Furthermore, it was argued that treatment did not have the reformative effect required to reduce offending. A treatment approach does not always factor in the understandings that people 'do' crime for reasons that could be personally motivated and socially embedded rather than being individuals with pathological issues (Bottoms and McWilliams 1979).

The perceived failure of a welfare approach of treatment, rehabilitation and social reform led to a swing back to the notion of justice in the early 1980s: just deserts (Cohen 1998, p.6). Following the over-use of welfare interventions and the "collapse of the treatment paradigm" (Bottoms and McWilliams 1979, p.159), supporters of the justice response to offending behaviour argued that rights of the child would be better upheld through principles of equality through the courts. Instead of a 'punitive welfare' response there needed to be proportionality of punishment according to the crime committed thereby ensuring equality and protection of rights through due process instead of unregulated welfare interventions (Muncie 2015, p.288). This, in turn, led to the emergence of a new discourse: the 'Back to Justice' movement which advocated that concepts of proportionality

should apply to criminal acts and the penalty should be commensurate to the crime committed rather than their background (Pitts 2005).

The Criminal Justice Act 1982 brought to the fore a return to justice that focused on the behaviour of young offenders who needed to be 'corrected' as opposed to correcting their life circumstances (Pitts 1992, p.416). A proportional approach was introduced to guide the criteria for custodial sentencing of young people. The impact was a significant reduction in custodial rates, and an increase in young people serving their sentence in a community setting. This was the government's response to the welfare approaches that had significantly increased the number of young people in the criminal justice system and particularly the number in custody. It was during this period that social workers, as a response to punitive welfare in the 1970s, moved towards minimalistic intervention and mechanisms of control. Responses now included packages of social support to address offending behaviour rather than packages of individual treatment aimed at 'curing' offenders of supposed pathologies (Pitts 1990). Through the application of Schur's (1973) radical non-intervention ideas, the intention was to leave young offenders alone as much as possible and let them mature out of offending (Pitts 1990, p.15). The aim of this approach was to prevent negative labelling of offenders because it was theorised that children's behaviour would tend to react to negative labels by living up to the label (Ohlin 1979). However, it was argued that, with causes of crime being situated in social contexts, 'leaving the kids alone' is tantamount to a dereliction of duty by workers (Ohlin 1979). Problems are not self-fixing and not all children can be expected to grow out of delinquency.

Simultaneously, running parallel to the main government policy of minimal intervention, the Intermediate Treatment initiative survived the impact of a transition from welfare to justice

response by being tailored to provide alternatives to custody and bringing child in care back into the community (Cawson 1985). To achieve this, project workers established relationships with agencies and individuals to provide locally-based responses to crime (Pitts, 1992, p.416). The aim was to create a range of programmes and packages that focused on the young person's offending behaviour and deliver these within the local community. As part of this, work with young people and their families moved into their own homes as a diversionary approach to keep young people out of the criminal justice system, out of custody and out of local authority care (Cawson 1985, p.676).

A key element of Intermediate Treatment (IT) was that of proportionality. It recommended low intensity interventions for trivial offenders through to high-intensity interventions for those at risk of going to custody (Thorpe, Green and Smith, 1980). However, one of the requirements of IT was to be effective in reducing offending through use of short-term solutions and herein lays a problem (Cawson 1985): in the short term, IT proved to be no more effective that custody. Offending behaviour requires long term solutions and it requires finances over and above what governments were willing to provide. It turned out that IT solutions were no cheaper than custody or residential care alternatives. Furthermore, the best that short term IT programmes could do was reduce the damage of long-term care or delay entry into custody for high intensity young people rather than resolve underlying causes of offending behaviour (Cawson 1985, p.678).

However, Intermediate Treatment was successful in terms of significantly reducing the number of young people who were sent to custody. This success was attributed the introduction of the concept of 'proportionality' and to the ability of professionals to co-operate with magistrates and influence their decision-making at the point of sentencing

(Pitts 1992, p.416). The young people were given defined and time-limited support by the courts during which the professionals would carry out individualised interventions with a focus on offending behaviour. However, the execution of IT attracted criticism as behaviour changes were not being measured against children's behaviours within the wider community (Cawson 1985). Instead, success was measured through research of behaviour changes 'within' IT group attendees but the "personal, cultural, social, economic and racial factors that heighten vulnerabilities of the young person" (Pitts 1992, p.418) were not being addressed.

Following on, the Criminal Justice Act 1991 made further use of the justice approach and formalised the 'justice model' for dealing with young offenders. This was to serve as a standardised correctional package to be 'delivered' to an offender whereby professionals defined 'the problem' with the young person and then determined the best response to 'the problem' (Pitts, 1992, p.422). This approach acted as a trigger away from a purely casework approach to one of case management through which professionals 'manage' the young person and make referrals to locally based services to address offending behaviour. Furthermore, the emphasis on proportionality was extended in the Criminal Justice Act 1991 with a new sentencing framework. This moved the emphasis away the characteristics of the young offender towards considering the factors of the criminal act in terms of the seriousness of the crime and the impact of the crime on the victim and public (Cadman 2005; Graham and Moore 2006).

Whilst the justice system refined its responses to adolescent behaviours, legislation concerning child welfare was also being refined within social care. The Children Act 1989 defined the *paramountcy* principle specifying that the best interests and welfare of the child

must be the primary consideration when making any decision about a child. This also applied to children in the youth justice system. However, in 1993, public attitudes towards youth crime dramatically shifted when two year old James Bulger was abducted and murdered by two 10 year old boys (Smith 2011). As a consequence, the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 brought punitive responses to the top of the agenda. Stiffer penalties were introduced for young offenders in an attempt to curb the supposed delinquent tendencies of youth. This was a clear example of justice approaches overriding welfare principles for the purpose of protecting the public.

Running parallel at this time was international recognition of the need to protect children from institutional and state abuse. The United Nations Charter for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is a rights-based framework that encourages national laws to be applied consistently and fairly for under 18 year olds (Monaghan 2005, p.46). Article 40(4) states that responses by youth justice must be proportionate to both personal circumstances and the offence. This, in part, compliments the welfare principle outlined in s44 of the Child and Young Person's Act 1933 (Stephenson et al 2011, p.27). From the justice perspective, a primary principle was that young offenders should receive their *just deserts*. However, Smith (2005 p.13) makes the point that "the 'justice' position remains permeated with a strong emphasis on children's rights, which might be expected to offer some protection against excessive treatment of one kind or another" (p.13). Also, Article 3(1) states that the best interest of the child should be a primary consideration which is consistent with s1 of the Children Act 1989 that the child's welfare shall be the courts paramount consideration.

However, in spite of the development of welfare legislation there was a swing back to a more punitive approach as a result of the Audit Commission carrying out a detailed analysis

and evaluation of responses to offending by youth. The *Misspent Youth* report (Audit Commission 1996) identified that a disproportionate amount of crime was committed by males under the age of 18. The report argued that the past was replete with tensions responding to the issues of delinquent youth between the law (justice response) and social workers (welfare response) (Graham and Moore 2006). It also criticised responses to youth offending as being "uncoordinated, inconsistent, unsystematic and inefficient" (Graham and Moore 2006). The report recommended a deviation from the justice and welfare responses and proposed that practice should be a systematic response to managing young people as *individualised* offenders. This new approach was to be underpinned by a technical assessment of the risk of reoffending of each young person followed by identifying interventions addressing each of the identified risk factors (Haines and Case 2015, p.84).

Following the *Misspent Youth* report (Audit Commission 1996), the Crime and Disorder Act (CDA) (1998) signalled the start of radical changes in the government's response to youth offending. A new youth justice system was introduced to be solely responsible for youth offending rather than being shared between government departments. The Home Secretary was given the responsibility for dealing with young offenders. To assist, the Youth Justice Board (YJB) was established as a non-governmental body to implement and oversee the operation of the new youth justice system with the principal aim to "prevent offending by children and young persons" (Home Office 1998, s.37). The justice/welfare turf war was subjugated by the development of a new bureaucratic system that would hold to account statutory services working with young people in the criminal justice system (Smith 2005). An integrated framework for children's services made it the responsibility of all relevant governmental departments to ensure positive outcomes for young people through inter-

agency working (Powell 2008). This new corporatist-based approach suggested that the goals of interventions would be underpinned by law and organisational structures which brought together all relevant departments to achieve positive outcomes for young people (Muncie 2015).

Underpinning this new corporatist approach were social and criminal policies influenced by communitarian philosophies emanating from America as an ideology that emphasises individual responsibilities and the importance of the family (Hopkins-Burke 2015). New duties were placed upon local authorities to establish Youth Offending Teams with an over-arching aim to bring together all agencies working with children in trouble. They were required to work together in the local community to address the offending behaviour of young offenders (Tomlinson 2005): the *deeds* of the young person.

However, it was argued that the focus on individual human rights actually separated the individual from their local community (Hopkins-Burke 2008) and severed the ties of social obligation and responsibility (Hancock 2006). Instead, communities were required to develop initiatives to "re-invigorate civic engagement, public participation and partnership working" (Hopkins-Burke 2008, p.173) in an effort to promote active citizenship. This was a shift by the state from being a "guarantor" of successful and productive communities to being a "facilitator" (Hopkins-Burke 2015).

Following on, the policy of 'responsibilities before rights' was implemented whereby "young people who commit crime must face up to the consequences of their actions and take responsibility" (Hopkins-Burke 2008, p.5). As a forerunner to the imposition of responsibilities on children and young people, the presumption of *doli incapax*, that children under the age of 14 were not capable of evil acts, was challenged in 1992 through the *C v*

DPP (1995) 2 All ER 43 case (Childs 1995; Martin and Storey 2013). It was argued that *doli incapax* was outdated because children mature quicker due to a formal education ensuring they are better informed of expected morality and social norms.

Although the challenge was eventually overridden by the Lords, the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 did abolish the presumption of *doli incapax*. This change constructed young people in a different light: they were now considered as individuals who were capable of making rational decisions in spite of a lack of maturity and life experiences. Furthermore, they were to be made fully responsible to the 'rule of law'. However, they would not be given specific rights within the law, over and above the Human Rights Act 1998, to protect their lack of maturity from abuse from the criminal justice system. In this way, criminal behaviour was increasingly constructed as a product of dysfunctional families and both child and parents had to take responsibility for their actions (Goldson and Jamieson 2002). It is more than apparent that the social construction used was again that of the *delinquent* child as used during the 1800s. This has been reworded by the government as the *offending child* and reframed in terms of risks posed by the child in reference to the likelihood of offending and the threats posed to public safety but the underlying ethos was the same.

At the time of the millennium, the New Labour government further negatively reconstructed the child in the Criminal Justice Act (2003) by stating that during sentencing the protection of the public must take priority over the welfare of a young person during sentencing (YJB 2006). Following this legislation, youth offending teams now have a procedural focus on the protection of the public as a priority over the personal background of a young person. Assessments are prescriptively administered using an actuarial basis to identify the likelihood of reoffending and the risk of serious harm a young person poses to

the public. A young person is then categorised as either: low, medium or high risk of reoffending. This information informs the amount and intensity of the interventions required to address offending behaviour. Furthermore, the young person is categorised as either: low, medium, high or very high risk of serious harm to the public. This information is further used by the courts to identify the *dangerousness* of a young person: but, notably, not the dangerousness of society to the young person.

Responses to youth offending became increasingly punishment-oriented during the period 1998 to 2013 (Smith 2014). Whilst the government was meting out punishment to young offenders, solutions to crime were made the responsibility of communities and individuals (Muncie and Hughes 2002). However, only due to the impact of the global financial crisis of 2008 did the government turn its attentions to rehabilitation as an alternative to custody. The onset of money-saving initiatives announced new policies such as 'Breaking the Cycle' as a 'rehabilitation revolution' suggesting that private, voluntary and community sectors would be more effective in delivering services than the statutory sector. This would further responsibilise the community to reduce offending through specific initiatives devised within the community to address causes of offending that are specific to individuals within their social context (MoJ 2010; Yates 2012; Smith 2014).

The above critical discussion concerning government intervention and responses to youthful offending behaviour brings to attention its justification in doing so. A key criticism aimed at youth justice interventions is the negative effect that contact with the Youth Justice System has on a young person. Whilst children are portrayed as a risk to society through their behaviour, it is argued that the response by the youth justice system is a risk to the development of children with whom they work (McAra 2010; Haines and Case 2015).

Marginalised groups of young people tend to suffer complex and interlocking problems that generate vulnerabilities within their own personal contexts and, even worse, during interactions with larger society (Yates 2012). It appears that one problematic aspect of responses to youthful behaviour is the tendency to prioritise the needs of society over and above those of an offender (Smith 2014). Metaphorically speaking, this is the battleground on which the policy makers, welfarists, justice and academics use the weaponry of rights, responsibilities and needs to exert influences on policy and practice.

It has been argued that the current corporatist approach and risk-based model makes children vulnerable to abuse from state institutions through oppressive and use of retributive interventions (Bateman 2011; Haines and Case 2015). The current approach to youth justice has been described as breaching and ignoring the rights of children for protection against the state in accordance with the UNCRC (Rogowski 2014; Haines and Case 2015, p.5). This, it is argued, is because children are treated as adults in the YJS, which then subsumes and marginalises a focus on children's rights and actively contravenes many of them (Haines and Case 2015).

In strengthening the rights of children, there are calls for all children's rights to be at the heart of policy and practice (Scraton and Haydon 2002; McAra 2010; Smith 2014; Hollingsworth 2014; Haines and Case 2015). Rather than just acknowledging the existence of children's rights, it is suggested that rights should be the bedrock on which policy is formed and practice performed. The strength of this approach is how it encourages the participation of children to express their views and realise their potential. Taking a *child first* approach rather than an *offender first* approach allows children to access and actualise their rights and entitlements. Doing this encourages the capacity of children to develop a sense of

agency to foster their own futures and contingencies during times of trouble. This then opens up ways to achieve social inclusion through participation and engagement to contribute to more positive outcomes (Haines and Case 2015, p.2).

A rights-based statutory framework will also help to ensure the law is applied equally and consistently to children whether they are inside or outside of the youth justice system (Monaghan 2005; Haines and Case 2015). As a participatory approach, children are given a voice and a sense of personal agency (Brown 2005). Children can learn how to speak and act on their own behalf as they develop their own social and personal capital. Using these new skills, they get to challenge social constructions of them being innocent, vulnerable and weak thus integrating themselves into society as they transition into adult roles. Following on, children's ability to access social opportunities and entitlements are increased therefore leading onto the possibility of improving personal contingencies (Rogowski 2014; Haines and Case 2015).

However, there are many issues that require addressing in order to implement a rights-based approach such as; raising the age of criminal responsibility, ensuring children do not gain criminal records and ensuring that families are involved in sentence planning (CRAE 2014; Bateman 2017). This failure of the YJS to achieve equality for children inside and outside of the system has been recognised as being unacceptable by international and national monitoring agencies. It is argued that the current YJS systematically denies the young offender citizenship, a sense of agency and full participation within society (Hollingsworth 2014). Furthermore, punishment and restrictions of liberties are legitimised through the needs and protection of the public. It is this stigmatising effect of punishment and negative labelling that may have a permanent damaging effect on the mental health

and life chances of children and young people (Hollingsworth 2014, p.11). This serves to further isolate, exclude and stymie the development of capacity of a young person to participate within society. This detrimental effect is described in two very important ways. The first is the restriction of agency as a matter of developing the 'capacity' to exercise choice. The second is the prevention of full autonomy as a matter of the 'freedom' to exercise choice as an expression of subjective preferences, values and morals (Hollingsworth 2014, p.7).

One longstanding problem with the youth justice system is the negative effect it can have when it comes into contact with young people (McAra 2010; Taylor 2016; Case 2018). Experiences such as (potentially degrading) interactions with the police, (often frightening and intimidating) appearances at court and on-going attendance at meetings with caseworkers (which may interrupt existing routines) do not contribute to the good of the young person and may contribute to negative labelling. Whilst children and young people have to be dealt with in accordance their behaviour, it is the manner in with they are dealt with that is of the utmost importance. Furthermore, it is these negative experiences that bring into question whether the youth justice system intervenes in young people's lives in a just, fair and proportionate manner (Bottoms 2002).

One purpose of the youth justice system is to enforce the government's 'right to rule' and to maintain public order through compliance with the law (Bottoms 2002). One approach used to achieve compliance is remoralising the offender in line with the law. However, it has been identified that remoralising an offender towards social obedience presents as a significant challenge for caseworkers, especially when the state's moral principles do not necessarily match those of the young person (Tyler 2006). It is further recognised that young people

entering the youth justice system are forced into engagement therefore it is not regarded as a voluntary activity. This can create difficulties for caseworkers who may be seen as coercing young people into engaging with them to change behaviours to prevent reoffending. This brings to the fore the requirement that each young person has to accept that their caseworker has a right to hold a certain degree of power during the time they spend together: the concept of legitimacy (Tyler 2006). Furthermore, legitimacy is defined as the "moral and political validity of exercise of power" (Scott and Flynn 2014, p.6). It has been suggested that only when an offender accepts the authority and legitimacy of the criminal justice system (and thereby the legitimacy of the caseworker) that their path towards conformity to social norms and obedience towards the law can begin (Ugwudike 2010; Robinson and McNeill 2010).

It is this significance of legitimacy that underpins the relationships which are explored in this thesis. During the beginning of the relationship between young person and caseworker resistance is at is strongest (Bateman and Hazel 2013). It can be argued that legitimacy has not been granted by the young person in such cases. Yet, further along in time, most young people do engage with their caseworker and change some aspects of their behaviour. It is this process and the manner of achieving compliance and legitimising interventions that will be the focus during analysis and discussed in the findings.

This chapter has critically explored the many ways in which governments and society have responded to youthful behaviour over time. Given the importance of achieving compliance from a young person and the need for them to actively engage with their caseworkers, the next chapter will explore what is known more broadly about rehabilitation and the processes experienced by young offenders should they decide to stop offending.

2.2 Rehabilitation and Desistance

The previous chapter has critically explored how government policies regarding some types of troublesome behaviour enacted by some children and young people over the past 50 years have, in the large, been driven by differing constructions to offending behaviour. Following on, this chapter critically explores commonly recurring state responses to these constructions of problematic behaviours in an attempt to prevent reoffending. These responses are broadly categorised as punitive or rehabilitative. Punitive responses have been justified as a mechanism of deterrence to encourage people not to reoffend because of the undesirable consequences of sanctions (Bedau and Kelly 2015). Also, "justice" is seen to be done in an attempt to protect people from further harm and demonstrate to those who have been harmed that appropriate responses have been made (Tadros 2016). Rehabilitative responses have been justified in terms of altering the personal characteristics and the social circumstances of the offender so they refrain from further wrongdoing (Tadros 2016).

The main aim of the youth justice system is to "prevent offending and reoffending by under 18s" (YJB 2017b, p.9). To achieve this aim, the youth justice system utilises an element of punishment for wrongdoing as a retributive quality (Haines and Case 2015, p.50; Canton 2017) along with a package of rehabilitation based on individual needs of a young offender (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.16). The purpose of this chapter is to frame the nature of intervention work required to be done by case workers with young people who they work with. Therefore, this chapter starts off by critically exploring various definitions of rehabilitation. This is followed by a critical examination of utilitarian and deontological justifications for intervening in the lives of offenders. Focus will then be narrowed down to critically exploring approaches that address these justifications in an attempt to stop

reoffending in terms of factors that lead people into crime and that lead people out of crime. The debate of whether offenders should be worked on by experts to cure them of perceived mental illnesses or whether they should be helped to develop skills that will help them to become more socially inclusive will be explored.

When found guilty, young offenders are subjected to punishment as a statement of repugnance for their past behaviour. The justification is a deterrent to future offending and, likewise, sends a message out to society as a whole in an attempt to prevent others from offending and to maintain public order (Muncie 2009, p.141). Given that punishment in varying forms has been meted out to young offenders by courts since inception and shows no signs of abating, it has to be accepted that retributive justice is here to stay for the foreseeable future. Yet while young people are obliged to serve their punishments without question, there is no conclusive evidence that punitive reform of those who are actively engaged in offending actually contributes towards reducing recidivism: especially those sent to custody in a secure unit (Muncie 2009, p.339). Also, given that the reoffending rates have remained persistent at between 32% and 38% for the last 10 years (MoJ 2016) it can be further argued that punishment is not effective for many of those already entrenched in offending behaviour. One of the main criticisms of the effects of punishment is that it holds back the effects of rehabilitation through processes of stigmatising and shaming of the individual (Haines and Case 2008).

In contrast, rehabilitative approaches have shown more promise in reducing recidivism through a process of reform (Raynor and Robinson 2009). It is described as a forward looking approach that focuses on change for the betterment of the individual. It is further argued that each offender has the right to be re-integrated back into society following any

form of punishment (Haines and Case, 2008). Rehabilitation is defined as a process that restores someone to an improved state defined by a degree of normal life from one of deterioration: a return back to norms of society; or a restoration back to health and a working capacity (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.3). This change requires time. It is a process through which people work together over time to induce some type of change in behaviour. Also, it needs to be imbued with consent and respect for states of liberty and rights of the individual containing elements of choice and voluntary involvement (McNeill 2012, p.7; Haines and Case 2015).

However, it has been revealed that young people demonstrate resistive behaviours during interactions with caseworkers (Ivanoff et al 1996; Trevithick 2011; Bateman and Hazel 2013). This resistance has been identified in terms of a lack of trust of the youth justice system and of caseworkers. But it has also been revealed that young people do move away from displaying resistive behaviours and end up working with their caseworker. Herein lays a gap in the youth justice literature-base in a call for further research finding out how and why some young people withdraw their resistance and comply with their caseworker (Stephenson et al 2011; Bateman and Hazel 2013). Throwing out the search beyond youth justice boundaries brings to light that possible explanations do exist within the wider criminological literature-base concerning legitimacy and (normative) compliance (Bottoms 2002; Tyler 2003, 2006, 2007; Liebling and Tankebe 2013). This thesis will bring in some ideas from these sources to offer explanations as to why the young men in this study came to comply with their caseworker once they had given legitimacy to having their life intervened in.

Following this line of argument, Farrall and Caverley (2006, p.xii) bring to attention that the prefix "re" is used to indicate the return of someone to a previous state; for example: re-form and re-integrate. A dictionary definition of "habilitate" is "to make fit or capable as for functioning in society" (https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/habilitate). So, "re-habilitate" implies returning someone to function within society. However, they further argue that some offenders with entrenched criminal behaviour were most probably never formed and integrated in mainstream society in the first place. Therefore, the usage of the prefix "re" does not paint a true picture of the tasks required to achieve a reduction in offending. Instead it is more of a generalisation that ignores individual circumstances. This suggests that, during the process of rehabilitation some offenders actually have to build new lives as a consequence of their criminal involvement. This requires a major re-organisation of who they are as an individual and how they relate to others within the community and society (Farrall and Caverley 2006, p.xii).

Successive governments have situated justifications of offender rehabilitation in two philosophical domains: utilitarian and deontological (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.32; McNeill 2012). The utilitarian perspective argues that offenders are a drag on the national economy requiring financial assistance to maintain their life situation when they could be providing a purposeful financial contribution to the national economy. In this context, the aim of rehabilitation is to increase an offender's usefulness to society so that they provide a utility for the growth of the country in pursuit of economic goals. The deontological position argues that offenders are a 'moral contagion' that require curing. Furthermore, the State is the agent of morality setting standards for individuals that align with societal expectations for the protection of the public (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.33; McNeill 2012). In this

context, programmes of re-moralisations are imposed that challenge the perceptions of offenders and expects them to self-regulate in line with pre-set norms to ensure the smooth running of society (Kemshall 2008, p.23; Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.21). Deontologically, a set of duties and obligations in terms of the law have been defined that must be adhered to so that all people can enjoy rights that are available to them (Bottoms 2002; McNeill 2009). Failure to abide by these expectations can lead to strong controls over the liberty and behaviour of offenders from the State.

One common theme running through these responses to offending behaviour is situating the blame for offending within the individual without fully and overtly acknowledging the negative influences of social structures and influences (Pitts 2003). Rehabilitation programmes, in the large, have been aimed at reforming the individual so they are more able to fit into society rather than altering the characteristics of society to cater for the individual. Therefore, there is the expectation that individuals must demonstrate some form of commitment to embark on personal change to absorb intrusions from the State to alter their current lifestyles according to instructions given.

To achieve this, successive governments have employed practitioners to use power bestowed on them to effect change in the behaviour of offenders. This is essentially based on the concept of utilitarianism to 'reform' people for the needs of the state rather than the needs of the individual or the community: reduce harm and contribute to the public good (McNeill 2012, p.5). The government's justification for this approach is to encourage the offender to fulfil their responsibilities and enjoy full rights of citizenship. The State is treating individuals primarily as citizens who are expected to show allegiance towards the government and the smooth running of society. So, as an alternative to punishment,

community-based rehabilitation schemes have been deployed to reform the social and personal characteristics of a young person (Pitts 1999; Raynor and Robinson 2009). This suggests that individuals are treated as 'instruments' for the purpose of the national economy and protection of the public (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.25). Achieving this requires young people to acknowledge the legitimacy of their caseworkers (Tyler 2006; Ugwudike 2010)

However, acting as a barrier to complying with instructions from caseworkers are feelings by the young person that they have been treated unfairly in some way or other. Through this means it has been argued that intervention in their life by the YJS has lost its moral justification as a sense of being right and just from the young person's perspective (Bottoms 2002). Essentially, the young person may not accept the power and authority held by the YJS. In addressing this scenario, it is the manner in which caseworkers enact social control as formal procedures and personal interactions that persuades people to eventually comply with instructions (Tyler 2006). Social authority is achieved when people recognise they are being treated fair and just, even if they do not necessarily agree with the ends: it is the means that is pivotal.

Reducing recidivism is the primal tenet of rehabilitation: ensuring offending behaviour is not repeated (McNeill 2012, p.9). Whilst broad models and expectations of rehabilitation have been expressed, one underlying requirement is that rehabilitation attempts to change an individual's thoughts and behaviour in some way. Herein in lay many challenges in getting someone to change their morality in favour of societal norms. Compliance with a caseworker and, ultimately, with the law is clearly of importance in securing recidivism because programmes of intervention address reasons for committing crime. This is

explained in terms of each individual having personal moral principles that might not necessarily match those expected by the caseworker during dialogue, as an acceptance of a belief in social norms (Bottoms 2002).

This lacuna between what a young person 'ought' to do from the perspective of societal norms and what they 'are' doing from their own perspective is the fundamental challenge of a rehabilitative approach. Raynor and Robinson (2009, p.5) frame rehabilitation of behaviours within two broad applications: correctional and socially inclusive. The first application focuses on 'correctional rehabilitation' to actively correct defects within the individual through various modes of treatment. This is described as a backward looking approach that focuses on the cessation of offending by fixing what are ostensibly diagnosed as psychopathic mental illnesses. This implies that the correctional model locates the causes of crime within the individual rather than in external factors (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.6). Furthermore, it is about effecting change within the individual rather than their social and economic situation. This approach has been expressed as the "unforgiving nature of correcting people" (McNeill 2012, p.4) carried out by experts on passive objects to be assessed and corrected according to professional opinion.

The second application focuses on social integration to create a sense of belonging to encourage offenders to change through education, accommodation, training and employment. This model is about 'change' not 'correction' (Smith 2007, p.210; Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.8). It is a forward looking approach that aims to remove the desire to offend by creating improved social capital to aid the transition process. This approach locates the individual in their criminogenic situation from which they need to move away from. By developing social capital as capacities and skills, the young person will be in a

better personal and emotional situation to transition further from their current situation to a better set of social circumstances. It is about effecting change in the offender's life situation rather than within the person to prevent reoffending.

The use of rehabilitation as a substitute for practices of punishment expected gains of recidivism within the same time span as a period of punishment. However, this aim was not achieved and, some would say, confirms the conclusion that, actually, "Nothing Works" (Tankebe and Leibling 2013). It is argued that the process of rehabilitation is more complicated to establish than simply restricting or denying someone of their liberty as a deterrent. Instead, practices of rehabilitation are time consuming, complex, expensive, difficult and embedded with an uncertainty of successful completion. Therefore, justification for claims of efficacy and effectiveness are required to mitigate implementation issues around success, time and costs. These justifications have included moral arguments about what society 'ought' to do with people who offend (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.16). Given the resistive nature of young offenders, some level of compliance must be achieved before any sort of work should be attempted so that some sort of voluntary action is enacted during interactions (Tankebe and Liebling 2013).

Remaining focused on rehabilitating young people, the response of the state to young people who offend is through the youth justice system. An approach has been developed through various longitudinal studies of young people through which domains of risk factors related to offending have been identified as being criminogenically situated in; familial, school, peer and community (Hawkins et al 2000; Haines and Case 2008, p.6). Each of these domains contains a plethora of individual factors that link an individual's biological and social development with unfortunate life events that could trigger deviancy and offending

behaviour (Farrington 2000, p.5; Haines and Case 2008, p.6). Furthermore, these risks are used to predict and explain offending followed up with a preventative-style response (Farrington 2000, p.5). In essence, this is a reductivist approach that focuses on factors within the individual and ignores the wider social context within which the offending behaviour has developed to manage the complexities of rehabilitation theory into a more manageable policy that is easy to define and sell to the practitioner base (Haines and Case 2008, p.5).

Since the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), work with young people who offend has been grounded in the identification and management of the risk of reoffending (Haines and Case 2015). Attempts to reduce recidivism with young people are based upon a defining set of beliefs about the causes of offending and subsequent treatment that encourages habitual ways of working as defined by the YJB through the Risk Factor Prevention Paradigm (RFPP). This focuses work on the criminogenic risks posed by offenders in terms of the continuation of offending (Haines and Case 2015). Key risk factors for offending are identified followed by implementing programmes to counter these risks to prevent the development of ongoing offending (Farrington 2000, p.1).

Furthermore, this approach inculcates risk factor prevention as the dominant model of case work with young people in the YJS. It works on the individual to change the way they interact with their environment without due consideration for altering the influence of the environment. Addressing risks factors is achieved by focusing on the competencies of the individual and improving skills thereby taking a deficits perspective. This approach uses the 'correctional model' assuming that individuals can be fixed or cured of perceived deficits they harbour through the assessment and intervention of experts. This is a move away from

the welfare-based and justice-based approaches to a more technical and standardised risk assessment and formulated response (Haines and Case 2015, p.6). Further underpinning RFPP is a managerialistic approach to rehabilitation that lays the blame for offending and responsibility for changing behaviour on the offender (Armstrong 2004).

RFPP has been lauded for its success on achieving positive outcomes for those who are generally included within society and already have a sense and feeling of belonging (Smith 2007, p.210). However, using factors of risk as a mechanism for predicting future offending behaviour has led to an onslaught of criticism. Haines and Case (2015 p.231) lament that "children are reduced to a dehumanised bundle of risks" as a style of working that "does things to" children as passive objects rather than "working with" children in a participatory manner. O'Mahony (2009 p.99) further condemns RFPP because it fails to take into account key values such as personal agency, motivation and human rights. Instead, it takes a deterministic approach that avoids dialogue to encourage the individual to make their own rational decisions regarding their own future. This, ironically, counters the responsibilitation argument; or, more to the point, responsibilises the individual towards the state's agenda and requirements ergo creating citizens not individuals as a one-sided bargain (O'Mahony 2009, p.112).

Other criticisms of RFPP include arguments that statistical calculations of risk factors fail to capture the complexity of the social situation within which offending occurs (Pitts 2003). It is argued that risk factors cluster together and influence each other to generate a unique description of the behaviour of each individual that is not necessarily a truly reflective account. Furthermore, interventions are chosen based on the risk factors identified irrespective of the condition of the individual (Farrington 2000, p.13). It assumes that

standardised interventions will work on all individuals because it is the relationship between the risk factor and the assessment that takes priority. There is no measure of the differences of corrigibility presented by the individual in terms of their mental and rational capacity to take on-board the nature and contents of the intervention being imposed. The interaction between risk factors and social context needs to be better understood so that appropriate interventions can be planned and targeted to the individual.

As well as criticisms of the relationship between risk factors and the individual, criticisms have been levelled at the relationship between the "expert" and the individual. It is argued that within RFPP there is no real appreciation of issues around engagement between "expert" and the individual. It is argued that the "expert" who is delivering the intervention owns the process and the individual is expected to comply with recommendations and suggestions (McNeill 2012, p.13). This inevitably prioritises the needs of the state rather than the needs of the individual (McNeill 2012). This suggests that the individual is treated as a passive object that must be "worked on" from the perspective of expectations defined outside of the individual's life context. It disregards the motivations and capabilities of the individual by failing to acknowledge their legitimate goals and aspirations. This creates a barrier preventing individuals from engaging with the desistance process (McNeill 2012, p4).

These issues are the very focus of why people reject the intervention of authority and social control (Tyler 2006). Instead, people are concerned about the processes as well as the outcomes in the criminal justice system and feelings of being treated in a fair and just way, irrespective of the outcome (Tyler 2006). To gain the moral assent from the person on a court order allowing the caseworker to hold power, the power has to be experienced as being justifiable and fair. Achieving this status requires a caseworker to engage in fair

encounters through dialogue that includes openness and accountability (Tankebe and Liebling 2013). Each contact between young person and caseworker is a 'teachable moment' that contributes to either the strengthening or the weakening of perceived legitimacy (Bottoms and Tankebe 2013). This implies that the offender is wary during contact interactions and is actively making judgement calls about their caseworker.

The underlying approach of the risk factor prevention paradigm is that it predicts pathways 'into' crime. It is proposed that by directly addressing risk factors relevant to the individual, future reoffending can be prevented. However, it has been counter-argued that the factors 'out of' crime are significantly different (Farrall 2002; Haines and Case 2009; McNeill 2012). Risks factor prevention works on the factors that predict offending but, in contrast, these factors did not predict desistance. Furthermore, human beings go forward in time through the life course, not backwards. This implies an on-going personal developmental trajectory that needs to focus on the aims and aspirations of offenders rather than remaining fixed in the past (O'Mahony 2009, p.103).

Instead of relying infallibly on risk factors to predict desistance, Farrall (2002) moved the focus into a different dimension and suggested that desistance has its own factors. The main point is that desistance needs to be forward looking to promote pro-social and positive behaviours in the context which behaviour occurs as an antidote against fundamental problems of social inequalities (O'Mahony 2009, p.103; Haines and Case 2015, p.28). Farrall and Calverley (2006, p.4) argue that desistance begins when an individual acquires something they value that improves their life situation. Furthermore it attempts to move the individual away from the negativity associated with their previous criminality (ibid, p.20). Factors that create movement away from crime include: maturation to take on more

personal responsibility; employment to gain social and economic resources along with a pattern of routine; forming significant relationships that are mutually satisfying; and emotional experiences such as happiness, becoming tired and feeling shame. The culmination of these factors is the feeling of contentment, trust, security and safety within the new life context that creates a sense of belonging (Smith 2007)

Within the desistance process, it is suggested that the stages of moving out of crime bear a resemblance to the stages through which individuals enter crime (Maruna and Farrall 2004; Healy 2017, chapter 5). Lemert (1972) offers a description of the stages of becoming deviant. The primary stage is the trigger within the individual that starts deviant behaviour. The secondary stage is the negative responses emanating from society regarding the individual's deviant actions. It is the individual's response to these disapprovals from society that inwardly confirms their self-conception of being an offender by internalising stigmatisation and perpetuating the behaviour. Furthermore, the labelling of deviancy by both society and the individual keeps the individual within this state.

Following on, Kitsuse (1980) suggests a third stage: tertiary deviance when the deviant actually rejects societal responses of stigmatisation. Instead, the socially applied label is transformed into a "positive and viable self-conception" (p.9) that is maintained by the individual within the inner workings of society. Effectively, the deviant has transformed the negative intentions of society into personal positive intentions thereby maintaining a sense of pride and dignity irrespective of opinions of those outside. Furthermore, Weitz (1984) suggests that deviants still view themselves as worthy citizens with social worth and full rights: they still have a place in society. It is this tertiary deviance that could be a statement

of resistance against the dominant societal structures to promote and glorify themes of resistant groups or individuals.

Mirroring the three stages of deviancy, it has been argued that desistance can also be categorised into primary, secondary and tertiary stages. Primary desistance is described as the personal decision to explore alternative lifestyles that creates a hiatus in offending (Maruna and Farrall 2004). However, Nugent and Schinkel (2016) argue that referring to desistance in terms of a staged process is not helpful because it does not capture the essential elements of the journey of desistance experienced by individuals. Instead, they redefine the primary deviance definition by referring to it as "act-desistance". The triggers for the onset of desistance were either positive or negative personal events such as marriage or lengthy prison sentence respectively. However, Nugent and Schinkel (2016) identify criminological acts such as the addiction of drug misuse and offending to stave off financial hardship as barriers to act-desistance. Furthermore, some offenders display a sense of fatalism that no matter what happens, nothing will change for the better that is accompanied with mental health issues such as depression (Farrall 2002, p.186). It is this sense of delusion that acts as a barrier to starting the desistance journey. They have a lack of will power to address sources of offending and that engaging with the probation officer is a waste of time (Farrall 2002, p.191). It is this attitude as a lack of hope that prevents compliance with caseworkers (Tyler 2006; Barry 2010).

Secondary desistance is described as the long term process to move away from crime and build a new life (Maruna and Farrall 2004). A new personal identity is built through which the individual changes from a pro-criminal identity and links themselves to societal norms. Furthermore, this new identity is acted out through compliant behaviour. The most

common reason for change was related to strong social bonds underpinned with emotional support in the transition towards new social roles (Laub and Sampson 2001). The foundations for this transition require strong social bonds within their local networks to branch out further into society through work, education and recreation. Following through this journey, individuals start to take on constructive roles of work and family life. Secondary desistance is recognised once these roles have been internalised by the individual (Maruna and Farrall 2004). Again, Nugent and Schinkel (2016) add further elements to a change in identity as "identity desistance". The point being made is that "identity desistance" could happen before "act-desistance" because the pathway out of crime is not sequential. Taking this point further, an individual may relapse with "act-desistance" but maintain a sense of being a law abiding citizen within their new pro-social identity. Gaining employment appeared to play a large part in the creation of a pro-social identity by giving the individual security, money and something to work for and something to fill their time (Farrall 2002, p.177; Barry 2010). To move on through the desistance process, establishing positive relationships is fundamental (Farrall 2002, p.178). It is through experiences of positive relationships that individuals learn how to become more responsible and gain a sense of purpose and pride within themselves. One important skill required for positive relationships is the ability to understand people and communicate in an appropriate manner. It is going through this process that desistors gained confidence and became more mature (Farrall 2002, p.177). However, a lack of quality employment and accommodation creates obstacles to creating a new pro-social identity (Farrall 2002, p.177). Using the perspective offered by Nugent and Schinkel (2016) could provide a crucial vantage point for case workers to help offenders address relapses into offending by maintaining a focus on the pro-social identity that they have developed.

McNeill (2016) argues that a tertiary stage of desistance exists during which the individual develops a sense of belonging back into society. It is this part of the journey through desistance that the family, peers, community and society feeds back to the individual to affirm that they are operating in ways expected of them through recognition of the changes they had made ala Braithwaite's (1989) reintegrative shaming. This stage is further crystallised when individuals experience improved relations and interactions with the wider community (McNeill 2016). Finally, Nugent and Schinkel (2016) add further description to this as the "relational-desistance" sphere in which change is recognised by others. However, problems exist for the individual in this sphere in many domains: peer, family, community and societal. One major factor in the continuation of this journey is the notion of a bond between and individual and society (Sampson and Laub 1993). It is the formation of bonds for other reasons than for crime that sustains the movement away from crime. For instance, barriers exist for the offender if their whole support network is pro-criminal (Farrall 2002, p.186).

It is noticeable that the literature-base talks of desistance as a process with an identification of specific stages within this journey (Farrall 2002; Barry 2010). However, these stages are not drawn together to illustrate the process as a journey. Addressing this issue can be achieved by using the concept of 'transition' to describe the experience of desistance. Bridges (2004) developed a general theory of how people manage transitions that could shed further light on the desistance process. As a mechanism, it is a lens through which people can make sense of life changes by recognising some of the emotions they are feeling and barriers they are encountering. A transition is described in three phases: endings, neutral zone and new beginnings. Through a transition, people gradually accept a new

situation and deal with the changes that come with it. Essentially, transitions are emotional experiences that need to be acknowledged and worked with. According to Bridges (2004), when people go through a transition, initially they have to consider what they are letting go of and how they are going to do it: considering the ending of a previous way of behaving. Underpinning this process of transition is maintaining respect for people's self-worth and personal identity. Taking this point into consideration, aspects of a person's criminal identity needs to be acknowledged but not ridiculed. Instead, their behaviour needs to be addressed to avoid stigmatising the person.

The second phase is moving into the challenging state of liminality. This is the neutral zone during which the person develops plans for and sets in place ways of completing the transition. During this phase people will experience emotions such as ambivalence and scepticism as they go through this stage. Furthermore, it is marked through experiences of chaos as important decisions are made and attempted. However, relapse could occur whereby the person returns back to the previous way of behaving. In countering these challenges, solutions require creative abilities and persistence from all parties concerned with the desistance process to help movement through this stage.

The third phase is managing a new beginning. It is this stage during which a person completes a transition by internalising a new way of living, behaving and developing a new social identity. During this phase people will experience emotions such as impatience, hope and enthusiasm, as well as anticipation and fear of the unknown. It is marked through personally experiencing a new chapter in life with a new social identity.

Bridges' (2004) theory of transitions will be used on the findings to shed light of some of these feelings that indicate the phase of the transition that the young person is

experiencing. An indicator of a shift away from offending was noticeable through a change in the manner individuals talk about themselves, talk about society and their how they relate to others: the narrative they personally hold within and project outwardly. The beginnings of the path out of offending was identified from within as a motivation due to life changing experiences and reassessing what the importance of the individual's life as a re-evaluation of their inner-being and a sense of who they are (Farrall 2002, p.9). Maruna (2002) suggests that desistance is achieved through a series of on-going life transitions supported by bonds with others within their support network. McNeill (2012, p.9) brings all of these points together further suggesting that these factors co-exist and influence each other along the journey of the individual. These factors are also noticeable through the lens of Bridges' (2004) theory of transitions.

Fundamentally, desistance is about preparing the desistor with social relationship skills for integration into mainstream society (McNeill 2012, p.13). To achieve this, the process of desistance has to be owned by the desistor because by taking a lead in overcoming obstacles of desistance they were more likely to desist (Farrall and Calverley 2006). It was their actions and motivations that were more effective than the probation officer's interventions. However, the probationers still needed support and guidance to help them gain 'something' they valued that gave their life meaning in a pro-social sense. The probation officer, as the expert in terms of a holder of knowledge, will be useful to the desistor by offering support and guidance, therefore, is implicated in the process of desistance as a joint stakeholder (McNeill 2012, p.13). However, the knowledge from the "expert" supports change but does not cause it. Instead, it is the motivations and aspirations of the desistor that causes change and the knowledge provided by the expert supports the

desistor in their personal journey out of crime into a new way of living. It is these motivational characteristics imbued in the process of transitioning that drives forward change. This is in contrast to the risk factor prevention paradigm whereby the experts own the process in an instructional sense.

Desistance has been described as a gradual drift away from offending (Laub et al 1998). It starts off with the creation of new attitudinal seeds that germinate the beginnings of desistance as the individual starts to contemplate a move away from offending (McNeill 2012, p.9). However the journey of desistance is not a straightforward or necessarily pleasant experience (Nugent and Schinkel 2016). Long term persistors have to go through a radical long term reorganisation of what type of person they are and what they want to become (Farrall and Calverly 2006, p.7). They have to deconstruct their criminal identity and construct another social identity which is in-line with Bridges' (2004) assertions that the transitional process requires a new identity. They are likely to experience false starts and face obstacles along the way as they move away from a life of crime. During this journey, periods of re-evaluation and reflection are experienced, during which a decision regarding whether to persist or desist with offending is made as they enter a stage of liminality (Farrall and Calverly, 2006, p.21; Barry 2010). From these reflections, individuals choose a narrative to outwardly project their emotions and feelings. It is, therefore, suggested that the nature of narratives used by young people gives clues as to state of mind and current emotional feelings. This could be exemplified by a negative-based narrative that could indicate feelings of failure imbuing opinions that nothing has changed for the better in spite of their efforts (Farrall 2002, p.182). Likewise, positive talk enables positive communications and is a sign of a willingness to confront obstacles.

Whilst the outcomes of desistance is positive for some (Maruna 2001; Laub and Sampson 2003) the journey of desistance can be replete with relapses and challenges ending with outcomes of suffering and a restricted life (Nugent and Schinkel 2016). The process of desistance has been described as ongoing and enduring, backed up with no guarantee of a successful completion. The journey of desistance is not necessarily a pleasant one. One problem for desistors has been the transition from being clearly defined as an offender to being clearly defined as their new identity (Nugent and Schinkel 2016, p.577). On reflection, some desistors have reported that they find themselves in a lonely existence because of failures integrating into society or having to isolate themselves from peers and families to maintain desistance to avoid negative influences. As a consequence, some offenders find themselves stuck in a liminal state of being neither one nor the other because of social and structural constraints (Barry 2010). It is this transitional stage that they need to come through. They are prevented from acting out a new pro-social identity because of a lack of opportunity in terms of finances, employment and stable accommodation (Nugent and Schinkel 2016, p.577). It is this 'pain of goal failure' that leads to pains of merely existing in a day-to-day manner and remaining on the edge of society being excluded from full participation. Furthermore, this state of existence can lead to hopelessness which is then followed by a drop in motivation, further followed by a race to the bottom and giving up on the transition towards achieving participation in society.

Either way of the need to "correct" or "help" young offenders, factors relating to the risk of re-offending and factors relating to social inclusion co-exist within the youth justice system. In their daily practice, caseworkers have to address differing, challenging, complex and chaotic issues related to offending that are presented by each young person. Therefore, the

influence of the caseworker also bears a significant influence on outcomes of the desistance process. In addressing these challenging issues faced by caseworkers and experienced by young people, the next chapter critically explores how both parties go about the relationship they are supposed to have with each other.

2.3 Supervision of Young Offenders: the Supervisory Relationship

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"It is absolutely essential that all professionals in the youth justice system (YJS) have a guiding philosophy of practice for their work with children: a sense of objective and purpose to frame and animate their knowledge and skills bases." (Haines and Case, 2015, p.1)

The previous section of the chapter has identified two distinct approaches to the rehabilitative work carried out with young people who offend. One approach was treatment that focused on "curing" supposed mental and moral deficiencies within a young person. The second approach focused on more practical issues concerning the welfare of a young person, particularly issues around social inclusion within main stream society. Both approaches acknowledge the importance of a working relationship or alliance which enables a practitioner and young person to come together so that specific work can be carried out, under supervision, within the community.

It has been recognised that establishing relationships between caseworkers and young offenders has been heavily influenced by literature drawn from social work, psychotherapy and counselling; especially the works of Carl Rogers (Trevithick, 2003, p.164). In the main though, these approaches have been replaced by the move towards a more clinical and prescriptive way of working with young people in the youth justice system. This chapter draws on a wide literature-base to bring back to light some of the more complex and

subjective aspects of face-to-face exchanges of supervisory relationships. The underlying focus is on the approaches and practices that cultivates a young person's acceptance of the presence of a caseworker intervening in their life situation.

The first part of the chapter connects the supervisory work with young people to the rehabilitative context. Following on the complex and challenging nature of the dual role of caseworkers will be brought to light. Then there is a critical exploration of the many definitions of relationship used within a social work context. The rest of the chapter will then focus on aspects of relationship interactions that will be drawn on later when working with the data collected from participants namely: resistive behaviours, professional boundaries, masculinity or "doing gender" and managing the emotions.

The nature of supervisory work in a rehabilitative context

Young people who have been found guilty or pleaded guilty in a court are subjected to statutory supervision by a local authority during the community part of their order. Supervision is defined as "the routine or regular interviews which take place between probation officers and those sentenced to probation or other community-based orders" (Trotter and Evans 2012, p.256). It is the primary form of applying community-based interventions to address offending behaviour (Trotter and Evans 2012, p.256). During this period young people who have been convicted of an offence have to engage with caseworkers and comply with instructions (McNeill 2009). Mason and Prior (2008) emphasise that supervision should "have long-term engagement and contact time [...] particularly for persistent and serious offenders; continuity of contact is important" (p.11).

The caseworker role is fulfilled by probation officers for adults and youth justice caseworkers for young people.

Whilst YJS caseworkers are employed to help solve problems being experienced by young people who offend, rehabilitation is specifically directed towards understanding events that caused the offending behaviour (Baker 2014; YJB 2014). Young people are recognised as being in a period of adolescence during which they are going through a personal emotional, physical and social transformation (Santrok 2015). It is further recognised that they have not yet fully developed a functional and rational understanding of an adult-centric world within which they can purposefully function. Instead they are on a cognitive and emotional developmental trajectory towards adulthood (Haines and Case 2015). In the meantime, adolescents exist in a liminal state enacting confusions and disturbances as they develop a sense of purpose and personal identity exploring where they fit into their social reality (Waddell 2018).

Bringing together the rehabilitative focus and the adolescent nature of young people, a caseworker's role is to help a young person to desist from offending by becoming more aware of their thought processes along with the criminological influences in their personal surroundings (Collins and Behan 1981, p.16; Fook 1993; Haines and Case 2015). Achieving this should lead to an improvement in the young person's ability to make appropriate and positive decisions going forward in their life (Stelman 1980, p.88; Pitts 1999; Smith 2013; Haines and Case 2015).

However, it is argued that work on internal thought processes and work on the outer influences are distinct from each other and have to be treated as such (Jordan 1970 p.5; Collins and Behan 1981 p.16; Fook 1993; Haines and Case 2015). Conflating inner thought

processes and outer social problems experienced by the young person can create further barriers to the pursuit of personal progression. Therefore, each of these issues needs to be addressed separately: they present with different causes and so require different solutions. It is suggested that addressing inner problems as internal conflicts within the young person can be achieved through the use of therapeutic techniques that generate self-realisation and improving clarity of judgement (Collins and Behan 1981, p.16; Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.60; Trevithick 2011). Whilst addressing outer social problems and concerns around social inclusion can be achieved through helping techniques that encourage the development of self-efficacy and self-sufficiency to achieve purposeful interaction with society (Perlman 1979; Pitts 1999; Haines and Case 2015). The overall end game for the young men is to achieve autonomy in discovering pro-social solutions to problems such as housing, education, finances, jobs or illnesses that promote their own well-being (Collins and Behan 1981, p.16; Farrow et al 2007; Whyte 2009).

Working with young offenders has been described as personally challenging and intimate work (Jordan 1970; Trotter 2006; Alexander and Charles 2009, p.6; Trevithick 2011). The fundamental importance of the relationship between a practitioner and a service user has been summarised as: “nothing exists until there are relationships” (Gorman et al 2006, p.24). From this perspective, the YJS caseworker is the primary resource for a young person and the use of relationship is the medium through which change happens (Sudbery 2002, p.151; Trotter and Evans 2010; Haines and Case 2015). It is through the relationship that the caseworker connects with a young person in the youth justice system to form an alliance or partnership that enables work to be carried out (Jordan 1970; McNeill 2006). Underpinning the creation of a relationship is the ‘use of self’ by consciously bringing into personal

interactions one's own knowledge, previous experiences, skills and values (Kaushik 2017; Trevithick 2018). Furthermore, skilful use of self requires the individual to be aware of their own hidden personality traits that could skew or bias interactions in unforeseen ways. The literature on this subject focuses on practitioners' use of self; however, this study will report that, actually, the young men also used various modes of self as a form of non-verbal communication and as a defence mechanism to prevent further emotional harm.

Caseworkers are expected to use relationships to establish appropriate intimacy to achieve goals whilst still maintaining a sense of objectivity and professionalism (Perlman 1979; Trevithick 2003; Alexander and Charles 2009, p.6). It has been argued that the nature and quality of the relationship between caseworker and young person does impact, both positively and negatively, on the outcome of interventions (Britton and Farrant 2008; Wikström and Treiber 2008). It is the demonstration of respect for people and holding a belief that change for the better can be achieved (Burnett and McNeill 2005, p.232; Mason and Prior 2008, p.22; Deering 2010 p.463). However, whilst it is important to be able to respond to people's emotional needs there can be challenges and disagreements that lead to the creation and expressing of perturbations within the relationships (Sudbery 2002 p.150). It is these tensions between professional objectivity and personal engagement that practitioners have to resolve within the relationship (Alexander and Charles 2009 p.6).

Dual roles

In terms of addressing the utilitarian and deontological aspects of rehabilitation, there are dilemmas of moral orientation around what a young person 'wants' to do and what they 'ought' to do in regards to solutions to problems (Stelman 1980, p.87; Ivanoff et al 1996; Trotter 2006; O'Leary et al 2013). There are still expectations of conformance to societal

rules and orders of the court. It is these new challenges and situations that can create extra stresses for young person to handle appropriately as they move their life forward in a more pro-social manner (Farrall 2002; Trotter 2006). Taking this dilemma in to consideration, during the course of multiple face-to-face contacts with young people, emotional vicissitudes give caseworkers decisions to make regarding issues of care and control (Orsi et al 2010). It is suggested that caseworkers who work in a statutory context such as the youth justice system (Trotter 2006, p.4; McNeill 2009) or an authoritarian setting (Orsi et al 2010) have two central roles to perform: a therapeutic, helping or problem solving care role; and a legalistic enforcement control role (Trotter 2006, p.3). The care role is characterised as being warm and authentic with a helping and therapeutic element whilst the other is objective and legalistic with a social control element.

Coming to terms with the execution of these dual roles has been described as one of the greatest challenges faced by practitioners (Trotter 2006, p.4). It is getting the appropriate balance of these roles to satisfy the demands of society and courts along with aspirations of the young person. It is further argued that practitioners must understand the effects of these orientations in practice (Alexander and Charles 2009, p.11). For caseworkers and young people alike, it is important for both to understand the unavoidable demands of both these roles and the function they perform (Trotter 2006, p.66). Following on, it is necessary for the practitioner to help the young person understand the nature and function of both of these roles. Doing this is required to avoid confusion in the mind of the young person; especially during the first face-to-face meeting (Shulman 1991). In the first instance, there needs to be a negotiation of what is expected of both parties along with defining and agreeing boundaries to put in place as a mode protection to prevent confusion and further

unnecessary harm (Trotter 2006, p.71). Furthermore, it is the removal of confusions and avoidance of unexpected responses through a process of negotiation that contributes to establishing a relationship in a control dominated context (Orsi et al 2010, p.279).

Types of relationships

The supervisory requirement of a court order requires the young person to meet up and engage with one or more caseworkers in a relationship. The concept of relationship is defined as "the cumulative experience of interacting" (Saunders 2005, p.60) through the way individuals regard and behave towards each other (Perlman 1979, p.23) to develop a common body of experience (Saunders 2005, p.60). Furthermore, face-to-face interactions within relationships are "primal and primary" that arouse emotions (Turner 2002, p.1).

Whilst the relationship has been identified as the main tool available to a caseworker, there is no universally agreed definition of the type of relationship that should be deployed. Instead, different types of relationships have been proffered depending upon the aspects of work being carried out.

Underpinning expectations of relationships is the need for a caseworker to treat each service user as an individual (Perlman 1979). The *casework relationship* has been described as a vehicle for improving personal situations by generating a focus on specific problems and acting as a foundation on which to build future work (Biestek 1957; Hollis 1964; Trevithick 2003, p.166). A casework relationship is controlled through decisions made by the practitioner after an assessment has been carried out. Casework attributes specific problems to the service user that becomes the focus of on-going work. However, casework relationships have been criticised for professionals acting in superficial or routine ways that

could focus on the identified problems and not seeing the human being experiencing those problems (Perlman 1979, p.9). It views service users *as* problems and as objects to be worked on rather than people *with* problems (Fook 1993; Trevithick 2003, p.165).

Countering this perspective, when working with young people it is argued that the caseworker has to go beyond working 'on' a young person; instead they have a role to be 'in' their life (Jordan 1970, p.16; Perlman 1979, p.17). Developing this point further, caseworkers are required to work together with young people to negotiate and agree the nature of problems being experienced. This approach can be described as establishing a *working relationship.* Work is still driven by the detailed assessment of the service user and this still acts as a foundation on which to build future work (Trevithick 2003, p.166). However, problems and solutions are expressed by the young person and acknowledged by the caseworker. Rather than being distant, the caseworker needs to develop a close and purposeful interpersonal relationship characterised by empathy, warmth and genuineness. The aim is to create a sense of closeness so as to develop a personal understanding of the situation that the young person is experiencing. The working relationship has to have a humanising quality that, in turn, contributes towards a sense of security that generates an emotional connection (Perlman 1979; Trevithick 2003; Trotter 2006). This closeness within the working relationship can then be used as a platform for undertaking work with young people (Trevithick 2003, p.167). However there is a criticism that adopting this focus can lead to an overly-individualised view of a young person's problems with only minimal social emphasis (Fook 1993, p.19). This can prevent the goals and tasks from being truly grounded in any wider social or political influences.

Another type of relationship is described in terms of the practical work done by the practitioner sometimes called a *helping relationship*. This approach acknowledges that young people experience social problems as physical, economic, socio-cultural and circumstantial and that they also have thoughts and feelings about what they are experiencing (Perlman 1979, p.10). The young people, therefore, need 'help' to address and overcome the problems they are struggling with; not deep intrusive therapy (Perlman 1979, p.11; Robinson and Raynor 2009). It is suggested that this can be achieved by enacting a *helping relationship* based on recognising the potential within people and supporting their own problem solving. This helping aspect pays attention to nourishing and moving people's wishes forward, to use their will to fulfil personal and social well-being to bear greater comfort. To achieve this, the young person needs to be at the centre of the helping relationship and be personally responsible for creating forward movement.

However, it is argued that practitioners need to go beyond task completion defined by the working relationship and helping relationship (Sudbery 2002). A *therapeutic relationship* recognises that a young person will have an internal relationship with self as well as the external world. Through an internal dialogue, young people play out emotions underpinning amicability, anxieties or hostilities that are forerunners to addressing external realities. It is inner conflicts that are being personally experienced such as a lack of confidence and self-deprecation that can act as barriers to addressing wider social problems. These issues are played out internally and difficulties experienced by a young person will be brought into the relationship and expressed to the caseworker in various ways. Furthermore, past experiences of other relationship interactions, both positive and negative, are reawakened and placed onto current or imminent relationship interactions (Sudbury 2002). These are

generally explained as echoes of past outcomes that contribute to the self-efficacy of young people's confidence to achieving specific goals.

Sudbery (2002) argues there is a therapeutic component of the relationship requiring caseworkers to attend to these inner conflicts in preparation for the outer world engagement of external realities. Only by being tuned into a young person can a caseworker respond appropriately to these instances of emotional transference. Therapeutic relationships encourage consideration of the quality of a person's relationship with themselves; they can release potential through support and encouragement rather than proffering formulaic advice. To aid the therapeutic process, workers should respond to service user's "emotional needs, to their impulse for emotional development, and to the difficulties they experience in forming or maintaining relationships" (Sudbery 2002, p.150). This is achieved by paying attention to feelings and emotions that bring anxieties and mental unease into relational interactions. Addressing these issues supports young people to emotionally mature (Sudbery 2002, p.152).

One common aspect of the working relationship, helping relationship and therapeutic relationship is empowering the young person with their own decision making to change behaviour. In the pursuit of behaviour changes, in some ways, social work has aligned itself with the person-centred approach (PCA) based on Rogerian principles such as unconditional positive regard, unconditional acceptance and neutrality (Miller 2005). This empowers the young person as the sole agent of change. However, whilst person-centred work places a premium on these core conditions, it has been criticised for not being directly suitable for work in specific circumstances (Perlman 1979, p.222; Sudbery 2002, p.157; Murphy et al 2012, p.1462). It has been argued that PCA does not factor in the inevitable dynamics

associate with aggressive service users (Sudbery 2002, p.157) and that it fails to recognise the bureaucratic function of the worker including their accountability to public finances in provision of a service (Stelman 1980, p.88). Moreover, social casework has been described as having a social control function embedded within it that prioritises maintaining the welfare of society in priority to the welfare of the individual (Fook 1993, p.28), which calls into question its compatibility with person-centred approaches. Given the statutory nature of intervening in young people's complex and chaotic lives, it is therefore not possible to use principled non-directive and unconditional practice to promote personal change (Murphy et al 2012). However, whilst relationships cannot be fully person-centred, because of the principle of non-directivity and unconditionality, this does not preclude the person being at the centre of the relationship in pursuit of required goals to be achieved and tasks to be done.

In terms of the main components of a relationship between practitioner and service user, psychotherapy and psychology have widely utilised Bordin's (1979) concept of the "alliance". It was asserted by Bordin (1979) that, generally, alliances are composed of three interrelated elements: the goals to be achieved; the tasks to be carried out; and the presence of an affective bond. Whilst aspects of the first two components are overtly tangible by all parties through a written agreement or contract, the third aspect, the emotional bond, is more subjectively conspicuous. Addressing this issue further, there exists an inventory available within psychotherapy practice that measures the strength of the affective aspect of the relationship from the perspective of the service user and the perspective of the practitioner. Through the implementation of a Likert scale, the *working alliance inventory* (WAI), the service user can be encouraged to make known their opinions

of the affective bond without undue influence from the practitioner (Horvath and Greenberg 1989).

Following on, using the strength of the work done by Horvath and Greenberg (1989), the WAI was adapted for use within social work practice as the *helping relationship inventory* (HRI) (Poulin and Young 1998). Similarly, a Likert scale questionnaire is completed separately by practitioner and service user to gauge the strength of their affective bond. The HRI has 10 items asking opinions of the tasks of the relationship. Also, there are 10 items asking opinions about the interpersonal component of the relationship and their experiences of each other. This, in effect, gives the service user a voice in making known issues concerning the quality and congruence of the relationship.

It is argued that the work of, and related to, Bordin has relevance to relationship work within youth justice. The working alliance components asserted by Bordin (1979) are also found in relationships between caseworkers and young offenders. Assessments of a young person and life situation lead to the identification of goals to be achieved and tasks required to be carried out are closely monitored through the use of the AssetPlus toolset. Furthermore, the positive contribution of the affective and emotional bond is also recognised within the supervisory relationship (McNeill 2009; Trotter and Evans 2012; Haines and Case 2015). However, whilst the significance of the affective bond is recognised, no attention is paid to its formation and on-going development. By acknowledging the applicability of Bordin's (1979) concept of the working alliance and its adaption within social work practice, it is suggested that work with young offenders naturally brings into play these two relationship inventories. Following on, this opens a gateway for bringing in theory from

psychotherapy to improve the literature-base for work with young people who are in the youth justice system.

Types of engagement

During supervision sessions, a caseworker and young person are expected to engage with each other to achieve a reduction in offending behaviour. The importance of engagement is firmly stated as forming the basis for the strength of the alliance or relationship that develops (Thompson et al 2007). However, there has been recognition of the problematic definitions of engagement (Mason and Prior 2008; Stephenson et al 2011; Bateman and Hazel 2013). Similar to relationships, the concept of "engagement" has been discussed regularly within the literature-base yet it does not have a universally agreed definition (Macgowan 2003). It has been suggested that engagement has an ambiguous nature which is imbued with complexity (Bateman and Hazel 2013). In trying to unpick this ambiguous phenomenon, a distinction has been highlighted between participation and engagement. The concepts of motivation and engagement have also been separated out suggesting that these terms are not synonymous (Stephenson et al 2011 p.74). The difference being that *motivation* is linked to the goal of the engagement, which in youth justice service terms is a cessation from offending. Whilst there is no fully defined construct of engagement within youth justice, within the discipline of education, *engagement* has been defined as being multifaceted: behavioural, emotional and cognitive (Fredericks et al 2004, p.65). These terms have been extrapolated and introduced into youth justice literature through literature reviews conducted by Bateman and Hazel (2013) and Stephenson et al (2011). However, definitions of engagement within the literature typically do not separate out the behavioural, the emotional and the cognitive elements (Bateman and Hazel 2013, p.6).

Behavioural engagement refers to “participation and cooperation” through involvement in activities (Fredericks et al 2004, p.60). It is the manner in which individual’s conduct themselves whilst carrying out tasks during relational interactions. This includes doing the work, getting involved in activities and sticking to the rules of conduct (Fredericks et al 2004, p.61). Furthermore, this includes the required effort, persistence, and contribution in activities (Fredericks et al 2004, p.62). From this perspective, it is argued that behavioural engagement implicates the caseworker as well as the young person because, by the very nature, relationships are two-way and interactional.

Emotional engagement encompasses positive and negative reactions to interactions which further influences willingness to work (Fredericks et al 2004, p.60). It is the enactment of motivation and enthusiasm with a positive orientation towards others who are involved. This has been explained as “the young person’s attitudinal relationship with the project and those who work in it” (Bateman and Hazel 2013, p.5). It is argued that this definition is slightly problematic given the supposed two-way nature of engagement therefore it should imply the attitudinal element of all parties. This stance is derived from studies showing that service users are more likely to engage when a worker pays attention to their emotional feelings. This includes those feelings that are not being obviously expressed: the demonstration of a caring and sensitive nature that encouraged service users to engage (Doel 2010, p.200). Achieving this fits in-line with the demands of achieving legitimacy in the eyes of the young person (Tyler 2006).

Cognitive engagement is the willingness to exert effort to master required ideas and skills (Fredericks et al 2004, p.60). Engaging in this manner facilitates change through the

acquisition of new skills. It is this dimension of engagement that drives change in offending behaviour.

It is suggested that engagement is achieved through the application of skills and knowledge associated with a particular type of intervention whereby effectiveness is measured through the process of desistance (Mason and Prior 2008). To achieve this, engagement requires more than passive involvement, it requires motivation and commitment. Critiquing this definition of engagement, Ipsos MORI (2010, p.5) defined engagement as containing an element of progression, however, sometimes young people were not always able to translate what they had been told into practice. It was further suggested that young people may have problems committing to a programme; this does not necessarily mean they are not engaged or do not want to change their behaviour but, instead, external factors may hinder engagement therefore prevent success in changing behaviour. The literature in youth justice has tended to focus on engagement with intervention programmes which is a different type of engagement than that within relationships.

Extrapolating the Frederick et al's (2004, p.74) multi-faceted definition of engagement into youth justice practice, there is more of a focus on the behavioural and cognitive rather than the emotional. Even more, the attention is on the engagement of the young person to the exclusion of the caseworker. Whilst there is some research about engagement within youth justice, it has mainly focused on how young people engage in the broadest sense with services, programmes and provisions: behavioural engagement (Bateman and Hazel 2013). Achieving broad engagement from a young person was found to be more likely when interventions are perceived to have relevance to their lives (Mason and Prior 2008, p.12):

cognitive engagement. This is different to the interpersonal nature of engaging with caseworkers: emotional engagement.

Within child protection, engagement has been defined as both an attitude and commitment to achieve a desirable outcome which is measured through service usage (Yatchmenoff 2005). Furthermore, engagement has been defined as a means of establishing a relationship of trust in order to prepare the service user for readiness for change to take place (Ivanoff et al 1994). But identifying the level of commitment and motivation of engagement is problematic (Ivanoff et al 1994). It is recommended to distinguish engagement from banal compliance whereby the service user just "plays the game" and does not make a genuine effort to change (Yatchmenoff 2005). It has also been recognised that mandated service users may not fully engage with the practitioners but could still offer a level of cooperation and compliance (Ivanoff et al 1994). In the case of low level engagement it has been recognised that some form of positive outcome of an experiential nature may result from informative experiences with workers as opposed to measurable outcomes of recidivism.

Within the youth justice literature, Stephenson et al (2011, p.73) say that 'to engage' usefully conveys the sense of contract and mutuality thereby giving a sense of two parties working together to achieve a commonly agreed goal. They further suggest that the perception of fairness is important to young people. Major components of fairness were having an understanding of the nature of rules and boundaries along with reciprocity that both caseworker and young person should observe the same rules. Doing this helps to develop a shared set of values. Furthermore, there is a sense of coming together to form a partnership or alliance that becomes an agreed foundation from which a young person will accept help to improve their behaviour and life situation. Using reciprocity, enforcement

procedures were more likely to be accepted if there was a sense of fairness, again encouraging a sense of legitimacy.

However, the term *mutuality* does lack a full definition within youth justice literature. Nursing, as a discipline, has explored and proffered a definition of mutuality within helping and therapeutic relationships. The centrality of a nurse-patient relationship was expressed as a 'privilege of participation' as a connected role with the patient (Curley 1997). Furthermore, it was argued that mutuality is a crucial element of presence within the relationship. Curley (1997) used a definition put forward by Hagerty et al (1993) as "...the experience of real or symbolic shared commonalities of visions, goals, sentiments, or characteristics, including shared acceptance of difference, which validates the person's world view" (p.208).

Mutuality has been explained as a sense of closeness through activities associated within sharing during contacts. It has also been argued that a key component of human interaction during relationships is bi-directionality (Alexander and Charles 2009, p.10). It is through this activity that parties create meaning of any event: a two-way exchange through which people experience reciprocity. This exchange makes the worker 'human' (Turney 2010). However, literature guides workers away from developing close relationships with service users. As a consequence, an emotional distance is created between worker and service user that underpins professional-based relationships (Alexander and Charles 2009; Doel 2010; Grant and Mandell 2016). Yet, some have found that reciprocity is a complimentary element of mutuality valued by service users (Alexander and Charles 2009; Doel 2010; Turney 2010). It has been suggested that reciprocity is the willingness to exchange something of each other. However, given the nature of relationships, it was recommended that care has to be

given when exchanging information because of the potential for abuse or oppression. Therefore, comparing the concept of mutuality as a sense of closeness against the ideas underpinning professional relationships to maintain a personal distance raises ethical dilemmas within professional practice. Also underpinning these dilemmas is the naturally occurring experience of social work relationships as personally engaging and intimate work through which workers use intimacy to achieve goals (Alexander and Charles 2009, p.10).

Resistive behaviours

When young men enter the youth justice system it is fair to say that they do so with life experiences of their social and domestic situations that has moulded their personality into its current form. Within their social situations they will have developed behaviours and coping strategies to achieve specific personal aims (Santrock 2015). Furthermore, it is known that young people who are pushed towards seeking assistance often display resistance (Bateman and Hazel 2013). Some young people will be defended, guarded and self-protective to prevent from any emotional harm on the basis of minimal damage aspirations (Collins and Behan 1981, p.17; Trevithick 2003, p.169). Therefore, resistive and defensive behaviours can be expected to be enacted in the face of coercive demands made by the youth justice system (Trotter 2006; Bateman and Hazel 2013).

The aim of one-to-one youth justice casework is to change the young person's behaviour to prevent reoffending. The starting premise of the change process comprises of a person who seeks change and one who offers to be a change agent (Bordin 1979, p.252; Perlman 1979, Trevithick 2003). For this to happen, there has to be a readiness of service users to accept they have a problem, either social or personal, that requires attention (Jordan 1970, p.5; Perlman 1979, p.3; Bateman and Hazel 2015). However, young people entering the youth

justice system are not seeking advice, solutions or change; instead they are having constraints imposed on them. They are, therefore, not ready or willing to seek and accept help in bettering themselves to improve their life situation. For this reason, young people entering the youth justice system have generally been classified as “involuntary” (Trotter 2006, p.2) or “mandated” (Ivanoff et al 1996) service users. They are further recognised as not always being motivated to change, do not recognise they have problems and have a different set of values to those of caseworkers (Trotter 2006, p.2).

Furthermore, it has been recognised that young people in the youth justice system are likely to have experienced failures and the feeling of being let down in relationships that has generally lead to some form of emotional damage (Trevithick 2011, p.391; Santrock 2015). In response, defence strategies are developed as a survival mechanism, including an enduring range of behaviours designed to protect the young person from feelings that could produce anxiety leading to further emotional harm (Perlman 1979; Trevithick 2011, p.392). The use of defensive manoeuvres has been described as the passing on or transferring of an emotional reaction or pattern of relating that has roots in the past as a repetition of previously used behaviours (Trevithick 2011, p.403). These behaviours typically include the generation and articulation of personal narratives that distort reality or memories of what actually happened. As a result of this, there could be expressions of anger, resentment and contempt towards caseworkers (Stelman 1980, p.85; Shulman 1991; Bateman and Hazel 2013). Also, adolescents have been described as having a tendency to distance themselves from adult influences (Orsi et al 2010, p.28). So, when young men begin their relationship with a caseworker, it is these learnt behaviours and coping strategies that are likely to be

presented during initial encounters with caseworkers (Jordan 1970; Trevithick 2003; Bateman and Hazel 2013).

In addressing defensive manoeuvres, it is argued that the aim is not to break down defences or avoid resistance but, instead, to enable people to acknowledge its existence (Trevithick 2011, p.392). The use of these resistive behaviours as defence mechanisms could be an indication that there are deeper underlying issues requiring further attention. Whilst the display of behaviour that is problematic needs addressing, the underlying issues also need exploring. There is a need to understand how and why individual defences are being used; especially among those who are presenting as difficult to engage (Trevithick 2011, p.392).

Professional boundaries

The coming together to form a union or alliance within a relationship creates a living bond through which both parties become malleable in their opinions, thoughts and feelings (Perlman 1979, p.24; McNeill 2006). To this sense, relationships have to be meaningful to both parties and charged with both negative and positive aspects that will merge and separate as a balancing mechanism (Perlman 1979, p.28). People are tied together through negative emotions such as hate, spite, hostility, perversity and guilt (Perlman 1979 p.25). Also, positive emotions can be generated when someone manages to cope with their problems with personal satisfaction being experienced as a result of their endeavours (Perlman 1979).

It has been previously discussed that caseworkers are required to have an emotional capacity to relate to service users and their problems (Jordan 1970; Alexander and Charles 2009; O'Leary et al 2013, p.138). It has also been identified that this could create personal

and intimate moments that brings both parties closer together resembling a friendship. Furthermore, events of this nature could cause ethical issues related to boundaries of friendship and professionalism. It is these issues that have been described as being the most problematic and challenging in terms of preventing or causing conflicts (Reamer 2003, p.121). Specific issues include those of self-disclosure, discussing personal details and holding conversations about inappropriate subjects.

Given the power imbalances that exist in the relationship between caseworkers and young people, these potentially problematic ethical issues require managing (O'Leary et al 2013, p.138). In recognition of this, Reamer (2003 p.123) distinguishes two different types of transgressions when operating on the boundary of a relationship. The first is 'boundary violations' and the second is 'boundary crossings'. It is suggested that 'boundary violations' cause harm to service users through engagement that are "exploitive, manipulative, deceptive or coercive" (Reamer 2003, p.123). In contrast, 'boundary crossing' confuses the nature of the relationship causing ambivalence about the caseworker's involvement. It is the central themes of intimacy, dependency, performing favours and mutuality that need to be carefully managed to prevent confusion thus complicating and threatening legitimacy of caseworker intervention (Reamer 2003, p.124).

To counter impending problems caused by ethical transgressions, the need for *professional boundaries* has been recommended to safeguard against discrimination and exploitation for both caseworker and service user. Professional boundaries are operating rules that aim to ethically create a safe emotional distance that caseworkers and service users can use to restrict interactions that could cause further harm (Alexander and Charles 2009, p.6). Furthermore, this helps to establish that the relationship is to be used as an instrument

towards achieving goals rather than becoming a purpose in its own right (Trevithick 2003). It is approaches like this that contribute positively to the legitimacy of caseworker intervention as both parties get to know each other (Tyler 2006; Ugwudike 2010)

Masculinity

As mentioned in the previous section, when young men enter the youth justice system they do so with personalities developed through interactions and experiences with others in the home, with peers and wider society. One reason for the focus on young men for this study is that in the year ending March 2017, 84% of arrests of the 10 to 17 years population were male (MoJ 2018). This figure has remained persistently skewed towards male arrests with the percentage varying between 80% and 84% since at least 2005 (MoJ 2016).

In recognition of the gender dynamics which play out within society, one of the key sociological ideas associated criminality and behaviour are theories around *hegemonic masculinity*. As a theoretical lens, it has persuasively argued that criminal behaviour is one means of *creating* masculinity. This insight was a shift in the conventional thinking that "men do criminal behaviour as an expression of their masculinity" (Connell p. xi in Messerschmidt 1993). Instead, it is argued that criminal behaviour is a strategy for 'creating' masculinity (Messerschmidt 1993, p.28). During adolescence, gendered role expectations are loaded onto young men (Lui and Kapland, 2004). In response, young men use exaggerated gendered behaviour as coping strategies to achieve their aims of 'becoming' a man, especially if a masculine identity is denied (Holter 2005). The argument is that masculinity is enacted or performed as an instrument to achieve control and dominance to create an ideal male persona (Messerschmidt 1993, p.27).

In terms of achieving dominance and control, one key type of masculine persona has been identified as being *hegemonic*: the demonstration of strong behaviours (Messerschmidt 1993). In terms of a Gramscian explanation, hegemony is used as an explanatory mode for achieving social structural change through the practices of domination using "culture, institutions and persuasion" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, p.831). Hegemonic behaviour attempts to get others to subordinately position themselves in relation to the one displaying dominance.

Within relationships, behaviours are enacted that have specific qualities imbued with meaning to both parties (Goffman 1967). Furthermore, the recognition of specific behaviours has been classified in terms of gender (Bem 1974). Behaviours with characteristics such as aggression, assertion and dominance are regarded as masculine traits while behaviours with characteristics such as affection, gentleness and sensitivity to the needs of others are regarded as feminine traits.

Masculinity is a patterned way of producing behaviour that is engrained through practices that are social situated. It is these patterns of behaviour that confront caseworkers during the initial interactions. Within these patterns of reproduced behaviours are thoughts and feelings towards authority, control and dominance. Young men "do" masculinity in their social environment, so when they enter an alien social situation such as the young justice system they are "doing" manly behaviour and appearance in order to assert their gender identity (Messerschmidt 1993, p.84).

A key point of hegemonic masculinity is achieving dominance, and subordinating others, to maintain control through the rule of force (Messerschmidt 1993, p.33). Dominance is enacted through cultural and social practices to create a state of fear which acts as a form of

social control (Messerschmidt 1993, p.36). Elements of hegemonic masculinity have been described as having aggression and control through which the subordinate is denied self-determination. Furthermore, acts of violence are embellished with threats to render the subordinate powerless, yet remaining useful (Messerschmidt 1993, p.38).

However, the assignment of behaviours as being gender specific has been criticised as being unhelpful during the development of the individual during adolescence as they prepare for adulthood (Hoffman and Borders 2001; Budgeon 2014). It is argued that through the creation of difference in idealised gender roles, expectations are internalised that suppress behaviours which are necessary for personal development (Bem 1974, p.155; Hoffman and Borders 2001; Budgeon 2014). It is the social construction and labelling of specific sets of human behaviours that contain characteristics and traits generally aligned to one gender or the other that creates barriers preventing public performance of those behaviours. Instead, the full range of behaviours is required. In effect, it is these devalued characteristics that create gender differences and support power for producing and legitimising privilege. Furthermore, it is this devaluing that strips away an individual's ability to gain full autonomy to achieve rights by denying them opportunities to enact their responsibility in search for agency and self-determination (Hoffman and Borders 2001; Budgeon 2014).

The relevance of focusing on gender assigned behaviours is that when young men reposition themselves within society they need a range of competent behaviours spanning both gender role expectations. Given that young men generally act out traits of masculinity during their adolescence, and the work place environment offers jobs requiring a more expressive quality, it is differences of gender reframed in terms of being "human traits" that offers a more valuable currency (Hoffman and Borders 2001). To this extent, this theory is

important to shed light on how caseworkers work with young men to navigate gender expectations. The findings of this study will show how caseworkers helped young men to develop a full range of gender behaviours. Young men were encouraged to develop more expressive behaviours whilst addressing the dominant masculine behaviours that could become barriers to further education and employment.

Managing emotions

An emotion is a feeling or affect that occurs within a person during an interaction about something that relates to their personal well-being or welfare (Campos et al 2004). Underpinning each relationship is a set of interactions embodied by a human's feeling of connection through being "touched, aroused, moved" (Perlman 1979, p.23) in a mutually shared and emotionally charged experience (Trotter 2006; Trevithick 2011). Through the emotional experience a helper influences change for a person with a specific problem (Perlman 1979, p.51). It is these emotional experiences that are driven by the push and pull of feelings (Jordan 1970; Perlman 1979, p.51; Trevithick 2003). Especially with teenagers, emotions are powerful, ready, excited and freewheeling from which a foundation of work can be driven forward (Perlman 1979, p.39; Santrock 2015).

In support of a young person, the caseworker is required to mutually share some aspects of the journey with the young person to prevent the relationship becoming one-sided (Stelman 1980 p.93). So, by committing honesty and openness to the relationships, the caseworker is creating personal vulnerabilities by handing over some control through which both parties can take mutual risks together (Stelman 1980, p.94). It is through the creation of empathy and compassion by the caseworker that acts as a bridge of sharing thoughts and feelings within the relationship (Stelman 1980, p.93). Whilst empathy is regarded as a key factor, it is

the use of accurate empathy that enables a caseworker to infer the "unstable and transient dispositions as the thoughts they are having, the feelings they are experiencing, and the more immediate, short-term goals they are pursuing" (Ickes 1993, p.587). This enables correct mirroring of another person's thoughts and feelings (Trevithick 2003, p.170) through which appropriate emotions can be transferred both ways. This encourages responding in an approachable manner with attitudes of concern that displays warmth and being genuine towards a young person by listening to their thoughts and opinions. Furthermore, it is through the repeated stimulated experiences of being safe and dependable within the relationship that trust is developed (Perlman 1979 p.32). This is achieved by workers enacting interactional qualities of care, acceptance, understanding and genuineness (Perlman 1979; Trotter 2006).

Emotional arousals are unavoidable during face-to-face interactions and it is recognised that emotions are an undeniable aspect of relationships: however, it is the manner in which they are managed that is subjected to debate. One common aspect of relationship interaction is the purposeful expression of emotions (Biestek 1957; Perlman 1979). However, Individual casework has been criticised when used as a clinical tool for the assessment and diagnosis of individual problems as pathology (Fook 1993). This has, in the large, resulted in the service user being treated as an object to be worked upon by an emotionally distant practitioner (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.61). This approach has been further criticised as adversely affecting the role of human agency by reducing the interplay within relationships as people mediate the exact nature of problems being experienced. This approach limits individual choices of potential solutions that are available and reduces the feeling of control over their future (Raynor and Robinson 2009, p.137; Haines and Case 2015). Furthermore, it negates

the building of human and social capital that prevents services users from developmental emotional experiences related to learning new skills and knowledge. In effect, it reduces motivation to change through instructive methods rather than participatory methods of engagement. However, maintaining objectivity is still regarded as a key aspect of the relationship so that an appropriate emotional distance can be maintained and focus remains on the agreed goals (Stelman 1980, p.85). Doing this counter-balances the potential ethical problem of forming a friendship.

To the extent of understanding and managing emotions, it is necessary to learn how to relate to others during their process of developing a sense of personal and social identity (Santrock 2015). Within this process, two important aspects have been identified: the cognitive and the affective. The *cognitive* is described as the *perception* a person has of themselves whereas the *affective* is described as the way someone *feels* about themselves. It has been further identified that the affective, emotional part of the brain reacts more quickly to an event than the cognitive, thinking part of the brain (Goleman 1996). This is a key analytical distinction to make regarding face-to-face interactions between caseworkers and young men. It follows on that caseworkers will have to engage with affective responses before gaining access to the cognitive part of the brain: the thought process behind the affective response.

Within any relationship, both parties use techniques of interpersonal emotion management to manage their own emotions and feelings (Hochschild 1979, 1983) along with the emotions and feelings of the other (Thoits 1996). The managing of evocation, suppression and transformation of one's own emotions has been described as emotional labour (Hochschild 1979). It is through this mechanism that workers tune themselves into the

current emotions of a service user and render emotions that are appropriate to the situation. This approach to emotional self-management has been theorised as involving three elements: changing one's own personal perspective (cognitive), changing one's own physical arousal (bodily) and a surface emotional tone (expressive). It is through the use of one or more of these elements that workers create an emotive experience and exert self-control over their emotions during interactions (Hochschild 1979). In effect, they 'feel' their way in to an emotional state in an attempt to 'connect' or 'disconnect' with the other at any given point in time.

To invoke any sort of change within a young person, a caseworker has to find out what is going on and how it is happening. To achieve this, the caseworker has to be in touch with the young person's emotions and, furthermore, engage with their emotional experiences (Trevithick 2003, p.171). However, this task is made difficult by relational difficulties expressed through defensive manoeuvres and resistive behaviours that are underpinned by the enactment of negative emotions. This suggests that it is necessary to manage the emotions of the other person given the possibility of tensions in relational exchanges (Thoits 1996, p.86).

At beginning of this process, there are clues in personal narratives as to current emotional states (Trevithick 2003, p.165). Thoits (1996) suggests that *deliberate provocations* can be used as a mechanism to elicit emotional reactions to move from "surface acting to deep acting, or real emotional engagement" (p.94). He argues that there are five consequences of deliberate provocation: not responding effectively; symbolic detachment from the problem; affective change in the form of a new feeling; cognitive change in the form of an insight; or a

loss of emotional control. Once any of these reactions have happened then the caseworker needs to demonstrate a sensitive and positive response.

As an on-going process, intense emotional states have a contagion effect on the other person. It is during these moments of revealing vulnerabilities that offers an opportunity for strengthening the partnership. It is through these emotional moments that solidarity can be increased (Thoits 1996, p.105). The relevance of this is that the young person will respond to the emotional mood as presented by the caseworker whether that be negative or positive in nature.

To conclude, this chapter has developed a framework from which data collected from participants will be critically examined to shed light on what goes on between YJS caseworkers and young men. The supervisory nature of caseworker involvement in a young person's life has been explored through the relationship experienced by both parties. Whilst the concept of relationship was defined, it was found that different types of relationship are enacted in practice with young people depending on what is trying to be achieved. Following on, common aspects were found within each type of relationship that defined the nature of interactions: dual roles, resistive behaviours and professional boundaries. Moreover, it was noticed that within each of these common aspects of relationships were elements of enacted behaviours, especially resistive, masculine, and the display of emotions underpinning interactions. It is each of these aspects and elements that will be used to explain the nature of the caseworker and young person relationship in novel ways that are not currently available within the youth justice literature.

This chapter has given focus for the research, the next chapter will critically explore how and the impact of previous research conducted on the focus of relationships between caseworkers or probation workers and both adult and young offenders.

CHAPTER 3 A Review of the Research Literature on Community Supervision

"It is a paradox that perhaps the one question in youth justice work that practitioners would deem the most important, how to get young people to participate effectively in youth justice interventions, is the least researched." (Stephenson, Giller and Brown, 2011, p.72).

One of the most effective ways of reducing recidivism is to intervene at the human individual level (Bonta et al 2008, p.251) and, by taking this perspective, effective supervision by probation officers or YJS case workers does lead to lower recidivism rates (Trotter and Evans 2012, p.256; McNeill 2009). However detailed knowledge and understanding of what actually goes on during individual community supervision sessions is lacking which renders the mystical art of supervision as a "black box" of processes and procedures (Bonta et al 2008, p.256). Similarly, supervision has been described as being carried out behind closed doors away from the management and public gaze (Deering (2010, p.453). Overall, the available evidence suggests that little is understood about how supervision is actually carried out, its nature or its quality (Deering 2010; Trotter and Evans 2012; Grant and McNeill 2015).

Since the inception of the current youth justice system through the CDA 1998, the literature-base has a 'relational myopia'. In spite of a sound literature-base in other but similar disciplines, relationship concerns between caseworkers and young people has suffered from negligence in favour of offending behaviour programs. This chapter provides a review of the research literature on the practice of supervision between case workers and

offenders. Having first established that community supervision is the modus operandi for addressing offending behaviour of young people, subsequent sections will give critical consideration to research relating to the practice of supervision and how it uses relationships, engagement, communication and dialogue to achieve desired outcomes. Doing this will identify a gap in literature that will purposefully drive the research aim and objectives. Furthermore, methodologies and methods used in the reviewed research studies will be used as guidance for the selection of a suitable methodology and methods.

3.1 The Relationship

Young people who have been found guilty or pleaded guilty in a court of law are subjected to statutory supervision by a local authority during the community part of their order. It is the primary form of applying community-based interventions to address offending behaviour (Trotter and Evans 2012, p.256). The role is fulfilled by probation officers for adults and YJS case workers for young people. Within a youth justice context, the aim of a case worker is to prevent reoffending as directed by the Ministry of Justice. Furthermore, supervision should have long term engagement with continuity of contact (Mason and Prior 2008). This section explores some studies that have identified specific characteristics which reflect, amongst other things, the tension between the need to develop effective relationships and the need to control the relationship to achieve desistance from criminal behaviour.

One task for a case worker is to apply interventions such as behaviour programmes to address offending behaviour (Smith, 2007, p.34) and offer support to sustain change (Whyte, 2009). It has been consistently demonstrated through evaluations and meta-analysis that behaviour programmes reduces recidivism for those offenders who engage

with the programme (Dowden and Andrews 2004, p.204; Wikström and Treiber 2008). Moreover, a key point found by some meta-analyses is that effective programmes must contain the risk, needs and responsivity (RNR) principles long with focusing on the criminogenic factors situated within an offender's life situation (Lipsey 1995; Andrews and Bonta 1998; Dowden and Andrews 1999, p.203; Bonta et 2008).

The *risk* posed by an offender is addressed through the intensity of supervision. The *needs* are addressed through identifying criminogenic factors to define the goals of supervision. *Responsivity* is encouraged by matching the programme to their learning style. Dowden and Andrews (2004) conducted a meta-analysis of staff characteristics involved in delivering interventions to reduce recidivism. Whilst it was inconclusive about the contribution of the skill set of staff in failing to reduce recidivism, it acknowledged that "relationship factors are arguably the most important" (p.212). An assertion was made that interventions will be most effective with offenders when staff interactions are open, warm and backed up with enthusiastic communication.

One criticism of meta-analyses and evaluations of offender behaviour programmes is that they use studies of male adult offenders (Bonta et al 2004; McNeill 2009). Furthermore, results are then assumed to be applicable to young people making it difficult to assess effectiveness in reducing offending in a youth justice context.

Whilst meta-analyses have identified the programme characteristics that were most effective for offenders, there is a paucity of research focusing on practitioner characteristics for delivery (Dowden and Andrews 2004, p.204; Bonta et al 2008; McNeill 2009). This suggests that the supposed efficacy of behaviour programmes may not be replicated during the practice of supervision. This raises the problem of measuring the effectiveness of

supervision as being limited to the technical and managerial aspects especially through the impact of offending behaviour programmes (McNeill 2009, p.7). This point is exemplified by an evaluation of 23 cognitive behaviour programmes conducted for the YJB. It found that less than half of offenders (47%) completed their programmes yet 71% of those who did complete went on to reoffend (Feilzer et al 2004).

Moving on to case worker characteristics, many literature reviews of engaging young people in interventions have found that the relationship between the case worker and the young person does impact on the outcome of behaviour programmes (Mason and Prior 2008; Ipsos Mori 2010; Stephenson et al 2011, p.155; Bateman and Hazel 2013). Otherwise, failure to develop engagement can lead to early withdrawal from an intervention because a relational foundation upon which dialogue can be conducted will not exist.

Following on from the literature reviews, empirical studies of youth justice and adult probation practice have focused on the skill set of supervisors. They have come to broadly similar conclusions about the important role of relationships in human services work by identifying a range of factors that are important in making relationships work. Ipsos MORI (2010) held a focus group with 8 YOTs and collected replies from 421 YOT workers through an online survey about what they believed were the most important factors in developing a positive relationship. Responses were; setting boundaries, being consistent, openness, empathy, mutual trust, patience, being a positive role model and being flexible encouraged young people to attend their appointments. This is in contrast to becoming frustrated or demoralised with a young person's reluctance to enter into the relationship.

Trotter (1996) carried out a study of probation officers in Australia to consider the extent that a combination of approaches had on reducing recidivism. The recidivism of offenders

was compared for officers who had been trained in the use of pro-social modelling and reinforcement, problem solving and empathy against those who were not. During the research programme, the trained probation officers supervised 366 offenders older than 16 years. Supervision notes were analysed for evidence of the above principles. Analysis of the file notes was completed by two research officers who rated from 1 to 10 the extent to which the notes reflected use of the principles. The views of the clients were also gathered through the use of a questionnaire about the supervision they had received. The study found that the offenders of officers who were trained in the principles of pro-social modelling and reinforcement, problem solving and empathy achieved lower recidivism rates than officers who were not trained. Officers were most effective when they related to adult offenders using warmth, empathy and reflective listening skills. Furthermore, criminogenic needs should be addressed by using problem solving skills and challenging anti-social attitudes and by acting in a pro-social manner along with reinforcing those values (Trotter 1996). The recidivism rates were: 28% of clients of trained supervisors were breached during the order as compared to 44% from untrained supervisors. Also, 46% of clients of trained supervisors were reconvicted within four years after the end of the order as opposed to 64% from untrained supervisors.

Meta-analysis of relationships have shown the importance of empathy, warmth, respect, genuineness, honesty, humour, enthusiasm, self-confidence, empathy, flexibility commitment and dignity to help client engagement, maturity and intelligence in achieving positive outcomes (Dowden and Andrews 2004, p.209; Kemshall 2010, p.161; Ugwudike 2010, p.333). In Dowden and Andrews' (2004) meta-analysis, they found that supervision

that lacked core elements of practice such as effective reinforcement, effective disapproval, use of relationship and effective use of authority did not lead to a reduction in reoffending.

However, Farrall (2002, p.33) challenges the approach of seeking explanations to changes of behaviour by using techniques akin to laboratory-based experiments such as those for offending behaviour interventions. He argued that such ways of analysing data makes the fundamental assumption that all people under investigation act in the same manner. This perspective does not factor in the biological characteristics or the social circumstances of an individual. It is further argued that whilst some things do work and others do not, it is not possible to identify a set of consistent results if there are too many variables unaccounted for (Pawson and Tilley 1997). This challenges the notion of objective evaluations and, instead, draws attention to issues embedded within the personal and within wider social contexts that need to be addressed by research studies.

Some studies have identified the manner in which offenders are treated by probation officers and case workers during community supervision and how it contributes to reducing recidivism. Rex (1999, p.370) carried out interviews with 44 male and 16 female probationers over the age of 20. Also, experiences from 21 supervisors were collected. She found that achieving desistance required active and participatory community supervision in which the negotiating skills of the supervisor enabled joint planning to engage the probationer. McNeill's (2006, p.133) literature review of effective community supervision pointed to studies that identified how the process of desistance was aided when community supervision was "active and participatory" (p.133). He argues that there should also be a demonstration of "reasonableness, fairness and encouragement" (p.133) from probation

officers towards their probationers as this gave them a sense of being human beings rather than just a set of problems.

Deering (2010, p.461) explored the nature of the professional relationship with probation officers to capture the skills of supervision within probation. It was acknowledged that it was not possible to observe actual supervision sessions. Instead, interviews were carried out with 51 probation officers asking them their opinions of what works for them. The study was, therefore, a review of the reflections of probation officers views on supervision. One of the driving practitioner values was the quality of the relationship they had with supervisees. It was the person-centred aspect of the relationship during supervision that held the most hope for positive change in behaviour (p.462). Some probation officers expressed the view that they could not do their job if they did not have respect for people and believe they could change for the better (p.463). They reported supervision as being primarily concerned with "individual change facilitated by a professional relationship based on rapport, empathy and professional discretion" (Deering 2010, p.451).

To capture the concepts of quality within supervision of offenders in Scotland, Grant and McNeill (2015) carried out a study of probation officers using *Appreciative Inquiry*. They replicated an English-based study that tried to identify the key dimensions of one-to-one supervision. The key qualitative finding was establishing meaningful relationships, especially between supervisor and supervisee. They found that the quality of supervision "rested on a reciprocal and meaningful relationship [...] suggesting that a combination of professional skills and personal characteristics is required to help strengthen this connection" (Grant and McNeill 2015, p.1991). Their analysis identified the three most important components relating to relational processes of; engagement, spending time together and trust/respect.

Another thematic finding was that practitioners tended to ground their practice in social work values of promoting rights and social inclusion, and respecting the individual.

However, there were no findings that identified the exact manner in which practitioners held the conversations with offenders to enact the social work values and strengthen the relationship. Grant and McNeill (2015) suggested that "*Hearing* from supervisees and *seeing* what practitioners actually do must be the next step in analysing both what 'quality' means, and whether it really represents resistance to managerialism and punitiveness" (p.1999). This point has also been raised by Trotter and Evans (2012). During a literature review they found that "We know less about the extent to which these skills [of supervision] are used in practice and how clients respond to the way the skills are used in practice" (p.134). The study of this thesis responds to this call by collecting data by hearing from both young men and case workers about what is actually done, how is it enacted and how the other party responds.

Farrall (2002) carried out a 6 month study of 199 male (173) and female (26) probationers aged between 17 and 35, along with their supervising officers. Three sweeps of face-to-face interviews were held with each probationer to shed light on processes during community supervision that contributed to either desistance or to the continuation of further offending (p.3). From the interview data it was found that desistance is a process that sets off on a trajectory not an 'event' that suddenly happens to a probationer. In addressing the 'black box' metaphor of supervision, Farrall (2002, p.213) argues that addressing social problems experienced by a probationer is more likely to sustain a trajectory of desistance rather than as a direct result of an intervention or programme. Furthermore, offending persistence among probationers was attributed to supervising officers not being 'tuned' into the

probationer and personal issues such as addiction to the crime and substances and having a personal identity of a professional criminal.

Within the practice of offender supervision, many components have been identified such as assessment, behaviour change, and management and regulation. Yet underpinning all of these is the impact of relationship held between a caseworker and offender and little research has focused on the "affective, emotional and relational aspects of supervision practice" (McNeill 2009, p.8). In effect, the role of the practitioner has been subjugated in favour of technocratic and bureaucratic practices through the 'What Works' doctrine (Bateman and Hazel 2013) and development of intervention programmes. However, the effectiveness of the relationship between young person and caseworkers has consistently been identified as having an impact on outcomes (Dowden and Andrews 2004; Batchelor and McNeill 2005; Mason and Prior 2008). Studies found clients citing the manner in which they were treated as having a positive effect on changing behaviour. However, missing from these studies is evidence of *how* practitioners actually interact with offenders. How do practitioners translate theory and enact theoretical concepts in real life situations? How can a practitioner be 'active and participatory'? How are reasonableness, fairness and encouragement enacted, especially during an interaction of challenging and inappropriate behaviour? There is a need to understand how skills are used in practice and how young people respond to them.

To address some of these issues, the next section will explore empirical studies of engagement.

3.2 Engagement

During community supervision, young people have to engage with case workers and comply with instructions (McNeill 2009). Some meta-analyses have demonstrated positive outcomes of active engagement with interventions when they have been applied as designed (Lipsey 1995; McGuire 2002; Mason and Prior 2008, p.12). However, other literature reviews have lamented the paucity of empirical research on the finer details of engagement with young people who offend (Ipsos MORI 2010; Mason and Prior 2008; Stephenson et al 2011). Ipsos MORI (2010) concluded that whilst the importance of engagement is recognised "limited evidence exists within the youth justice context as to how such a bond develops" (p.6). Also, there is a call to identify specific elements of the what, how and why of engagement: "what it is that practitioners are using their skills and knowledge base to achieve, and how, in turn, might that be measured" (McNeill 2009; Batemen and Hazel 2013, p.4).

Ipsos MORI (2010) interviews with youth justice caseworkers asked them about their perceptions of *engagement* and *participation* revealed that they had difficulty differentiating between the two. Furthermore, both terms were defined in broad terms in reference to specific behaviours such as attendance, contribution and communicating that actually encompassed being both engagement and participation. Distinguishing between participation and engagement was not a necessity of working with young offenders, for case workers it was more important to understand the underlying behaviour than acknowledging theoretical concepts.

Emotional engagement in education, training and employment opportunities has been explored in a study of young persistent offenders by Cooper et al (2007). The case notes of

twenty three young people were studied and then interviewed to collect opinions of their engagement with services. This also included the relational and interpersonal nature of engagement with youth justice caseworkers. During the literature review they found studies which highlighted the motivational influences of support from others encouraging young people to overcome barriers to engagement with services (Cooper et al 2007, p.128). During the actual study, they found the roles of mentors and personal assistants during one-to-one interactions were pivotal in achieving effective outcomes. Young people reported that establishing trust encouraged them to relax and open up (Cooper et al 2007, p.88). When a worker adopted a listening role, the young people took up opportunities to confide in and take advice given to them (Cooper et al 2007, p.88). This gave an opportunity for the worker to demonstrate trust by accepting the young person on their terms rather than telling them what they should be doing and how they should be doing it. Adopting this approach invites the young person to engage with the caseworker (Cooper et al 2007, p.88). However, they said that they preferred to work with their mentor because of the non-directive approach and because they spent more time with the young person. This was in contrast to their caseworkers who spent shorter time periods with them and were more likely to focus on enforcement (Cooper et al 2007, p.88; Ipsos MORI 2010, p.27) and talk at them (Cooper et al 2007, p.129). Caseworkers prevented trust from developing because they were too quick to breach and lacked flexibility to cater for a young person's life situation (User Voice 2011, p.35).

The young people said they felt less resentment towards mentors than YOT workers because less pressure was put on them during contacts. Another finding that encouraged young people to become more engaged was being active participants in their own decision

making. However, no mention was made of how the discussion of decision making is conducted between mentor and young person and the substantive nature of the dialogue used to encourage young people.

Mutuality has been defined as a core component of relationships that is exercised through dialogue between worker and service user in a helping relationship (Grant and Mandell 2016). During their qualitative research study of 26 mental health service users and 19 service providers Grant and Mandell (2016) found that young people had a preference for relationships that are supportive, flexible and respectful. Also, safety in a relationship was increased through the negotiation and navigation of boundaries. It is through dialogue that mutuality was achieved in terms of negotiating and agreeing boundaries, safety and expectations.

In a different statutory context, Henriksen et al (2013) conducted interviews with 23 girls and 23 males in 10 different Residential Treatment Centres (RTC) in Sweden and asked them their opinions of their key staff members' engagement with them. They focused on the obstacles and opportunities for establishing a therapeutic alliance between key workers and adolescents. The adolescents residing in a RTC were asked to talk about their attitudes towards their allocated key worker's efforts to form a therapeutic relationship. Henriksen et al's (2013) main findings identified qualities of both the worker and the role they played within a working relationship. Three categories of involvement from workers with adolescents were identified: negative personal involvement, instrumental personal involvement and positive personal involvement.

The first category identifies workers who lacked a positive emotional depth and did not reciprocally exchange on an affective basis tended to have negative interactions with the

adolescents. This negative interaction reaffirmed the negative relationships the adolescents have had with adults outside of the correction centre. This lack of affective involvement by a worker characterised the formation of a working relationship that does not achieve positive outcomes. A negative personal involvement by a worker is then reciprocated by a lack of trust from the young people. This lack of trust further impinged upon the formation and on-going development of treatment plans to achieve positive outcomes.

The second category are those workers who adolescents perceived as being useful whereby they could be utilised to achieve tasks concerned with daily functioning. This type of worker was not seen as actively seeking contact with residents and there was a lack of emotional depth and no reciprocity within the relationship. Workers enacting this approach created an instrumental working relationship whereby the adolescents had a partial lack of trust but saw the workers as a means to an end.

The third category consisted of workers who established positive working relationships with the adolescents by enacting the core concepts of trust, reciprocity and continuity (emotional engagement). Through use of these core concepts and adopting an affective turn, the adolescents tended to settle in to the secure home more quickly and began engaging with interventions on a more thoughtful level (cognitive engagement). Supporting this approach, the worker created a safe and warm atmosphere along with acting clearly and consistently in relation to the resident. Alongside this observation, the residents also stated that their own maturity was allowed to develop by acknowledging that the worker's intentions were to promote their best interests. Workers utilising this positive personal involvement were significantly more likely to create positive working relationships with the adolescents.

An important finding from Henriksen et al's (2013) study is the concept of trust. It is reported that a young person is more likely to engage with a worker if they can trust the worker to accept the young person and their problems. From a worker's perspective, they have to gain the trust of a young person. It is trust which was the foundation from which positive working relationships are formed and maintained. Once trust has been established between both parties then the young person will actively engage and openly discuss their issues.

One weakness of the current literature-base regarding engagement with young offenders is the blinkered focus on the necessity for young people to engage with practitioners, services and programmes. This is a contradictory stance given that engagement is a two-way activity requiring attention from both parties to form an effective partnership. This section has brought to light three modes of engagement: emotional, behavioural and cognitive. This thesis will focus on *emotional* engagement by showing a key requisite for effective two-way engagement requires caseworkers to enact behaviours that are acceptable to young people. This suggests that problems relating to engagement apply to caseworkers as well as young people. It is this perspective that makes it important for this study to collect the young men's experiences of caseworkers' attempts to engage with them, as well as the experiences of caseworkers.

3.3 Resistance to Engagement

The previous sections have identified the need for an effective skill set and approach to working with young people and how, during the relationship, constructive and persistent engagement is required between a young person and caseworker to achieve positive outcomes. However, due to the nature of young people in the youth justice system, full and

co-operative engagement is not always guaranteed or on-going (Bateman and Hazel 2013, p.9). This has been explained in terms of resistance displayed by young people in response to authority and influences in their personal circumstances (Bateman and Hazel 2013, p.10).

Within the youth justice literature there are references to persistent enactment of resistance and poor engagement as non-compliance (Bateman 2011). The reasons for non-compliance are put solely at the feet of the young person with negative consequences such as being breached and sent back to court for resentencing. As a consequence of the forced nature of relationships in youth justice, it was found there is likely to be reluctance displayed by a young person in the first instance by being oppositional towards the caseworker (Trotter 2006; Bateman and Hazel 2013). Some case workers reported that some young people simply failed to attend appointments (Ipsos MORI 2010). This was indicative of the unpredictable nature of engagement by some young people that creates difficulties for a practitioner trying to develop rapport.

Interestingly, within other disciplines that work with resistant service users, a different terminology is used. Social work literature talks about difficulties that can cause a *breakdown* in the ability to sustain a healthy or constructive relationship (Trevithick 2003, p.167). Many studies have found instances of engagement between service users and practitioners that has either not been established in the first instance or has broken down subsequently. In particular mandated service users are likely to display periods of challenging, resistant and hostile behaviour along with periods of constructive and positive interactions (Ivanoff et al 1994; Cooper et al 2007; Ipsos MORI 2010; Ferguson 2016). The response from workers is to attempt to maintain engagement because they have no real recourse to the criminal justice system, unlike youth justice caseworkers. So, there remains

a necessity to actively maintain engagement by identifying and responding to instances of breakdowns (O'Leary et al 2013, p.138).

Findings from key studies have identified factors and conditions that contribute to resistance between young people and workers. Two studies with young offenders found that young men had negative opinions of the youth justice system that caused an initial reluctance to engage with workers. Wilson (2006) interviewed 140 young black young people to find out how they responded to regulation and surveillance. The data was collected by listening to and taking accounts of their life stories and experiences of the criminal justice system. A demanding aspect of a YJS caseworker's role is holding supervision sessions with young people who have a negative perception of the criminal justice system (Wilson 2006). Also, practitioners are faced with the personal dilemma of maintaining a meaningful care-based relationship in the face of contradictory statutory responsibilities of control. A key finding relating to the perspective of the young black males was that they had learnt to "play the game" when interacting with YJS caseworkers (Wilson 2006).

Supporting the presumption of negativity towards caseworkers, Yates (2006) carried out an ethnographic study of working class young people from a deprived and socially excluded community, collecting data over 20 months through participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The aim was to explore young people's confidence in the criminal justice system. A recurring theme from the analysis of the data was the importance of "not grassing" to the authorities. The study reported that problems of the community generally stayed within the community in preference to engaging with social services. A key finding from this research identified strong networks within the community as a resource of central importance: young people tended to seek solutions to problems from within their

community network rather than via the perceived 'interference' of social services. Yates (2006) suggests that a major barrier to achieving positive engagement was the 'us versus them' tribal view. This view was further crystallised by young people commenting on the flawed morality of people from outside of the community – especially the police and social services. This is problematic for YJS caseworkers as they are required to overcome initial suspicion to gain the trust and be accepted by the young people during supervision sessions. In reality, both studies reported that whenever a young person wanted support they tended to looked towards their peers for advice in preference to social services.

One study for the Beyond Youth Custody charity was carried out by Bateman and Hazel (2013) to explore positive resettlement of young people leaving custody and moving back into the community. They conducted a survey with 20 resettlement workers who help young person leaving custody and move back into the community. Their views were elicited through closed and open questions about positive resettlement back into the community.

A major theme arising from the views of resettlement workers and literature review was the criticality of initial engagement (p.13). It was found that resistance at this point maybe sharpest until trust has been developed. It was suggested that a short window of opportunity exists which provides the opportunity for engagement. Thereafter, it rapidly diminishes. The importance of a good reputation was found to foster the possibility of rapid engagement. Services with whom the young people had previous had good interactions were helpful in overcoming barriers, but unknown services or those with poor reputations would be perceived negatively by young people. This was related to intervention being imposed and the compulsory nature of attendance. Instead, this charity could *invite* young people to engage which was found to be more effective in achieving engagement.

Another theme coming out of the study was related to characteristics of the staff (p.14). It was found that a barrier to initial engagement was a lack of motivation. One effective staff characteristic was persistence ensuring overcoming inertia and lack of motivation in order to, over the long term, maintain engagement. Along with this, showing a commitment to young people's involvement must involve practical action. More than half of the respondent workers said that working inclusively with a young person was more important than the nature of activity. Action must follow words by carrying out what has been said will be done. Just as critical was that the activities provided by the services must have an appeal to the young people (p.20). It was suggested that motivation was sustained when tasks and activities have interest and meaning for a young person. Without this, attention drifted as they could not create the required enthusiasm to participate because it had no relevance to their current life situation. Furthermore, enjoying time together was found to function as enrichment activities that help establish a bond (p.19).

It has to be recognised that the Beyond Youth Custody (BYC) charity starts from a premise of voluntary participation by the young people. Whilst factors for effective participation have been identified by the study, it is crucial to recognise that YJS caseworkers are imposed on young people by the courts. The findings within this thesis will bring to light that YJS caseworkers did take the same approach as the BYC workers to achieve similar results in engagement. However, to achieve this, they had to overcome initial suspicions and negative constructions held by young people.

Previous studies within youth justice have shown engagement being resisted by young people either because they have a low opinion of the caseworker or it was a defence mechanism to protect their emotions. With the recognition of non-engagement being an

obstacle to achieving desired outcomes, some studies have explored how resistance is overcome by practitioners (Ipsos Mori 2010; Trotter and Evans 2012; Bateman and Hazel 2013). The main theme from these studies was that practitioners had to respond in some way to address resistance because it does not resolve without proactive intervention. Ipsos MORI (2010, p.29) asked practitioners how they made a breakthrough in engagement with young people. Some caseworkers said they responded to partial engagement from young people by being persistent and persevering with the task. This was supported by "taking small steps, appearing firm and un-fazed in the face of challenges from young people" (p.29). However, generally, they failed to isolate specific factors in how they achieved breakthroughs and sometimes practitioners did wonder how a breakthrough could be eventually made (p.29).

Motivating young people to engage and actively participate in a programme of interventions is one of the many challenges faced by practitioners. Once engagement has been established, the practitioner is further challenged to maintain engagement through periods of hostility and resistance (Stephenson et al 2011). Whilst general social work and youth justice literature has identified problems around engagement, psychotherapy has investigated in depth problems of collaboration between a client and therapist. Social work tends to refer to problems around engagement as "breakdowns" whereas psychotherapy refers to them as "ruptures". Within psychotherapy, there has been a focus on how therapists identified ruptures within a contact and how they attempted subsequent repair. Safran and Muran (1996) identified problems of collaboration in terms of *ruptures* and generically defined these as:

> "…deterioration in the relationship between therapist and patient. They are patient behaviours of communications that are interpersonal markers indicating critical points in therapy for exploration" (p.447).

Safran and Muran (1996) further analyse ruptures in terms of markers. The occurrences of ruptures are made manifest in three ways. The first rupture marker is in the form of a withdrawal in the negotiation activity. This is marked by the service user moving away from the therapist in terms of not communicating. The second marker of withdrawal in the negotiation activity is banal compliance by the service user whereby they move towards the therapist in terms of agreeing to anything that is asked of them. The third rupture marker is in the form of hostile responses termed as a move against the therapist.

To address these markers, a model of rupture repair within psychotherapeutic environments was developed by Safran and Muran (1996) that identified a mechanism for the identification and repair of ruptures. Within this model they identified four service user states and three interventions that therapist can utilise to help the service user move through the stages. Fundamentally, the worker has to explore the immediate experience and should not respond in the hostile or withdrawn manner exhibited by the service user. Instead they should treat the rupture as a secondary emotion and explore it through meta-communication. Bennett et al (2006) developed this model further by applying it to service users diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. They applied empirical data to validate ruptures and repair in the form of the service user events and worker responses. The process was further refined and they developed a model of stages a therapist should go through to repair a rupture.

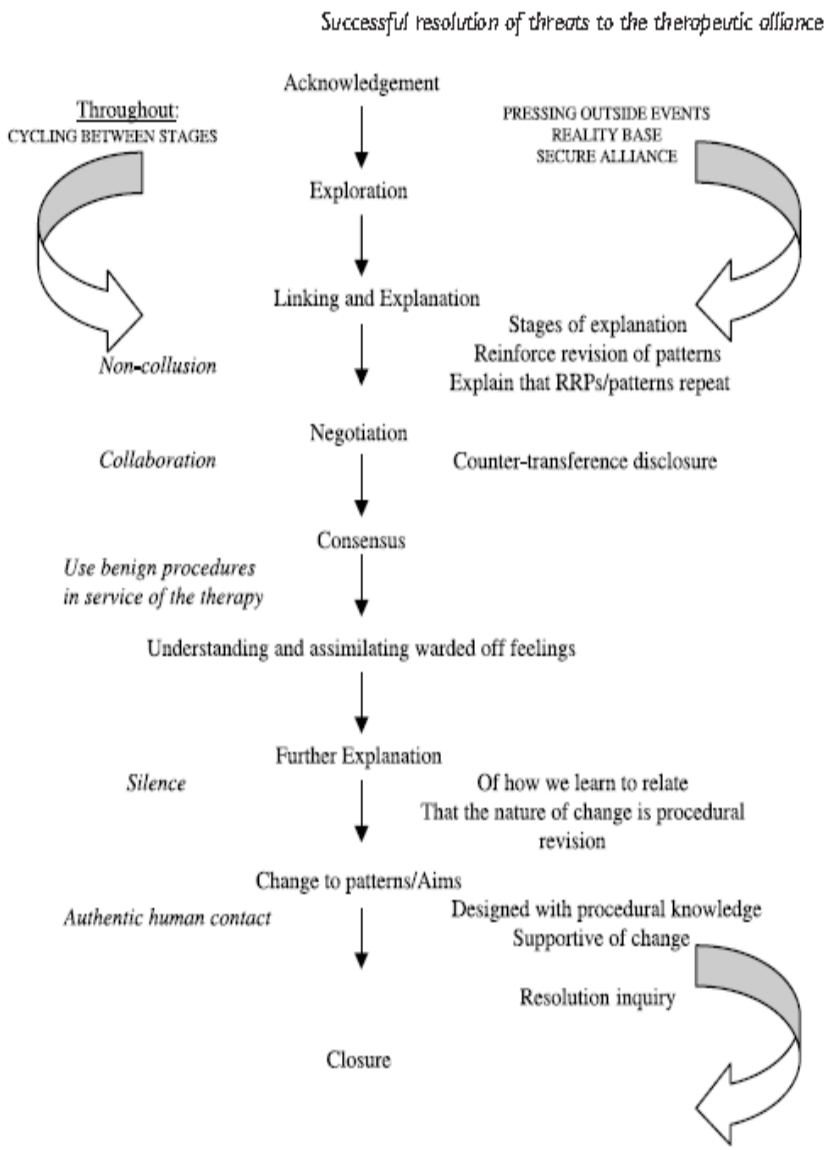

Figure 3. Refined performance model.

(Bennett et al, 2006, p.411)

Daly et al (2010) carried out a study using this model to validate it through the actual use of a specific intervention, Cognitive Analytic Therapy (CAT) with adolescents aged 15 to 18 year olds. The aim was to develop the evidence-base further regarding this model. They define ruptures as "as an emotional disconnection between client and therapist that creates a negative shift in the quality of the therapeutic alliance" (p.273). They also started from the premise that ruptures have the potential for changing events in a relationship. Resolving

threats to a relationship have the potential to improve outcomes by developing a greater understanding of a service user's current problems. This is in contrast to the failure of addressing threats that only serve to increase the likelihood of treatment dropout. Data was drawn from three therapists of five sessions with five adolescent participants who had completed the course of the treatment. They found that using the series of steps outlined in the model contributed to the resolution of threats.

The idea of seeing threats as an opportunity is not recognised in youth justice relationships: instead there is the tendency for punitive responses. This is a novel and unique perspective that has value in pursuing. This model could be used to explore elements of deterioration in engagement within a youth justice context. Within it there is recognition that there are many factors that caseworkers need to be acutely aware of for successful identification and resolution. It guides the caseworker to address both the content of the conversation and the procedural mechanisms used to support engagement. The caseworker is instructed to address issues of engagement and rupture immediately from the young person's perspective as well as from their own perspective. Negotiating appropriate and consensual responses to both of these issues forms a resolution for on-going engagement.

This section has explored how engagement defines and underpins the quality of relationships between practitioners and service users. However, the main point is that full and co-operative engagement cannot be assured with young people in the youth justice system due to the nature of their involvement. It was identified that breakdowns or ruptures in the quality of engagement may prevent positive outcomes for the service user. Given the importance of recognising breakdowns informed by the concept of ruptures in engagement my study gathered data from both young men and caseworkers about how

they recognise, enact and respond to behaviours that pose a threat to continual engagement

Developing and maintaining engagement through personal interactions depends in large part upon the effectiveness of communication between the caseworker and service user.

3.4 Communication

Engagement during a relationship is sustained through communication; i.e. the caseworker's ability to communicate with a young person is what ensures the necessary engagement (Cooper et al 2007, p.128; Ugwudike 2010, p.333). In conceptualising the practice of supervision Dowden and Andrews (2004) identified five dimensions of effective supervision. One of these was the quality of interpersonal relationships:

> The interpersonal influence exerted by the correctional staff member is maximized under conditions characterized by *open, warm, and enthusiastic communication*. An equally important consideration is the development of mutual respect and liking between the offender and correctional staff member. This approach asserts that correctional interventions will be most effective when these types of relationships exist within the treatment program. (Dowden and Andrews 2004, p.205, emphasis added)

Within this declaration, communication underpins some of the characteristics previously identified as effective for engagement. The fundamental ability of workers to communicate effectively is necessary when engaging with service users (Ross 2016, p.11). Similarly, within the youth justice literature, Mason and Prior's (2008, p.15) literature review suggested that engagement is developed through communication between practitioner and young person

(p.47), and that trust is a key part of effective communication and engagement. Stephenson et al (2011, p.81) carried on with their analytical exploration of engagement by suggesting that "If the relational aspects of engagement are so important then the communication skills of the practitioner need to be highlighted" (p.81). They brought to attention that communication is achieved by facilitating dialogue through talking, listening and responding.

Exploration of the literature has uncovered theories and approaches to communicating within social work (Lefevre 2010; Ross 2011; Koprowska 2014). According to Koprowska (2014, p.2), communication between people is happening all of the time when they are together and it is communication that underpins engagement. *Communication* is generally defined as a set of context-driven interactions that take place within a relationship (Koprowska 2014, p.1). However, it is noted that whilst communicating is a natural activity, it is littered with everyday incompetence. Effectively, people are not naturally imbued with skills and qualities to be effective communicators (Koprowska 2014, p.14). Instead, people interact unconsciously and are unaware of the processes involved – they just do it. They have problems "identifying, naming and discussing" (p.3) the processes involved in communicating. Koprowska (2014, p.8) makes explicit that skilled communication makes a difference. She then brings to attention some interpersonal skills that are required for communication that are effective for practice. Amongst the many techniques she suggests are watching body language and the way emotions are expressed when listening to service users. Also, responding requires specific techniques such as turn-taking and feeding back in appropriate ways that mirror the emotional state of the service user.

To address these natural deficits, communication skills need to be learnt. However, there is a lack of training available for practitioners in the practice of engagement and

communication (Mason and Prior 2008, p.15). Also, these skills cannot be learnt from a book (Koprowska 2014, p.xiv). The minutiae of communication need to be revealed through personal experience and practiced to develop effective practice.

Furthermore, making sense of a young person's response requires attentive listening and watching followed by responding accordingly (McMahon 2010; Koprowska 2014; Ross 2016). However, sometimes communication goes wrong because of misinterpretation. In addressing these issues, communication needs to take into consideration indirect and unintended ways information is transmitted. Basic messages are conveyed through speech but, non-verbal communication also needs to be recognised, along with the context in which it has been expressed. These include techniques such as silence, taking timing in communicating, use of bodily language and emotional congruence (Koprowska 2014, p.80; Ross 2016, p.91)

Ugwudike (2010 p.334) carried out research on compliance with community penalties by interviewing probationers. It was found that compliance was more likely to be achieved when probationers could talk to officers who would listen and respond appropriately and offer practical solutions. Ross (2011, p.60) has used her own research observing conversations between young offenders and social workers to identify key communication skills. She identified that reluctance of young people affects willingness to communicate. In breaking down communication barriers it is suggested that caseworkers could use *phatic communication* to quickly build rapport. This approach is described as *everyday communication* with a purpose "to promote and maintain friendly relationships through demonstrating sociability as opposed to giving or seeking information" (Ross 2011, p.63). Phatic communication sends out a message demonstrating an interest in the other person.

She suggests another key technique to supplement developing rapport is to “use humour and the service user’s language” (p.68). Doing this can help develop early rapport, which is a prelude to another key communication skill of “achieving a shared purpose” (p.65)

Within the Youth Justice System, the vehicle for addressing offending behaviour is mainly through verbally mediated interventions (Bryan et al 2007). It has been identified that young people in the youth justice system suffer from impairments that contribute to a lack of capacity to communicate meaningfully (Bryan et al 2007). Impairments identified in most young offenders have been described in terms of behavioural, language and communication abilities that are significantly below their peer group (Beresford et al 2004; Bryan et al 2007; Fyson and Yates 2011). It was found that symptoms of impairments are acted out as conduct disorders which then lead to the development of poor social skills and the lack of ability to form on-going supportive relationships (Beresford et al, 2004) and contributed to offending behaviour (Fyson and Yates 2011)

It has also been further identified that young offenders have difficulties finding the right words to articulate feelings and emotions (Jessor and Jessor 1977; Hollin 1996). This then further impairs their ability to communicate with society and behave according to cultural norms (Snow and Powell 2008). A consequence of such difficulties in expression and articulation makes them vulnerable to problems in developing peer and family relationships. This is further compounded by having problems in meeting expectations and the demands of schools and the community they live in (Whitmire 2000).

Koprowska (2014 p.8) brings attention to the contribution of non-verbal content during face-to-face communication. It is through the non-verbal that the emotional impact is conveyed within a message. However, it is also through the non-verbal that

misinterpretations can occur (Koprowska 2014, p.60). From an emotional perspective, the affective impact of "dialogue, discretion, understanding and informality within the professional relationship between worker and client" (Barry 2005, p.11) is substantial. However, time to foster these factors is being eroded in favour of other priorities such as bureaucratic management. Barry (2005) puts a greater emphasis on building meaningful dialogue between worker and young person as an important contributor to engagement and communication (Barry 2005, p.18). She concludes that

> "offending is not a problem of young people but a problem for young people. It is the manifestation of wider problems that can only be addressed adequately through constructive dialogue with young people to refocus youth policy and practice" (p.23).

It is further suggested that dialogue can only be achieved through participation of the young person, by listening to them taking on-board their views and opinions (Rex 1999; Barry 2005, p.23). Therefore, inviting and encouraging young people into dialogue underpins approaches through which opportunities are generated for improving engagement (Gorman et al 2006, p.24).

This literature review so far has brought attention to many of the components, approaches and techniques that are required to ensure effective relationship building. It has also been identified that positive engagement is not a given condition due to the nature of young people and the manner in which they have been mandated to work with YJS caseworkers. It becomes clear that missing from the literature is a temporal framework that seeks to understand the on-going development of a relationship. There is a need to capture and understand change as it happens. Doing this offers clues to effective responses for

caseworkers that are contextually appropriate. To address this, the next section will explore the process of how people come together during working relationships.

3.5 Process of *Coming Together*

In the previous sections, characteristics, attributes and qualities of behaviours of both young people and caseworkers were critically explored in an attempt to shed light on how they affected relationships, engagement and communication. It was identified that while some interactions are positive, there are other times when breakdowns or ruptures occur that temporarily or permanently interrupt the working relationship. It was also suggested that ruptures can present an opportunity to strengthen the relationship by addressing any underlying tension or confusion. Just as important is encouraging an offender through the period of desistance and strengthening social ties (Rex 1999, p.10). A young person who makes a decision to stop offending to make a new life needs active and on-going positive and developmental support (Graham and Bowling 1995; Rex 1999, p.10). Underpinning all of this is a sense of on-going change happening due to interactional experiences. A need to identify the specifics of what caseworkers should do to achieve positive engagement has been highlighted. However, there is also limited evidence of how techniques and approaches can be drawn together in a manner that that encourages the process of change.

To address this gap, drawing from *small group development* literature (Tuckman 1965) proved beneficial in terms of providing a language and phrasing that sheds light on the on-going progression of inter-relational elements. Within this literature there is a deep insight into the process of change through inter-relational practices that bears relevance to young people and caseworkers. This literature identifies how groups start with group members having a sense of individuality backed up with initial uncertainties and confusions. As the

group begins to develop relationally, shared experiences helped to overcome barriers and lead to the formation of a new social entity (the group) which then serves as a platform for task-based activities. However, whilst the application of *small group development* theory to the relational development of *pairs* is debateable at this point in time, the language used to describe this process serves a useful function for this thesis. A young man and caseworker are brought together to form a social entity required to carry out tasks to achieve an end goal by relating with each other to ensure efficient functioning. They are, in effect, a small group.

Literature in small group development focuses on the *change,* over time that a group will go through during the course of its existence. This could typically be individual change, formation in preparation for task activities or performance in pursuit of objectives. One of the leading theories in the area of small group development is Tuckman's (1965) model which suggests a developmental sequence of *forming*, *storming*, *norming* and *performing*. This model was hypothesised after reviewing 55 articles with small group development in therapy groups, human relations training and task groups to isolate common components of group functioning.

Tuckman suggested that small groups engage in two general types of activities. One is *interpersonal* through which an operational structure is configured. The other is *tasks* required to achieve desired outcomes. These are distinguished by the *interpersonal* being the manner in which people act and relate with each other whereas the content of the interactions is the task activity. It is through the interpersonal that the group develops patterns of behaviour and becomes a *social entity*. It is through the tasks that *outcomes* are achieved. For the purpose of this thesis, the *interpersonal* activities only will be considered

to remain within the scope of the research aim and objectives. This will give a focus to the findings on the manner in which young men and caseworkers relate to each other. This theoretical lens will be used to tease out the social and emotional elements that have an impact on integration towards a social entity.

In spite of the names given to each stage, Tuckman did identify specific characteristics that composed each stage through his literature review. In the interpersonal these were identified respectively as: testing dependence, conflict, cohesion and functional roles.

The first stage, forming, is *testing and dependence* of others and leadership style to discover what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable based upon interpersonal reactions. There is a process of acclimatisation or familiarisation during which boundaries are set and group structure and dependency on leadership is developed. However, it was identified that people do not come together as a clean slate. Instead they carry opinions and social constructions that have been developed in their own personal environment. It is these well established and traditional ways of behaving that they have become dependent on for life guidance. From these they will have constructed prejudices and have preconceptions about the people they are about to join and the tasks they are required to undertake. It was suggested that as a consequence there will be anxieties around expectations of how others will function. In response to these anxieties, people will want to determine the nature of the environment and the kinds of relationships the leader will promote. It was suggested that for some people there will be problems of inclusion in terms of wanting or not wanting to join and commit further. This stage is defined by activities that are *initially testing the situation* as a period of orientation towards others and the tasks required to be done. Typically, it was found that within this stage people test the limits of tolerance when relating

to each other. Also, some others have been seen to enact hesitant participation that is characterised through resistive, silent and hostile behaviours. It was suggested that people are looking for support and guidance in this new and perceived unstructured situation.

The second stage is *enacting conflict* during which individuality is expressed through hostility towards others and resisting formation. This makes manifest the lack of unity and is characterised by uncertainty of interpersonal relations whereby members remain in relative safety of their comfort zone. Within therapy groups, members were observed as being defensive, competitive or jealous. This tended to increase friction between group members with either withdrawal or anger being a resultant behaviour. It is important to work through these hostilities rather than ignoring them.

The third stage is *developing cohesion* during which each other's idiosyncrasies are acknowledged and accepted. There is integration and mutuality that forms a unity. A social entity is formed that generates its own norms whereby harmony is maintained by minimising conflicts. Within therapy groups, consciousness is developed through which boundaries are observed and maintained.

The fourth stage is *functional role-relatedness* during which members can adopt and play the roles allocated. This will enhance the task-related activities because members have learnt to relate to each other with the bounds of a social entity. Within therapy groups, the group is now functioning according to its aims and objectives. There is minimal emotional interaction due to member roles supporting rather than hindering the task processes.

However, limitations of the hypothesis were recognised in terms of the over-representation of therapy groups and under-representation of natural groups. It was recommended that

more empirical studies be carried out to further validate the hypothesised stages. To address these limitations, Tuckman and Jensen's (1977) carried out a follow up study review of 22 empirical studies that tested the original hypothesis that groups go through these stages. It confirmed the applicability of the stages. However, variations were identified depending on which type of group was being observed and who decided on the naming of the stages identified. Finally, the literature review identified a further stage during which the group terminated. They called this the *adjourning* stage characterised by disengagement with recognition of achievements.

The most recent empirical validation of Tuckman's stages of group development was by Manges et al (2017). They wanted to ascertain how Change Teams and nurse leaders maximised initiatives in new quality systems in hospitals. They collected 50 semi-structured interviews of Change Team members and sponsors exploring the implementation of changes to working practices. All interviews were coded for the Tuckman stages. They identified relevant characteristics of each stage encountered during the process of change.

3.6 Summary of the Research Review

The review of the research on community supervision has identified many techniques and skills required from practitioners that can aid the development of meaningful relationships and encourage engagement. However, it was argued that statutory youth justice work has become more focused on a technocratic form and lost its roots in understanding the emotional processes and transformative possibilities of relationships. This implies that the practitioner is a technocrat or/and bureaucrat and that change can be achieved with scant reference to the humanity of the service user. Work with young people is in danger of becoming dehumanised as a consequence. Nevertheless, face-to-face interactions are still

an emotional endeavour and work with young people who offend in the voluntary sector has shown that participatory techniques are effective in engendering engagement.

To address the paucity of literature on supervisory relationships, statutory practice will be explored from the young men's perspective and from caseworkers' perspective to tease out what happens within one-to-one supervision and how young people respond. In particular, four main gaps will be examined. The first is explaining how discrete elements of practice fit together into a cohesive whole. The second is developing an understanding of breakdowns or ruptures in engagement as a natural phenomenon. Thirdly, reporting responses from young men to approaches used by caseworkers and the latter's accounts of using these. Finally, presenting and analysing concrete examples of how some important concepts are enacted during face-to-face interactions.

The next chapter will define in detail the methods through which the data will be produced and analysed.

CHAPTER 4 Methodological Framework

The literature review concluded that the current state of knowledge regarding the practice of community supervision of young offenders in England and Wales is mainly driven by evidence collected from studies conducted within adult probation or within youth probation in Australia. The literature review further demonstrated the importance of engagement and communication to ensure a relationship is achieved and maintained over the course of a court order. However, due to the nature of young people who offend, it was found that breakdowns or ruptures in the relationship are a natural and regular occurring phenomenon. Whilst breakdowns have been discussed in social work literature (Ivanoff et al 1994; Trevithick 2003; Yatchmenoff 2005) and ruptures discussed in psychotherapy literature (Safran and Muran 1996; Bennett et al 2006; Daly et al 2010) neither have been explored in the supervision of young offenders.

In pursuing further knowledge regarding sessions of supervision between young men and caseworkers, this chapter details the way in which phenomenological research was designed and conducted for this study. First, it will state the research aim and objectives that gave the study a specific focus. Following on, it will define the methodological framework and explain why a phenomenology approach was used instead of a positivist approach. Furthermore, a case study design is discussed showing how the study was located in the real world and practical issues of gaining access to participants were overcome. Following on, due to the challenging nature of interviewing young people, the next section will explain how bespoke interview schedules were designed and used to gather data. Finally, the approach to analysing the data to create findings from the data will be explained.

4.1 Research Aims and Objectives

This lack of knowledge regarding securing constructive and ongoing engagement is problematic because the literature on the efficacy of offender behaviour programmes have identified that behavioural programmes are largely successful if the young person engages with the caseworker on the tasks within the programme (McGuire 2002; Dowden and Andrews 2004; Mason and Prior 2008). Also, the 'helping' aspect of the relationship requires a caseworker to be persistent in engagement and communication to support efforts of social inclusion and a trajectory towards desistance (Perlman 1979; Farrall 2002; McNeill 2016). To address this lack of knowledge, this study takes a broad view and aims to 'understand how caseworkers and young men establish and sustain relationships during face-to-face contacts'.

To achieve the research aim, attention will focus on specific aspects of the relationship to form research objectives that will:

a) Describe participant's accounts of the processes of face-to-face engagement between caseworkers and young men;
b) Explore how young men experience face-to-face contacts with caseworkers;
c) Identify breakdowns in engagement and rupture in relationships experienced by young men during face-to-face contacts and the strategies they adopted to deal with them;
d) Explore how caseworkers experience face-to-face contacts with young men;
e) Identify how caseworkers respond to breakdowns and ruptures in the relationship enacted by young men.

f) Consider the implications of these findings for existing theories of engagement, rupture/breakdowns and repair in relationship-based practice.

4.2 Methodological Framework

The starting point for this project is from the first objective stated above: 'Describe participant's accounts of the processes of face-to-face engagement between caseworkers and young men'. Doing this requires a researcher to "see through the eyes of the research participants" (Bryman 2008, p.366). Collecting personal information enables an in-depth understanding of "people's experiences, perspectives and histories in the context of their personal circumstances or settings" (Spencer et al 2003, p.17). Furthermore, relating to the values, beliefs and assumptions of participants along with distilling needs, desires and emotions gives depth and meaning to findings (Choy 2014). Achieving this allows the researcher to be true to the data and, furthermore, ground concepts and theories in their natural environment (Hycner 1985, p.280). However, in pursuit of 'seeing through the eyes of the participant' issues concerning validity, reliability and reflexivity for findings to be taken seriously have to be addressed (Neuman 2006, p.197; Henn et al 2009, p.208).

Validity relates to the accuracy of findings through the alignment of research aims, research objectives, questions asked, data collected and explanations offered (Maxwell 1992; Denscombe, 2010b, p.143). It is therefore important to pay attention to issues that could affect validity. For example, information collected from participants could be distorted as a reaction to being researched by consciously or unconsciously modifying behaviour (Gore et al 2012; Henn et al 2009, p.208). Also, recall of specific facts from a distance in time may not be an exact representation of the specific events being articulated (Holstein and Gubrium 1995; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Skinner 2012). Instead it may be an approximation of

incidents, thoughts and feelings. Another issue of validity is the subjectivity of what the researcher considers worthy of reporting (Neuman 2006). The issues reported from the findings are governed by what the researcher wants to report and the conceptual framework within which it is recorded. The interpretations of the data by the researcher could be different from that of the participants because of how the researcher makes sense of individual stories and then brings them together as a group narrative (Neuman 2006, p.197). Furthermore achieving external validity by generalising findings across similar social settings is problematic as the essence of individualised contexts is lost. Instead, it is recommended that claims made from personal lives should remain within the domains from which they have been generated (Hycner 1985; Maxwell 1992, p.287; Shkedi 2005). However, this does not preclude emerging trends and patterns forming a foundation to observe similar behaviours in other social settings, situations and cases.

Reliability relates to developing data collection methods that can be applied consistently across participants to ensure findings are not distorted (Denscombe, 2010b, p.143). It is also the degree to which the data collection methods can be replicated in other social settings thereby permitting the replication of the research aims (Bryman, 2008, p.376). Furthermore, the issue of generating trustworthy findings that gains credibility in the minds of readers needs to be considered (Rolfe 2006). For this study, credibility is addressed through an in-depth design and development of the data collection interview schedule that takes into consideration the different characteristics of both caseworkers and young men. These points will be demonstrated later in this chapter.

Reflexivity relates to the influences of the researcher on the construction and execution of the study (Breuer and Roth 2003). In the construction of knowledge it is not possible to

observe human behaviour from a totally objective perspective that is devoid of any influences (Henn et al, 2009, p.211). Furthermore, it is not possible to stand outside the social world in order to gain an understanding of it from a privileged vantage point: the researcher has to position themselves somewhere within the context being studied (Berger 2015). This means that social research is not a neutral or impartial activity. Instead, it is influenced by the researcher's personality, position of observation and instruments used to collect information as the researcher becomes embodied in the study (Breuer and Roth 2003; D'Cruz et al 2007; Berger 2015). Therefore, researchers have to be aware of their assumptions, self-knowledge and any potential biases during the design of the study and the construction of knowledge (Breuer and Roth 2003; D'Cruz et al 2007; Berger 2015). It is suggested that the way the researcher makes sense of the world is through the concepts that are intrinsically linked to the social world (Denscombe 2010a, p.325). It is therefore essential to develop an interview approach with an understanding of influential concepts such as power, deviance, life experiences and the nature of the YJS. To achieve this I needed to have an appreciation of these concepts so that I could join the participants in their world and help them develop their narratives in the way they wanted whilst remaining true to the research aim and objectives.

Furthermore, issues of reflexivity are also related to my influences on the collection of data. My aim in executing a phenomenological research strategy was to collect the lived experiences of the participants through their voices. It is the participant who is the expert in their world. The experiences belong to them, not me as the researcher. It was their experiences that needed to be caught so it was not for me, as the researcher, to put words in their heads to reshape the experiences they have had. However, Holstein and Gubrium

(1995, p.38) suggest that interviewers do not conduct neutral inquiry. Instead they are actively involved and deeply implicated in the production of participant responses. Using Holstein and Gubrium's (1995) active interviewing process creates a moment in time during which a narrative is jointly generated. This implies an influence of the interviewer on the interviewee. This raises an important question about the influence of the interviewer on the generation of narratives. There is, therefore, a requirement to question and explore this influence to isolate any potentially undesirable influences.

Achieving this meant that I had to be actively involved in the data collection so as to gain an understanding of how to develop the on-going conversation. These issues around researcher reflexivity raise the concern that my influences could unwittingly contaminate the words of the participants by suggesting meanings to events and situations, through my understanding of the world, which could be contrary to the worldview of participants. It was therefore necessary for me to be aware of my influence on the data collection process. Addressing this, it is recommended that researchers list out their social values, bias, decisions, presences and personal reasons underpinning the study along with personal roles enacted with participants and services (Sanders 2003; Gearing 2004; Bednall 2006). This issue was addressed through the deployment of the phenomenological perspective. The participants were positioned as the experts in their own life situation. To aid this task, it is suggested by Gearing (2004) and Bednall (2006) to invoke the concept of an 'epoch' to create a period in time during which the interviewer suspend one's own judgements about the phenomenon being discussed during each session with participants. For my data collection, I created an epoch by suspending my judgements before the start of each interview and carried on by asking 'what' and 'how' questions to encourage and maintain a

focus on the views and opinions of the young person. Taking this approach helped to prevent my personal opinions from influencing the narratives being generated by participants.

These issues around validity, reliability and reflexivity as they were encountered within the study are further explored in the following sections.

4.2.1 Phenomenological Research Strategy

Capturing the experiences of young men and caseworkers is the key objective of this study; achieving this will allow the perspectives of a both parties to be reported. To this extent, a mode of research has to be decided upon so that the correct type of data can be collected. The recognised research paradigms applicable to this study are: empiricism, positivism and phenomenological (Giorgi et al 2017). Empiricism suggests that only knowledge derived from the senses can be inferred or deduced (Zalta 2017). This is achieved through the measurable and the observable (Greener 2011). However, such mechanisms are difficult to develop in complex social situations that are imbued with many factors and generative situations rapidly evolve and change (Greener 2011, p.118). Furthermore, while people's posture and reactions can be objectively observed, there is hidden information such as prejudices and thoughts that prevent meaning from being inferred (Becker 1967). It was not possible to use an empirical approach because the local authority YJS where the data was collected did not grant me access to observe face-to-face meetings. Instead, they granted me access to interview caseworkers and young men only. This restriction meant that I could not collect any observable data.

Positivism posits that behaviour is deterministic and researchers can discover causes and effects under certain conditions. To achieve this, only factual knowledge collected through

empirical observations and statistics is trustworthy to generate observable and quantifiable findings. From these types of findings the aim is to make predictions based on the facts and offer possible solutions. Again, it was not possible to use a positivistic approach because I was not granted access to use measuring tools such as the Working Alliance Inventory or the Helping Alliance Inventory to collect statistical data regarding the relationship between caseworkers and young men.

A phenomenological inquiry differs from both empiricism and positivism by bringing to light the hidden consciousness of individuals and its functions. It is argued that the hidden consciousness manifests itself differently to physical phenomena (Giorgi et al 2017, p.177). The type of phenomena experienced within the consciousness could typically be ideas, dreams, feelings, thoughts and emotions. To this extent, phenomenology emphasises the subjective interpretations of the individual with a focus on the perceptions and meanings that actors attach to specific phenomena (Creswell, 2007, p.58; Denscombe, 2010a). This approach describes the meaning of the lived experience of a specific phenomenon for individuals who have actually experienced it at first hand (Shkedi, 2005, p.54; Creswell, 2007, p.57; Denscombe, 2010a, p.102). A phenomenological approach was chosen because of: (i) the current lack of consolidated theoretical knowledge in the literature-base specifically about relationships between young men and caseworkers: therefore a picture of what happens needs to be established before empirical observations can be done; (ii) the restrictions of access which meant that the information I would be collecting was subjective experiences that cannot be observed or measured.

A phenomenological approach shows concern towards an actor's point of view as a source of knowledge through introspection (Benton and Craib 2001, p.82). This is in contrast to the

empirical methods of observation and positivistic use of statistics to generate an objective and generalised story (Benton and Craib 2001, p.82). In essence, it 'goes back to things' to develop a deeper understanding of issues rather than with an eye on trying to fix problems (Smith et al 2009, p.1). The point is to develop an understanding of 'typical' characteristics of particular types embedded in the phenomenon under inquiry (Benton and Craib 2001, p.84). These are then organised into meaning contexts that form a 'stock of knowledge' to be reported and shared with others. Therefore, gaining access to this non-observable data requires a different approach and methods to those used for empirical and positivistic inquiries.

However, there are different strands within a phenomenological approach that need to be explored before a choice can be made as to which one is the most suitable to the research study. One strand, based on Husserl's phenomenology, identifies pre-knowledge as a source of bias of the researcher that could distort and skew the actor's viewpoint. The point of phenomenology is to remain true to the narratives. To achieve this, the researcher has to set aside or suspend every day and common-sense beliefs they have about the phenomenon under inquiry (Macann 1993; Benton and Craib 2001, p83).

However, Heidegger questioned and criticised Husserl's notion of suspending judgement and common-sense views held by the researcher (Dant 1991; Macann 1993; Smith et al 2009). Instead he stated that the researcher is indelibly implicated with the participant through conducting the study. There is no way a researcher can "unknow" a thing (Dant 1991; Macann 1993; Smith et al 2009). Furthermore, the purpose of an inquiry is to uncover the existence of things and structures that create the world actors live within: an ontological phenomenology (Macann 1993). In Husserl's approach, the lived experience is expressed as

a series of happenings, events and feelings that are personal to the actor: an epistemological phenomenology (Macann 1993).

In choosing an appropriate strand of phenomenology, it was necessary to connect to the study's aim: 'to understand how caseworkers and young men establish and sustain relationships during face-to-face contacts'. Making this decision also brings to the fore my ability to suspend my judgements of young men and caseworkers. In mitigating this issue, I contest that I am ignorant of experiences of both young men and caseworkers because I am, and have not been, in either of these positions within the youth justice system. Therefore, I decided to deploy Husserl's phenomenological reduction approach that enabled me to suspend my judgements due to naturally occurring ignorance.

4.2.2 Case Study Research Design

Doing empirical research requires the researcher to be connected to the empirical world being studied (Henn et al 2009). Remaining true to the requirements of a phenomenological approach, attention must remain focused on the experiences of individual participants. Given that there is very little in the way of literature concerning the relationship between caseworker and young offender it is, therefore, required to discover and comprehend what is going on during the black box of supervision. To start of this process, it is necessary collect people's experiences so that they can be translated into a set of coherent findings whilst remaining true to their individual experiences (Riege 2003). In following this path, a case study research design was chosen to enable a sense of personal and particular detail to be uncovered. Case studies are used to show how events 'really happened' in the real world to uncover mechanisms buried in the experience of a particular case (Moses and Knutson 2012). To achieve this, a case study design "will involve intensive, detailed and in-depth

research among a small sample of carefully selected cases" (Henn et al 2009, p.65). Furthermore, there is a search for a "sense of detail" (Smith et al 2009, p.29) which enables a depth of analysis that attempts to remain true to the words of each participant.

In essence, this type of research is idiographic: it is a detailed inquiry of specific cases to understand experiences from a particular perspective occurring within a particular context (Smith et al 2009, p.29; Yin 2018, p.14). It is the cases that become the units of investigation requiring a specific single focus such as an organisation, community, group or event. To satisfy this requirement, the unit of investigation for this study was the phenomenon of 'relationships during the court order'. The level of investigation was at the individual of the caseworkers and young men. In this instance the "particular" was the local authority YJS through which the experiences of the caseworkers and young men were brought together.

During the analysis, narratives of individual experiences were condensed down to meaningful descriptions that collectively reflected the sample population as the central meaning or the essence of each phenomenon as experienced by both groups (Shkedi 2005, p.57; Creswell 2007, p.58). Generalising these findings to social settings outside of the case group was resisted in response to criticisms around external validity (Robinson and Norris 2001; Huberman and Miles 2002). Instead, it is suggested that findings should be particularised to the group being studied. Taking a 'particularised' approach instead of a positivistic approach to 'generalising' to the wider population brings to the fore the concept of homogeneity. This develops the notion of comparing several self-contained units thereby distilling observed differences and constants across case studies (King et al 1994, p.93). Doing this generates a rich and detailed account of the phenomenon under investigation (Smith et al 2009, p.52).

In essence, this study of relationships in one local authority YJS can be considered as the beginning of a larger potential project that uses the same methodology and methods to collect data from many other local authority YJS. Once these 'units of homogeneity' have been collected, common findings can be used to develop a larger picture through the recognition of patterns of behaviour (King et al 1994; Smith et al 2009, p.101). Furthermore, differences can be used to display regional or demographic variations or uniqueness. Therefore, over time, generalisations can be gradually made through causal inferences using units of homogeneity as the units of analysis (King et al 1994, p.93).

4.2.3 Sample Populations

Designing the case study further, it was necessary to identify the research population and specific characteristics. In developing a notion of homogeneity, the population of interest for the case study were: caseworkers from one local authority YJS and young men on their caseload. The young people of interest was limited to young men mainly because this group is over-represented in the YJS and, therefore, easier to find and recruit.

At the start of the research, there were 36 caseworkers employed by the local authority YJS on a permanent contract basis. The selection criteria for inclusion into the project was any caseworker who had been working the local authority YJS for at least 12 months as a demonstration of being able to provide a meaningful account of working with young men.

In contrast to the caseworkers' involvement in the youth justice system, the involvement of the young men had been directed by the courts as a consequence of their offending behaviour and not through a voluntary choice. The nature of the young people's contact with the local authority YJS is on a fixed term basis through which they are instructed by the courts to be in contact with a local authority YJS for between 3 months and 3 years. The

selection criteria for inclusion into the research project were young men aged 16, 17 or 18 years old allocated to a caseworker for at least 3 months. This allowed them to have experienced face-to-face interactions as part of their court order. The selection criterion is restricted to this age group because they are about to, or have, completed compulsory education and, following on, have to find their way into either work, further education or both. It is deemed that they will be displaying different behaviours to those under the age of 16 because of expectations regarding moving their life forward into adulthood and the need to become self-sufficient. Furthermore, they also needed to have the mental capacity to consent to participate. This requirement is defined as: being able to understand the purpose of the study through the information sheet; being able to participate actively in a conversation about their relationship with their caseworker; and being able to articulate their experiences of face-to-face interactions as a demonstration of being able to provide meaningful experiences with their caseworkers.

To achieve the research aim and remain with a case study design it was necessary to gain access to caseworkers and young men within one local authority Youth Justice Service (YJS). After gaining ethical clearance from the University of Nottingham's ethical committee, one of the 157 local authority YJS in England and Wales was approached and asked if they would be prepared to participate in the research. The YJS head of service was contacted and asked if they would grant access to caseworkers and young men. It was explained that interview data would be collected from caseworkers and young men aged 16, 17 or 18 years old. I informed them that ethical clearance had been given by the University of Nottingham and the research will be overseen by my supervisors. Also, I said that I would adhere to any local authority YJS research governance procedures.

Following acceptance, a YJS representative was allocated to act as a link between myself and the caseworkers and young men. It was stipulated that my involvement must cause minimal disruption to the caseworkers' workload so the representative organised my interviews with the young men. Furthermore, I was told that I would not be granted access to any information stored about the young men. During the data collection period it was apparent that the local authority YJS was very protective over the young men under their control. They were fearful of any emotional harm caused and would not allow intrusions over and above what was necessary.

Presentations of my study were given to caseworkers at three team meetings within the service. After each presentation I emailed each attendee individually and asked them if they would be willing to participate. In response, caseworkers slowly came forward. To recruit young men, caseworkers were asked to approach young men on their case load that fitted the selection criteria. The names of those who wanted to participate were given to the YJS representative who then arranged a date, time and place to hold the interview.

Overall, 11 caseworkers responded to say they would be willing to participate. No caseworkers replied back to say that they did not want to participate. I eventually took a non-reply as meaning that the caseworker did not want to participate. During the call for volunteers, the YJS announced that 8 caseworkers were to be made redundant. This caused a period of sensitivity during which I did not carry out any interviews or calls for participants.

The first caseworker interview was carried on the 3 December 2014 and the last on the 10 June 2015. Each interview was organised at the convenience of the caseworker. All were

held at their place of work in pre-booked meeting rooms for the purpose of confidentiality and away from possible distractions.

Table 4.1: Demographics of the sample of caseworkers.

	Gender	Ethnicity	Approx. Age	Length of interview
CW1	Male	White, English	Mid 20s	1hr 15mins
CW2	Female	White, English	Early 30s	1hr 20mins
CW3	Female	White, English	Late 20s	1hr 26mins
CW4	Male	White, English	Early 50s	1hr 28mins
CW5	Female	Asian	Early 50s	1hr 21mins
CW6	Male	Black	Mid 30s	56mins
CW7	Female	White, English	Mid 50s	1hr 40mins
CW8	Female	White, English	Late 30s	1hr 38mins
CW9	Male	Asian	Mid 30s	1hr 22mins
CW10	Male	White, English	Early 40s	1hr 27mins
CW11	Male	White, English	Early 40s	1hr 49mins

Table 4.1 shows a total of 15 hours and 42 minutes (942 minutes) of data was collected from the caseworkers with an average of 1 hour and 26 minutes per interview. Whilst there was a

spread of gender, age and ethnicity; the attributes were governed by voluntary participation rather than purposeful sampling. This prevented meaningful analysis regarding these attributes. It will be shown in the findings chapters that young men largely dismissed the notion that characteristics of age, gender or ethnicity were significant in shaping their relationship with caseworkers.

The recruitment of young men to participate in the research project was prolonged and challenging. Whilst there are 28 caseworkers working for the YJS, only 6 of them recruited young men to participate. In total, 18 interviews were arranged but only 9 were carried out. Two of the young men cancelled their interviews when I was driving up to meet them because they had been involved in family disputes and were not emotionally in the right frame of mind to participate in an interview. Another young man had a court appearance and was due to be sent to a secure estate. Another had been moved to new accommodation in a different county at the last minute thus he was no longer under the responsibility of the YJS. The others failed to attend for unknown reasons.

The first young man interview was carried out on the 19 March 2015 and the last was the 11 December 2015. Each interview was organised at the convenience of the young men. Two interviews were carried out in their grandmother's houses, one was held in a young man's rented house and the other six where held in meeting rooms in various community based buildings. In all cases, safe researcher procedures, as set out and approved in the ethics form were followed.

Table 4.2: Demographics of the sample of young men.

	Ethnicity	Age	Length of interview
YM1	Black	17	48mins
YM2	White, English	16	1hr 14mins
YM3	White, English	17	1hr 7mins
YM4	White, English	16	1hr
YM5	White, English	17	36mins
YM6	White, English	16	57mins
YM7	Black	18	1hr 8mins
YM8	White, English	17	57mins
YM9	White, English	18	32mins

The table 4.2 shows that 2 young men were from black and ethnic backgrounds whilst the other 7 were white English. A total of 8 hours and 19 minutes (499 minutes) of data was collected from the young men with an average of 56 minutes per interview. Whilst there were different ethnic respondents, it was not possible to comment on the representativeness of the sample as the total figures were not collected from the local YJS. Again, attributes of the young men was governed by those who volunteered their

participation rather than purposeful sampling. Again, this prevents meaningful analysis regarding these attributes.

The literature exploring conducting interviews with young people who offend painted a picture of a restrictive and challenging process where the young men would be unable to develop in-depth and coherent narratives that would explain their experiences of face-to-face interactions with caseworkers. However, this was not the case in this study: all of the young men were motivated to voluntarily take part in the research project; they were not forced, coerced or bribed. The main motivation for participating was that they had developed a successful working relationship with their caseworker: they were keen to advertise this fact and were proud to do so. The tone of their narratives was celebratory, for them it was an invigorating encounter to describe the challenges they eventually overcame that developed into an overall positive experience. There was a passion within all of their voices that told of their desires to make a difference whenever they could by reporting their experiences. However, this created narratives that lacked criticality. To balance out the findings, it would have been useful to collect the experiences of young people who had been involved in a hostile or deeply resistant relationship with their caseworker. But young people with these experiences were not forthcoming. Therefore the sample is biased towards the experiences of service users who had positive experiences and a broader picture is missing that details experiences of young men who did not engage with caseworkers. However, promoting the notion of homogeneity, these positive accounts enabled factors of successful relationships to be distilled and reported. A further study could use the same research aims and methodology to collect data from participants who had experienced failed relationships.

During the interviews all of the young men gave candid accounts of their experiences, including six of the nine who gave particularly in-depth descriptions of their experiences. It should be noted that all of the young men who participated had disconnected from mainstream education. Some were in an alternative provision and some were looking for work or trying to get onto a college course.

One measure of success of my interview approach can be demonstrated by the interview length and the percentage talk-time by the young men. Due to my assumptions from the literature on researching young men and comments made by caseworkers, interviews were expected to last for up to a maximum of 30 minutes. Also, I presumed that I would be doing most of the talking. A summary of the interview statistics show an average of 56 minutes with the shortest being 35 minutes and longest of 1 hour 14 minutes. The transcribed interviews with young men contained 84,000 words of which 70% were uttered by the young people. This is compared to 88% utterance by caseworkers.

This is a demonstration that young men have the capacity to articulate their narratives albeit with some help from interviewers. This thesis will show that often, young men in the criminal justice system do have the ability to say something interesting and deep about their life experiences. Whilst enabling the young men to develop there narrative is not straightforward, it does require guidance and encouragement to help them think about memories and pertinent information. It was incumbent upon me, as the interviewer, to piece together their narratives thereby leaving the young man with the main task of recalling experiences. It is suggested that we, as researchers, just have to sit and listen; be patient and gently help them to develop their narratives.

4.2.4 Ethical considerations

There is a common appreciation of the importance of ethics within social research with the main aim of *avoidance of harm* by protecting the interests and well-being of participants (Bryman 2008; Henn et al 2009; ESRC 2010). The design considered three potential aspects that could potentially cause harm to participants relating to involvement in the study: voluntary participation, consent to use information, and maintain confidentiality. Alongside this, researchers must also act with professional integrity at all times (Denscombe 2010a).

A key ethical issue was *voluntarily participation* to be involved in the study as they are required to make a conscious decision to engage with the data collection methods. Within my research project there are two groups of participants: caseworkers and young men, who have different intellectual characteristics. These participants were invited to give information about their personal experiences of the relationship with either young men or caseworkers. It is recognised that each party have different levels of literacy: caseworkers are above average whilst the young men are below average. To help them make an informed decision to participate I developed different versions of the participant information sheets presented in a manner that is appropriate to the reading abilities of each set of participants (see Appendix III: young men). During the interviews they were not coerced into talking about anything they do not wish to or feel uncomfortable with. Supporting this ethical principle, they were also given the *right to withdraw* at any time during the research up to the beginning of the data analysis stage. However, no participant requested to withdraw from the project.

Another key ethical issue is obtaining *informed consent* from participants as they needed to give permission for me to use the information they give for the purpose of generating

findings relating to their life experiences. The point being made here is that, as a researcher, it is an obligation on me to be true to the data and accurately report the lived experience of all individuals in both sets of participants (Broom 2006; Creswell 2007). This ethical principle was achieved through the use of the predefined and validated process of phenomenological data explication: which is discussed later in this chapter. One common consent form was used for both sets of participants (see Appendix II).

The final key ethical issue is ensuring c*onfidentiality and anonymity* of the participants. All of the interviews contained personal experiences and opinions from participants which were audio recorded on a digital device. This made their narratives potentially accessible after the interviews have been completed. It is, therefore, necessary to protect the identities of the participant for fear of embarrassment and potential harm during and after the research project is completed. For example, during the interviews, the young people were asked to talk about interactions with their caseworker. Also, the caseworkers were asked to talk about interactions with young men. Entwined within these conversations, participants could discuss issues which were not related to the face-to-face interactions such as the youth offending service, colleagues or peers. It was, therefore, imperative that my research strategy protected both the caseworker and young men from anything they have said which could have a negative impact on them in the future. For example, an ethical dilemma could arise if a young person spoke negatively about their caseworker. If their caseworker had access to the negative opinions of the young person then the working relationship could be adversely affected.

To prevent any negative impact, it was important the audio recorded interviews were not accessible to other parties after interviews had been completed. To keep these recordings

out of reach, they were uploaded onto a secure folder on the University's computer network and stored as a password protected file. Following this, the recordings were deleted from the digital device.

However, participants were made aware that it is a legal requirement for the researcher to disclose information if it relates to; (i) the interviewee being at risk of serious harm, (ii) another person being at risk of serious harm or (iii) a crime had been committed or is soon to be committed.

To ensure all ethical criteria were met, an ethical plan was developed and submitted to the University of Nottingham Ethics Committee (UoN 2010) for approval prior to the start of any data collection activities. A copy of this can be found in Appendix IV.

4.2.5 Structure of the Interview

One limitation specified by the local authority YJS was that only one-off contacts with caseworkers or young men would be allowed. With this restriction in place, it is therefore necessary to maximise the short opportunities I had for collecting deep and personal information from participants.

Interviewing in social research is considered as one of the bedrocks of data collection (Holstein and Gubrium 1995; Skinner 2012; Brinkmann 2013). To this extent there are considered to be generally three different forms of interviews: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. A structured approach to interviewing tends to be rigid in its search for data and is used more for quantitative studies through the use of surveys. Otherwise, semi-structured and unstructured interviews are used for qualitative studies because they allow levels of flexibility for data collection to evolve in a natural manner.

Semi-structured interviewing is an approach through which a researcher asks a series of questions but the sequence of questions is expected to be variable (Bryman 2008; Gore 2012; Brinkmann 2013). A key factor of successful semi-structured interviews is flexibility so that both parties can develop the conversation according to the moment (Brinkmann 2013, p.14). This allows the researcher to follow lines of inquiry to generate deep knowledge through the use of follow-up questions that could not be envisaged during the design of the interviews (Brinkmann 2013, p.14).

Holstein and Gubrium (1995) suggest that each interview is a unique creation between researcher and participant in space and time. Therefore, each interview must be regarded as a one-off opportunity to extract information from a participant on the focus of the research. As previously explained, it was not possible to conduct more than one interview with each participant. To this end, interview schedules were developed to help guide the process of data collection in a manner that maximises the one and only opportunity I had with each participant. For this reason, careful consideration was given to the following:

- The structure of the interview.
- The questions asked to extract information.
- Ensuring no leading questions.
- The length of time the interview is expected to last.
- The manner in which I interacted with the participants.
- How to address any problematic situations that could arise during the interview.

Since there were two sample groups, the research project also had a comparative element to it in terms of the YJS caseworkers' experiences of interactions and those of the young men. It was, therefore, necessary to pursue the same thematic topics for both interviews

but the conversations had to be tailored to their differing characteristics and expected perspectives. This encouraged the development of narratives that tell the stories of lived experiences that were particular to that sample. This addressed issues around reliability whereby the study could be replicated by using the interview schedules specifically developed for each sample population in different social settings. Also, the level of detail was not too prescriptive to prevent each individual from generating their own personal narratives.

During the initial part of the interview, Holstein and Gubrium (1995, p.59) recommend priming the participant to think about the subject matter in an experiential manner. So, starting off the interview the participants were asked how they initially became involved with the local authority YJS. The career path into the YJS was explored with the caseworkers. The offence related behaviour that brought the young men into the YJS was explored.

Following on from priming the participant's articulation of memories, the interview moved onto how engagement was established and maintained during face-to-face contacts. The areas of exploration were (see Appendix I for the young men interview schedule):

- The initial contact the caseworker and young men had with each other.
- Subsequent face-to-face contacts.
- Co-operative working specifically exploring ruptures and breakdowns
- Reflectively identifying what caseworkers should do during face–to-face contacts.

The majority of the interview was spent exploring these areas.

The final part of the interview focused on how the caseworker or young men positioned themselves emotionally during face-to-face interactions. Each of the parties came together

with different personal characteristics that have been developed over time through their own life experiences. It was necessary to explore these in terms of similarities and differences. The areas of exploration were;

- Reflecting on personal life experiences and those of the "other" party.
- Use of own life experiences during face-to-face contacts.

To ensure in-depth narratives were collected that are fit for meaningful analysis, Holstein and Gubrium (1995, p.43) suggest that interviews must be "active" and organic otherwise there is a danger that banal interviews will produce banal narratives. To achieve this Brinkmann (2013) suggests that there is a common cycle of conversation that exists in qualitative interviews. There are five elements within the cycle that help a researcher to develop meaningful conversations (Brinkmann, 2013, p.16);

- asking *a question*,
- *negotiation of meaning* (concerning questions and themes, including clarification),
- asking for *concrete descriptions* from the interviewee,
- the interviewer reflects back their *interpretation* of the description,
- completes the cycle in the form of a *coda*.

4.2.6 Developing an Approach to Interviewing

Whilst the design of the interview schedules was important in defining the information to be collected, the manner in which the researcher interacts with the participants also needed to be carefully considered (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

Holt and Pamment's (2011, p.130) opinion of the research methodology literature notes that the norm researched population are implicitly constructed in the textbooks are adults

who possess the ability to be self-reflexive. They are assumed to have an education comparable to the interviewer and are capable of looking back at their own life and, by ordering events structurally and temporally, to develop an in-depth narrative. This presupposes that participants have the ability to reflect upon their own thoughts and articulate those thoughts into a coherent intellectual narrative (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). The narrative produced then forms the basis for sound and systematic analysis.

When interacting with participants, it has been identified that researchers can inadvertently become obstacles to collecting information. Brinkmann (2013, p.8) identifies the problem of researchers talking too much during interviews and then goes on to suggest that there should be an asymmetrical distribution of talking in terms of the interviewer posing short questions and the interviewee giving longer and more elaborate answers. Nind (2007) identifies the problem of a limited scope within narratives and suggests they should be broadened with the following key elements of: place, people, time, feeling, talk, action, end and consequence. Brinkmann (2013) further warns that care has to be exercised when following lines of enquiry with respondents. The researcher's motive in an interview is to assure meaning by dispelling any doubts in the respondent's replies rather than trapping them. Once an initial answer has been given the interviewer can probe to extract deeper information but the respondent must be encouraged to use their own language to express their own experiences within their own interpretative framework.

However, the greater challenges lie in the expectations of interviewees' abilities to reform memories of the past as they try to articulate their lived experiences (Holstein and Gubrium 1995; Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Skinner 2012). These problems have been expressed as the inability of memory to recall exactly what happened. In essence, memory is subject to

revision, appears in the consciousness fragmented and out of sequence. Furthermore, the prompting of memory recall is challenging and problematic. In essence, the key problem with interviewing lies with the ability of the interviewer to trigger memories within the respondent. Current literature on semi-structured and unstructured interviewing does not detail in depth how to deal with gaining access to tacit information regarding personal experiences (Gore et al 2012). However, there exists literature within anthropology suggesting mechanisms of gaining access to embodied and situated nature of personal experiences so that respondents can give first-person accounts. One such technique is called *explicitation interviewing* (Maurel 2009; Gore et al 2012).

Explicitation interviewing aims to create conditions that are conducive to activating access to "knowledge stemming from a moment of action experienced" (Maurel 2009, p.58) of which a respondent has no knowledge of in the mode of reflective consciousness. To achieve this, explicitation interviewing requires the interviewer to guide an interviewee towards an "introspective posture" (Maurel 2009, p.58). By drawing on a concrete memory, it is possible to support the interviewee to make the transition from pre-reflective consciousness to reflective consciousness. It provokes awakening of a memory recall by placing the person emotionally back in the situation to evocate actions carried out as they become conscious of what they did and why. Memories are triggered through visions, smells, touch, sounds, tastes and emotional feelings. The interviewer then has to guide the interviewee towards evocation of a lived experience through the use of words and verbalisation (Maurel 2009, p.58). Once this has happened the interviewer then has to make sense of these recalls of memory. It is at this point that the co-creation of knowledge begins (Skinner 2012).

To remain in-line with a phenomenological research strategy, Holstein and Gubrium's (1995) active interviewing approach was utilised. Through this approach the participant was "actively" stimulated in terms of their thought processes and memories to develop narratives that reflected their personal experiences. This was done by introducing topics and sub-topics to the participant but encouraging them to choose their own words to form a personal narrative to frame their experiences. For meaningful data to be collected, I also used the cycle of conversation to guide and constrain the conversation to produce narratives that were appropriate to the experiences of the respondent and also in-line with the aim of the study. The focus of the research aim was maintained, in spite of the general drifts of conversations, by guiding the participants in the formation of their experiences.

A guiding principle of a phenomenological research strategy is to collect lived experiences from the perspectives of the people who have actually experienced that phenomenon. To achieve this, the participants were placed at the centre of the interviewing process and the development of their own narratives. To start this process, each participant was made aware of the purpose of the interview. They were made to feel that their role in this research was vital to its success and enthused to fully engage with the interview. They were positioned in the role of the expert. They were then told that questions would be put to them for them to reply to as they see fit. They were also told that there are no wrong answers to these questions. There are only right answers because it is their experiences they are conveying. It was not my role as an interviewer to pass judgement and opinion. I suggested the young men were the experts during my introduction by announcing that I am here to collect their experiences, not to judge in any way, shape or form. This positioned me as the "ignorant one" who was in need of educating. This enabled me to clarify the

statements made by participants without them feeling that I was challenging them. The approach I took to achieve this was to install the young person as the expert at the very start of the interview,

In line will the phenomenological approach, an epoch was created for the period of each interview during which my judgement was suspended. The experiences of the participants were not questioned, queried or judged from my perspective – but I did prompt them for their opinions from their perspective. The participating young men responded positively to this approach. During the course of the discussions, all of the young men grew in confidence and enthusiasm to tell their stories. This was evident in how the length of time for each narrative chunk increased from a few seconds at the start of the interview to a few minutes at the end of the interview.

It has been recognised that the ability to form and articulate a narrative is dependent upon the language abilities of the participant (Booth and Booth 1996; Lewis and Porter 2004; Snow and Powell 2008). Due to differences in the two sample populations, they were expected to display differing language capabilities. The caseworkers are deemed to have language capabilities which enable them to create longer and deep narratives during semi-structured interviews. They are professionals who have been exposed to situations where they have had to be reflective and reflexive. The caseworkers are educated to a degree level and, during their education, would have been expected to carry out exercises on personal reflection. This is evident in many previous studies using semi-structured interviews that have been successfully carried out with caseworkers during which they have developed in-depth narratives to articulate their lived experiences (Williams 2001; Callaghan et al 2002; Burnett and Appleton 2004).

The caseworkers were also expected to be able to sustain emotional engagement for the length of time of data collection. The only problem was that these interviews were more prone to interruption because caseworkers have a fully scheduled day of events in terms of visiting young people, attending court, writing reports and other office-based duties. The interviews needed to remain uninterrupted for fear of disrupting the flow of thoughts when creating their narrative. The problem of the distractions of work was addressed by having the interviews in meeting rooms away from distractions.

In contrast, it was expected that the young men might display difficulties articulating in-depth narratives and, therefore, perhaps not commit to the same level of emotional engagement and time during data collection. Research with young men in the Criminal Justice System has proven to be difficult (Beresford et al 2004; Bryan et al 2007; Snow and Powell 2008). Many research studies found that although young people are capable of expressing themselves during interviews, the use of non-standard methods are required to engage them effectively. These issues posed a threat to the accuracy and validity of the data and subsequent findings. It was therefore, necessary to develop approaches that ameliorate challenges to validity.

When interviewing young people, I had to recognise possible impairments that could act as inhibitors of data gathering. These are generally described in terms of limited skills in articulation, difficulties with social interaction and a restricted range of interests and activities (Wing 1993). It has been shown that young people in the Criminal Justice System demonstrate characteristics of social interaction difficulties such as autism and learning disabilities (Bryan et al 2007; Snow and Powell 2008). Also, these same young people are recognised as often having engagement problems with the education system including a

lack of school attendance which would have had a negative developmental effect upon their abilities express their thoughts and feelings.

The ability of a young person to develop their own in-depth narrative was an unknown variable when preparing for an interview and could only be identified during the course of the interview. However, given that the young person was placed in the role of the expert at the beginning of the interview I had to assume that the young person did have some ability to articulate an in-depth narrative.

4.2.7 Piloting the Interview

Once the interview schedules and approaches for carrying out interviews had been designed, it was necessary to undertake trial runs to gain confidence in the process before conducting the main fieldwork (Bryman 2008; Henn et al 2009). The data collection instruments were piloted in the field to test for appropriateness by conducting interviews with each of the sample populations. The selection criteria for a caseworker were general in terms of being any type of caseworker working with adolescents. The data collected during pilot interviews was recorded and assessed for analytical suitability in terms of addressing the research aims. The interview schedule to be used with caseworkers was piloted twice. The first was with a child protection social worker. This proved to be a positive exercise. The social worker developed a narrative that was in-line with the research aim. The interview lasted for 70 minutes. After listening to the recording, I identified amendments to the interview schedule in terms of phrasing of questions and my interview approach. I noticed that some of the questions I asked were leading in nature. This was pushing the participant's narrative away from the creation of their own meaning. Overall, the narrative was reflective

but I had to be careful not to imbue my thoughts and opinions in the narratives of the participants. The interview schedule was considered to be fit for purpose. Another point I had noted was that I needed to stay within each of the “cycles of conversations” longer to develop more depth in the participant’s narrative. I needed to work with the participants to develop more depth to their experiences and this would be achieved by using more follow up questions.

After amendments were made to the interview schedule, a second pilot interview was carried with a representative of the YJS to give an experience of the issues I would be exploring. This gave an insight into the nature of my research which could then be used to promote participation in the study. Both interview recordings were deleted and played no further part in the research project.

However, selecting appropriate young men for the pilot interview was more problematic. The selection criteria for a pilot interview had to match the characteristics of the research population to ascertain appropriateness of the interview schedule and approach to interacting with the young men. Whilst I had opportunities to interview young men aged 16 to 18 years old who were not involved with YJS, they were not suitable because they were reasonably well educated and demonstrated an ability to articulate their thoughts and feelings. The opposite characteristics were required. The sample required was difficult to gain access to as they were already in the Youth Justice System. In resolving this problem, the first interview with a young man was used as a pilot interview. The data collected during the pilot interview was recorded and assessed for analytical suitability in terms of addressing the research aims. Following this, appropriate changes were made to the

interview schedule and approach to interviewing. The interview recording was retained for analysis.

4.3 Phenomenological Analysis (Data Explicitation)

Finally, within the methodology, the manner in which the collected data is dealt with needs to be defined as a matter of demonstration of rigour. From this, a specific and in-depth approach adds credibility to the findings through the demonstration of remaining true to the narratives thereby upholding the ethical principle of consent and participation of each participant.

Data analysis is concerned with making meaning out of data by moving it from unstructured chaos to a creative order (Shkedi 2005). The process of analysis is complete when key themes are identified, relationships between them defined and integrated into either a meaningful description or a story line. The aim of this study is to understand how caseworkers and young men establish and sustain relationships during face-to-face contacts. The findings, therefore, provide a *meaningful description* of *what* happens and *how* it happens from both perspectives.

This type of qualitative data quickly generated a set of large and unstructured textual material. Also, the narratives were in piecemeal as opposed to a free-flowing and orderly form (Holstein and Gubrium 1995). This created transcriptions of interviews that were cumbersome in nature leading to a problem of finding an analytic path through the collection of all interviews (Bryman 2008). Unlike quantitative data, there are no clear cut rules governing how interview data should be collected and analysed (Bryman 2008).

The aim of phenomenological research is to capture the "lived experience", "the lived world" in terms of the "internal experience of being conscious of something" (Holloway, 1997 p.117). Giorgi (1970) suggests phenomenological analysis should "describe" the phenomenon as accurately as possible by remaining true to the facts. However, Hycner (1985) warns against using the term "analysis" for phenomenological data. He suggests that breaking up the data tends to lose the meaning of the "whole of the phenomenon". Instead the constituent parts need to be investigated in terms of keeping the "whole of the phenomenon".

Many researchers have suggested various ways of working with data collected through a phenomenological approach (Van Kaam 1966; Giorgi 1970; Colaizzi 1978; Hycner 1985; Moustakas 1994) and Groenewald (2004) and Creswell (2007) have further integrated these approaches to descriptive phenomenological explicitation into the following phases:

1) **Bracketing and epoch** (being neutral). The researcher takes no position for or against statements made by the interviewee. When working with the data, bracketing the researcher's presuppositions enables them to remain true to the data. This is an attempt to set aside the researcher's biases towards the participants and the research subject matter.
2) **Delineating units of meaning** (how phenomena are being experienced). In each interview, isolate the significant statements that are seen to illuminate the researched phenomenon. This is done by looking for statements made by the participants about how they are experiencing the phenomenon.
3) **Clustering of units of meaning to form themes**. Clusters of themes are formed by grouping the formed units of meaning together (Creswell 2007; Moustakas 1994).

From these thematic clusters, significant topics are identified. Central themes of importance to the research are then determined "...which express the essence of these clusters" (Hycner 1985, p.153).

4) **Write a textural description of "what" the participants experienced** (made known in the Findings chapters). The descriptions need to be supported with verbatim examples (Creswell 2007, p.159).

5) **Write a structural description of "how" the experience happened** (also made known in the Findings chapters)**.** The descriptions need to be reflective of the setting and context in which the phenomenon was experienced (Creswell 2007, p.159). In my study this was achieved by using theory to explain what was happening and then locating explanations in the youth justice context.

6) **Summarising each interview, validating it and where necessary modifying it**. Each interview is revisited to determine if the essence of the interview has been captured (Groenewald 2004, p.20).

7) **Extracting general and unique themes from all the interviews and making a composite summary** (made known in the Discussion chapters). The composite summary must reflect the context (or "horizon") from which the themes emerged (Creswell 2007, p.159). This is driven by the textual description and the structural description (Groenewald 2004, p.21). The composite description details the "essence" of the experience in terms of "what" the participants experienced and "how" they experienced it with reference to broader theoretical concepts and theories.

After concluding each interview, I immersed myself in the interview data. This was achieved by listening to the recording followed by fully transcribing that recording. Shkedi (2005, p.87) instructs the researcher to understand the bigger picture of the interview by asking questions of the interview contents. These questions encourage the researcher to take a critical perspective by asking; who, what, when, where, why, how, which and “so what”.

The next step was to make judgements about the meaning of contiguous blocks of text within each interview transcript (Shkedi 2005, p.83). This is a process of classifying distinct segments of text that seem to pertain to each other across all of the interviews and are recognised as being relevant to the aims and objectives of the study. Ryan and Bernard (2003) discuss at great length the activity of open coding in terms of developing conceptual units. The product of this activity conceptually defines the segments of text and eventually brings statements together in a novel structure. For my study, 184 categories of statements were identified within the caseworker transcripts and 72 categories within the young men transcripts. Whilst the categories had been identified, they also needed a name to represent their meaning. Shkedi (2005, p.96) states that it is the names allocated that are the beginnings of the construction of the group’s story to be told. The name of a category should be based on a concept that encompasses its dimensions. A challenge in carrying out this task was that the collated statements did not necessarily tell one succinct and encompassing story. The question posed of the categorisation concerned the number of ideas or elements being captured. Whilst many statements shared similar elements, there were also different embedded elements that lead to the problem of the growth within categories through which some became too large and unwieldy. An indicator of this was in the name given to categorised statements. If this became more like a sentence than a title

then it most probably needed to be subdivided into different but related categories. Going through this framing and naming cycle lead to organically evolving initial categories.

Bringing the categories together was the next task. Shkedi (2005, p.106) identifies this stage as “the conceptual phase because the new ordering of the categories raise the sorting of data to an analytic level” (p.106). The product of this activity conceptually brings categories of statements together in a novel structure by identifying how categories relate to each other: what do they have in common? (Shkedi,2005, p.112). Doing this helps the researcher develop meaning in the material. Pointers for identifying units of similarity are through descriptions of actions, events, beliefs and thoughts. It is during this activity that themes start to become apparent. This is why I found the naming of categories so important. Working with the name was easier than persistently referring to all of the constituent statements. The naming of a category commits it to a specific meaning that remains throughout the explication, findings and discussion.

It is incumbent upon the researcher to systematically and creatively develop the categories and concepts emerging from the interview data. Shkedi (2005, p.83) suggests that the researcher has to demonstrate mindfulness to their conceptual perspective. This is expressed in terms of the particular conceptual frameworks that have oriented my inquiry to the participants and the phenomenon under investigation. Through these orientations I had to critically evaluate my implicit and explicit understanding of the data. This then enabled me, as a researcher, to identify the decisions I have made in terms of assumptions, criteria, decision rules and operations for working with the data. The emergent concepts started to be defined dimensionally through the discovery of their conditions, consequences and associated interactions and strategies (Shkedi 2005, p.83). However, the emergent

categories must remain empirically grounded and related to the wider framework being developed in relation to other categories. They must remain focused on the phenomenon of interest along with maintaining meaning to the interview data and with other categories (Shkedi 2005, p.85). For my study, 21 analytical concepts were identified within the caseworker transcripts such as; approaches for addressing inappropriate behaviour during face-to-face interactions; caseworker and young person communication; and caseworker rationalising reasons for young person's inappropriate behaviour. Also, 6 concepts within the young men transcripts were identified such as; emotional experiences; young person and caseworker communication; young person and caseworker engagement.

Shkedi (2005, p.87, 88) further suggests that the emerging categories are indicative of the relations between the researcher's conceptual perspective and the interview data they have collected. The categories are formed as a result of discussions between the conceptual perspectives and the interview data. The concepts are inductively distilled from the interview data. These emerging concepts are deductively checked against the researcher's conceptual perspective. This on-going discussion validates both the emerging concepts and the conceptual perspective. Again, emerging concepts had to be given a name encapsulating its essence that would remain for the duration of the explication, findings and discussion. Each concept was given a name using the natural language of the participants or from the researcher's analytic interests (Shkedi 2005, p.86). Either way, the given name must logically relate to the data it represents. This resulted in the refinement of both the concept names of the conceptual perspective of which both must reflect the data imparted by the participants.

Following on, the next four chapters will report findings from the data. The first two findings chapters will explore the experiences of the first face-to-face contacts. Chapter 5 will draw out defining experiences for young men whilst chapter 6 will do likewise for caseworker experiences. Furthermore, the second two findings chapters will explore experiences of subsequent face-to-face contacts as the journey through the court order continued. Chapter 7 will draw out defining experiences that helped young men to engage with their caseworker. Chapter 8 will draw out specific approaches and techniques they used to encourage and sustain a collaborative partnership.

CHAPTER 5 Young Men's Experiences of Their First Face-to-Face Contact

The beginning of statutory community supervision requires a young man and an allocated caseworker to meet up face-to-face. The purpose of this initial contact is to introduce each other and for the caseworker to complete an AssetPlus assessment. This chapter outlines and discusses findings concerning the first time the young men met with their caseworker. The overarching theme of this chapter, arising from the young men's narratives, is their changing initial opinions of caseworkers. It will be shown that most began with low expectations and negative assumptions about casework and what their caseworker would be like. However, these fears, for the most part, turned out to be unfounded. Their narratives show that the first face-to-face contact was an emotional experience that had a profound impact on their motivation to engage with their caseworker during future contacts.

In tracking this journey from negative assumptions to positive engagement, this chapter presents what was experienced by the young men that improved their motivation to engage. To achieve this, the chapter is divided into two parts. The first part explores prejudgements formed about caseworkers. The data show that it was due to these prejudgements that uncomfortable experiences of first face-to-face contacts were expected. It will be further shown that these expectations generated emotions of either anxiety or resentment that drove their unwillingness to fully engage and not accept the authority of the caseworker in the first instance. Despite these negative expectations, most young men said that they wanted to be treated like decent human beings in spite of their offending behaviour.

The second part brings together some examples of first face-to-face contacts that had an impact on their willingness to engage. Key factors were the initial presentation of their caseworker and the manner in which the conversation was held. The young men said that these experiences were instrumental to them gradually improving their motivation to engage during subsequent face-to-face contacts. This then eventually led onto accepting the authority of the caseworker therefore assenting legitimacy. It will be further shown that one barrier to initial engagement and accepting the caseworker was uncertainties of trust. For these young men, this barrier was overcome only when they had experienced trustworthiness and genuineness from their caseworker. This, therefore, is a behavioural signifier that young men actively construct an image of a caseworker through personal interactions. It was only after experiences of emotional positivity and a demonstration of 'usefulness' did the young men accept the caseworker's intrusive intervention demand by the court order.

5.1 Preparing for the first Face-to-Face Contact

The data show that most of the young men entered the first face-to-face contact with negative opinions of caseworkers and the youth justice system. It was through this negativity that they refused to accept the authority of the caseworker in the first instance. Anxiety was expressed in relation to uncertainties about their caseworker's role, further punitive reproaches and the demands of the work they were expected to do. Also, jealousy was expressed by one young man through resentment of a caseworker's life situation. It was identified that these emotions were developed as a consequence of an incomplete picture they had of their caseworker. This missing information was partially filled in with past experiences they had had with other professionals. It was this that caused them to prejudge

future interactions they expected to be uncomfortable experiences. Alongside these expectations, this section also presents how some of the young men said they wanted to be treated by their caseworker during the first face-to-face contact in a humanistic manner. It will also be shown that one young man did not express any emotions regarding his first contact. For him, even after the event he was only able to consider it as something that he had to endure.

One of the emotions discussed by most young men was their anxiety about meeting up with their caseworker for the first time. One young man expressed his emotions outright.

> *I just got anxious about it and worked up. (YP2)*

Some explained the cause of their anxiety was because they were unsure about their caseworker's role and mode of interacting.

> *Just not knowing what their actual role is. Like, it's just like to me their role could be a copper but I don't know that. The role that I heard is they only work with the police and the solicitors and the courts. So, that's what I thought it all works in one thing. That's what I thought anyway. (YP1)*

> *Before I met him, I just thought obviously he's like a teacher from school or something like that. So, it wasn't and I was never keen on teachers and didn't do very good at school so I wasn't looking forward to it. (YP8)*

> *Strange because it was a new person who I didn't know who needed to do work with me. I was worried because it was a new person and I didn't know her and I'd never seen her and that because of my autism. (YP4)*

The first two presentations of anxiety appeared to be rooted in past experiences of negative interactions with authoritative people whilst the third said that mental health issues caused by his autism induced anxieties about meeting up. Previous negative experiences with authority preclude legitimising new authoritative interventions.

Further examples of anxiety were caused by expecting harsh words as a response to their criminal behaviour.

> *I was nervous because I didn't know what was going to be said. I didn't know whether if people were going to be having a go at me and things like that. And I didn't know what it would be like. I thought it would be a lot of hard work sort of thing. I was expecting just to, the first time I met them for them to sit there and have a massive rant at me about it and tell me that you should, that I shouldn't be doing it and I'm liable to end up in prison and things like that. It's not the sort of thing you want to hear but it's what you expect when you're working with someone who's on the youth offending team, sort of thing. (YP2)*

> *I was expecting someone, like after standing up in court and that and the judge being so blunt about things I just thought "Oh no. I'm to go down here and the guy's going to be screaming at me, screaming down my ear and everything like telling me that I need to be doing things and that and getting on my nerves. (YP7)*

Similar examples of reluctance to engage in the first instance have been highlighted by theorists (Perlman, 1979; Trevithick, 2003; Trotter, 2006; Bateman and Hazel 2013). These narratives show how fear of further punitive reproaches contributed to anxieties and,

therefore, sensitised for an uncomfortable experience through possible acts of humiliation which further demotivated them to engage. This is explained through experiences of previous relationships as a source of distress (McNeill, 2009) projected onto the pending relationship. This brings into play different uses of self (Kaushik 2017; Trevithick 2018). In this initial instance, Trevithick's (2018) suggestion of a 'protective self' is being used to hide and protect the 'true self' until the young men feel that it is safe to do so.

Another emotion described by one young man was jealously. He said that he assumed most caseworkers have had a good life and had been supported to help them develop their positive life circumstances. This was in stark contrast to his own life as he looked enviously upon his caseworker's earning capacity.

> *So, obviously like, I'm not saying all of them but like you and all other youth offending workers been brought up with a good life if you know what I mean. Like had things there for you. You didn't have to go out offending for money. You didn't have to go skint or anything. Always had money. (YP5)*

It was through the perception of such differences that resentment developed towards his caseworker. He further used his resentment as a reason to resist engaging.

> *Like, it's just when, don't know what to fucking say. When they eventually understand your situation, then that's when they can start helping you. (YP5)*

To overcome this barrier, his caseworker had to develop an understanding of his current life situation. This would then act as a trigger to engage in meaningful conversations.

In chapter 2.1 of this thesis, "Justice vs Welfare through Constructions of the Child", the concept of constructing and reconstructing children and childhood was explored to bring to

light some of the labels assigned to young people who cause trouble. It was suggested that it was the label that people respond to rather than the person behind the label. The data in this study shows the same process – but the other way round. The young men had built a mental construction of their caseworker characterised by the role they perform rather than the real-life characteristics of the person that performs the role. The construction of this label concentrated on the power status of the role along with possible punitive reactions. The data shows that it was the *label* that the young man had primed themselves to interact with, not the actual person behind the label.

This observation also relates to Tuckman's (1965) forming stage suggesting that people start off being defensive therefore preventing any meaningful task-related work. A marker of this stage is anxiety as a manifestation of uncertainty when interpersonal sensitivities are exposed. Characteristics of this stage are testing each other to discover acceptable behaviours and developing a sense of dependency and trust. The data show hesitancy towards inclusion with defence mechanisms creating barriers in preparation for self-preservation. These barriers are built around doubt of being treated well and the need for a sense of personal protection from potential harm. For these young men resistance and tentative engagement was purposefully created in response to expectations of being treated in a punitive manner. The young men appear to remain in their emotional comfort zone in anticipation of the unknown. In making this point, examples of punitive responses sensitising the possibility of emotional hurt were given. It is suggested they are waiting for the caseworker to show their real-life characteristics before moving out of their comfort zone.

In spite of previous negativity shown, not all service users identified negative emotions prior to the first face-to-face contact. One young man said that even though he was uncertain as to how his caseworker would interact, he did not have any prejudgements.

> *Not sure. Just like, I don't know really. I wasn't really that bothered. Something I had to do so I just did it. (YP6)*

Another also said he did not know what the interactions were going to be like with his caseworker.

> *Well, I didn't know what to expect really. I was expecting boring visits that would annoy me. I thought they was going to try and put me in something I didn't want to do. I thought they was going to say "You're doing this, this, this and this". (YP3)*

However, he was more concerned about what he was expected to do. In response to this expectation, he spoke about the mental coping strategy he had prepared for the initial contact.

> *I thought I could get it over and done with as quickly as possible with them. That was what I was thinking. (YP3)*

This shows that there is another element of contact work to be aware of that could cause resistance. As well as concerns around personal interactions there are also concerns around the tasks that have to be undertaken. Tuckman's theory recognises that people display emotions concerning task related behaviours. During the first stage of *forming* there is an orientation towards identifying tasks required to be done that has an emotional impact. This

suggests that caseworkers have to address expectations of task requirements as well as interpersonal challenges.

As well as talking about how they *expected* to be treated by their caseworker, the research also explored how young men *wanted* to be treated during the first face-to-face contact, which was to be treated as good people and spoken to in a respectful manner in spite of the offences they have committed.

> *Even though you might have been a bad man, think you're a good person but deserved to be treated, like you still desire like fun. Like that just isn't the way to speak to someone. Regardless of how they are, that person then they can still be a good person but that thing's happened to them. And they just should you that you wasn't a bad person, you was a good person. (YP7)*

> *Just like a normal person. And he doesn't, like I would say, he doesn't talk to you like lower than or anything. Just because you like, your case, you know what I mean? Like some people might talk down to you, like they'll be a bit snobby. (YP8)*

> *Treating them (young people) with respect and don't talk down to them (young people) (YP9)*

Whilst these young men acknowledged that their offending behaviour was not acceptable, they did not consider themselves to be bad people. In contrast to their expectations of being treated punitively by their caseworker, they said that they wanted to be treated as good people. They explained that they *did not* want their caseworker to use their power to dominate and talk down to them. Instead, they wanted their caseworker to treat them as a

normal person in spite of being in the criminal justice system. This is an acknowledgement by the young men of the socially constructed labels that have been assigned to them. They show awareness of how they have been negatively constructed through their behaviour rather than through their life experiences.

One young man explained that it would have a detrimental impact on his motivation to engage if his caseworker was to talk down at him because it brought back memories of negative experiences at school.

> *It would make me angry because that's what I used to be like in school and I didn't get along when I was in school (YP9)*

It appears that this young man is asking for a different mode of interaction than those he had previously experienced. Instead, his caseworker needs to create positive emotions and memories instead of the negative ones he experienced in the past.

Another young man also explained that shouting at him would have a negative impact on his engagement due to previous experiences from other professionals.

> *It's just like people trying to tell me off rather than help me. It's just the worst thing you can do to someone in my situation. It would have just made me more angry because I'm being told off for something again when I've already been told off for it. I've already been told off in front of a judge. (YP7)*

Three others said that they wanted their caseworker to show respect in the manner they talk to them.

Speak to them [the young person] how they, speak how you want to be spoken to. If you want to be spoken to alright then speak to the young offender alright. If you want to get spoken to like a piece of shit, talk to them like a piece of shit. (YP5)

So just speak to me with respect and I'll speak back to them with respect. If they speak to me like, I don't know, in a, if they're not speaking to me properly then I won't speak to them properly. (YP6)

I guess in like their kind of job thing, like treat people like you want to be treated is a big, is a big thing kind of thing. (YP8)

They suggested that a caseworker should demonstrate the quality of interactions required to encourage them to reciprocate in kind.

It has been shown that all of the young men had thought about the first face-to-face contact and had been uncertain about how their caseworker would interact due to past experiences. It is suggested that strategies of resistance were developed in preparation of the first face-to-face due to previous negative labelling of their caseworker. As a consequence, most were expecting an uncomfortable experience. However, in spite of their expectations, they said they wanted the caseworker to interact within them as a person and be treated with respect. Farrall (2002) states that desistance is a process that imbues the efforts of both offender and caseworker. It is a journey of transition requiring a new personal identity that needs to be 'lived' (McNeill 2012). To begin the transitional journey, Bridges (2004) explains the first phase is 'letting go' of the current way of life before a new life can be developed. This section suggests that the young men make an informed decision

to start the transition only when they tentatively accept the authority of their caseworker and can trust them to be honest with them going forward. To achieve this, the young men were using a 'protective self' in anticipation of their caseworker revealing some aspects of their 'true self' so that they could make an informed decision as to the safety of revealing their 'true self'. It appears that this could be a key moment for young men assenting authority to their caseworker.

5.2 The First Face-to-Face Contact

The local authority where the data was collected had a policy instructing caseworkers to have face-to-face contacts out in the community. The reason for meeting up with young people in the community is an implementation of the principles of effective practice (McGuire and Priestley, 1995). One of these is the "community-based" principle that recommends interventions are most effective when they take place in an environment that has positive meaning for the young person. It is further inferred that the YJS office has a negative meaning for a young person therefore meeting in the community is more effective in encouraging a young person to engage and comply with instructions.

All of the young men said their initial contact was either at a parent's house, grandparent's house or their own accommodation. For a home visit the young man has to be in the house waiting for their caseworker. The data shows two key experiences that improved their willingness to engage with their caseworker. The first was the initial presentation of a caseworker; this had an immediate impact on the perception gained by a young man of his caseworker. The second was the manner in which the caseworker conducted the conversation; this had an impact on their motivation to engage.

Waiting for their caseworker was an anxious period. When the caseworker arrives, letting them into the house, their world was described as an uncomfortable experience.

> *When they came round to my house it was alright but it felt a bit weird because it's not happened before. It's like meeting, like someone you don't know randomly out of nowhere comes into your actual house, meeting your family members and all that. And then actually talking in your house and you don't know them from Adam. It was a bit weird for me. (YP1)*

> *It's a bit weird because you don't normally just let people in that you don't know. But you feel kind of uncomfortable at first but it gets better. You start to become more comfortable with it when you start talking and that. (YP2)*

> *The first time I met up with them was at my mum's house. To begin with it was static. Like I wasn't for talking or anything. (YP8)*

> *It was meeting someone for the first time. It's a bit awkward at first but as soon as you get to know them it's like just someone like a friend eventually. It's like just someone there but obviously they're older. (YP9)*

Whilst the initial face-to-face contact was often an awkward or 'weird' experience, these young men say that subsequent contacts were more comfortable experiences. The data shows the transition for this experience began in the very first instance when caseworkers introduced themselves using a friendly and welcoming manner.

> *It made me feel welcome sort of thing even though it was them coming into my house like where I live and like I wanted to talk to them because they were polite and everything. (YP2)*

But he didn't he just, when I first spoke to him I just knew it wasn't anything like that. He was quite friendly. He came across nice, he introduced himself, shook my hand and that. Just quite friendly. Just knew he was a friendly person. (YP7)

Obviously I wasn't looking forward to it but when you like obviously know the, you actually meet the people that you're working with it's, it's fine. Everyone's alright. (YP9)

It appears that overcoming initial reluctance to engage was achieved by using a friendly and welcoming manner which helped to ease initial anxieties and therefore, the young men become more willing to engage in conversation. These caseworkers acted in the manner wanted by the young men which was confounded by their expectations of an uncomfortable experience. As a consequence, a conscious decision was made to engage during the initial meeting based upon the presentation of their caseworker. The data shows that these experiences are in-line with Tuckman's first stage of forming by learning to act and relate to each other. The young man is testing the caseworker's behaviour to see if it is acceptable to him. This is revealed by the caseworker demonstrating their own personal characteristics as opposed to those expected of the role. In these instances, if the caseworkers' behaviour is deemed acceptable then a degree of engagement was assured during the contact. Using Frederick et al's (2004) categories of engagement, the data show that emotional engagement is the primary connection that the young men responded to. Also, acknowledging the emotions of the self (Hoschschild 1979) and the other person (Thoits 1996) is a factor in creating an appropriate working situation. This is in contrast to moving immediately into offending programmes: behavioural engagement, and developing new ways of thinking: cognitive engagement.

However, this did not happen for all young men. One reported that his experience of first face-to-face contact was not a positive encounter.

> *<caseworker> were a prick. A right arse. (YM5)*

When asked to elaborate further, he said that he did not like the way his caseworker was strict with him.

> *Well, would you like someone to be strict with you that you didn't know? Hated it. I didn't like <caseworker> at first (YM5)*

This experience had confirmed his expectations of a negative experience which contributed to his lack of willingness to engage. The personal characteristics of the caseworker were in-line with the envisaged characteristics of the role. This reaffirmed the feeling he could not trust his caseworker therefore was not willing to engage at this point in time. He did not tolerate the caseworker's behaviour therefore decided not to join as a partnership. This young man definitely did not accept the authority of his caseworker to intervene in his life. This was made clear through his emotional response projected towards the caseworker. This example shows that caseworker behaviours can create barriers that prevent engagement.

Following the initial greetings, the caseworker and young man are expected to engage in conversation. The data suggest this first face-to-face contact is one of the most important points of the relationship. Indeed, Bateman and Hazel (2013) found that resistive behaviours are at their sharpest at the initial point of contact. Examples of using strategies of resistance were identified that also highlighted signs of possible future conflicts. Two young men described how initial behaviours impacted on their judgements of their caseworker and

therefore their willingness to engage during subsequent face-to-face meetings. They said that they were prepared to withdraw engagement if they could not interact with their caseworker.

> *If you get a long order and you don't, you don't get on then [loud exhalation of breath] you're best off going back to court. But if you get the relationship with the thingy you're sorted. Your whole order sorted. You're just nice really aren't you? (YP1)*

> *I think, on the whole order and, I guess everyone may or may not say this, out of the whole order, I guess the first time you meet your caseworker will determine how well your order will go. Just obviously you get your first impression don't you? Obviously if they give off the impression, if you get the impression of "No, I don't like this guy" kind of thing there's no like motivation you know like there's no aspects like or anything generally turning up and doing like helping me. Do you know what I mean? I think that's why people breach so much. (YP8)*

This also demonstrates that emotional and interactional elements from the young man's perspective contribute towards the perception gained of his caseworker. The findings chapter "Young Men's Experiences During Subsequent Face-to-Face Contacts" will show that, eventually, all of the young men accepted the authority of their caseworker. Furthermore, this was also reflective of the sample. This was demonstrated through a culmination of steps moving towards desistance. The concept of authority was replaced with the concept of an emotional bond by each young man as they improved their motivation to engage and comply with suggestions; not necessarily instructions.

The data show different levels of engagement during first face-to-face contacts. One young man said he engaged with his caseworker from the first contact because he was made to feel comfortable.

> *It's just they're quite, they're just nice people from the moment you first meet them. So, you're just automatically comfortable around them, sort of thing. Like, I know a few people who wouldn't be but I was. I don't know why. They just come across as really nice people the moment you meet them which makes it a lot easier to work with them. (YP2)*

Experiencing his caseworker being a nice person made it easier for him to accept his presence and work with him. It appears that the initial presentation determined whether young men feel as though they could trust and depend on the caseworker in the first instance. However, some others enacted defence mechanisms whilst they gathered personal experiences of the caseworker.

Two young men said their minimal engagement was because they did not know if they could trust their caseworker.

> *It's just that for me there has to be that little barrier of trust there kind of, before I, you know what I mean before I'm like, nice and proper, you know what I mean. Like there has to be a barrier of trust. (YP8)*

> *I'm not really open to people that I first meet. I'm, it takes me a couple times to like open up to someone I first meet and talk properly. (YP9)*

Another young man was more specific with his reasons for having a lack of trust. He said he was being guarded about revealing too much information in response to intrusive, personal

questions because he thought that his caseworker was trying to trick him into giving important personal information.

> *Thought like she was going to snitch me up or just wary of what to say or if I say something, am I tripping myself up into stuff? They might ask me a question and I might answer it but it's a trick question. (YP1)*

This shows the presence of doubt around trusting the caseworker. It appears these young men engaged minimally during the first face-to-face contact because they were unsure how their caseworker would use or abuse their position of power. Hesitancy in participation is noted as they appear to be testing the behaviours of caseworkers for signs of safety. There is guardedness about responses from the young men who display a lack of trust that they will get the responses they want from the caseworker. This position is in-line with suspicions of intentions and motivations developed from within the community about police and social services that have to be overcome by the caseworker (Wilson, 2006; Yates, 2006). A sense of separation is maintained by resisting becoming dependent and reliant on the caseworker. It appears that a safe environment has to be demonstrated by the caseworker. Once this has been experienced by the young man then compliance to instructions is more likely to begin.

Following on, most young men said that they gradually started to engage more with their caseworker over subsequent meetings because of improvement in trust. One young man explained that he slowly recognised his caseworker was trustworthy through on-going experiences as a matter of trial and error.

> *Well obviously, I did interact straight away because he was obviously helping my case. Like I guess you can like just got them like that atmosphere kind of thing.*

Like we're just there. Like, I guess like if you talk to certain people you can tell straight away like this guy like is not really trustworthy. I don't really, you know what I mean but, no he was fine. But I, about like, I don't know like, probably after a couple of times with him I was comfortable with him. (YP8)

Another young man described how his guarded approach became more open when he realised his caseworker was genuinely interested in him as a person.

When I speak to people I'm not too fussed to start with. They have to keep seeing me, keep seeing me to talk to me until I think "Yes, they're alright". [...] I didn't really talk much. She was asking questions and I was saying yes and no. And then, I think it was after three visits then when I started talking to her a bit more. Like they were actually interested and they actually listened. That's actually when I took an interest in actually trusting them. (YP3)

Furthermore, being listened to made him feel like his caseworker was genuinely interested in his life situation. The caseworker was also willing to invest his own emotional energy into improving his life situation. After experiencing this he made a conscious decision that he could trust his caseworker. It appears that overcoming initial suspicions can be achieved by showing emotional presence through actively listening and being genuinely interested in a young man.

Some young men also spoke about how their caseworker interacted with them in the manner they wanted. One young man expressed his relief at not being made to do tasks that he would not enjoy.

I was expecting crap work or where they're telling me that I shouldn't do this and I shouldn't do that. They didn't tell me what to do. (YP3)

Another young man expressed his relief at the cessation of the punitive nature of contacts with professionals.

Screaming down my ear and everything like telling me that I need to be doing things and that and getting on my nerves. But he didn't he just, when I first spoke to him I just knew it wasn't anything like that. Just made me feel like being given a chance. Like someone was willing to help me not I'd have to do it by myself (YP7)

For him this was a pivotal moment that convinced him not to withdraw from engaging with his caseworker.

I wouldn't have liked it that much. I would have just either not listened to him or just not even spoke to him. (YP7)

Interestingly, this is an example of a young man giving his caseworker an opportunity to create a situation to foster engagement. It might not have been obvious to the caseworker but if the response to the young man had not been favourable then it is possible the opportunity to help this young man turn his life around would have been missed. Young men do want to comply with their caseworker but only if it is worth doing so from their perspective.

As well as the first contact being a pivotal moment, the data also shows that the initial engagement in the substantive work was significant. One young man spoke about the

daunting feelings of being overwhelmed about the work he was expected to do during the course of the order.

> *Loads of writing. They was talking and saying their name and what their role is. Then we was just doing loads of papers like ticking and all the stuff they said like you have to go through when you're starting work. It was a bit, it just felt a bit long. From the start as well it was only from the start and I was thinking "I've got months of this". (YP1)*

However, another spoke about how his caseworker prevented him from being overwhelmed by explaining the court order to him.

> *She stayed for half an hour to 45 minutes I think it was. That was because she was telling me what I would be doing and telling me about my order as well. Explaining everything. That was a bit boring. I got everything explained to me in the order. We've even got the letter for it as well. (YP3)*

This is an example of an emotional response generated by feelings of being overwhelmed. Through discussion, the discrepancy between expectations and reality had been raised, explored and dealt with. This example shows how resistance could form and become problematic during future contacts if it is not dealt with in the moment. Likewise, and just as significant, situations and interactions can be created by the caseworker that create resistance and an unwillingness to comply meaningfully.

These are all examples of young men testing caseworkers' behaviours. Once they had made the decision that the caseworker could be trusted, a sense of co-operation began to be demonstrated. This appears to be the beginning of a young man accepting the authority of a

caseworker and complying meaningfully with instructions. This concurs with characteristics suggested by Tuckman's *forming* stage that individualisation is reduced as the young man emotionally moves towards his caseworker to form a partnership. Also, with Bottoms (2002) assertion that young people will comply when they feel that they are being treated in a fair and just manner. Furthermore, this acts as a stimulus towards Stephenson et al's (2011) statement that working together conveys a sense of mutuality by connecting on an emotional level. This situation can be said to be the foundation from which a transition starts as a journey towards desistance (Farrall 2002; Bridges 2004).

These findings are consistent with studies that identify service users are more likely to engage when workers pay attention to emotional feelings and demonstrate a caring and sensitive nature (Doel, 2010). These accounts line up with Henriksen et al's (2008) findings that caseworkers who displayed a positive emotional depth created an affective turn in young people. Doing this encouraged them to settle more quickly into the relationship.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that most of the young men held a perception of their caseworker that contained negative prejudgements prior to the first face-to-face contact. Some of them said this was because they were uncertain about their caseworker and did not know how they would interact with them. In response to this uncertainty, they made assumptions about possible interactions based upon their previous experiences with authoritative people which had generally been negative. It appears that these past experiences were transposed onto possible future experiences and in doing so contributed to creating expectations of an uncomfortable first contact.

In contrast to how they expected to be treated, most of the young men reported that they wanted to be treated respectfully and as good people by their caseworker. Their narratives suggest they wanted a positive experience of their first face-to-face contact. Also, they reported that their motivation to engage would be unlikely to improve if their caseworker interacted according to their negative expectations.

It was demonstrated that the first face-to-face contact was a crucial moment because of the need to achieve legitimacy and get compliance from the young men to start the transition towards desistance. Also, creating a positive effect had an impact on their motivation to engage during subsequent contacts. The findings suggest that a young man might take a cautious approach during the first face-to-face contact due to possible negative assumptions and expectations they may hold about their caseworker. However, most young men reported a positive experience of their first face-to-face contact when a caseworker presented in a friendly and welcoming manner and interacted in a manner that was inclusive of the young man. This was in contrast to the stereotypical image some held of authoritative figures.

All of the young men made judgements using the experiences they had with their caseworker during the first face-to-face contact. Based upon their judgement they reported making a decision about whether or not they would be motivated to engage further. This shows that connecting through emotional engagement causes strategies of resistance to be reduced. Concerns around doubt expressed as a lack of trust were addressed through positive interactions. It has been shown that going through these experiences changed a young man's perception of a coercive nature of involvement. Instead, it is argued, that

engaging on an emotional level creates an affective turn that encourages a young man to settle more quickly into the relationship.

The next chapter outlines and explores the experiences of initial first face-to-face contacts from the perspective of caseworkers.

CHAPTER 6 Caseworkers' Experiences of First Face-to-Face Contacts

After they are sentenced, a young person is added to the caseload of a youth justice service caseworker for the purpose of being supervised in the community. During community supervision, a caseworker is required to intervene in the life of a young person to prevent further offending. One aspect of the caseworker role is instructing a young person to comply with certain aspects related to the court order such as appointments and cessation of offending behaviour. The caseworkers, somehow, have to gain acceptance of their authority and power to intervene in the life of a young person to achieve this aim (Bottoms 2002). This chapter outlines and discusses findings concerning the first time a caseworker met up with a young man. As already pointed out these were not the same young men who were included in the study but the caseworkers were referring to their experiences in general. The overarching theme of this chapter arising from caseworker narratives is the dynamic use of dual roles to achieve legitimacy from a young person: authoritative law-enforcement role or friendlier helping role. In the first instance, it will be shown that, depending on the immediate situation, caseworkers chose different role-types to engage with a young man.

In exploring uses of and transitioning between these roles, this chapter presents how the caseworkers attempt to ensure on-going engagement through to gaining some level of compliance. To achieve this, the chapter is split into three parts. The first part reports some reasons why caseworkers emphasise the importance of establishing an emotional engagement within the working relationship in the first instance. This is in preference to establishing behavioural or cognitive engagement related to intervention work. However,

they also identify some challenges in establishing relationships due to young men's negative prior life experiences.

The second part explores how caseworkers prepared for the first face-to-face contact. Initially, it shows that there was a temptation to form negative pre-judgements about the young man.

The third part illustrates some experiences of first face-to-face contacts that demonstrate approaches to encourage positive engagement and compliance. It will be shown that there is a naturally occurring process starting from knocking on the door to engaging in the substantive conversation, collecting personal and sensitive information, through to completing the assessment. It will also be shown that caseworkers manage uncertainty, unpredictability and emotions (their own and others) when interacting with young men.

6.1 The Benefits of Establishing a Relationship

All caseworkers recognised the importance of establishing a relationship in the first instance in preference to starting task-based work. They spoke firmly about the necessity of establishing a relationship as a platform to ensure compliance for future intervention work. Three caseworkers said that attempts to use behavioural interventions are not going to work because the young men will most probably not engage as effectively as they could.

> *So, I think if you can at least build up a relationship and then lead into what you're doing they'll have a great understand why you're doing what you're doing. (CW2)*

You're not going to get anywhere if the young person doesn't engage with you. You know, your building a relationship is more important than starting the intervention work. (CW3)

There's no point in doing intervention work with somebody you've not got a relationship with because they're just not going to listen. (CW11)

Using Fredericks et al's (2004) categorisations of engagement; the data shows that emotional engagement is prioritised over behavioural and cognitive engagement in the first instance. In supporting this approach, some caseworkers identified specific benefits of establishing a relationship. Three caseworkers said that a young man is more likely to open up and talk about his life situation if he is feeling relaxed.

The more you get to know someone just more open I find they are with you. (CW2)

So, when you first meet a young person it's about rapport building, it's about getting on with them, about being able to help them to feel relaxed, to open up. (CW3)

It's nice when you can build that relationship. When you can see them opening up to you. Just when you can have that bit of banter with them. (CW11)

On the point of recidivism, one reported that challenging the underlying reasons for offending behaviour is more successful once a relationship has been established.

Something I've found useful from a training event I went on was sometimes professionals say "Well, I'll build up a relationship first before I start to challenge them". (CW1)

However, there was also recognition that relationships require time and effort to develop. Two caseworkers said a relationship evolves over many sessions of building familiarity with each other.

So, just start off getting to know the young person. Spend your first couple of sessions getting to know them. Just take your time and get on with it. (CW3)

I spend normally a couple of sessions, three sessions getting to know them so it makes the rest of the order a lot easier. So, once you are familiar with them, once you and vice versa as well, it just makes it a lot easier. (CW9)

These experiences are in-line with Tuckman's (1965) hypothesis of a forming stage. It is during this stage that people orient towards each other to develop familiarity. The purpose is to learn about each other along with defining operational parameters such as boundaries and interactional behaviours. This creates a common base from which interventions can progress.

One caseworker specifically made the point that some 16 and 17 year olds are capable of developing a close relationship because they have developed the ability to objectively and critically reflect on their behaviour.

I certainly think that as you get older, as you get to 16 to 17, you do end up forming a close relationship, professional relationship with young people than a

little bit earlier than the younger lads. You know, sometimes when I get an 11 year old or something like that it's very different than with a 17 year old. It's their ability to reflect. So with an 11 year old it's … issues of pretty much behavioural. You know, it's about patterns of behaviour that have been reinforced by teachers or schools or peers or parents and their ability to step out of that and look at it objectively and analyse it and criticise it. Everything's quite limited at 11. (CW1)

This suggests that emotional engagement is more likely with older adolescents than the young ones. However, whilst all caseworkers have reported they had formed close relationships, examples were also given of when relationships had not been formed. For example, one caseworker reported struggling to establish close relationships because of the impact of challenging life experiences.

The common theme with young people is difficulty in relationships and the difficulty in valuing relationships and difficulty in their primary care relationships they've had. They're constantly under threat of being chucked out of home and spend long weekends or weeks with relatives sort of to get out of people's hair (CW4)

This highlights the challenges ahead for caseworkers. Whilst the literature has identified the importance of connecting on an emotional level, it has been shown here that some young men do not possess the ability to achieve this. One reason given is that young men's previous experiences of malformed relationships have been normalised which can act as resistance towards acknowledging the authority of caseworkers (Bottoms 2002).

Again, with reference to Tuckman's forming stage, this is demonstrative of problems of inclusion and commitment for some people. It has been shown that people come together with behaviours formed in their personal environment. These could act as barriers in the first instance and therefore need addressing before any meaningful work can begin.

This section has reported that the initial aim is to achieve some level of compliance and acceptance of authority in the first instance. To achieve this, it was reported that caseworkers attempt to establish emotional engagement in priority to behavioural and cognitive engagement. Examples were shown that young men were more likely to *open up* during conversations during the first contact when an emotional connection was made. This suggests that emotional engagement underpins both behavioural and cognitive engagement. However, examples were also given of young men who the caseworkers saw as not capable of developing positive engagement due to the effects of difficult relationships experienced in their past. It has been shown that these caseworkers acknowledge the importance of establishing a relationship but they also acknowledge challenges of achieving this aim.

The next section explores how the caseworkers said they prepared for the first face-to-face contact.

6.2 Preparing for the First Face-to-Face Contact

All caseworkers actively prepared for the first face-to-face contact. This section will show two elements of preparation. First, constructing an image of a young man through information collected from other authoritative sources that is largely incomplete and portrays a negative view. Second, managing any emotions they felt around entering into the unknown of the young man's life. It will be shown that uncertainties around presentation of

the young man and anxiety about the possibility of uncovering serious issues not recorded in social service databases shaped these emotions.

All caseworkers spoke about constructing an image of a young man before meeting up face-to-face. One caseworker said having knowledge about the young man and family contributed positively to this process.

> *I'll always do my research as far as I can on the family because I need to know, that first, you only get that, I do believe, as corny as that my sound, you get that one shot to make that first impression and that kid will know the minute you walk through that door whether you know about them, interested in them and that you're willing to work with them, you know, no matter what. (CW8)*

This caseworker is making a statement of intent to a young man. This gesture makes it clear that the caseworker is willing to invest time and effort by demonstrating a personal interest. This shows that for some caseworkers, practice on the frontline is imbued with a sense of working together in a partnership.

Another caseworker reported using information retrieved from a variety of official sources to construct an image of a young man.

> *You can always have a picture in your head about a young person before you've even met them because you'll read a police statement so in there, there will be quite a bit of information around what happened. So you might know that the offence happened under the influence or with friends or at a certain time of day, something like that. Also, we can access social care database so we'll know what*

social care involvement they've had before we go. We can speak to other agencies before we go. (CW11)

An image of the young man embodying various characteristics relating to attitudes, behaviours and life circumstances has been constructed. Information from the police is used to understand the type of criminal activity and seriousness of crimes. Sometimes, social services will have been involved in a young person's life. They might have been estranged from their birth family through adoption, fostering or in a care home. They might be currently in the family home and be subjected to child protection issues. This gives an indication of the life pressures the young men are currently enduring. Other agencies such as GPs and schools provide information relating to health and education respectively.

It has to be recognised that the sources of this information are mostly from authoritative people with whom the young man most probably had negative interactions. The caseworkers did not mention extracting any positive or constructive information so it is implied that there will be little in the way of positive comments due to the nature of information which is held on police and social service databases. As a consequence, mainly negative aspects of a young man's life will be reported. However, two caseworkers were adamant that it was not advisable to form any sort of judgement prior to the first contact.

I don't think you can have, you can't go in, if you're going in with prejudgements then the young people are going to, it's like your opinions have already been formed. Now you don't know that person that you're going to be working with. (CW10)

It would be easy to but I'd like to think it's about building a picture. But then to go in and have a judgement about that young person before I've even met them is a little bit unprofessional I think. (CW11)

It is this information gathering exercise that sets a platform for the type of work required and nature of relationship that will be formed. Three caseworkers identified that accepting other people's opinions without question could lead to reinforcing negative labels that perpetuates assumed ways of working.

I've had kids where I know about their reputation, I've had other young people, other workers or other people from their offending history like "Oh, that person's this and that" and if I walked into that room believing all of that or taken on board all of that, I'm doing an injustice to that young person because I'm immediately walking through that door and I'm attaching a label and an assumption to them. And they've probably had that all their life. (CW8)

You've got all this information, I mean some of them, they might have offences that have been really serious. But there might be contributing factors that you don't know that have led to it. So, if you go in and do "Right, you've committed this really serious offence", you know I might, you know you might have already formed that opinion. If that's the case then you're kind of on a, the young person's on a bit of a downward slope straight away. (CW10)

People have different opinions on other people. So a teacher might have quite a negative opinion on him and I go to meet him and, you know, he's one of the nicest lads that you've met. But in school he might not get on well with teachers

and that might be his behaviour in school. So for me to go in and assume that I'm going to have trouble with him: "Oh, you know, he's going to be acting in a certain way" is not fair to him really. (CW11)

Previous experience has taught other caseworkers the virtue of suspending judgement until they have had direct experience of a young man.

The classic case is thinking "My god, I've got a right one here". Then when you meet that person you see some real strengths, you know, within their character and you think "I quite like you. You're quite a decent human being. You've just got a really bad hand at the moment, haven't you? You've got what we call 'Shit-life' syndrome" (CW4)

It's interesting like, something I look forward to actually is just to see if the puzzle matches [laughs]. Sometimes it does. Sometimes it doesn't. But that's all part of the work we do. (CW6)

They said they were guarded against forming judgements based on other people's opinions because previous experience had demonstrated such judgements do not necessarily reflect to the young man in reality. These statements suggest that the true nature of a young man is not represented within social care databases. Other people's opinions contain part of the truth about a young person, but these are based on a different set of experiences, not necessarily relevant to the current set of circumstances. There remain uncertainties about each young man prior to the initial contact therefore more information needs to be collected. In recognition of an incomplete picture, two caseworkers said they continued

constructing an image by collecting valuable information from the young man during contacts.

> *The first session will be gathering information for an assessment but that might take the first couple or three sessions. (CW1)*

> *The aim is to collect a lot of the information at the initial visit. (CW6)*

One caseworker talked about transcending negative constructions by asking a young person for their opinions on reported facts.

> *You've got to go in there and like "These are the facts and you've caused, you've done this offence, you've committed this offence. Tell me about it". And then you can get their view on it. Get their take and then you can work out where they are and where they're coming from. (CW10)*

This caseworker counter-balanced potentially biased information by remaining open-minded and allowing the young man to explain things from their perspective. Another caseworker spoke about putting to one side what other people have said about a young man and, instead, gained knowledge through their own experience of conversations and interactions.

> *What I tend to do is ignore any previous thing someone might have said or the way they have worked with them and just meet them myself face-to-face because you're not going to pick anything up until you actually meet them and know how they are presenting to you. (CW3)*

It was further pointed out that some young men will recognise that judgements are being made about them. It was suggested that negative judgements based solely on social care reports could form unconscious parts of the interactions and dictate the manner in which interactions could be carried out during the meeting.

> *I think anyone who [judges] or takes a look at the home environment and makes assumptions you'll, they'll see through that. The kids and the family will see through that if you do that if you've got that way of working. (CW8)*

Whilst this observation was made about negative judgements, the same point can be extended onto positive judgements. It can be inferred from the previous statement that young men sensing positive judgements from a caseworker will improve engagement (Rex 1999). This shows that these caseworkers are starting from a perspective of being "active and participatory" (McNeill 2015).

Further compounding problems of engagement, one caseworker reported difficulties collecting enough information to develop a full picture of a young man and his family due to short timescales prescribed by the YJB. It sets the foundation for the work caseworkers consider to be "reasonable, fair and encouraging" (McNeill 2006).

> *We've only got 20 days to allocate to the young person (to complete an assessment). If it gets allocated on a Tuesday and we've got appointments already booked in for that rest of the week, you can't even see them until the following week. And then you've got a really quick turnaround to get your paperwork done. (CW3)*

While the caseworkers constructed an image of a young man in preparation for the first contact, they also said it was not possible to develop a complete picture. This raised a problem of having a negatively skewed opinion of a young man that could adversely affect initial interactions. Countering this requires a caseworker to have direct experience of a young man and to explore opinions from his perspective. Collecting information directly from the young man is required in order to develop a balanced picture of him as a person.

For the first contact, caseworkers have to visit young men wherever they may be. This aspect of practice has been shown to be effective in encouraging engagement (McGuire and Priestley, 1995; Bateman and Hazel, 2013). However, the data also show that this can generate anxieties within caseworkers. In preparation for the first contact, caseworkers acknowledged their own concerns and emotions arising from the unknown factors relating to a young man and his environment. Two caseworkers reported anxieties driven by the possibility of uncovering dangerous lifestyles posing serious problems for a young man.

> *You're walking in to their world and you don't know what their world is and particularly with young people that are, you know, are at risk of sexual exploitation or are in dangerous relationships or anything. (CW8)*

> *To begin with it's probably quite intrusive. You'll be asking some quite sensitive questions. Some about family history, offending, family's offending, substance misuse, etcetera. So, that's quite sensitive. So, when I first meet them it's, it's "I need information from you". (CW9)*

Two more spoke of anxieties about making a good first impression on a young man and his family.

I feel a bit apprehensive, a bit nervous about the impression I going to make. Generally speaking, I'm more nervous about the impression I make on the parents than the young person. (CW1)

So, it's, that first meeting is the most important because obviously I'm representing [the service] (CW8)

Three others reported various conflicting emotions about the degree of engagement likely to be encountered.

I'm always kind of excited. I can't think of a better word to describe meeting a new person. That's what I enjoy and then sort of what they will be like and if they will be one who is going to work with me or not. I suppose it's a bit of an unknown. Depending on, I suppose, what I know perhaps about the family beforehand, it can make me a bit more anxious. But, just it gives you a bit of a buzz I suppose, something interesting, again because you are meeting someone new. Generally, that's why I like meeting new people. (CW2)

Before I met them, I'd be a bit anxious myself and actually I don't know how this lad's going to work with me. (CW3)

I think now my worry is more about; Is the kid going to engage? How are they going to worry me? Can we build that relationship? Are parents going to be there? Are they going to chip into the assessment? Are they going to want to get involved or are we going to be fighting battles with parents getting information all the time trying to get them on board a little bit? (CW11)

And one caseworker expressed concerns about health and safety issues when entering a house containing unknown risks.

> *If I've never met them there's always a bit of apprehension. When I was a bit more "wet behind the ears" as a case manager I would have been more worried about walking into a home environment in terms of maybe risk to myself or, you know, putting myself in an environment you don't know what's going to happen. (CW11)*

However, as a result of on-going practice, one caseworker reported not getting too anxious before the first face-to-face contact because of previous experiences. Instead it is now a matter of seeing what is presented and then responding accordingly.

> *I do wonder how it's going to be face-to-face. But nowadays, because I've met so many, young people I just tend to see what I'm faced with at the time. (CW3)*

Drawing these narratives together brings to light a range of emotions in anticipation of entering a young man's world as being imbued with uncertainty and unpredictability. Some caseworkers said they were nervous and anxious about what they would uncover whilst others said they were excited about the challenges ahead. These narratives demonstrate that caseworkers recognise working with young men is an emotional experience and do not conduct contacts in a cold and detached manner. Instead, they spoke about themselves as human beings who also have emotions and feelings that need to be managed accordingly: both their own and those of the young man (Hochschild 1979; Thoits 1996).

This section has explored some aspects of how caseworkers constructed an image of a young man in preparation for the first face-to-face meeting. The next section explores how

both the construction of the young man and emotional feelings are taken into the first face-to-face contact.

6.3 The first Face-to-Face Contact

All of the caseworkers described their experiences of the first actual face-to-face contacts with young men. The data show a journey starting with alerting the occupants through to collecting personal and sensitive information during the substantive conversation. First of all, entering the house will be explained in terms of alerting the young man, the first visual contact and having the initial conversation. Following this, the main part of this section will explore how caseworkers said they guided the transition onto the substantive conversation.

The data show the first stage of the face-to-face contact is alerting occupants of the caseworker's arrival. One caseworker reported that establishing engagement starts from the very first knock of the door.

> *It's about being, being approachable. When you knock on that door, you know, not putting the front door through by knocking so hard. (CW11)*

This caseworker appears to be mindful that different ways of alerting could affect the mood of a young man and his family. It is suggested that alerting the occupants in a manner that does not agitate their current mood could contribute to constructive engagement. This is in contrast to an aggressive style of alerting that could cause barriers to engagement to be put up instantly.

The next stage of engagement is when someone opens the door and first visual contact is made. Two caseworkers spoke about the impression they wanted to make when the door is opened. One caseworker wanted to present as an ordinary person through the manner in

which they dressed but still maintaining a sense of duty to the role. This is in contrast to presenting as an authoritative figure.

> *Turning up a bit more casually, smart casual. You're not turning up in a suit. This is why we can get away with being a bit more casual, the way we dress and, you know, the way we approach young people. Sometimes it's a way to get in there but you still have got to have that professionalism about you. (CW11)*

Another caseworker reported using the ritual of shaking hands as a sign of respect for the young man and the forthcoming engagement.

> *I always go to shake their hand out of respect every time and they can choose to do that. I don't make a big issue of it. (CW8)*

The next stage is entering the house. One caseworker reported keeping the initial verbal introductions simple.

> *It's just about introducing yourself. It's saying who you are. You know, introduce yourself to the young person. (CW11)*

Starting off with a humanistic and respectful approach plays down the authority of the caseworker so as to encourage engagement. Following this, different ways of entering the house were discussed. Two caseworkers spoke about offering some control to the young man allowing them to be invited into the private space of the family environment.

> *I always invite them to tell me where they want me to sit unless there's health and safety risks that I'm aware of. I know it might not be the going thing but, you know, I'm in their house, their territory and the minute I cross that territory I*

have to, I believe no matter what they've done, that's their house, that's their private space. I need to respect that. (CW8)

I always ask "Does it matter where I sit?" How many households, I know we have in ours, how many people sit in the same seat in your living room on the sofa. Everyone's got a spot and sitting in somebody's spot certainly could "Ooo", you know, "I sit there" or "I'm sat here, I don't normally sit here". Or I once got told off because I sat down and it's the dog's seat, the dog sat down on that part of the sofa. Again, it's just about manners, isn't it? If you're walking into someone's house, ask. (CW11)

This is in contrast to marching into the home using the authority assigned to their position.

Cooper et al (2007) found demonstrating respect and concern increases the likelihood of an open and honest exchange with service users. The above narratives are examples of how respect and concern can be demonstrated toward the family situation from the very first moment. Caseworkers are showing awareness of the power of their role by offering the family some control in decision making, however minor in terms of the sitting location.

It is suggested that these first interactions set the tone for the contact. Using Tuckman's (1965) description of the testing and dependency stage, these interactions define the interactional behaviours that are acceptable. This sends a message for future engagements that it is acceptable for the young man to give instruction to the caseworker; that it will be a two-way relationship.

However, the data also shows other factors that caseworkers are alert to when making an entrance. One reported being mindful of unknown factors regarding health and safety issues that might be present in the family environment.

> *I mean we're not supposed to take your shoes off for health and safety because if you need to get out of there quick. Or if, you know, there's things on the floor, you know, needles whatever you could be treading on then the last thing you want is to be running out of the front door and picking your shoes up as you go. But you know, sometimes it's about being polite and saying "Sorry but I need to leave my shoes on" or "Do you want me to take my shoes off?" or you know something like that. (CW11)*

This suggests that entering a property is not a straightforward activity. Instead, caseworkers are constantly monitoring the environment for signs that require a response. This caseworker was looking for signs of danger and sensitised to a fight or flight stance in response to possible stimuli in the home environment by preparing for a quick escape if necessary. An awareness of the impact a response could have on engagement was managed by having a sensitive conversation with the family about keeping the shoes on. Again, this is indicative of caseworkers having to manage their own emotional responses when the situation arises (Thoits 1996).

One caseworker reported starting off with the assumption that a young man will not want him in the house.

> *I work on the basis of I'm not going to assume that they're going to be alright with me. So, I think the best thing I can do is to just "mis-foot" them slightly. You*

know, so I'll come in wearing a daft hat or I'll come in just being. I'll notice something as soon as I come in the room and ask them a question about it. I'll deflect the attention away from the fact that I've come in and that, so what they are thinking about is not necessarily focusing on making a judgement on me, I'm just off straight away trying to have some sort of level of engagement with them. (CW4)

This caseworker is aware that a young man will most probably have a personal judgement that could negatively influence the level of engagement. In anticipation of this, the caseworker quickly deflected attention away from him as a practitioner and his perceived authority to stop the young man from holding onto his initial preconceptions. A conversation was immediately instigated about some household item to distract the young man's current line of thought. The caseworker said that attempting to 'mis-foot' a young man created a short window of opportunity to give the young man a positive experience.

Another example reported by the same author was to create a good impression by using something as simple as a smile. It was through this friendly act that the caseworker attempted to initiate positive engagement.

So, it's within that very first opening gambit, you come in and do something. I don't know – anything, anything just to distract the moment to crack a smile that will very, very quickly leads into sort of introducing who you are and saying why you're here and acknowledging, very quickly acknowledging the fact that "You don't want me here do you? I understand that". (CW4)

Again, there is an awareness of possible problems around engagement in anticipation of his authority not being accepted. Studies by Wilson (2006) and Yates (2006) found that black young people and young people from deprived and socially excluded communities often demonstrated negativity towards YJS caseworkers. They found there was low confidence in the criminal justice system and they preferred to keep problems in the community. This is seen as maintaining their individuality and separation by presenting an 'us versus them' tribal view. This further compounded a belief that police and social services have a flawed morality that then creates a situation of non-acceptance of authority (Bottoms 2002). There are deep suspicions that create barriers to initial engagement for caseworkers. Presenting with diversionary tactics, as in the example of the above caseworker, appears to be an attempt to circumvent such prejudices. There was a quick transition from entering the house to starting a conversation with a young man. It is suggested that this caseworker is trying to create positivity by acknowledging the emotional state of the other (Thoits 1996). Then, whilst the young man has a feeling of positivity, this is followed by acknowledging some feelings of resentment the young man might have. It appears that this caseworker is quickly establishing engagement through conversation. This is in contrast to the gentler and smoother entrances of the two previous caseworkers who used the tools of appearance and rituals to initiate engagement.

It has been shown that underpinning the process of entering the house is being aware of possible emotional responses from the young man and family. Doel (2010) found that service users were more likely to engage when attention was paid to emotional feelings that were not necessarily expressed. The above caseworkers were mindful of possible thoughts and feelings of a young man. However, within these experiences there was also concern

expressed around many unknown factors. Their voices convey uncertainty of the exact nature of the emotional thoughts and feeling. In mitigating these uncertainties, it appears these caseworkers chose to expect to encounter anxious and wary young men who are likely to be resistive of attempts to engage. They position themselves in the first instances expecting uncertainty.

One common theme coming through the above narratives is the use of the self as a professional tool to create an impression. The above caseworkers said they purposefully presented a particular image in the first instance. Some caseworkers enacted an empathic sensitive approach by demonstrating respect for the family environment whilst one caseworker used a diversionary approach to disrupt a young man's thought process. The aim of both approaches was to influence the young man so that the following interactions ran smoothly. As the previous chapter showed, young men were likely to have constructed an image of their caseworker prior to the first contact. After the initial presentation of their caseworker, the young man is now likely to be left needing to make adjustments to his previously constructed image.

Following the entrance, the next activity is initiating the first conversation. Three caseworkers gave descriptions of how they prepared to start off this conversation. They said they recognised face-to-face contacts could be challenging experiences for some of the young men and emphasised the need to monitor the young man's presentation to predict reactions. They reported being attentive to behaviours as markers of emotions. In particular it was suggested that anxieties felt by a young man could detrimentally affect their level of engagement.

Quite usually I find that young people are quiet anxious when meeting somebody because they've got to talk to a stranger and I'm always mindful that if they've not met me before. That's the first time they've met me and I'm asking them a lot of personal, personal questions and sometimes painful questions. (CW5)

He'd not been in the criminal justice before, you know, police were, obviously that was all a very scary process for him, court was very scary for him. (CW7)

For some young people, it might be overwhelming. (CW6)

When the initial conversation begins most caseworkers reported they used this space to explain the court order. The data shows that they typically set the conversation in motion by reminding the young man why they are intervening in his life. One of the key points reported was making sure that the young man understood the role of the caseworker.

When I meet a young person it's post-conviction. I would normally refer back to the court hearing saying "You remember when … do you remember they said you would have a 12 month order, that's what I'm here to address". I think the court hearing is such a big deal, it leaves a lasting impression on the minds so that's probably a good place to start I find. (CW1)

What I do say is that my role is to get them through their order and help and support them. But it is very much their order and I'll meet them half way but they have to, it's their order and they have to meet me there as well. (CW5)

You'll do your introductions, "Nice to meet you. This is who I am. This is what I do. This is what's going to happen". And I'm just like setting your stall. You

should be completely honest and let them know what to expect from you. Let them know what you expect from them, you know and just be giving them all the information without kind of blowing their minds and keeping it to the right language they'd understand. (CW10)

I think just basically being as open as you can be; "Look, you're on an order. This is why I'm here. This is what a Youth Offending Team is. This is what my job is going to be. Today I'm going to be doing this, this and this. It's going to last for however long. If you need a break let me know." (CW11)

During these initial conversations caseworkers said they were mindful of the responsibilities bestowed on them by the YJB. They acknowledged that they had to manage conflicts of interest when using a more casual engagement alongside an authoritative-type engagement. This is an attempt to legitimise their intervention by using a 'care and helping' justification. But the main emphasis during the first conversation is that they are a law enforcement agent of the State, a switch away from presenting in a friendlier manner. Some said they managed the tension between these two modes of engagement by being open and honest about the nature of the relationship with the young man.

I usually adopt quite a formal approach when I first meet a young person just to be, I suppose I do it so that there are no misunderstandings about my role. There is a power imbalance especially with lads. Particularly when you first meet and I suppose it's only fair to be upfront about that and I think that if your trying to pitch the way you present yourself I would rather err on the side of being more formal than a little too casual when I first meet up while we're working with each

other out because I suppose if you get it, if you try and be a little casual, a little relaxed, my fear is that you risk appearing disrespectful. So yeah that's kind of the way I hold myself in the first meeting with the young person: friendly but formal. (CW1)

I just found that all my career that they seem happy just to answer pretty much most of your questions as long as you're clear on your role and why you're asking the question. (CW2)

In many ways, I'm not a friend because there may be times I need to take, do things that don't sit well with them. For example, I'll explain breach and what that means. (CW5)

So for me it was about trying to make my involvement not scary but at the same time saying to him "Yeah but I'm an officer of the court. So, I have to tell the truth. I can't say that you're a good lad and you'll never do it again because I don't know that. You know, I have to report the facts, I have to give my analysis and then I will do what I can to support you in completing your order but I can't lie for you and I can't do it for you" (CW7)

However the first of the caseworkers warns about appearing to be disrespectful towards the young person. The tensions in applying a care and control approach are apparent in these narratives as a careful balancing act (Trotter 2006).

Just to ease the situation, another caseworker reported using humour along with keeping conversations simple.

I usually use some humour in the way that I explain things. I try to simplify things and I do acknowledge to them that I do. I may use words that are really long and it's because I'm so used to it that I don't always remember that other people may not understand what I am saying and it's ok to stop me and ask. So I might use colloquialisms, local terms, some young people's terms which sometimes make them laugh because they don't think that someone of my age would know those words (CW5)

It appears these caseworkers are using the initial conversation to define some boundaries around how they will function together with the young person. Role clarification is defined in an attempt to create predictability of future interactions. This approach is in-line with Tuckman's (1965) initial stage of 'formation'. In the beginning, anxieties are to be expected around how contacts will function. The caseworkers are uncertain of young men's behaviours and vice-versa. So, each person has to discover which behaviours are acceptable and not acceptable. With both parties uncertain of each other, the data has demonstrated that caseworkers take the lead in defining behaviours and boundaries. This is started off by explaining their role in the first instance to address possible confusions and misunderstandings.

Following on from setting the scene, the data show caseworkers attempting to transition onto the substantive conversation. One caseworker mentioned giving each young man an experience of his "human" side as a way of developing familiarity.

Sometimes they see you as, you know, [caseworker] rather than my case manager. I'm a bit of a human being rather than somebody who just comes round sits to you and talks about your problems. Most of them would want a

worker that shows they understand and shows an interest and that they're not there because they've got to be. (CW11)

This is another transition from the caseworker role to an ordinary presentation. This is recognition of the differences between the role and personality of a caseworker. This shows that attempts are made to overcome possible negative perceptions of the role by giving an experience of presenting as ordinary people to demonstrate these differences in-line with Trotter (2006).

Another caseworker reported not really knowing how a young man will respond. Instead, their starting point was to adopt an open mind and wait to see how a young man presented before deciding exactly what to do.

Them initial appointments are literally going in and I don't have a particular plan. If I feel that young person's comfortable to go off and do more of an outreach session just to get, to be comfortable with me, I'll do that. Or if I feel, actually we've got to change it to another day or they're not ready really, I just kind of set it out to them about – how am I going to get, how am I going to work the best with you? Because, you know, you'll get people who won't even talk to you and you've got to get over that initial barrier (CW8)

This is an example of walking in to the unknown. This caseworker is operating intuitively by making decisions based on initial presentation. A judgement about the young man's willingness to engage is intuitively made before proceeding further. Using the young man's behaviour as a marker of his emotions, a decision is made based on past experiences of similar situations to ask intrusive questions only if the young man appears ready to do so.

It can be said that these caseworkers are responding in a manner that that sends an unspoken signal back to the young men that they are willing to work and work together. To demonstrate this, some reported searching for an interest that a young man has to use as common ground for conducting a conversation. For example, one caseworker reported using sport as a common ground to start off a conversation.

> *Well, I find, you find a common ground. I mean, I've had, sometimes when you've challenged them they might not be, be happy but I've never had like a bad initial contact where I've had lad, like young people, lads kind of saying "You know what, I think you should leave". I've never had that. But I find that if we like sports, we'll talk about sports while I'm doing the assessment. So, I'll find something that they'll like to try and so you can talk about, might be talk about work. "Do you work? Tell me about it", you know while you go back to the offence, see if you can find something that they can relate to them with. (CW11)*

Another used previous life experiences as a means of connecting with a young man to start a conversation.

> *Or a conversation you can have whether you know the young people whether it's with previous workers. Because lots of the kids around here have been to the youth group so maybe I'll talk about "Oh you used to go to the youth group, oh I work with [youth worker] the group leader there", "oh yeah, [youth worker], I know, yeah, yeah, she's wicked" and then they automatically associate because they like her, "Ah, you know her!" Then you might be alright then because you worked with her and I liked her. "Yep, ok". You mention people that they know they've got happy relationships with. (CW3)*

By contrast, this caseworker used bad experiences a young man might have had as a means to start a conversation.

> *If they're talking about school, "Did they used to treat you like a bit of a dickhead at school?", "Yeah", "Yeah". Because every young person feels like they were treated like a dickhead at school. If you say that then they'll "Yeah, yeah, she understands what the problems are". (CW3)*

Drawing together these attempts to initiate conversation brings to light many different ways used to capture engagement. This, in turn, also reveals how caseworkers use self in an empathic mode to create a commonality of being together in a professional sense rather than a social sense (Kaushik 2017). The common theme is caseworkers taking the initiative to overcome perceived barriers to encourage a young man to engage in conversation.

The data show the next task is sustaining the young man in conversation. Once a young man has begun to communicate, the next challenge is sustaining the dialogue over a period of time. The literature makes the point that engagement is sustained through communication (Cooper et al 2007; Ugwudike 2010). However, it also recognises that young men in the youth justice system have problems communicating effectively over a long period of time. Embedded in the data was recognition of some difficulties in communicating that is already noted in the literature-base (Bryan et al 2007; Snow and Powell 2008). Three caseworkers reported being cautious about making demands that could cause withdraw from engagement. Each identified a different trait that requires attention to prevent withdrawal.

> *Just to make them feel comfortable so they can, if they aren't feeling their best in the session then they can let me know and I can work around that. So that initial*

visit, you can split it up into sections. Speak to the young person, they may need to wander off themselves to have a bit of a break to get a drink. Come back and then you can finish off the session. (CW6)

I would never say, "Sit up straight. Look me in the eye". Eventually you have to teach them some of them skills but that's not, that takes you years of work with them because actually some people are not capable of that. By the end of his order he would sit and not be covered up. But over time, you had to teach some of them skills because obviously what I'm saying is he's not going to get through society and be part of the community if he always acts like that. You can't make demands on young people early on in orders. That takes a long time to achieve. (CW8)

If you start saying to them "Right, you're going to sit there. You're going to tell me everything and you're not leaving until I've got everything I need to know" then you've shot yourself in the foot start away really, haven't you? Because that's what they're going to think every session's going to be like with you. (CW11)

The first of these traits identifies low resilience when feeling overwhelmed. Putting strong demands on a young man by overworking them is regarded as likely to cause him to withdraw from engaging. This caseworker recommended breaking the contact up into sections that are dictated by the young man. This is a further example of negotiating and defining acceptable behaviours contributing to partnership cohesion.

The next is the skill set required for effective communication. The second caseworker quoted above starts off the relationship with an assumption that the young man will not possess an effective communicating skill set. This is another example of working with the likely characteristics of the young men. Direct experience is being used to assess an appropriate start point when communicating.

The final element was managing the expectations of information from a young man. The third caseworker makes the point that setting expectations too high could lead to worsening a young man's opinion. It is suggested that patience is required when extracting information from a young man. This approach is preferable to having to repair a broken engagement. This is demonstrative of caseworkers attempting to connect with a young man on their verbal and functioning level.

Finally, the data shows how the driving objective of the first contact was to extract personal information from the young men so that initial assessments could be completed. It was specifically stated that the primary necessity was to collect information.

> *When I first meet them it's, it's I need information from you. So, that's my first thought, is I need information to complete this assessment. So, I will just focus on the questions that I've got just to get that information, just to get to know them that bit better, to get to know their parents that bit better. (CW5)*

However, it was also found that attempts to collect the necessary information did not always go well in the first instance. This is in-line with literature that suggests sometimes engagement between worker and young person breaks down (Ivanoff et al, 1994; Trevithick, 2003) with compliance being withdrawn. The data show that some young men enact

resistance by moving against the caseworker during conversations. One caseworker acknowledged that young men will have their own thoughts and feelings about their own lifestyle and therefore, challenging personal lifestyles could be perceived as threatening that lead to aggressive responses.

> *I think if you do it quite genuinely, you're having a conversation rather than them seeing you as a threat, I think they'd probably react quite well. It's about, I don't want to be a threat to how they live their life or how they see things. All I'm there for is, I'm not going to sit there and say "Before you're order's finished you're not going to think like that". All I'm there for is to say "Well, that's maybe not how most people see it. There are other ways of looking at it". Give them the options and then by the end of the order, if they still want to look at it in the same way, that's their way of doing that. (CW11)*

This example suggests that engaging in dialogue as a two way communication contributes to reducing resistance. Whereas, in contrast, taking an authoritative approach could sustain or increase resistance. Being genuine and reasonable appears to be a necessary attribute in gaining compliance from a young man. This exemplifies the concept of compliance as being validated from below as well as from the position of authority: from the perspective of the young person (Bottoms 2002). It appears that the caseworker recognised that young men need to make the decision whether or not to act in a compliant manner.

In addressing the possibility of encountering resistance, one caseworker reported doing something unusual that a young man will not be expecting. It was explained this approach can distract attention and create a window of opportunity that could be exploited.

I will present them with something that is slightly out of the box, they won't be expecting. I just, it's just, I sometimes see myself as a bit "Peter Faulk" character. You know, Colombo turns up and people just don't know what to make of him. He's faffing around for a pen and his glasses and he, you know anything he's got to do which is sort of an annoyance. He says "I've got to do this because my captain expects me. He's asked me to come back and do this". He defers off to something else you know what I mean. You're always trying to distance yourself from anything that's seen to being in the bag. I try and work it so that we have discussions around things which are slightly different to what they might have had in the first place. (CW4)

It appears this caseworker is attempting to create a style of interaction that is different to what a young man is used to. It is suggested that the caseworker is trying to prevent the young man from replicating well-rehearsed behaviours by giving him something different to respond to.

Drawing these points together, it can be seen that caseworkers are primed to expect resistance in the first instance. It has been shown that many different approaches are used to reduce the possibilities of a young man withdrawing engagement. One theme arising from these approaches is that of using direct experiences as a mode of communicating. This recognises the young men's limited verbal communication skill set and the possibility of inappropriate non-verbal communications. It is suggested that verbal communication can easily be mis-interpreted. Instead, direct experience appears to be a more profound learning experience that create 'teachable moments' (Tyler 2011) and is more likely to get

the required message over to a young man in the absence of well-developed verbal communication skills.

Another aspect that caseworkers have to factor in is events happening prior to the meeting. The following is an example of a breakdown followed by repair that resulted in a caseworker and young man eventually resuming dialogue. One caseworker reported abandoning an initial contact as a result of problems with engagement. It was found that tensions had resulted from a stressful encounter between young man and mum prior to the meeting.

> *There was one young person from a chaotic background. When I went round to the property, there was, I think mum was a bit stressed out because I think things had gone on early that morning between mum and young person. So, the young person was already wound up to start with, the young person was already in a bad, bad mood. (CW6)*

This is yet another example of caseworkers having to manage uncertainty and unpredictability. It is not always possible to foresee of the emotional condition of a young man prior to a contact. Upon entering the house, the caseworker monitored the environment and sensed underlying tensions that could adversely affect the contact.

> *Then me coming in, I assessed the situation but I thought let me see if I can, what I can get out of this assessment. It didn't go, it started off not too bad but it got to a point where mum and young person were arguing and both kind of kicking off and we weren't getting anywhere too fast [laughs]. So, at that point, I had to just decide to kind of call it to an end and rearrange another appointment when things were calmed down, calmed down a little bit. And at that point the young*

person went out, he went out and I spoke to mum and she explained what had happened in the morning. (CW6)

In response to the tensions, the caseworker decides to terminate the contact because the situation has become unmanageable. In the absence of the young man, who had left the room, reasons causing the situation were explored with mum.

So, that gave me a better understanding and I also managed to get some information from mum. (CW6)

Notably, there was no attempt to repair the breakdown at that point. Instead, with emotions running high, the caseworker made the decision to terminate the contact and arranged another one.

The next time we met, I think that's, that's the interesting thing about the young people we work with because the first time we met he was an angry young man, abusive, didn't want to speak to me, he didn't want to, yeah abusive to mum. Second time I met him, fine. [laughs] It was a complete, a complete change and that's how you've got to kind of understand a young person and not take it personal. (CW6)

The caseworker reported that during the subsequent contact the young man was a changed person and the necessary information was collected. This shows that the repair process actively involves both parties. The approach for repair in this instance was *time*. This example shows that uncertainty is an element of breakdowns that cannot be effectively prepared for. This leads onto another point that uncertainty begets unpredictability which, in turn, requires situations to be monitored and assessed. Should the situation become

unmanageable, which is more than possible given the nature of the young man, then breakdown in engagement can be viewed as a naturally occurring phenomenon. The above caseworker did explore at an early stage reasons why the situation existed. Finally, *time* was used as a tool within the repair process. This means that it is acceptable to terminate contacts so that a young man can have time out to cool down the emotions. Furthermore, this is another example of responding to the emotions of a young man as a mode of addressing their behaviour.

The data shows that sometimes a caseworker can enter the first contact which is already tense and is further worsened during discussions. One caseworker reported negative family influences that further worsened an already challenging situation.

> *There's a lad I went to see who'd had an argument with his mum while we were having a session. I'd interviewed them both separately because I knew there were tensions between the two. He was fine with me, absolutely fine. Telling me all sorts. I was having a conversation with mum and she just sat down and went "What are you going to do about his cannabis use because you've just said on that form that he's not allowed to be under the influence for a session". And that just made him, got his back up, and then they had a massive big argument. He'd overheard some of the conversation that mum had said and it ended up in him grabbing two knives out the fricking kitchen doing one out the house whilst the mum was on the phone to the police. And I'm like "This is a fun session". But, actually, I'm not sure, he didn't have the issues with me. It was obviously an argument with mum that was sort of underlying. Nothing ever directed towards me but if I had, and how do you know in the first session, I knew the tensions*

between them were bad, but I never knew that was going to fricking happen else I wouldn't had bloody seen him at, you know, I would had seen them completely separately. (CW3)

The issues raised in this situation relate to the overall safety of caseworkers in a peripatetic manner that requires going into the social environment of young people who offend. This makes known the problem of risky situations that caseworkers, as lone workers, could find themselves facing. Further conversations were had with two caseworkers outside of the interviews about their own safety. It was said that the immediate response is to get out of the place and then report back to management. Following on, alterations to meeting up with the young person are made to ensure the safety of the caseworker. In the example above, the caseworker identifies the problem is situated in meeting mum and son together. It was the stressful dynamics between these two that moved attention away from the caseworker and young man relationship at that point in time. Furthermore, this prevented meaningful work between the caseworker and young man from happening.

Conclusion

This chapter has brought to attention some elements of a naturally occurring process through which caseworkers reported entering a house with initial greetings through to eventually engaging a young man in a substantive conversation. Three main findings arise from the data. It has been shown that caseworkers prefer to establish emotional engagement in preference to behavioural or cognitive engagement because they said it underpins all future intervention-based work. However, it was also reported that not all young men have the capability to achieve emotional engagement. Caseworkers cited experiences of difficult relationships that have been normalised. A second finding is how

caseworkers have to deal with uncertainty and unpredictability during each stage of the engagement process. It was suggested that major causes of uncertainty were the emotional mood of the young man and his capability to communicate. It was further found that caseworkers mitigated this uncertainty by assuming resistance as the expected response. The approach taken was therefore to start with behaviours that attempted to encourage engagement.

The third finding concerned caseworkers enacting dual roles. It was found that they were presenting either as an authoritative person or as a normal person, depending upon the situation. Examples were provided demonstrating caseworkers switching between these roles as and when necessary. However, the data shows that the more casual role was dominant for its ability to encourage engagement from the young men.

Underpinning these themes, it is argued that the AssetPlus assessment process implicates a caseworker together with a young man in a partnership or alliance to work on a common set of problems. The caseworker is employed to prevent re-offending and the young man is ordered by the court to stop reoffending. Explaining it in this manner brings to attention Bordin's (1979) definition of an *alliance* by having a common set of goals that need to be achieved. It has been shown that each young man may not necessarily buy in to this common goal in the first instance. Instead, the young men were being prepared in readiness to come together in partnership. However, it has been further shown that caseworkers actively demonstrate specific behaviours to convince young men to be active participants in the alliance or partnership.

The previous two chapters have explored some experiences of having the first face-to-face contact. The next two chapters will explore the experiences of subsequent face-to-face contacts; beginning with the young men.

CHAPTER 7 Young Men's Experiences During Subsequent Face-to-Face Contacts

Statutory community supervision requires a young man and an allocated caseworker to have regular face-to-face contacts as determined by the AssetPlus assessment. During community supervision, an offender is required to engage with caseworkers and comply with instructions. This chapter outlines and discusses the findings as young men and caseworkers continue their relationship. The key finding of this chapter arising from the young men's narratives is that working from their perspectives and life situation encouraged them to accept the authority of a caseworker and engage more effectively. In detailing these experiences, this chapter presents what the data show regarding specific instances of working from the perspectives of the young man. To achieve this, the chapter is divided into two parts. The first part explores why the young men said they wanted to be treated as unique individual human beings. The second part brings to light some elements showing how young men become more dependent on their caseworker as they form a partnership. Throughout this chapter it will be shown that all of the young men ended up complying with instructions from caseworkers; but only if these instructions were meaningful and were deemed to be fair and just.

In tracking these experiences, the first part will explore three elements of being recognised as an individual which were reported by all of the young men. The first was showing a genuine interest in the things that are important in their lives. The second was working within the limits of their capabilities. The third was being in tune with their thoughts and feelings and adapting interactions and conversations accordingly.

The second part will explore three elements that demonstrated how the young men developed a healthy relationship with their caseworker. Firstly through demonstrations of trust, honesty and consistency backed with supporting actions from the caseworker. Secondly, any advice or action has to be seen to have a positive impact on their life situation, and finally, having mature conversations backed up with explaining points in a manner that can be understood encourages respect. Thirdly, the young men reported a presence of an 'emotional bond' with their caseworker which could be a signifier of the assent of the presence and authority of the caseworker.

7.1 Being Treated as an Individual

The data show all of the young men identifying as unique individuals and, therefore, wanting their caseworker to treat them as such. This section will explore three specific elements found to constitute being an individual: acknowledging what is important to them in their life; working within the limits of their capabilities; and third, recognising their thoughts and feelings of how they regard themselves within their life situation. It will be shown that responding to these elements of individuality had a positive impact on engagement.

First of all, the narratives show that young men wanted caseworkers to demonstrate a genuine interest and develop an understanding of them as unique individuals. One young man felt that it was only possible to help him if his caseworker was genuinely interested in him as a person.

> *If they're not going to take interest in you as a person, they're not going to be able to help you. (YP2)*

Similarly, another young man pointed out that he has different behavioural characteristics to other people so using interventions in a uniform manner might not work for him. For him, the only way he could be truly helped was if his caseworker took time to understand him as a unique individual.

> *Understand the person before you start to work with them. Don't just go based on like "Yeah, the kid has had this happened and you need to do this". Learn how that person is and how they are because it, I could have been through the same thing with someone else but I'd need, I'd react to different things he would because we are different people. So you need to learn the person and what they need, what help they need and how you can help them before you do any work. (YP7)*

This suggests that characteristics relating to personal behaviours have to be factored into applying interventions. In the literature review the low success rate of behaviour programmes was noted and that compliance was minimal. The words of this young man suggest that one reason for this failure is down to caseworkers not having a detailed enough understanding of the young person as situated in their life circumstances. It is argued that the idiosyncratic characteristics of each individual have to be factored into each behaviour intervention programme for them to be truly effective.

Following on, the data shows reactions and responses from caseworkers as markers of understanding the young men. One young man concluded that his caseworker understood him as an individual because his opinions were being listening to. This was then followed by actions from his caseworker to adapt work to suit this young man's requests.

Made me feel like they, like I keep saying they respected me. They respected what I needed different from everyone else and they was willing to listen and adapt to what I said and how I was. (YP8)

It was through listening and adapting interventions to his wishes that this young man thought his caseworker had developed an understanding of him as a person.

However, two others could not give a definitive description of how they knew their caseworker understood them as a person. Instead they said it was more of an intuition they made through experiences with their caseworker.

I don't know if he understands me, do I? That's what I'm assuming. (YP5)

I just know that they understand me as a person and everything. (YP4)

The above quotes show how some young men had problems objectively identifying how their caseworker understands them as individuals. Nevertheless, an assumption is made through experiences of action and reaction that serves to inform a young man about the understanding of their caseworker. It is through these experiences that an emotional connection occurs that informs a subjective assessment as opposed to objective criteria. Underpinning these sets of interaction is the caseworker using themselves as a demonstration of the 'person they are'. It further appears that this approach slowly opened the young men so that they also demonstrated their 'true self' (Kaushik 2017; Trevithick 2018).

Developing this further, three specific components of individuality were identified from their narratives: paying attention to things that were important to them; working within the

limits of their capabilities; and being in tune with their current mood and adapting interactions and conversations accordingly.

Recognising things that were important to the young man was especially noticeable in terms of their interests, hobbies and aspirations. Two young men reported becoming more engaged when their caseworker talked about things that mattered to them.

> *It was like they were interested in getting me like through what I was going through. They was interested in asking me what I wanted to do. That they was actually bothered. [...] To start with they asked me what I was interested in, like what my hobbies were and what I did. I told them I was mainly into sports and boxing, stuff like that. (YP3)*

> *Like he built it up and that. And then obviously like I guess the music that helped us as well because, instantly if someone likes music then I'm alright. (YP8)*

To these young men their hobbies formed a fundamental part of their life. The latter followed on by saying that he needed his caseworker to show respect towards his music.

> *To me respect's a lot, a big thing. Like due to my music, obviously my music is just all respect. So, I guess once you lose that respect, loses that trust, loses the ability to communicate with me in a complex way, kind of thing. (YP8)*

He said that demonstrating a respectful and genuine interest in his music encouraged his motivation to communicate. It appears that he needed to experience his caseworker enacting a genuine approach to what is important to him. Once this happened the young man said he would be more willing to trust his caseworker with other aspects of his life situation. It is further suggested that he would withdraw from active engagement with his

caseworker if respect was not shown towards his music. The use of empathy is evident here to create a common ground on which both could start to form a relationship. It is argued that this is the beginnings of the process of accepting the authority of the caseworker (Bottoms 2002).

It was also found that motivation to engage improved when a caseworker enquired about work aspirations. In chapter 5, one young man reported having a negative experience of his first face-to-face contact and therefore had a low motivation to engage. However, the same young man said that he did improve his motivation to engage during later contacts when his caseworker became interested in his work aspirations.

> *The Youth Offending Service put things forward to obviously get me stuff so I could get the job that I wanted. Obviously when you grow up you need a job, don't you? Don't want to be on fucking dole for the rest of my life, do I? No signing on, that shit. Fuck that. (YP5)*

This young man recognised the instrumental value of his caseworker which was then followed with complying with advice to help achieve his aims of getting the employment he so desires.

Underpinning a desire for moving away from crime is demonstrated through a passion in their hobbies and work aspirations (Farrall 2002). It has been shown that caseworkers can tap into this passion as a source of motivation by being genuinely interested in things that matter to the young men. This implies a source of energy that can be utilised to improve motivations to engage and as a vehicle to move their life forward.

Another element of individuality identified from the narratives was adapting tasks to individual capabilities. All of the young men reported they struggled to complete tasks asked of them during the court order. In essence, the YJS is a complicated system that has evolved over time. It is entrenched with procedures that may appear confusing to newcomers. At the start of their order a young man is unlikely to have a detailed understanding of the aim of the YJS and how it goes about achieving this aim. In contrast to this, the caseworker will have detailed knowledge of the YJS. Therefore, a caseworker is able to quickly overwhelm the young man in terms of explanations and expectations. This means there is a significant imbalance of power against the young man which is likely to make him feel vulnerable at the start of the court order. It is suggested that this gives the caseworker an opportunity to dominate and shape the relationship.

The narratives show that young men were resentful when presented with tasks related to their court order. Two young men reported that some contacts were stressful because of demands expected by their caseworker.

> *If you're stressed and it just makes it harder to do that work because it's stressing you out and you just feel like giving up on it. (YP2)*

> *It is hard. It still is hard now but it's better because in the long run it helps you out really. (YP1)*

These men had different reactions. One had a heightened desire to withdraw from engaging, and while the other acknowledged current difficulties. Furthermore, the second also identified the long term gain that can be achieved by remaining engaged with the task. This shows that young men are making conscious decisions to do the tasks asked of them.

However, care must be used to ensure the demands do not tip the young man towards a withdrawal of engagement. This demonstrates the careful balance needed between creating enough pressure for change, but not so much as to alienate the young man.

In countering possible stress, one young man noted how his caseworker was careful about the amount of pressure put on him when asked to do the tasks required.

> *It's just how they come across. They're not, like they don't pressure you into doing anything. It's not like they're forcing you to do anything. Obviously some of the stuff you have to do because of your Referral Order but other than that they don't pressure you into doing anything. (YP9)*

He said he felt pleasure when his caseworker recognised his problems with being overwhelmed by the work expected of him. Making demands the young man could cope with gave him a positive experience of his caseworker.

Another said that he struggled with reading which prevented him from understanding the documents he was asked to sign. His caseworker helped him to overcome this challenge by reading the documents with him.

> *She stayed for half an hour to 45 minutes I think it was. That was because she was telling me what I would be doing and telling me about my order as well. Explaining everything. That was a bit boring [laughs]. Then I had to sign lots of papers. That's the bit I didn't really like. It means like, because I struggle with reading and I was reading them things. But I did tell her I was struggling with reading and she read through it, read it to me. (YP3)*

By doing this he could make more sense of what was required of him and this enabled him to develop a basic understanding of his court order. This suggests that some young men may need alternatives to written material if they are to be fully engaged in court order work. Again, this caseworker demonstrated sensitivity to the capabilities of the young man to help them to comply with the requirements of the court order.

This concurs with a previous finding of needing to have a detailed understanding of a service user. It appears that the application of this principle helps young men through any personal challenges they may face during the court order. In acknowledging this difficulty, it appears that young men display markers of behaviours to signal that they are being overwhelmed. One such behaviour was being stressed out and wanting to give up during which a caseworker having a depth of understanding supports an emotional engagement that, in turn, helps a young man to trust the actions of his caseworker. It is through caseworker responses that a young man develops a healthy relationship. This is also indicative of the relationship being the vehicle for changing a young man's life situation. This is further acknowledged by the young men when the caseworker's use of self demonstrates his or hers contribution within the relationship

A third element of individuality identified from the narratives was being attuned to a young man's thoughts and feelings and adapting interactions and conversations accordingly. One young man was clear that he wanted his caseworker to respond to him as each situation presents itself.

> *It's about you in that situation really. (YP2)*

During the data collection period all of the young men were 16 years old or over and some of them had their own accommodation. Two had girlfriends who were pregnant. Most said that they did not view themselves as adolescents but as making the transition from adolescence to adulthood. However, four said they regarded themselves as adults and wanted to be treated as such.

> *I felt more like a grown up because we could have that heated discussion on it and come to a mutual understanding from both of our points of view. (YP2)*

> *He treats me like an adult. (YP5)*

> *It's just that's how I would expect other people to treat. I didn't think it would be like that but it was. (YP7)*

> *Obviously, I'm not a kid. Obviously I did a childish mistake but it's no reason to be treated like a kid, is it? (YP8)*

Strengthening this point, one young man highlighted the detrimental impact on his engagement if he was treated in a child-like manner. He had his own accommodation, was living by himself and was making life sustaining decisions.

> *Obviously I wouldn't like if he started treating me like I was a kid or something. It'd probably go downhill very quickly. (YP8)*

Furthermore, another reported that inquiring about his current emotional state had a positive influence on his willingness to engage during the contact.

> *Like, he doesn't not care as such, know what I mean. Like he's not that bad "Yay, you're feeling a bit down. I'm not really bothered about that like. Carry on with*

your life". He's not like that. He cares. He'll help me out, trying to if obviously he could. (YP8)

This suggests that the young man responds on an emotional level in preparation for behavioural and cognitive engagement (Fredericks et al 2004). He is acknowledging that he is a human being with feelings. Likewise, it appears that he appreciates his caseworker also engaging on an emotional level. This is, in part, symptomatic of two people sharing parts of their 'true selfs' as they come together and discuss issues of relevance (Kaushik 2017; Trevithick 2018).

The data show that events happening prior to a contact can also affect moods and emotions. It was found that being stressed before the contact can have a debilitating effect on engagement with the intervention work. One young man spoke about his caseworker engaging with his emotions when they meet up. As a response to his own troubled emotions, he did not want his caseworker to fake their presentation as a reaction to something bad he had done prior to the contact.

Sometimes you like get them when they're a bit too happy to see you, sort of thing, and they're putting it on. But it's not very often that they're like that. [caseworker] has never been like that. [...] Well, like say you've done something bad and they've heard about it and they see you the next day and they still got a massive smile on their face about it with you. It's like "Well, that's fake isn't it. If you're trying to help then you shouldn't be happy about what I've done", sort of thing. So, they can be too over joyed with it but not all the time. (YP2)

Here the young man wanted his caseworker to present an emotionally honest response to his behaviour. It appears that this young man has to be assured his caseworker is being attentive to his needs to ensure engagement.

Another said that sometimes he is not in the right mood to engage after a stressful day at work.

> *Obviously I don't want them there but they're got to be there. Like there's, it's not like, there's some days when I get home from work and I'm fucking stressed out and I have to proper count it out. Yeah, there is them days where I actually don't want them there but they've got to be, haven't they? (YP5)*

Three young men reported being tired as a cause for their poor engagement.

> *"Because sometimes like he noticed that I wasn't bothered to talk to because sometimes I'd be tired if they came in the morning. (YP3)*
>
> *Only when I've been tired. (YP7)*
>
> *But that was due to tiredness really. (YP9)*

As well as bringing emotions into the contact, the data identifies that emotions are generated during the contact. One task required of caseworkers is to collect information by asking questions that are sometimes personal and intrusive. Asking these types of questions is demanded of the caseworkers by the YJB procedures to gather information about the life situation and offending behaviour of each young man. This information is written into an assessment along with information collected from other sources. The caseworker then has to identify specific risks posed by a young man. These risks are the likelihood of reoffending,

the risk of serious harm to other people and the risk of harm to self (vulnerability). To achieve this, the caseworker follows a prescriptive format within the AssetPlus assessment that guides conversations exploring specific areas of the lives of each young man.

The data show young men accepted that this sensitive conversation is required. Whilst some were willing to engage in this conversation, others were uncomfortable doing so. Either way the narratives suggest that it was the manner in which the conversation was held that improved their willingness to give personal information. One young man felt comfortable in the presence of his caseworker and this made it easier for him to have challenging conversations.

> *They asked me questions, like they asked me what sort of things I had been through with my parents, why I wasn't living with my mum, why I was with my dad, or why I wasn't with my dad and things like that at different times. And they just, they asked quite personal questions but it doesn't seem like they're asking such a personal question. It's like what was your life like and things like that. And it's just, it helps them get a better perception of what your life is as a person as to why you would be doing these offences. (YP2)*

He was willing to engage in a conversation about his personal life because it gave his caseworker a more detailed understanding of his difficult life situation. It is suggested that he was willing to give deep and personal information so that the right type of help could be given to improve his life situation. It can be argued here that the young man recognises the authority and usefulness of his caseworker as a means of improving his life situation and becomes willing to accept help and advice.

Two others said they were also willing to engage in conversations but they preferred a slower pace to revealing information about themselves, rather than a raft of intrusive questions.

> *Just like, well to begin with like he'd ask, like asking not such like top end questions. He wasn't just jumping straight in to it expecting me to like say everything straight away kind of thing. (YP8)*

> *It would seem pressuring but it's not, I guess they don't ask you a load of questions on the spot. They ask you a few questions and then as time goes on they get to know you as a person. (YP9)*

However, two young men complained that providing personal information was a one-way demand. They said that they wanted their caseworker to reveal some personal information.

> *If you tell them a bit of information and I think they should tell you some. In that way you get to know them as well. Instead of them just coming and knowing about you, you don't know nothing about them. It helps like with trust as well. It's like they told you something, you've told them something. (YP3)*

> *If I've got to tell you all my problems and the things that I'm doing and why I think I might be doing it, you could be a bit more honest about how you feel about working with me and things. It's a bit better if they're honest with you. (YP2)*

This shows that some young men want to be a part of a reciprocal partnership. It was found that one way of demonstrating this was by sharing personal information so that the

emotional demands of the relationship are not all on one side. It appears that sharing personal information eases the emotional strain.

This section has highlighted that young men recognised themselves as individual human beings with personal characteristics and that engagement in interventions will be more effective once personal needs on an emotional level are satiated. This points to interactions with young men to as being an emotional labour so that participation is meaningful to them (Hochschild 1979; Thoits 1996; Fredericks et al 2004).

7.2 Developing a Bond with the Caseworker

Following on from being treated as a unique individual, the data show all of the young men developed varying degrees of a bond with their caseworker. Three identified a bond being created. This section will show how experiencing trust and feeling safe contributed towards the forming of this bond; which, furthermore, signified an acceptance of the caseworker's authority to intervene in their life situation.

First of all, the data show that trust had components: truth, honesty and consistency. Two young men demanded a fundamental requirement from their caseworker: truth and honesty, but for different reasons. The first said he did not want to waste his time and emotional energy with someone who was not genuinely interested to help him and his life situation.

> *I want someone that just tells the truth that I can put trust in. I know that I'm not just wasting my time. Like "I'm going to help you". Like that's what my case manager said, "I'm going to help you. Not breach, not do nothing". And I've not breached and not done nothing and she's stick to her word. (YP1)*

This is an example of how concrete action from a caseworker to back up words builds trust in a relationship, a demonstration of commitment that is acknowledged by the young man. The second expressed his annoyance and disappointment if a caseworker is not honest with him.

> *If someone is not honest with me I just, I don't know, I'm just not in a very good mood with them as a person because it's just like if you're here to help you should be honest with me if I've got to be honest with you, sort of thing. (YP2)*

This young man acknowledged that he has to be honest during conversations: in return he wants the same from his caseworker.

Both of these young men said they would withdraw from engaging if their caseworker was not truthful and honest with them. To them, engagement is a reciprocal activity whereby they are managing their own emotional commitment.

The data also show consistency is required from caseworkers. One young man said he needed consistency from his caseworker so that he could predict future reactions.

> *If I was telling a case manager something to learn on before they go and get the new kid, is just tell them, "If you're just going to be formal then tell them you're going to be formal all the way through. If you're not going to be formal, you just tell them how you are, how you act, how, if you don't listen to me I'm going to do this." Just tell them upfront, just don't beat around the bush. That's what I say to all these case managers. Before I say something, just tell me a yes or no answer instead of just beating around the bush and just explain it's not going to happen. (YP1)*

He wanted to be sure that his caseworker can be trusted with his life by not throwing up any surprises, even with difficult news. It is suggested here that the young man has begun his transition from his previous way of living. During this part of the journey he wants the security of honesty and not to be tripped up by the ambiguity of mixed messages.

Another young man reported that he started to develop trust in his caseworker when activities were fun and non-critical.

> *It's having laughs with, having laughs about things. Like we used to go kayaking and <caseworker> used to come kayaking with us but we'd just splash water around and that. It'd be just fun, do you know what I mean? You're starting to get that trust between two people because you're having a bit of fun and no-ones being too picky or anything so you know it's just alright. (YP7)*

Being introduced to new and safer experiences by his caseworker gave him enjoyable experiences that kept him motivated to stay away from the streets and he feels safe in the presence of his caseworker. Therefore he is able to drop his barriers and relax into the relationship because of a perceived lack of imminent threats.

> *I've just, things that are just fun like you know, just want to keep you going. Yeah otherwise I would have still wanted to go back on the streets where I thought it was fun. But this was just a lot better than being out on the street causing trouble. This was actual fun and like things that you can do that are like good that were fun. (YP7)*

It appears that the caseworker demonstrated a willingness to engage with this young man in his world, allowing the young man to experience the caseworker in a manner that he could

relate to and enjoy. By going into the young man's world there is a sharing of experiences that contributes to bringing the partnership together.

A display of honesty and truthfulness contributes towards convincing young men that their caseworker is a safe and predictable person. It is through being truthful and honest that trust is formed. Enacting consistency and predictability underpins trust as a place of safety where there are no imminent threats to self. Creating a safe environment encourages the young man to drop his 'protective self' to reveal aspects of his 'true self' (Trevithick 2018). From this, a working context is being developed whereby it is possible for a young man to choose to move closer to their caseworker.

The data show one part of the on-going process of coming together demonstrated through a change in perception of a caseworker. One young man explained that initially he did not realise his caseworker was there to help him.

> *I didn't like [caseworker] at first either but I end up realising that they're not there to fuck you about. They're there to help you. I've learnt now that they are there, they're not there to make my life hard. (YP5)*

These words display resistance during the initial face-to-face contact. The young men's initial construction of caseworkers tended to omit the elements of help and support, instead seeing them as authoritarian figures keen on law enforcement. Relating back to the previous quotes, it was recognising this young man's work aspirations that formed the foundation for the relationship. It was this concrete action that lead to a change of opinion and an improvement in engagement.

Another also spoke about his change in perception. He reported telling his friends that caseworkers are good people and they do try to help your life situation; you just need to give them a chance.

> *So that's how I know now I can say to someone that they're going on a like "Alright, don't believe what they first say but trust them". Because I didn't trust them like that and that's what I say to them. I didn't trust them but I haven't breached so you've got to trust people in life just to get on. And that's how you know how to, like you have to learn by your mistakes don't you so. (YP1)*

These words imply that he and his friends started off with a negative construction of caseworkers (this point was made by the same young man in chapter 5). However, experiencing his caseworker responding to his needs in a genuine and honest manner led him to change his opinions. As a consequence, he actively told his friends that caseworkers are good people that can be trusted. It is suggested that positive work of caseworkers feeds back into the public perception of the young justice system. This has an impact of changing the image of the service in the environment where most of the service users live.

Another aspect of the on-going process of coming together is when young men experienced caseworkers actively helping them to improve their life situation. Three young men appeared to come closer to their caseworker when they realised the advice given was helping to improve their life.

> *They'll help you with everything. So I can, it will help me like improve on it, improve on it, and even if I meet someone else I can put all that stuff what they*

taught me on to someone else like talk to them, put it how they would put it. (YP1)

To begin with I didn't really like to listen. Obviously like I said I thought I knew best and then listening just got me so much like better and I was just... Help you so much because I did learn things like I didn't know everything and realised that I didn't know everything. I was really thinking that there was plenty things to teach me. (YP7)

Made me feel like being given a chance. Like someone was willing to help me not I'd have to do it by myself. (YP8)

This shows they responded to advice that was helpful and lead to some form of improvement. Once they realised their caseworker could positively contribute they became more willing to co-operate. Again, this is symptomatic of a young man's accepting the authority of his caseworker because of the usefulness presented and the positive experiences given. However, the advice has to be meaningful to a young man in his current life situation. It appears this could be one of the instances when young men become closer and more dependent on the knowledge and wisdom provided by their caseworker.

At the same time, a barrier reported by the first of these young men was the lack of willingness to ask for help.

Some people don't like to talk or ask for the help. With me, I will ask for the help even if I don't need it. (YP1)

This suggests that caseworkers have to be proactive when giving advice even when it relevant to a young man's life situation. Also, the young man needs to be a meaningful

participator in the relationship to create an improved life situation as they continue the transition towards desistance (Farrall 2002; Bridges 2004). This further supports the need to have a detailed understanding of a young man as an individual.

When the young men did express their own ideas, it was also found that careful listening by caseworkers contributed the process of coming together. One young man described how he started to realise his caseworker was genuinely interested in his opinions and wanted to help move his life forward.

> *Like they were actually interested and they actually listened. That's actually when I took an interest in actually trusting them because that was after the second visit. ... It was like they were interested in getting me like through what I was going through. They was interested in asking me what I wanted to do. That they was actually bothered. (YP3)*

Another said that his caseworker listened to his ideas followed by explaining reasons for his decision to agree or disagree with what he wanted to do.

> *They'd always listen to you whether it was a good idea or bad idea they always listen to you first. Then if it was a bad idea they'd say no but explain to you why they said no. And if it was a good idea, by all means they'd go yeah. (YP7)*

It appears that this young man was able to make sense of what his caseworker was saying because it was done in a manner he could understand.

The impact of caseworkers not actively listening was also strongly voiced. One young man said he cannot tolerate a caseworker if they are not listening.

Like that's one thing, that's one thing that I can't tolerate if someone is stood there, they're not listening, they're not taking in what I'm saying. That's probably, I would probably have said something like "You're not listening to me". (YP7)

Further supporting this point, one also suggested that caseworkers should listen first and then talk in response.

Talk and listen. Or listen then talk. (YP5)

The men want to be involved in two-way conversations and they want advice they can make sense of. The impact of this can be explained using Frederick et al's (2004) definition of cognitive engagement as exerting the effort to master required ideas and skills. Furthermore, engaging on a cognitive level is made more effective on the foundation of an emotional bond.

However, not all of the young men were totally confident that their caseworkers listened to them. One thought his caseworker listens to him but he could not fully articulate the reasons why.

Well, I think she does. Not sure really. (YP6)

As a consequence of these experiences, three said that they felt as though they had developed a bond with their caseworker.

Yeah, because you bond relationships with them, don't you. So, It is more than that. Well, some people don't bond relationships they just talk like normal

people. But these relationships what I got, it's like they're my mates but, obviously, they're my YOT people at the same time. (YP1)

It's not like she's a worker, it's like she's just like the average person that you can talk to. It's like you've got someone there to talk to. It's genuinely like she's not got to work with you. It's like she's there because she wants to be there to help you. It's like there's a bond there, sort of thing. (YP2)

So, it was having that, making that bond between you so you that you both, you need both of you to learn. (YP7)

The latter young man reported that having an understanding of each other is important in the formation of this bond.

It's hard to help somebody if you can't bond with them because you're not realising what the person's like. You're not finding things out about them. You're just, obviously if you don't bond with someone, you don't talk to them, you don't ask them how there day has been, or anything and you just, you don't know anything about that person. You bond with someone, you know, you start to learn about them. You just start to know what they, what help they need and what help they don't need and what, when they know what's best for them and stuff. (YP7)

It was his opinion that without this bond it would not be possible for anyone to help him. According to him having a detailed understanding of him was crucial to forming an emotional bond.

In describing the characteristics of this emotional bond, young men spoke about their caseworkers as ordinary people who interacted in a manner that enabled them to hold mutual conversations. These experiences are in-line with findings from studies that suggest young people are more likely to engage with volunteers and mentors who present as ordinary people who do not impose authoritative ideals (Cooper, et al, 2007; Bateman and Hazel, 2013). These studies found that young people have less resentment towards volunteers and mentors because of a less directive approach.

Although tThe experiences reported by the young men in this study did show a lack of resentment towards their caseworkers, they did report being agitated during some points of their court order but this was mitigated by consistency applied by their caseworker. They reported knowing that consequences would follow inappropriate behaviour so they tended to own the situation more but did not necessarily hold resentment. Again, these findings point to the dual nature of a caseworker's role from a young man's perspective. It has been found that the dominant role is the helping role in preference to the authoritative role. It is this role that was reported to be more effective in establishing a relationship that promotes positive inter-personal interactions. However, it is still acknowledged that the authoritative role is used when needed for the purpose of imposing rules and regulations demanded by the nature of the court order.

Also, the young men were asked about the characteristics of caseworkers that contributed towards the formation of a bond. One said that it was through understanding his personal background that contributed to the bond.

> *You could make a bond but with a formal person and if, I like make bonds with the people now because they bring through stuff that I've been through as a kid*

or when they've done stuff when they was kids what I've done. But with other people they've not got a clue. They've never been arrested before so I'd have different bonds with them than I do with the other ones. (YP1)

Another spoke about not feeling alone in his thoughts and feelings.

It just makes you feel like you're not so alone and the fact that other people have done it as well. And even people that try to stop people doing it have done it. It's not like, it's not like just you're the only one that does it, sort of thing. (YP2)

Not being 'fake' also contributed to the development of a bond.

Don't be fake, you know what I mean. A lot of people out there are fake. It's like the picture they paint to you is completely different to who they are kind of thing, you know what I mean. Basically they're painting you a what's it called, a zebra but really they could be a Lion or something. (YP8)

Interestingly, none of the young men state ethnicity or gender as a factor in the development of a bond. It was purely down to honesty and being able to relate to the young man on his terms.

Finally these points made in the findings line up with the theoretical components regarding achieving legitimacy of caseworker authority in terms of instrumental self-interest and promoting compliance to behaviours within society (Farrall 2002). These are achieved by working from each young man's point of view to garner a sense of belonging (Bottoms 2002). Furthermore, maintaining an emotional stability provides a platform for moving forward towards desistance.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed the young men's accounts and identified two themes occurring during subsequent face-to-face contacts. One of these was being treated as a unique individual. The other was developing a dependency on caseworkers. First of all, it was found that interacting requires a personal touch. It was shown that being treated as a unique individual improved motivation to engage during face-to-face contacts. This experience was explained in terms of understanding their personality traits and aspirations to construct an image of the uniqueness of each young man. Using this understanding helped each person to develop their life situation according to their own situation and needs. One specific example of this was how, during challenging interactions, young men reported feelings of being overwhelmed. By contrast, young men became more resilient to challenging situations when caseworkers were emotionally in tune and provided necessary helped. Also, it was found that young men were passionate about their hobbies and aspirations and workers tapping into this passion offered paths to engagement through which to improve his life situation.

Some of the young man felt they had an emotional bond with their caseworker. It was found that feeling safe indicated by a lack of imminent threats to self in the company of a caseworker, contributed to this bond. Furthermore, trust underpinned this feeling of safety that led to a reduced usage of a 'protective self' to the usage of a 'true self' (Trevithick 2018).

All of the young man started off viewing their caseworker negatively, yet ended up with a sense of positivity. This in no doubt has something to do with the particular sample of men who agreed to take part in the study in that the more positive offenders feel about their

caseworker the more likely they may be to share this with researchers. Service users who were resistant to casework for the duration of their contacts with workers may have told different stories had they taken part. With the sample of men in the study there was a definite sense of change happening due to the caseworkers' practice. Supporting this, a range of affective characteristics was identified demonstrating that the young men want to operate within a mutual partnership. It appears that this approach is more conducive to establishing a relationship that supports effective intervention which is in contrast to an authoritarian approach that primarily supports law enforcement. This is similar to findings from studies of relationships and engagement in non-statutory services (Cooper et al, 2007; Bateman and Hazel, 2013) reporting that the young men respond to statutory practice from the caseworkers that has a strong element similar to that seen in voluntary practice.

The next chapter discusses the personal experiences of the caseworkers as they establish and maintain engagement during face-to-face contacts.

CHAPTER 8 Caseworkers' Experiences During Subsequent Face-to-Face Contacts

This chapter outlines and discusses findings from the caseworkers' perspectives about what happens after the initial contact. The key finding in this chapter is the use of a collaborative approach within the relationship in preference to an authoritarian approach. It was this mode of interacting that appears to circumvent issues around power within the relationship so as to create a mutual presence. The data show three distinct elements of collaborative working that were distilled from caseworker narratives. One was creating a sense of being together through mutuality by sharing current experiences and reciprocating personal stories and information. The second was encouraging participation in a collaborative partnership with each young man. In particular, caseworkers told of encouraging young men to actively use their voices to express thoughts, feelings and opinions. The third was maintaining engagement by responding to breakdowns.

8.1 Developing a Sense of Being Together

All caseworkers adopted a collaborative approach when working with young men in preference to an authoritarian approach. This section will outline how they used the concept of mutuality to share experiences and personal information with young men to create a sense of being together. It was this sense of 'being together' through which caseworkers encouraged young men to comply with the court order along with further instructions and advice.

In pursuit of this, one caseworker identified the significance of a collaborative approach in spite of the true nature of the youth justice system.

Generally speaking I find that if you adopt a collaborative sort of approach – yes you have to be honest about your role compared to them, your relationship with them. You have to be clear that you are the one with the degree of authority in the relationship but that doesn't preclude you from taking quite a collaborative approach with the young person. (CW1)

This caseworker was acknowledging their level of authority but suggested that the power imbalance afforded by the role could be ameliorated by working together. Furthermore, the justification for taking this approach was that more effective outcomes can be achieved by taking a collaborative approach.

Another caseworker made the point that young men show more of an understanding of relationships than they are given credit for. This is the recognition that the young men are also active co-creators of a mutually-based partnership in the pursuit of commonly agreed goals.

There are professional boundaries here. We do try to adhere to a professional code of conduct and certain boundaries are always seen, you know what I mean. I don't think being trying, trying to be friends with young people and trying to be pally with them. That is not the way to go forward. You don't need to do that because they are too wise to it. One, it's too unprofessional. Two, they're just wise to it. They know if you're trying to be, I don't know, friends with them. They don't want you as a friend. Who the fuck wants these as a friend? Do you know what I mean? They're not are they, you know? So, but that doesn't mean to say that there isn't a genuine human interaction going on in the time when you are seeing them. (CW4)

The above quote notes that young men have an understanding of how they want to be interacted with. But, they could initially be testing the caseworker for reasons ensuring emotional safety. So, given previous findings of young men demonstrating reluctance to engage in the first instance it is argued that caseworkers have to find a mode of interaction that encourages collaborative working.

In defining collaborative working, elements of practice were distilled from caseworker narratives. One element was defining the scope of the relationship that parties have to work within. Two caseworkers said they achieved this by being clear about their role and explaining acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.

> *The really clear explicit boundaries are in the behaviour contract which is one of the first things you go through. What I find works for me is to be very clear about my role, my role within the system that they find themselves in, then my relationship to them. So I just try and give a really clear explanation as to who I am and what I'm there for. And in doing so I hope that that communicates professional boundaries as well. As well as spelling it all out for them you know with the behaviour contract, don't hit anyone, don't spit. (CW1)*

> *I always set the scene when it comes to how we work together. There is a behaviour contract but I'll say to them "It is a standard thing. No violence, no aggression, no inappropriate use of names and I'll give examples". And then I'll take about no lateness and no coming in under the influence of drink (CW5)*

The main components identified were; the roles, behaviours, purpose of intervening and expectations. These were then followed up with examples the young man can relate to. In

specifying the behavioural expectations it emerged that there is a standard behavioural contract specified by the local authority that explains acceptable and unacceptable behaviours. Collaborative working starts by defining the scope of the relationship. This finding is in-line with Tuckman's (1965) hypothesis that a forming stage of coming together has an element of acclimatising and familiarisation. In the above quotes the caseworkers are starting to create a structure for the young men to settle into the partnership by defining expectations. This approach also fits in with the caseworker attempting to legitimise their authority in the eyes of the young man. It is compliance as viewed from below rather than enforcement of authority (Bottoms 2002).

The latter caseworker further introduced the idea of mutuality into the discussion by pointing out that these behavioural rules also apply to caseworkers.

> *I say "That also applies to me". And that's when they start laughing. Again, I'll say that right at the very beginning. I'll explain the complaints procedure, if they want to make a complaint and make it, that it's ok to make a complaint because sometimes "Like you, I'm human. If I forget to do something I don't mind you telling me that you are", and I'll use language that's like "You're really pissed off with me because it's ok. I am human and I forget and I would like it if you could remind me as well". (CW5)*

This narrative presents a mode of interacting that is aimed at the level of the young man rather than the practitioner. In this mode, there is encouragement to come together by sharing the rules of behaviour. Also, it is noteworthy that the young man has been given permission to challenge any transgressions through the local authority complaints procedure. Allowing this course of action gives a mechanism to ensure reciprocity with the

young men having some control over the caseworker. Within the relationship the caseworker can breach a young man for non-compliance but there is also a process through which a young man can bring a caseworker to account. Curley (1997) makes the point that mutuality is created through “being with” each other and bearing witness to each other’s own values and priorities. It is not they both have to agree with each other. Instead they do have to be aware of each other’s contrasting views as an acknowledgement of difference: different moral systems (Bottoms 2002). This has been demonstrated above by the caseworker “being with” the young man by sharing the same rules of behaviour.

Furthermore, this caseworker talks about presenting as an ordinary person in an attempt to reduce the appearance of the authority they have over a young man. It is suggested that this mechanism introduces an element of humanity and care on a personal level into the relationship. Through a two-way interaction the young man can experience reciprocity by exchanging elements of being ordinary human-beings rather than power being imposed through a law-enforcement role. Again, this appears to be an attempt by the caseworker to try to form a partnership that is mutually workable for both of them. It appears that the process of coming together is initiated by the caseworker in recognition of probable reluctance from a young man. The aim is to achieve some degree of compliance. The first part is enacted through sharing rules and boundaries. Importantly, this aspect of sharing keeps both of them within professional expectations as there is no emotional elements involved. Instead, it is setting expectations around behavioural sharing.

One caseworker further mentioned that reinforcing boundaries and rules is an on-going process throughout the court order.

I suppose in a more subtle way you're communicating boundaries all the time aren't you with the way you communicate with the young person. (CW1)

As well as scoping the relationship, two caseworkers said that setting and enforcing boundaries are useful tools for social learning.

Usually as a result of their own behaviour and they've got to understand that there's accountabilities in life. I think, they've got to, in order for society to get along, you know we've all got to, a reasonable degree we've got to play ball. I think these are lessons young people who offend have to learn is the lessons young people throughout their lives learn through going to school and institutions and having to play by rules and boundaries. (CW4)

When I speak to young people after the orders have ended, the boundaries were the most important things. They actually want the boundaries. They understand why their parents are imposing boundaries. With parents, they will rebel but then that's because that's the stage of a young person's development. They're trying to make decisions for themselves. They may get it right, they may not. But the ties with their parents are also loosening as they're being lured more towards their peers. But it's important to recognise that as a normal part of a process. (CW5)

These are examples of using the relationship as a behavioural intervention for the purpose of social integration. These skills form the basis of their abilities for making the most of social institutions. Following on, collaborative working is essentially a vehicle for working together by sharing elements of each other as well as sharing the experience of the journey.

The data show caseworkers encouraged the young men to develop an understanding of them also. Two caseworkers pointed out that professional relationships have an element of reciprocity around learning how each other operate.

> *I think, for me, good professional relationships aren't necessarily about two people who really like each other. It's nice when you do and I have got clients that I really like and I think they like me but I don't think that's what a good professional relationship hinges upon. I think it's when two people know each other, they understand each other and they know what to expect. (CW1)*

> *But if you say to them "I expect you to be on time" but you go half an hour late, what grounds have you to tell that person off or give them a warning? So as a worker, you have that responsibility and when you say you're going to do something, they really want to see when you've done it. They're going to test you. They get to know you and how you operate and how you work. (CW5)*

For the first caseworker, a professional relationship is defined by having a working understanding of each other that consists of predictable reactions to interactions. This is in contrast to gaining the 'friendship' by presenting as a 'nice person'. The driving factor of this approach is focusing on developing an understanding of each other as opposed to "liking each other". This is achieved by both parties getting to know each other by exchanging behaviours through interactions. The second caseworker went further by saying that young men are going to test caseworkers to see if they act in a mutual capacity. This is another demonstration of the active process of people coming together with purpose. Tuckman (1965) also talks about people actively testing each other and testing the rules as they orient

towards each other. For the young men this situation is new and perceived as being unstructured. It was suggested that through testing behaviours people are looking for support and guidance as they start to overcome hesitancy and reluctance to learn how to meaningfully engage within this new structure. This is evident of caseworkers making the relationship a safe place in an attempt to encourage compliance.

The data show that caseworkers also have to orient towards a young man in order to fulfil the obligations of developing a working partnership. One caseworker reported unwittingly coming across unfamiliar cultural rituals. During one contact, a dilemma unfolded that required a decision concerning mutuality: sharing hospitality from the family.

> *It's hard using an interpreter as well. Never used one before but again it's about respecting their culture because half way through the session they brought out these big ornate kettle things with all this Turkish tea in it and snacks. It's custom that you offer your guests food and drink. You know, so it's about realising you don't want to offend them so you have something. The interpreter was from Turkey, she explained because I looked a bit shocked. You don't get that normally, it was a 3 foot kettle and they brought it out and put it on the living room floor and started, like this little thing where they started pouring the tea and handing it out. The interpreter said "It's tradition that you do this for a guest" and stuff. If she told me to take me shoes off I'd have done that as well. Well, I've heard people say that they don't drink anything at some households that you can't see into. So, have a glass of water so you can see into it. (CW11)*

This is another example of working with the unknown as well as demonstrating mutuality. This caseworker was being confronted with a dilemma that could have health consequences

as well as future engagement challenges. It was decided that sharing the cultural practice would give an experience of mutuality that could promote engagement and bring both parties closer together by accepting cultural norms and, through this, further orienting towards the young man. This is in contrast to declining the offer to partake which would have maintained a professional distance.

The data show caseworkers developing mutuality in many different ways. One such way was exploring sensitive and personal issues in a dignified and respectful way. One caseworker reported having a conversation with a young man about confusions he had around his sexuality.

> *The other week I had a really long debate with someone about sexuality. It got us talking about things, really uncomfortable things for this young person but because we did it in the car as a debate, at the end of it, he was like "That was good, that was good". And the thing we were able to discuss, I did more in that car journey because it was nonthreatening and it was a debated way. We covered some really serious issues. Because he's got issues with his sexuality but he's not able to tell people that. And he's got confusions about his sexual preferences and actually what is sex and what does it mean to him. I think it was a really good piece of work with him because he was like "I've not ever really talked any of that with anyone". But it was done on, so on paper, yeah, you can say "Oh, yeah I did, we did a discussion in the car". But that's unconventional because obviously some people operate as "No, a YOT session has got to be a formal meeting". But, yeah, you've couldn't sit him down and talk about sexuality, face-to-face in a … (CW8)*

By engaging in a respectful conversation about an issue of importance to a young man, the caseworker co-creates a sharing mutual positive experience that promotes a sense of being together. This is done by demonstrating presence by "being with" the young man and bearing witness to his values and principles (Curley, 1997). This does not necessary suggest that the outcome is required to be positive, instead it is the manner in which the conversation is held that is a key factor in the shared experience. Furthermore, it is showing respect towards the values of the young man and being instrumental in helping him make sense of confusing adolescent transitions. It is a demonstration of valuing the young man rather than imposing a morality that is not in-line with his current view of the world (Curley, 1997). This caseworker is entering and empathising with the young man's world view rather than passing judgement on it.

Another element of a collaborative approach was moving forward together into the unknown and forward momentum into the unknown requires sharing experiences by taking mutual risks together.

> *What this trainer said and what really stuck with me was that "relationships are built up by mutual risk taking". I thought "What a great little nugget that is you know". That's kind of always stuck with me. I think I've tried to absorb that into my practice and I've found that to be true. (CW1)*

This caseworker reported using mutual risk taking as a vehicle for both parties to learn more about each other which, in turn, served as a mechanism for building respect in the relationship.

I think that that's why mutual risk taking quite good because every time you take one, you learn more about the other person. You know what to expect of them. You learn about the way they respond to situations. For me that's why it strengthens the relationship. (CW1)

This caseworker said mutual risk taking is a vehicle for sharing experiences within the court order. Through taking risks, learning took place through trial and error. It was this sharing of experiences that moved both of them together through the unknown as they developed a deeper understanding of each other. It appears the two of them have moved on from testing each other to testing situations together. This is a possible marker of overcoming initial reluctance whereby cohesion has been formed by addressing agreed goals and tasks.

In effect, the caseworker and young man are going through a transition together to create a joint identity of being together. The above shows that there is a liminal phase during which they are both creative, taking risks and negotiating the meaning of being together (Bridges 2004).

Another element of collaborative working coming out of the caseworker narratives was promoting positivity. One caseworker reported building a structure of positivity starting with trust and with believing in each young man as a human being who possesses the ability to succeed.

I see it as being something that I offer them, the trust and I like them. A lot of young people we work with don't have anybody who particularly likes them. They don't have a lot of people giving them positives. Constantly on their backs, constantly criticising them, constantly telling them they'll fail. So, it's about

building around them that structure that somebody believes in them and that actually, if they let me help them then they can get out of the situation they're in and make positive change. (CW7)

This caseworker is taking a strengths-based approach to promote collaborative working by responding to the talents of a young man rather than the offending behaviour. Doing this requires encouragement to be actively given. Young men offenders are more likely to reciprocate with a change in behaviour when this approach is used.

The above narratives have shown many elements required to establish collaborative working within a relationship. However, the data show that even though collaboration can be established successfully during contacts, with some young men no progress is made in changing offending behaviour. One caseworker reported that change with a young man can sometimes stall and the relationship becomes non-productive for both parties.

There was a lad I worked with a few years ago that he just kept coming through on orders. He just kept reoffending. So I started off with him on a Referral Order, then he'd have a YRO, then he'd have another YRO. So at the time you'd sit back and look at it, I'd been working with him for 18 months and going over the same stuff every now and again. And it's about saying to your boss "Look, I've got a good half decent relationship with him. I would want to work with him again but he needs a fresh pair of eyes looking at it. He needs a new relationship with somebody maybe not because he said he didn't want to work with me but it's an opportunity for him to work with somebody different." (CW11)

This story draws out other factors that are at play in changing behaviour. It is appears that even with a positive relationship, a young man still needs to have the will and desire within him to want to change. Therefore, it is suggested that a challenge for the caseworker is to develop insight into the mind of a young man to trigger the desire to change behaviour when stuck in the 'starting desistance' phase (Maruna and Farrall 2002; Nugent and Schinkel 2016). This caseworker reported making a judgement call whether or not to carry on working with the young man: maybe, another caseworker would be better positioned to develop a deeper insight into the young man and better understand his triggers.

> *I'm not going to claim, you know, I'm the best worker to work with him and I can do everything anybody else can, yeah. Somebody else might bring something to the table that works better with him than I've done. But it's sometimes about holding your hands up and saying "Look, I think we need a change" and most of the time the kids will say "Well, I'll probably agree with you. No offence but...". (CW11)*

It appears from this example that one element of connectivity within relationships is the naturally occurring attractions of the personality and the use of self. This caseworker identified that sometimes this connection just does not happen. In response, it was suggested that it is beneficial to move a young man onto a different caseworker. This allows a different approach to be used to see the young man's life situation from a different perspective. However, it was also reported that persisting with a young man for many years can also sometimes reap rewards.

> *But to keep flogging it for like two or three years with the same worker. I have had some cases where I have done that because it's been a benefit because you*

have got that good relationship, we trust you, we know you inside out, your family want you to carry on working with us because they've got they've got that relationship. They like that you know the person inside out as well. (CW11)

Again, this is an example of working with uncertainties. This caseworker is saying that a judgement call has to be made about whether or not persistence will prevail or it is time to allocate a different caseworker.

8.2 Encouraging Participation

The previous section explored how caseworkers encouraged collaborative working through mutuality and reciprocity during personal interactions. Following on, this section explores three approaches caseworkers said they used to create active participation from young men in pursuit of a collaborative partnership: demonstrating an interest in the young man; finding something a young man is able to talk about; and responding to requests about the caseworker's personal life. It was using these approaches that encouraged the young man to accept the authority of the caseworker for instrumental reasons.

The previous chapter demonstrated that young men will most probably have had negative experiences with practitioners. This is one of the reasons they are reluctant to engage with their caseworker and work together. To counter this, the data show that demonstrating an interest in a young man and treating him as a unique individual helps to overcome reluctance. One caseworker suggested that a young man will be more likely to engage when someone demonstrated a genuine interested in their life.

You will reap the rewards if you take that extra time with them because kids, I believe kids feel it and kids know whether you're interested or not. (CW8)

Two caseworkers made the point of recognising young men as fellow humans and suggested that individuality can be defined through differences in their personalities.

> *See that kid as an individual, see that kid as a person. (CW4)*

> *There's some good characters out there, these kids. If you don't check, if all you do is turn up and do a worksheet and then walk out again, you're not really seeing the personality. (CW11)*

Three caseworkers said they would prioritise getting to know more about a young man during contacts following the first contact over starting formal interventions.

> *So, following that appointment when they have signed it [sentence plan] and supposedly understood it and then the next session will then be about sort of them in general. (CW2)*

> *I'll spend most of the first few sessions, two or three sessions asking them about other things: interest, hobbies, parents, family those sorts of questions. Because you can't always ask them everything you need to in the assessment because you get a limited hour or a couple of hours. So, over the next few sessions, so it gets them a little bit better. (CW9)*

> *The first few sessions is not about turning up with your worksheets and "Right we're going to do this". It might be a bit of a get to know you session. (CW11)*

These caseworkers have reported making it a priority to show an interest in and develop an understanding of a young man in preference to starting formal intervention work. It is

argued that caseworkers recognise the centrality of a young man's involvement in the partnership going forward. This is in-line with Curley's (1997) recognition that workers can facilitate the shift from service users being passive recipients to becoming active participants. It fits also with Ivanoff et al's (1994) argument about the benefits of preparing service users in the criminal justice system in readiness for change as opposed to starting intervention work in the first instance. Furthermore, this creates reasons for the young men to accept the interventions of a caseworker rather than excuses not to engage meaningfully. Caseworkers preparing themselves to work with service users supplement the process of orienting both the caseworker and service users towards the tasks and goals of the partnership.

The previous chapters have described how caseworkers had constructed an image of a young man mainly through case notes written on police and social care databases. It was found that these tended to report negative behaviours that cast a young man in bad light. It was also found that caseworkers avoided the temptation to form judgements about a young man. Instead, they needed to collect information from the young man personally. Doing this requires active participation. The data show that one mechanism of encouraging active participation was by becoming vocal to express thoughts and opinions. One caseworker reported encouraging young men to use their voice so they can make a crucial contribution with their own opinions.

> *You need their voice. That's what counts the most. So, never make assumptions but you know, you might be from different backgrounds but actually their views are just as valid. Their views are the expert because you're never going to break down that barrier. It's about working to the kid's strengths really. (CW8)*

This caseworker suggested that each young man has to be encouraged to use their voice because they are the experts in their own life situation and that the voice of a young man can be maximised by working to his strengths. It is suggested that this is a continuation of encouraging the young man to take a more active role in the partnership by inviting him to give his opinions and thoughts on the world. This is encouraging a young man to comply with the instructions given by a caseworker starting from their own perspective and social positioning. It is argued that they will be more ready to move their life forward from a situation that they are familiar with and have a good understanding of. However, given the reluctance and hesitance of young men reported in previous chapters, it was found that preparation was required to develop an environment that was conducive to expressing personal thoughts and opinions. One caseworker spoke about tailoring conversations to match the capabilities of a young man.

> *Just how I judge probably best or ask them how best they work. It's more than just, you get to find out a bit more about the young person then. Then we use general stuff about getting to know you a bit more depending on their age, their abilities, the things they like that depends on how I go into that. Sometimes it can be just be discussion. Sometimes it can be picture cards. Sometimes we'll get them to draw or write. (CW2)*

Also, it was found that participation can be negatively affected by external influences on the mood of a young man. To counter possible disaffection, two caseworkers reported ensuring the physical location was free from external distraction and the time of day was appropriate for each young man. Also, there is an element of managing the emotions of the other so as to maximise the time spent together (Thoits 1996).

Some cases aren't good to see at home so I'll go and see them at school, you know, in the middle of the day where they respond better. Or, you know, it's about being flexible and being a bit inventive sometimes. Realising that not one size fits all in terms of when you see young people, when you do the work with them. (CW8)

Take them out for a drink, you know. I like sitting in back gardens and chatting to kids, you know. It's just different to sitting on the sofa, you know. (CW11)

It is suggested that these caseworkers are recognising individuality in terms of time and space as well as the person.

After preparing for the contact, the data show that sometimes young men are reluctant or hesitant to start a conversation. One caseworker suggested that some young men do not initiate meaningful conversations because they have not learned how to do so in other life situations.

I have to accept that there's certain young people with complex needs who are so entrenched in that response [abusive or threatening] with people that that's what they are going to offer up to me. That doesn't mean to say that I'm going to tolerate that over a long period of time. But it means that at that point in time I've got to roll with that as resistance, you know. (CW4)

In recognition of potential reluctance, three caseworkers spoke about finding a common platform to stimulate dialogue. This was achieved by starting in a young man's world encouraging them to talk about interests and aspirations they have.

I think you always do just try and have a bit of rapport about things. It's not like I'm a, or have ever been a teenage boy. Or I have never been interested in computer games. Or most of the things they ever have done. But, there is usually something you could find that you can talk about. (CW3)

I was trying to find out aspects of their life, what they're interested in and stuff like that you know. I'm always searching for some kind of link between what it is that they do and it is that I have experience of, you know. What's their favourite television programme? Their favourite film? What can you get out of that? What games do they play? Do they consider doing any sports? What sort of things do they like? (CW4)

I wouldn't be carrying on about any of my history. But if there's some stuff that's there, you know, you might say "Look, I can see where you're coming from", you know. It does, common interests build that relationship up. (CW10)

These caseworkers were searching for mutual interests in the first instance and, in the absence of mutual interests, the caseworker created common ground by demonstrating curiosity in the young man's interests. Again, this is evident of the use of empathy and self to create common ground in favour of the young man (Kaushik 2017; Trevithick 2018)

Following on, two caseworkers reported that once a young man has started to engage in conversation then it is very important to listen to what they have to say.

They've got to feel like you're listening to them. I think that's, you know, the key. Often they'll have tried to have told people throughout the years the problems they've been having. (CW3)

I think, the best thing you can do as a YOT worker for them young men is to know that they felt that they've been listened to. But you have to start that from day 1, the first meeting. (CW8)

It appears that giving attention to a young man encourages them to keep talking in the conversation as opposed to the conversation stalling if the caseworker was to dominate the dialogue. There is an attempt to maintain a flow of energy in the interactions. One caseworker reported that some young men enjoyed talking about themselves because they normally do not get many opportunities to do so.

Sometimes people love to talk about themselves because they don't get a chance to do it. People don't pay them that attention. Parents don't ask them how things are going at school or, you know, what they did with their mates last night or anything. So they don't have a chance to talk to somebody about that. It's sometimes a good thing and they like it. (CW10)

The data also show caseworkers making attempts to comprehend the narratives presented by the young men even in the absence of shared experiences. One caseworker spoke about trying to understand the life experiences of young men in the absence of having the same personal experiences.

Well you can have empathy, I think. I mean, unless you've been in a specific situation it's hard to. I've never been in a gang so I wouldn't be able to understand the gang culture because I've never been in it. But I've done training and kind of, you get it, yeah and there are reasons why people are in gangs just like there's reasons why people smoke substances or use substances or like. So,

but if you've never, if you've never, I wouldn't be able to say "Look, I know exactly where you're coming from that's happened to me, I used to be a gang member". I've never done that. So, you know, it seems, I suppose if you've got that experience, if that's you background then it will make it easier. And some of the young people might react better to that, "Ah, they know where I'm coming from, that's happened to them", you know, then it could improve the relationship. I mean, all I can say is what, you know, I can understand it, you tell me more so I can understand more and get them, then that starts that conversation but I wouldn't. (CW10)

This caseworker did not pretend to understand a young man's life experiences. Instead, an empathic acknowledgement of his situation was offered to maintain respect for the young man's life situation to ensure the focus remained with the young man. In this instance, there is a use of self for reasons of curiosity to develop an understanding of the young man's perspective rather developing a common ground.

Another dilemma was found in terms of caseworkers having real life experiences of discussed events. Two caseworkers said that when they did have the same experiences, they were wary about comparing their own life situation with that of a young man's.

You'd never say "Oh, I know what it's like. I've been there". You wouldn't say that. I think it's just bad form almost because it almost diminishes how important that issue is for them. So, "O, I've been there as well" - it's not something I would say personally. Some people might do. It might work for them, but it's not something that I do. I would say "I understand" but I wouldn't say "I've been there" though. I think it lessens it a little bit. (CW9)

It would help because you can relate, that relationship, you'd be able to relate. But like I say, you're not there, it's like "Ah, when I was in this situation when I was 17 I know where you're coming from". You know, they're situation might be totally different and they might be think "You know what, you don't know jack. You don't know me". You know and you're taking the emphasis off of them because you're there for them. But, you know, as that relationship builds you might say "Yeah, you know what, I know where you're coming from, believe me I know". (CW10)

These caseworkers said they were cautious not to let the focus of attention drift away from the young man onto themselves. However, another caseworker raised caution about interpreting the manner in which a young interprets his life experiences. This makes it more difficult to compare life events because, although life events appears to be similar, it is the interpretations that could be, markedly different.

What the young person has experienced is affecting him and his level of processing information, his guilt, self-esteem, identity, all of those factors. (CW5)

The above narratives have shown how caseworkers actively encouraged young men to engage and develop on-going conversations. As a consequence, some young men wanted to learn about the caseworker's life. In response to this, caseworkers reported being faced with a dilemma as to how much information they should give in response to prompts from young men. One caseworker reported giving minimal information.

So, I mean, you get to know them a bit but you don't, it's like that don't give them, I don't, you know give them some information but you don't give them

loads of information. They'll ask you about yourself. I'll say some information "Yeah, I'm married but I've got no kids but I know that you're a teenager and I used to be one once". It's that kind of, you don't, I won't give, you know it's that professionalism as well. (CW10)

This caseworker demonstrated concern about maintaining professional boundaries. Giving out minimal information was a response by the caseworker to maintain a professional distance and avoid getting to close to make the caseworker fell uncomfortable.

One caseworker refused to give any personal information at all.

No, I don't. I keep it. Past experiences with other young people, yes, but not my personal past though. I wouldn't talk about that. I don't think it's right to talk about that. I think there's a degree of sort of professionalism that you need to keep. I think there's a split between caseworkers who do and some caseworkers who don't. Some people do, some people don't. I personally don't. I'm aware of, I'll quite readily talk about the experiences of another young person. I wouldn't name them obviously but I'll say "I know, I knew a young person that had gone through something similar and this is what happened to them". But I wouldn't personally relate it to me though. (CW8)

The emphasis here was on staying firmly fixed on the young man and his life situation rather than drifting onto the caseworker's life situation. Inquiries from young men were deflected by using examples of other young men's experience. It appears that this caseworker tried to satiate the young man's hunger for knowledge by remaining responsive but supplying information that did not directly personally relate to him/her.

By contrast however, another caseworker did report giving out personal information in the form of sharing past experiences. It was reported that this was done to make a life experience point to a young man instead of making a point about the caseworker.

> *If it's to illustrate a point because I don't want them to necessarily think that there I am sitting there and I've got it all made. One example I can think of is a young person saying to me is that "Why shouldn't they steal?" because they haven't got those things why shouldn't they have those things. So the discussion around that was "Ok. Do you know what, my life was not that much different from yours and we had very little. I left home but that wasn't through drink or drugs. That was to go to university because I knew that's what I wanted to do. So, you can use it that way. Sometimes they'll say "Oh wow, really?" but in a sense that "Ok, she's gone through something as well". In terms of relationship building that can be a positive factor and they may start to open up a bit more because I think you're going to understand what their life is like. (CW5)*

This caseworker told a story of moving from a previous challenging life situation into a better life situation and the satisfying feelings resulting from being successful and that maybe the young man could be encouraged to feel the same if they adopted the same mind-set. Again, this is evident of empathically creating a common ground on which both can operate and interact on (Kaushik 2017; Trevithick 2018).

The above narratives from caseworkers have shown how they encouraged young men to engage in meaningful and on-going conversations. However, it has to be remembered that the purpose of a court order is to prevent reoffending. In recognition of this, one

caseworker said eventually there is a point in the court order when they returned to the formal work around offending behaviour.

> *And then once you've done the sort of "getting to know them" they've relaxed a bit more around you and they know that you know a lot about them as well they're not so shy on coming forward or stuff. And then following that little bit of work, I'll probably refer back to the sentence plan and say, "Look this is now sort of what we're going to focus on and start to go back to each little section on the sentence plan. (CW2)*

This caseworker's approach was to go back to the formal intervention plan when it was felt that a level of engagement had been established. However, there was no objective criteria identified that signalled a transition back to intervention work was appropriate. Instead, it is suggested that a visceral feeling was behind the decision to move onto intervention work.

It was further found that caseworkers also spoke about young men presenting in a guarded manner during some conversations and intervention work. In addressing this barrier, one caseworker said they started a conversation on a related topic rather than asking direct questions.

> *For example, if they didn't want to do work around peer pressure, you know, you can do work around lifestyle or thinking skills. Just drag friends into it rather, gradually without them realising that you're actually doing that. So, rather than sitting down and saying "This is a session on your friends" because the barriers are instantly going up. (CW11)*

Two others spoke about guiding the conversation as a means to getting young men to talk about aspects of their lives that they did not previously want to talk about.

> *If you're honest with them, you get a better, they'll be like "Yeah, yeah. I haven't done nothing wrong", "Yeah, ok. Tell me about that", "Well, I was with my mates", "Ok, yeah, yeah. So, what we're you doing with your mates?" "Ah we were just messing about", "Smashing windows?", or whatever the offence was, "You was doing that, messing about was it?" it's like "Yeah, yeah, yeah". And but sometimes by talking like that you get them engaging unwittingly, if that makes sense. (CW10)*

> *It's about going under the radar a little bit. Sometimes getting information. Sometimes they don't realise they're giving it to you. So, if you want information on who they're hanging out with then go, don't sit and do a peer pressure session do a session on something else and start talking about friends and bringing things in. Or just asking them "What did you do last night?". If "I went to the cinema" then, you know, you've got a bit of information there about what they're getting up to maybe with friends and stuff. Or you know, it's about gathering it gradually rather than "Tell me everything" because they're not going to do that. (CW11)*

It appears these caseworkers are using subtle forms of communication to extract the information they are searching for. Rather than taking a direct approach to collecting sensitive information, the approach used was to enquire about related aspects of the young man's life in the hope that pieces of relevant information would be inadvertently proffered.

One of the caseworkers gave an example of gathering names of friends using related exploration rather asking a direct question.

> *We'll sit down and say "This is a session around what you're doing in you spare time". It's a subtle change to what you want them to think you're doing because they might say "I play football". "Who do you play football with?" "So-and-so". So you might recognise the names. So instantly there you've got information on peers and peer pressure without saying to a kid "So, tell me who your friends are and what they get up to". (CW11)*

8.3 Maintaining Participation

The previous section demonstrated how caseworkers said they initiated mutuality and participation in collaborative working by encouraging the young men to use their voices to express opinions. It was also reported that, as a consequence, caseworkers managed to enjoy instances of active and on-going participation with young men. However, the data show that caseworkers also discussed problems and challenges of withdrawals from engagement by young men. In recognition of the phenomenon of withdrawals, this section explores how caseworkers identified and responded to various types of withdrawal in an attempt to maintain a collaborative partnership.

The literature review found that withdrawal of engagement as discussed within social work was generally similar to ruptures discussed in psychotherapy. However, the empirical knowledge within psychotherapy is more advanced than that within social work. So, to aid explanation of withdrawals of engagement in this chapter, Safran and Muran (1996) theories of ruptures from psychotherapy will be utilised. They defined ruptures as "a deterioration in the relationship between therapist and patient" (p.447). Also they identified

three rupture behaviour markers. One is *moving away* from the worker through no or partial engagement. Another is *moving toward* the worker by being overly compliant. The third is *moving against* the worker through anger, resentment or dissatisfaction. Furthermore, ruptures were conceptualised in Bordin's (1979) alliance definition through; disagreements in the tasks, disagreements in the goals, and strains in the relationship. Finally, four stages were conceptualised by Safran and Muran (1996); attending to the rupture, exploring the rupture, exploring the behaviour; and exploring the mind-set.

The position of a caseworker is imbued with power afforded by the State and the courts. In effect, they are primarily law-enforcing agents for the purpose of social control. One requirement of a court order is for the young man to engage with caseworkers and comply with instructions. Taking on this role requires the young man to accept the authority of the caseworker and comply with instructions to cease offending. Failure to do this gives a caseworker a decision to make. YJB procedures state that for each occurrence of non-compliant behaviours, a young man is given a written warning. After three written warnings the young man is deemed in breach of the court order and, therefore, has to be returned back to court to explain himself to the judge or magistrate. However, Bottoms (2002), Tyler (2006) and Tankebe and Liebling (2003) argue that there is an approach and process to achieving compliance that is different in nature to an authoritarian stance.

The previous findings chapters have shown that when a caseworker adopts a helping and more caring role, it is more effective in fostering engagement that leads onto achieving a change in behaviour. It was also found that young men are more likely to avoid engaging when their caseworker enacts a law-enforcement and authoritarian role. However, the data show that, irrespective of the approach taken by a caseworker, some young men

demonstrate resistance to engage and reluctance to form a meaningful partnership during the course of the court order. One caseworker reported that sometimes due to on-going non-compliance, breach is the only option left. In mitigating this option the caseworker deferred to the YJB process.

> *I think it's difficult to begin with because you probably try and do everything to avoid sending the young person back to court but in some circumstances, it's the only option, it's the only way you've got around it. So I'm ok, you know. I don't like doing it but it's part of the job. You have to do it. (CW9)*

Herein lays a dilemma for caseworkers. Taking a punitive approach to non-engagement risks further deterioration in the relationship whilst, taking no action signals to the young man that their behaviour is acceptable. The former could create emotional distance whilst the latter maintains a sense of closeness which threatens the caseworker's legitimacy in the eyes of a young man. One caseworker reported a challenging situation of breaching a young man because he transgressed some boundaries.

> *There was a young person who I breached who didn't want to be breached and fell out with me about the breach for a bit. He knew he was in breach and he understood why, he just threw a bit of a strop about it and wouldn't talk. But then following court, I think, I suppose a lot of it was around his anxieties about what would happen but we talked about what my proposals were and he sort of behaved again and I was willing to offer a chance or to suggest the court was to offer him another chance. (CW2)*

Using Safran and Muran (1996) theory of rupture and repair, it appears that the caseworker breached the young man for issues around behaviour related linked to the court order. There is no information regarding the exact nature of the transgressions, but the caseworker did mention exploring both the behaviour and its consequences. However the identification of the rupture in terms of deterioration in the relationship was quoted above as “fell out with me about the breach”. It was further reported that the young man “threw a bit of a strop” which points to *moving against* the caseworker by expressing dissatisfaction. As a consequence of the breach, the court proceeding was used to reaffirm the nature of order. It was noted that an explanatory approach was taken by the court in preference to inflicting further punishment. It appears that the key to repairing the rupture was the caseworker explaining some proposals regarding the court order: although the exact details are not available. This is an example of how repairing breakdowns in engagement can serve to strengthen relationships going forward. This is evidenced by becoming more open and honest during conversations. It provided the young man with evidence of consistency. Furthermore, the caseworker reported that the experience taught him the value and reasons for boundaries in a wider social context that he had not previously had.

> *After that, it was almost like he respected me for keeping to the boundaries and following some of the procedures I know that his parents never really offered any real boundaries in his life and that I feel like he knows where he stood with me. I would tell him when to expect warnings or when to expect to breach and so, whilst he wasn’t very happy at it, he knew it was coming because of what he’d done. So, it was almost that a bit of, it seemed to me, a bit of respect there that I followed through and what I told him that I was going to do because I think he’s*

certainly someone who would push and push if he didn't do what I said what I was going to do. But, at the same time, he was a bit more open and honest with me because I was more open with him on what I would do. (CW2)

The previous section supplied examples of young men and caseworkers having productive conversations. However, it was also reported by caseworkers that conversations can breakdown. The data also show that breakdowns in engagement are not necessarily the fault of a young man. Whilst the manifestation of a breakdown is made known through the young man's behaviour, it is suggested that reasons for such behaviour can be found elsewhere. It will now be shown that there are many reasons why young men choose to withdraw participation. One reason identified in the data was due to family influences. One caseworker reported an example when a young man's dad had a negative impact on his desire to engage in conversation.

With him, I saw him in school after school because where he was at home he lives in a bad setup with his dad which is just a room. So, his dad will be there and the tele is in there. There's a lot of distractions and I know he's quite closed in front of his dad. So, that was part of my building a relationship taking him out of that environment putting him an environment which he feels comfortable in at school where he knew he's safe but away from his dad. The difference from that day to previously because his dad wasn't sat there was amazing. (CW2)

Again, there are markers that line up with Safran and Muran's (1996) theory on ruptures. The above scenario is explained by the caseworker identifying a deterioration in the relationship that was evidenced by the young man *moving away* by being partially or non-

compliant. The consequence of this put a strain on the relationship from the caseworker's perspective so the rupture was attended to. However, no detail was provided as to how the problems underlying the rupture were explored. But, the caseworker did report making a change after which the young man engaged productively. It appears that this caseworker's repair was to change the environment of the contact. The point was to remove the father's influence by moving the meeting place away from the father as opposed to moving the father away from the meeting place. The caseworker confirmed the rupture had repaired because the young man was more willing to discuss issues that he would not otherwise do in the presence of his father.

During face-to-face contacts, the data show that having sensitive and personal conversations can be a very uncomfortable for both parties. It is identified that a possible reason for withdrawing participation is that a young man may be feeling uncomfortable about the topic of the conversation. This, in turn, could lead onto a young man not accepting the presence of a caseworker. One caseworker reported that some young men feel uncomfortable talking about their life.

> *It's not easy talking about your problems. Probably never mind to someone you've never met before and you know who's going away and recording it on some system all this information about you. Who's going to see that? Who's going to read that? How you're going to tell my mum and dad and tell you I had a spliff last night? Or, it's about building that trust up, I think. (CW11)*

The concerns expressed were about who would have access to what a young man has spoken about. There is an important point raised here that once something has been uttered then it is more likely to find its way out into the social world. This could be one

reason why reluctance is shown towards engaging in conversation thus barriers to full compliance: until safety has been experienced.

To address issues of uncomfortable topics, it was found that preparation is a key factor in ensuring that the conversation actually happens. One caseworker spoke about expecting resistance from young men when talking about taking drugs.

> *I need to talk to them about the legal highs they're taking. I know they're going to get annoyed with me but we're still going to have that discussion but I don't think how I'm going to do it. I just know that I need to talk to them about it unless there's something serious and I do need to think "Right, I can do this, this and this". So, if you've got a positive relationship with the young people, more often than not you can have those conversations and come to, there'll be an outcome sorting that out whether it's negative or positive. (CW10)*

It appears that this caseworker is expecting a young man to *move against* him when warning about something the young man enjoys doing and is, most probably, a part of his social identity. Also, this is an example of contrasting moral values that have to be dealt with by caseworkers. It is said that having this conversation when a positive relationship has been established is more likely to prevent a breakdown in the relationship.

Another caseworker also reported how they prepared themselves for having sensitive conversations. Key elements were anticipating the emotions of the young man and then pursuing the sensitive conversation only for as long as necessary before the young man totally withdraws.

It's about preparing them that you need to talk about it. It's about saying "Look, I appreciate that you might not want to talk about it and it might upset you but I'm going to ask you a few questions on you know whatever, then I'll leave it". If it's a delicate issue there's no point in talking about it for half an hour, it's about saying "Look, can I speak to you for 2 minutes about this and then we'll leave it this week". (CW11)

This suggests that the caseworker is continually assessing the young man's emotions for markers of behaviour that indicate either a *move against* him or a *move away* from him. Identifying either of these markers signifies that the conversation needs to end. In contrast to Safran and Muran's (1996) rupture repair theory, this is an example where it is acceptable terminate a task related conversation in favour of preventing strain on the relationship.

Another caseworker spoke about some difficulties using a collaborative approach especially when it concerns preparing a young man for a difficult time ahead. Using the example of planning for custody, this caseworker said it was about sharing the emotional journey together and supporting him through the emotionally challenging process.

Very, very gentle and very, very calm really for his pre-sentence work. A lot of the information I didn't actually have to get from him really because it was all about him. So, it was really just helping him through the court process but also with the custody threshold panel. I suppose if you want to use a social worky term a bit of a task centred approach really. So he could see the, the plan of work that we've drawn up. He knew what he'd got to do. He knew what I would help him with. You know, it was very much a, saying "Look, you know, if this is what happens

this is how we'll do it. You know, this is how I'll help you". So, it's kind of a partnership really. (CW7)

Collaboration in this instance is preparing a young man for transition into secure custody. It is suggested that this caseworker attempted to prevent a rupture in what is a very sensitive and emotional situation by removing some of the emotions. This removes some of the anxieties that underpin the present situation by focusing on the instrumental aspects of helping.

Just reassurance really. Reassurance that it'll be ok. Reassurance that he'd see his family soon. Said to him that when he got to the secure estate he'd be able to phone home and he really, really should do that. Explain to him that we'd have a meeting within a couple of weeks and that he'd be ok. Just to kind of, just to reassure him really and to say to him "Look don't do anything stupid". (CW7)

Following on, some caseworkers reported that sometimes the way in which young men present can quickly change from being positive to being aggressive. One caseworker spoke about understanding the presentation of a young man as a message of intent to engage. One such mode of presentation was the use of an aggressive posture.

Sometimes, well any young people really act aggressively to put a barrier up because they don't want to tell you about certain things. I'd like to think I've never pushed somebody so much that I've annoyed them and they've thrown themselves at me. But I think the banging, the shouting, the swearing and the aggressiveness at you is a way for them telling you "I don't want to talk to you today. I don't want to talk about this. If so, I'm going to make you step and don't

go there. So I'm going to make you scared of me". And I think you can see that in their general behaviour just out and about, you know. Being aggressive out in public with people gives them the impression. It's like a defence mechanism, isn't it? (CW11)

This caseworker reports a change in a young man's presentation as a prelude to withdrawal. In this case it was a *move against* the casework through the use of aggression. It appears that the young man is presenting an image to invoke fear in the caseworker and to generate a breakdown in the conversation. It is suggested that the act of aggression is a defence mechanism to avoid a difficult conversation.

Another reported a mode of presentation as silence. One caseworker suggested that silence might be a response to a challenging question that a young man cannot or does not want to answer.

I have in the past had a young person who does, if you ask him something like a challenging question open for discussion, that young person may go silent. Sometimes you can leave the silence and see if something does come out in the end. Sometimes silence may mean, yeah they don't want to answer or they may feel guilty or something or, it's trying to work out what silence means. Sometimes you can let it roll a bit. Then it gets to that uncomfortable stage to see if anything does come out of it. If not then you can just change the topic or you can do a bit more digging. Depends on the topic is. Sometimes you can do a bit more digging by changing the question slightly. (CW6)

This caseworker reports a change in a young man's presentation as a prelude to withdrawal. In this case it was a *move away from* the casework through the use of silence. This caseworker reported that different responses are available. One response was to roll with the silence by giving the young man time and space to respond how they want to. Another response was to abandon the current conversation and start on a different topic. The third response was to explore the reason for the silence by changing the question slightly. It is suggested the third response reacts to the reason for the silence as opposed to the actual silence.

One caseworker gave some insight into responses to rupture. It was pointed out that rupture is most often a behaviour marker indicating an underlying issue of anxiety or other difficult emotions.

> *If somebody said they don't want to do something, 9 times out of 10 it's because they've got an anxiety about why they've got to do it. There's something there because they've had a bad experience or some worry about not wanting to do something. It's about trying to look at the reasons and reassure them a little bit and break that down into smaller parts. You might find then that they were worried about nothing. (CW11)*

These words are in-line with Safran and Muran (1996) exploration of behaviour and exploration of mind-set in response to behaviour markers. This caseworker is pointing out that responses need to be made to underlying issues to resolve the actual behaviour.

Most caseworkers reported examples of interactions with young men where they had to work with bad news. One caseworker reported being in court with a young man who was at risk of going into custody for a long time.

> *I remember one lad who I was asked to manage on a bail support programme and I needed to be with him in court. It was quite an assault, it was the most serious charge you can get and for him, it was a really sensitive situation, he was potentially looking at years in custody, and what do you talk about? You don't talk about the case because it's going to make him more nervous. So we talked about movies because I knew what he was interested in. I don't know, something to ease the tension. (CW9)*

This caseworker spoke about how the engagement was maintained through these difficult moments through the use of empathy by recognising the emotional state of the young man (Thoits 1996). Anxiety can be debilitating. The caseworker identified the tension being experienced by the young man and how the caseworker's personal knowledge of the young man was used to compose a conversation. The tensions within this situation prevented an active conversation. Instead, the caseworker developed a passive conversation to ease the tensions and pass away the waiting time. This is an example of a caseworker working with a young man's anxiety.

It was found in the data that sometimes, caseworkers cannot repair ruptures at the point of occurrence because the underlying emotions are just too raw. One caseworker spoke about an incident when a young man was exhibiting self-harming behaviours after being sentenced to a secure custody.

He just thought "Well, that's going to be better than going to custody". Obviously when he got sentenced and he got took down to the cells, I had to go and see him in the cells which I didn't really want to have to do because I knew he'd be in a bit of a mess. He was, he was really angry. He was quite angry with me, shouting. He was saying he'd taken some tablets before he went to court and he wanted it all to end, you know all this kind of stuff. It would have been quite nice to not, normally when young people have been sentenced they bring them into a separate booth and you see them on the other side of a glass screen. But they'd got him in the observation cell because he been saying he was going to hurt himself, banging his head on the wall. So, I actually sat in the observation cell with him which was the first time I'd ever done that and, although I knew that we were being kind of watched, it was a little bit weird kind of normally if a young person has been behaving like that I would have just stepped out, or stepped away from them, you know. But I kind of thought I suppose I'd better stay sitting next to him really. Just kind of hang in there. (CW7)

This is a strong example of strain being put on the relationship. It appears the young man is *moving against* the caseworker by acting out dissatisfaction with his current situation through aggressive behaviour. Instead of attempting a repair, the caseworker reports managing the situation by trying to keep the young man safe until such a time that the emotions have subsided. The caseworker offered emotional support by speaking about a better future and that this current crisis is time-bounded and will pass over.

These caseworkers suggested that young men's responses are underpinned with emotions. In these instances it was anxiety. They recommended exploring the anxiety so that barriers can be removed and the interactions carry on.

Another reported emotion that affected young men's engagement was embarrassment. One caseworker spoke about one intelligent young man who had been found guilty of a sex offence. Due to possible embarrassment of the crime, it was reported that this young man attempted to develop conversations towards his own needs rather that the needs of the caseworker.

> *Again sex offender, probably last year, the year before, he'd denied the offence, very sort of guarded in terms of what he'd tell you. He was a bright lad, A-level student, you know, educationally he was a bright lad. Verbally, he could sit and hold a conversation with you. He was one of those that thought he could take you on intellectually and psychologically and he could get one over on you. But then again it's about chipping away, building that bigger picture. He was very guarded in what he told me and that came across in the way our conversations went and what he told me and other professionals said the same thing. But he was instantly on guard because in his head he was found guilty of a sex offence which is, obviously, one of the worst things you could be found guilty of if you've not done it. So, in his mind he wasn't going to tell me anything because he hadn't done anything and he didn't want anyone to know it because he'd done nothing wrong and got nothing to worry about anyway. (CW11)*

This example suggests that battles can also happen during conversations as well as debates that were reported earlier. This caseworker identified the young man was attempting to

deflect the aim of the conversation in order to prevent meaningful work being done and in order to protect his own emotional state. Again, using Safran and Muran's (1996) theory of ruptures and Bordin's (1979) requirement for a working alliance, the above example can be classed as a rupture because the example reports a disagreement in goals and tasks relating to addressing sex offending behaviour. The behaviour marker enacted was being confrontational towards the caseworker rather than engaging in the required debate. Therefore, it is suggested that the young man was *moving against* the caseworker using intellectual confrontation by deflecting onto other issues to protect himself from emotional distress. In response to this, the caseworker spoke about exploring the young man's mind-set and concluded that sexual offences are socially embarrassing crimes that are uncomfortable to talk about. Following on, the rupture repair technique used was persistence over time hoping the young man would drop his guard every now and again. However, no further details were supplied revealing an adequate repair.

The data also show caseworkers coming across instances of young men who engage at a superficial level. In these situations, one caseworker reported extracting information by challenging a young man's response.

> *Well if they're giving you straight forward answers, I'll dig a bit deeper. Or I'll question that answer. I'll put them on the spot, "Why are you saying that? That's not right" or "Why do you have that opinion? I don't agree with that. I think this". You know, push the boundaries a little bit in terms of why they're just giving you that answer. It's very easy to give, for me to give straightforward answers but if I did I would like you to think why you've pushed me a bit, why*

you've said that. Or ask me to elaborate on it a little bit more and, or even take me on a little bit and say "Well, that's not my experience", you know. (CW11)

This example shows that caseworkers have a decision to make when interacting with young men who give straightforward answers or comments during conversations. They can either respond in kind and have an easy session or challenge the young man to develop deeper answers. With reference to Safran and Muran (1996), identifying a rupture in the above example is contentious. The question revolves around to what extent is there a disagreement in goals and tasks relating to the nature of the conversation addressing offending behaviour or just a debate about different moral values and belief systems. It is suggested that the behaviour marker enacted maybe overly compliant. Therefore, it is suggested that the young man was *moving towards* the caseworker. In response to this, the caseworker reported being more provocative with the young man to stimulate deeper and more meaningful replies. Again, no further details were supplied revealing an adequate repair.

One caseworker reported that although having a challenging conversation with a young man can put strain on a relationship the tensions are not always carried into the next face-to-face meeting.

I do find that one of the things I like about working with boys is that, you know, you can say anything to them really. I don't mean in a, I don't mean in an abusive power way but I just mean you can talk to them about a spade is a spade. And they might not like what they hear but then the next time that you meet them that's kind of forgotten and you can still maintain a good relationship with them. (CW7)

Another caseworker spoke about letting ruptures happen.

> *If they want to storm out, slam things, shout, disappear and you don't see them for the rest of the session, let them do it. Go back another day, try it again. Do it that way. Small steps sometimes. (CW11)*

It is appears that sometimes the emotions within a young man are so deep that they need to be expressed: albeit not always appropriately. In this case the rupture behaviour marker was a *move against* the caseworker displaying aggression. It was further identified that time is the rupture repair element. This is further evidence of caseworkers responding to and managing the emotions of the other's self-expression, whether it is appropriate or not (Thoits 1996).

This section has explored how caseworkers experienced unexpected challenges to engagement during face-to-face contacts. It has been shown that using Safran and Muran (1996) theory of rupture identification and repair within psychotherapy helped explain some aspects of breakdowns in engagement between a young man and his caseworker. Examples of behaviour markers from caseworker narratives were provided to demonstrate instances of young men moving against, moving from and moving towards the caseworker. Furthermore, each example contained elements of attempts to repair the breakdown.

It is argued that ruptures or breakdowns in engagement are a naturally occurring phenomenon within relationships between caseworkers and young men. It has been demonstrated that Safran and Muran's theory offers a mechanism through which these types of behaviour can be recognised, explored and addressed. Whilst elements from the data were used to demonstrate this, it was not possible to develop a complete picture of

repair breakdowns in engagement using the narratives because not all aspects of Safran and Muran's theory were completely covered in any of the scenarios given. Instead, it is suggested that further research is required to conduct a fully inclusive enquiry that focuses solely on the theory.

This chapter is the final findings chapter. The next chapter revisit the study's aims and objectives to discuss how they were met. Following this, contributions to the youth justice knowledge-base will be discussed.

CHAPTER 9 Discussion

The subject of youth offending has attracted much attention in terms of how society ought to respond to deviant behaviour along with demands for positive solutions (Brown 2005; Smith 2005; Pitts 2005; Hendrick 2015). In 1998, a new Youth Justice System was created and given the overarching aim of preventing offending by children and young persons. The approach to achieving this goal has been bureaucratic and technocratic and largely ignores social and interactional issues. Accordingly, research and policy relating to youth offending over the last 20 years has primarily concentrated on delivering and administering interventions to reduce the tendency to recommit crimes (Stephenson et al 2011). However, the evidence-base for youth justice has largely been drawn from studies on adult male offenders. Meta-analyses have identified the programme characteristics that were most effective for adult offenders, yet further studies have found that less than half of adult offenders complete their programmes and that 70% of those who do complete still go on to reoffend (Dowden and Andrews 2004, p.204). This thesis has argued that behavioural interventions require the young person to engage with the programme in order to achieve its goals (Wikström and Treiber 2008). However, there is still a paucity of research in youth justice literature that focuses on the art and skill of engagement during face-to-face contacts (Farrow et al 2007; Mason and Prior 2008; Stephenson et al 2011; Bateman and Hazel 2013).

Addressing this paucity, it was necessary to trawl through literature-bases of other disciplines such as social work, education, adult probation and psychotherapy. Also, literature relating to work with young offenders back in the 1970s and 1980s was brought to the fore. This study has revealed that some of the engagement skills and approaches found

in other disciplines are actually being used by YJS caseworkers to build relationships with young people. It is therefore argued that these skills and approaches need to be reflected back in current youth justice literature.

Before discussing and drawing together the findings, it is necessary to revisit the aim and objectives of the study which emerged from identifying gaps in the current youth justice literature-base. These gaps are specifically around a lack of focus on relationships. Some of the literature identified a number of personal qualities such as 'honesty' and 'trustworthiness' that were said to support effective practice (Mason and Prior 2008; Bateman and Hazel 2013). However, the youth justice literature failed to explain, in practice, how these elusive qualities could be enacted and made evident to young people within the confines of a relationship with YJS caseworkers. Yet literature in other disciplines and work with young offenders pre-dating the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 does detail the use of such concepts.

To address these gaps in the literature, the core aim of the study was to 'understand how young men and caseworkers establish and sustain relationships during face-to-face contacts'. In pursuit of the research aim, the research objectives were to;

a. Describe participant's accounts of the processes of face-to-face engagement between caseworkers and young men.
b. Explore how young men experience face-to-face contacts with caseworkers.
c. Identify breakdowns in engagement and rupture in relationships experienced by young men during face-to-face contacts and the strategies they adopted to deal with them.
d. Explore how caseworkers experience face-to-face contacts with young men.

e. Identify how caseworkers respond to breakdowns and ruptures in the relationship enacted by young men.
f. Consider the implications of these findings for existing theories of engagement, ruptures/breakdowns and repair in relationship-based practice.

To address these gaps in the knowledge-base, this phenomenological study presented the detailed accounts of face-to-face contacts experienced by 9 young men and 11 YJS caseworkers. The intention was to construct a picture of how the young men said they responded to casework and caseworker interactions. Also, how caseworkers said they approached and responded to interactional behaviours exhibited by the young men. This concluding chapter will review the study's key findings in order to consider the contribution this thesis makes to existing theories of engagement, rupture/breakdowns and repair in relationship-based practice. In this chapter there will be a summary of the main findings, a demonstration of how young men experienced breakdowns during the relationship (objectives a, b and c), a demonstration of how caseworkers responded to breakdowns during the relationship (objectives a, d and e), a consideration of their implications for theory (objective f), and an acknowledgement of the study's limitations along with proposals for future research.

9.1 Summary of Findings

The core argument of this thesis is that the realities of front-line practice are not adequately represented in the current youth justice literature. Instead, the critical literature review had to reach out into other related academic disciplines and youth justice literature pre-dating the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 in order to draw together the information necessary to develop a holistic understanding of relationships, engagement and communication. Whilst

the general approaches to practice in other disciplines (such as psychotherapy, counselling and social work) shared some similarities with youth justice casework, the specifics of practice with this marginalised group of young people was missing.

Key features of youth justice practice relating to face-to-face engagement were identified in the findings chapters. The first two findings chapters demonstrated how the first contact was a crucial moment that had a profound effect on all of the young men's likelihood of engaging during subsequent face-to-face contacts. Similar experiences and processes of the first face-to-face contact were identified from both the young men (chapter 5) and from the caseworkers (chapter 6). Experiences of both parties were drawn together to reveal a process of *coming together* in spite of uncertainties both parties had about each other. The next two chapters identified specific elements of collaborative working with a particular focus on how relationships were sustained over time from the perspectives of both young men (chapter 7) and caseworkers (chapter 8) revealing a process of *staying together* in spite of challenges of expectations both parties had of each other.

However, understanding the findings of this study also require an acknowledgement that these relationships are defined by the government as employers of caseworkers. It was identified in the critical literature review that work with people who offend is driven by remoralisation for the purpose of public order: deontological; and to generate a usefulness from the offender to contribute positively to the state's economy: utilitarian. There is no escaping the fact that a caseworker's role is primarily to further the state's aims. It is the mechanisms through which caseworkers achieve these means that is of interest within this thesis.

9.2 Young Men's Experiences of Breakdowns in the Relationship

This section demonstrates how the research objectives a, b and c relating to young men's experiences of breakdowns during the relationship have been met.

The findings have shown that there is a process through which both parties come together to form a partnership, and that this has a profound impact on the relationship going forward. However, starting off the relationship was not without its challenges. It was found that one characteristic of this phase was young men have a feeling of uncertainty about their caseworker. In addressing this, they used tentative interactions to test out their caseworker to ascertain safety in the pursuit of 'trust'.

In dealing with their uncertainties, the young men reported they were likely to take a cautious approach during the first face-to-face contact due to negative assumptions and expectations they held about their caseworker. Furthermore, some of them said they did not know how their caseworker would interact with them. In response to this uncertainty, they made assumptions about possible interactions based upon their previous negative experiences with authoritarian people. It was further identified that young men *expected* to be treated in a harsh manner by authoritarian people that reflected their offending behaviour as opposed to them as a human being. It appears that these past experiences were transposed onto possible future experiences and, in doing so, contributed to creating expectations of an uncomfortable first contact. This finding supports those of Bateman and Hazel (2013) that motivation was low and resistive behaviours sharpest for the initial contact.

Furthermore, findings from this study show that, in fact, relationship breakdown or rupture is a commonly recurring feature of youth justice practice. This was demonstrated by young

men sometimes rupturing interactions to express a personal point of dissatisfaction or dissonance within the relationship. In the face of power differences, sometimes young men will, either wittingly or unwittingly, rupture/breakdown an interaction as a mode of communicating personal feelings of disagreement.

It is argued that relationships will mainly begin in a state of rupture as the young men enact resistive behaviours and defence mechanisms to prevent any emotional harm. Also, ruptures are a mode of communication by young men as they encounter power structures within the youth justice system.

9.3 Caseworker's Responses to Breakdowns in the Relationship

This section demonstrates how the research objectives a, d and e relating to caseworker's responses to breakdowns during the relationship have been met.

Starting off the relationship was not without its challenges for caseworkers. Likewise they spoke of uncertainties about home conditions and acceptance of their mandated involvement in a young man's life. In response to these perceived challenges, the presentation of the caseworker in a friendly and welcoming manner was instrumental in giving the young men a positive experience. This was in contrast to the stereotypical image the young men held of authoritarian figures. It was experiencing this that convinced young men to develop a degree of trust in their caseworker and engage more.

This finding supports the work of theorists (e.g. Perlman 1979; Trevithick 2011; Bateman and Hazel 2013) who point out that service users present in the first instance with resistance in order to protect themselves from (further) emotional harm. In addressing this, connecting through *emotional* engagement causes resistance to be lowered (Fredericks et al

2004). Furthermore, concerns and anxieties, expressed as a lack of trust, were addressed through apparently genuine presentations and interactions. It is argued that experiencing the manner which these caseworkers presented themselves challenged the young men's expectations of a coercive and authoritarian relationship. By engaging on an emotional level, the caseworkers created an affective turn that encouraged the young men to settle more quickly into the relationship (Henriksen et al 2008).

The review of the literature found that "nothing exists until there are relationships" (Gorman et al 2006, p.24). It was confirmed within the data that the relationship is the main resource for the caseworker from which to carry out any work required. Moreover, it was further revealed that a key element of the implementation of relationship was the use of self that caseworkers interacted with the young men.

As with the other components relating to relationships with young people who offend, the literature review had to reach out to the social work literature as a source of explanation (Kaushik 2017; Trevithick 2018). The data found that the use of self in terms of skilfully sharing one's own life experiences and the knowledge gained is of significant relevance as a therapeutic instrument to creating meaningful experiences between caseworker and young man. It was through relational interactions that caseworkers 'use of self' affect the young men's 'use of self' in a wider societal context to prevent reoffending and attempt to achieve desistance.

When confronted with ruptures, caseworkers reported using various approaches to overcome withdrawals and reluctances to engage. Importantly, following repair of a breakdown, the relationship between caseworker and young man was often reported to have strengthened due to discussing problems and solutions underlying the breakdown. It is

therefore argued that breakdowns offer an opportunity to strengthen a relationship and that this fact needs to be better acknowledged and understood within youth justice practice.

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Further underpinning responses to ruptures and relational distance, experiences reported by caseworkers revealed on-going challenges of managing the appropriate emotional closeness with each young man. They are required to encourage collaborative participation through reciprocal acts in order to create a partnership or alliance from which changes in behaviour can be attempted. Likewise, the young men expected a willingness from their caseworker to share the journey through the court order. Yet, it appears that there is a decision to be made as to how emotionally close a caseworker gets and what information and experiences are reciprocated and shared. To explain this, it was shown that caseworkers appeared to actively and consciously manage the professional distance. Given the emotional variations displayed by young men, it is argued that emotional distance is a changing variable that has to be managed flexibly depending upon the immediate situation rather than sustained at a constant level during emotive face-to-face engagement (Hochschild 1979; Thoits 1996).

It is the need to manage the emotional space that is significant when maintaining the relationship. Epitomising the essential element of the emotions within relationships, chapters 7 and 8 revealed an unavoidable sense of *closeness* between caseworkers and young men. Given the purpose of coming together in the first place and the involuntary nature of the relationship, the literature has discussed in depth the necessity to maintain a professional distance by installing boundaries (O'Leary et al 2013; Grant and Mandell 2016). However, other theorists bring to the fore that mutuality is a basic element of human interaction (Curley 1997; Alexander and Charles 2009). Therefore, professional boundaries aim to create a distance for the protection of both parties whilst mutuality is explained as a sense of closeness.

9.4 Implications of Findings for Theory

This section demonstrates how the research objective (f) relating the implications for existing theories of engagement, ruptures/breakdowns and repair relationships have been met.

Looking back to the literature review, the main finding was that literature guiding practice and policy is predicated on technocratic, bureaucratic and prescriptive guidance. Taking this stance has side-lined the emotional and relational component of face-to-face interpersonal interactions. This has been further compounded by the youth justice literature-base continually referring out to other disciplines for relational guidance for practitioners. This section looks at how the findings from this study can enhance the current knowledge-base.

Overall, this thesis has demonstrated that actual casework practice, as experienced by young men and practitioners, is deeply imbued with an interpersonal element as described by some academics (Jordan 1970; Perlman 1979; Pitts 1990/1999; Trevithick 2003/2011).

This is in spite of the 'cold and prescriptive' nature prescribed by the MOJ and YJB (Haines and Case 2015). In addressing the lack of knowledge that is particular to relationships between youth justice caseworkers and young people, this thesis concludes by making suggestions for change that will bring into the spotlight the need to specify how to use relationships and their interpersonal elements.

9.4.1 The process of 'coming together' and 'staying together'

The first recommendation to the literature-base is that 'partnership forming' is a crucial phase for the relationship.

Whilst it is recognised that there is nothing until relationship, there are instruments that contribute effectively towards the formation of a relationship such as; use of self, empathy, sharing the journey and mutuality.

Drawing together the experiences detailed in chapters 5 and 6 revealed a process of young men and YJS caseworkers 'coming together'. Starting from negativity through to being engaged in constructive conversation, this can be partially explained using Tuckman's (1965) theory of small group formation. From a legalistic perspective, underpinning this process of 'coming together', the caseworker has to acquire some degree of legitimacy of their involvement from the young man. In achieving this it was shown that before any intervention work is done the caseworker presents in a manner that appeals to the young man in an attempt to achieve compliance to requests for engagement and personal information. The first stage is when individuals come together and elements of testing each other for behaviours that are acceptable occur. This is described as acclimatisation and familiarisation through which they orient towards each other in spite of the constructions

and prejudices they have of each other (Tuckman 1965). The outcome of this stage was the acknowledgement by the young man of a 'bond' with his caseworker.

Furthermore, it was shown that caseworkers can enact more than one role during the course of a face-to-face contact. They presented either as an in an authoritative capacity or as an ordinary person, depending upon the message they wanted to convey to a young man. The authoritative role in a controlling law-enforcement capacity was used to introduce and make known the purpose of the court order and the boundaries of the relationship. The other role was an ordinary person acting in a capacity of a helper. Each role had a different significance, but each was important. The presentation as an ordinary person was more effective in encouraging engagement from the young men. The authoritative role was more effective in making clear to a young man what the behavioural expectations were. It was noted that it is the manner of being 'authoritative' rather than being an 'authoritarian' that ensured compliance during a challenging and disruptive situation (Bottoms 2002). This point is missing from the literature but this study has identified how and why caseworkers make the decision to enact one role over another as well as the triggers for transitioning between roles.

I argue that Tuckman's (1965) theory of group formation sheds light on the process through which people come together to achieve mutually agreed aims and objectives. Furthermore, this also brings into play Bordin's (1979) notion of the alliance in terms of goals, tasks and interpersonal bond.

9.4.2 Resistance, ruptures and repair

The second recommendation to improve the literature-base is the recognition that breakdowns/ruptures are a naturally occurring phenomenon during engagement. In

supporting this claim, the data show that breakdowns in communicating offer an opportunity to further improve the relationship if they are addressed constructively. The literature review showed that breakdowns and ruptures are discussed in detail within the psychotherapeutic literature; that breakdowns are acknowledged within the social literature only insofar as emphasising the need to prevent or avoid such events from occurring. In contrast though, breakdowns are largely absent from the youth justice literature.

Chapter 8 also covered the crucial theme of caseworkers encountering breakdowns or 'ruptures' in engagement on a regular basis. Whilst this phenomenon has been noted in the social work literature (Perlman 1979; Trevithick 2003), attending to and repair of breakdowns in relationships has not been explored and explained for youth justice practice. Safran and Muran (1996), in psychotherapy literature, identified three markers of behaviour signifying a rupture: move *against* the therapist, move *towards* and move *away from*. It was shown from the caseworker narratives that the scenarios they encountered were consistent with similar markers of behaviour.

Furthermore, the data from this study has demonstrated patterns of behaviour from both caseworkers and young men that are similar to the patterns of response and repair identified by Safran and Muran in psychotherapy. This gives youth justice practice access to pertinent knowledge that can be used to enhance current practice in working with young people who offend. For instance, Bennett et al (2006) refined Safran and Muran's original model. Using data collected through observations of psychotherapy practice, they identified nine stages from identification to closure;

1. Acknowledgement
2. Exploration

3. Linking and Explanation
4. Negotiation
5. Consensus
6. Understanding and assimilating warded off feelings
7. Further explanation
8. Change to patterns/Aims
9. Closure

My argument is that breakdowns and ruptures are naturally occurring phenomenon – that is to say an almost inevitable part of the relationship - which is not dealt with in the youth justice literature.

9.4.3 Emotions

The third recommendation to the literature-base is the need to for greater recognition of the role emotions play during face-to-face interactions. Reflecting back on the literature review, it was noted that technocratic and bureaucratic policies and procedures are prioritised in favour of the emotional labour in pursuit of reducing offending behaviour. Instead, this study has found that the emotional component forms the platform from which technical programmes and bureaucratic procedures are carried out. Therefore, emotional labour needs to be made an equal partner within the various theoretical frameworks that underpin practice. Essentially, face-to-face contacts are emotional experiences.

Furthermore, the data revealed that managing the personal and emotional distance requires caseworkers to manage their own emotions and, initially, actively manage the emotions of a young man. Through continual contacts with each other, the caseworkers attempted to demonstrate ways that a young man could control their own emotions as they

developed a sense of agency. It was through the medium of emotions that caseworkers helped young men to develop key skills to become more integrated within society (Hochschild 1979; Thoits 1996).

I am arguing that conceptualising the young man and caseworker relationship in terms of an emotional connection, along with Bordin's working alliance gives scope to measure the strength of a relationship. One such measure is the *helping* relationship inventory (Poulin and Young 1997). The other is the working alliance inventory (Horvath and Greenberg 1989). Use of these inventories has been made in social work (Young and Poulin 1998) and psychotherapy (Leeuw et al 2012), respectively, to gain deeper insights into on-going relationships between caseworkers and service users. However, due to the noticeable lack of attention in the youth justice literature towards the strength of the relationship, over and above acknowledging its existence, these purposeful inventories have yet to find a way into front line practice.

9.4.4 Legitimacy and compliance

The fourth recommendation to the literature-base is the addition of ways and means that legitimacy and compliance are achieved by both the young person and by the caseworker. Whilst the issue of legitimacy and compliance is covered in the adult literature-base, it is missing from the youth justice literature.

From the young men's experiences explored in chapter 7, it was shown how interacting required a personal touch. It was shown that being treated as a unique individual and a human being improved a young man's motivation to engage during face-to-face contacts thereby encouraging legitimacy of a caseworker's interference in their life situation. This was explained in terms of understanding personality traits and aspirations in order to

construct an appreciation of the uniqueness and individuality of each young man. A key tool for caseworkers in this respect was taking time to learn about the young men's hobbies and passion. To empathically create a foundation for the relationship, this knowledge could then be used to develop activities which built upon these interests but at the same time met the requirements of behavioural programmes.

Furthermore, in the development of a partnership, it was found that caseworkers also assent a degree of legitimacy to the ambitions and skill-set of a young man. In terms of an acknowledgement of 'moral validity' (Scott and Flynn 2014), caseworkers will help a young man move forward from their own situation given the discussions of pro-social ambitions.

These points generally line up with some of the current theoretical positioning of Bottoms (2002), Tyler (2006) and Tankebe and Liebling (2013) regarding legitimacy in the supervision of adult offenders. This study suggests that these points are also prominent in the supervision of young offenders. It is argued that the assent of legitimacy by young men is in line with their description of the bond they all eventually formed with their caseworker. This was acknowledged after trust and safety had been mainly assured as a result of confirming experiences.

9.4.5 Desistance

The fifth recommendation to the literature-base is the addition of ways and means that desistance from re-offending is achieved. Whilst the issue of desistance is covered in the adult literature-base, it is largely missing in the youth justice literature.

The YJS is set up primarily for the purpose of preventing reoffending. The dominant discourse to achieve this is addressing factors that cause offending in the first place.

However, it was shown in this study that, irrespective of YJS policies and procedures, in fact, the approach taken by caseworkers is to address factors that help young men move out of crime: desistance (Farrall 2002). It was overcoming the barriers to factors of desistance that appear to form the basis of work for caseworkers. Furthermore, through the foundation of the relationship these barriers could be identified, discussed and addressed on a personal level. The young men were encouraged by caseworkers to develop social agency by 'doing for themselves' and reflection. Again, the relationship was a platform from which reflection could be constructively conducted through which experiences could be examined and adjustments made for further social interactions.

The study also showed desistance to be a process from which they attempted to move from an offending identity to a pro-social identity. Furthermore, it is a journey imbued with emotional vicissitudes through which both the young man and caseworker share 'moments' during the time they spend in each other's company. Underpinning this journey is a transition from a specific 'way of being' to another 'way of being'. Taking this 'transition' perspective of desistance brings theories related to youth transitions into play that are not currently being utilised effectively to explain this journey. One such theory is Bridge's (2004) general theory of transitions to explain the liminal stage a person goes through when embarking on a transition. This study has shown that all of the young men became dependent on their caseworker in some form and degree during their personal transition into social integration. It was during this liminal stage that the 'doing for themselves' and reflection played a significant role. Also, once a young man had gained confidence and a feeling of self-efficacy then their dependency on the caseworker appeared to be reduced so that new behaviours could be inculcated. This encourages the young man to engage and

shape their life situation according to their own desires, wishes and ambitions. But, before this can be done the young man needs to have the capacity to do so: this is where the skills and knowledge of the caseworker comes useful instrumentally as a mode of 'helping'. It is this mode of interacting that is happening at the level of practice but not being reflected at the policy level and within the youth justice literature.

9.4.6 Masculinity(ies)

It was apparent within the data that each of the young men had different personality traits, social circumstances and the manner in which they presented themselves during face-to-face meetings. Embedded within this sense of difference, some academics highlight that some young men may enact different types of masculinities as a mode of interaction. This is viewed as a demonstration of resistance or compliance, depending upon the immediate situation (Messerschmidt 1993/2002; Connell and Messerschmidt 2005). Since this study is concerned about what happens on the front-line of practice, this sense of difference is acknowledged as a relevant area of analysis. The data do show that behaviours of some young men could be categorised in terms of trying to achieve dominance during interactions. However this dynamic was not identified by caseworker's responses; neither male or female caseworkers raised the issue of masculinit(ies) during the research interviews. Instead, one of the main factors identified as shaping the relationships they were able to develop was remaining in line with government requirements for attention to deontological and utilitarian needs and that caseworkers are agents of the state. Government aims were achieved, in the large, by responding to the skill-set and ambitions of the young men to develop usefulness to society rather than a focus on the multiple masculinities that could be encountered. It is this mode that caseworker's used to develop

the pro-social skills of a young man (Trotter 2006) to prevent reoffending and improve life circumstances.

This does not mean that attending to issues around masculinit(ies) are not relevant, but rather that it did not emerge from the data as a theme available for analysis. In future studies, it may therefore be that masculinities requires more detailed attention than was given by this study.

9.4.7 Implications for Policy and Practice

The previous section has identified a number of gaps in the youth justice literature base. This section relates back to the Youth Justice System (chapter 2) and considers how these findings help to fill some of these gaps by making recommendations for youth justice policy and worker practice.

Addressing youth justice policy, it has been found that the bureaucratic and the technocratic components have usurped the relational component of working with young people who offend. Furthermore, youth justice policy dictates that effective practice is predicated on seven principles (Stephenson et al 2011, p.25). Six of these seven principles talk about characteristics of interventions and programmes; and the seventh principle acknowledges operating in the young person's environment. However, based on the evidence from this study, I would argue that an eighth principle needs to be added: 'relational'. These lead, in turn, to the following three key recommendations for practice:

1. Addressing worker practice, an understanding of relational dynamics needs to be actively promoted within the domain of caseworker practice. This needs to be achieved by making caseworkers cognisant of the aspect of practice they perform on

a daily basis. Awareness of the importance of face-to-face contacts and breakdowns in engagement, are new subjects that need to be promoted. Specifically related to breakdowns in engagement, workers need to be made aware that, rather than being a threat to the relationship, breakdowns, used well by a skilled practitioner, can present opportunities to progress and strengthen the relationship.

2. Mutuality and emotional engagement have been identified as 'inescapable' aspects of practice, but both of these pose challenges for practitioners who must make these relational connections whilst also maintaining professional boundaries. It was notable that none of the caseworkers spoke about the support they got from their managers with this balancing act. It is suggested that more attention needs to be paid to how YJS workers are provided with supervision which supports the decisions that have to be made relating to the emotional aspects of working with troubled young people.
3. Finally, addressing the literature, youth justice needs to develop its own knowledge about relationships in this specific context rather than continually referring out to other disciplines.

9.5 Study Limitations and Further Research

The account presented in this thesis is a modest piece of work involving one local authority youth justice service and group of young men, from a narrow age band, who have offended. It was carried out in response to the recognition by some leading youth justice theorists, that there is a gap in our knowledge about how to engage and maintain relationships with young people in the youth justice system (Mason and Prior 2008; Ipsos Mori 2010; Stephenson et al 2011; Bateman and Hazel 2013).

The study aimed to uncover techniques and approaches used by youth justice caseworkers that overcame resistance to engagement on the part of young men. The main aim of the study was to bring attention back to recognising and acknowledging the huge emotional effort that goes into youth justice practice. This knowledge is significant because it derives from actual youth justice practice rather than being prescriptively guided by youth justice policy. However, the accounts of the young men were celebratory in nature as they were eager to tell their stories of a successful time with their caseworker.

It has already been stated that the scope of this study is limited; but it is a start. The suggestions for further research are twofold. The first concerns processes around engagement. The second are the situational, demographic and personal attributes of the people and places where and with whom face-to-face contacts are carried out.

Firstly, the findings and contribution to theory sections have revealed specific processes that are prevalent during face-to-face contacts that have not previously been fully considered in youth justice. These are;

a. Components of actual face-to-face contacts.
b. Managing closeness during emotional engagement: mutuality and professional boundaries.
c. Identification and repair of breakdowns or ruptures in engagement.
d. Experiences that lead onto legitimacy and compliance from both young man and caseworker.
e. The role that the relationship plays in the desistance process.

This study has raised awareness of practice in these areas, but it would be valuable to carry out further studies in each of these areas to develop a deeper understanding of the practices and experiences of both caseworkers and young people during face-to-face contacts. In particular, additional insights might be achieved if it was possible to record and analyse actual (rather than reported) interactions between young men and their caseworkers.

Secondly, the scope and depth of understanding needs to be extended so that a more complete picture of practice can be developed. Suggestions for further research need to include, but are not limited to, the following;

a. Broader age range from 10 to 16
b. Other genders; female and transgender, non-binary and a greater emphasis on masculinities.
c. Demographically different local authority youth justice services,
d. Different statutory youth justice providers such as the secure state: offender institutes, secure homes and mental hospitals.
e. Different experiences of face-to-face contacts. Essentially, this study concerned successful engagement. The knowledge base needs to be expanded to cover poor and problematic experiences of engagement.

Accomplishing this will require ethnographic studies of actual face-to-face interactions through methods of non-participant observation. Doing this will reveal data that enables validation and enhancement of current knowledge.

Finally, it is recognised that the scope of the interview schedule could be revised in light of comments received regarding further sub-topics that might usefully be explored: masculinities, transitions and legitimacy & compliance. Furthermore, whilst the interviews were very successful with 6 out of the 9 young men; 3 were less successful. I need to further develop my interviewing skills with young men who demonstrated a serious lack of ability or willingness to develop a narrative on the study themes during the interview.

Despite these limitations, the current study has made a contribution to new knowledge about practice, moving beyond '*what* works' in youth justice to consider *why* and *how* certain approaches are effective. It is hoped that this will help YJS caseworkers to further refine their approaches to the relational aspects of their work and that this, in turn, will help young men who offend to achieve the changes necessary in their lives to avoid recidivism and achieve desistance.

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Appendix I.Semi-Structured Interview Schedule – Young Man

Young Male Interview Schedule

➢ Introducing the research

First of all, I would like to explain to you why I am here. My aim is to improve the way case workers interact with young people. I want to understand and learn about what happens when you meet up with your case worker. The reason why I'm interested in this is that there is so little information in the books that tells your side of the story. I can only do this if the likes of you tell me your side of the story about what goes on between you and your case worker.
I will be asking questions and developing the replies you give. I'd like to emphasise that there are no right or wrong answers so I would like you to be as honest as you can about the answers you give.

➢ Starting off

Cycle of conversation – coming into contact with the YJS
So, starting off, please tell me how you became involved with your case worker? ➢ What age was this? ➢ How old are you now? ➢ What types of offences have you been committing?
What is it like being involved with your case worker? ➢ How many case workers have you had? ➢ Are they been different? –How? In what ways? ➢ What do you like about them? ➢ What do you not like?

➢ The focus of the interview: establishing and maintaining engagement

Introductory questions

Prime the participants thought process in the experience of engagement.

Cycle of conversation – Explore the initial contact you have with each other.
First of all, when you first met up with your case worker, what was it like? ➢ What thoughts and feelings do you have? ➢ What does that voice in your head say? ➢ How did the meeting start off? ➢ Then what happened? ➢ What would you tell you mates? (How would you summarise that?) Specific examples. ➢ Can you describe something that went really well? ➢ Can you describe something that didn't go so well?
When things don't go the way you want them to, how did you react? ➢ How did you respond to your case worker's attempts to interact with you? ➢ Have you got a specific example? ➢ Did it work? ➢ What did your case worker do?
Is there anything about your case worker that would stop you from working with them? (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, type of offence, the way they look, culture, language, previous involvement?) ➢ "Yes, I like my him/her" ➢ OR "No way!!!"

Cycle of conversation – Explore subsequent face-to-face contacts
What happens after this first meet up? Are there any more? ➢ Do you know what you have to do when you meet up again? ➢ What does your case worker want do? ➢ What do these meetings mean to you?
What is important to you when you meet up with your case worker? (creating a mutual purpose) ➢ How would your case worker know what is important to you? ➢ What do you do before the meetings? (tiredness, intellectual difference, daily structure) ➢ How does the meeting start off? ➢ What do you want to happen? (tasks and goals) (compliance rather than agreement) ➢ What does your case worker talk to you about? ➢ How do they talk to you? ➢ How do you want to be treated? (honesty, respect) ➢ What emotions, thoughts and feelings do you experience? (levels of anxiety) ➢ <who by, where and when (Project report.pdf, p.10,11)
<conditions, constraints and consequences>

Cycle of conversation – Explore co-operative working? (identifying, responding to and repairing ruptures)
What do you do when you two are together? (transactional sequences) ➢ Do you feel as though you and your case worker work together on the things you do? ➢ What happens if you don't want to do it? (compliance rather than agreement) ➢ How do you go about getting what you want? (establishing motives) ➢ How does your case worker respond to that?

How do you know if your case worker is fully co-operating with you? (checking)

- When things during a face-to-face contact do not go the way you want, how do you react?
- Is it important to you that your case worker listens to you?
- What do you do to ensure this happens? (focus on the immediate experience, frustrations and kickbacks)
- How do you know they are not listening? (banal compliance, salute and stay mute, play the game)
- What do you tell your case worker?
- How do you tell them?
- How do they respond?
- What, do you think, causes those reactions?
- What do you think about these reactions?
- How do they affect your responses?

Do you have disagreements with your case worker? (maintaining the dialogue)

- What are they about? (emotional, practical, opposing opinions, misunderstandings, mistrust, patronising, disrespect, something has gone wrong, about tasks and goals)
- How do you deal with them? (what strategies do you use? repeating rationale, clarifying, change things, explore relationship, meta-communication)
- How does your case worker deal with them?
- How long does it take to reach an agreement?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how bad are the disagreements?
- What happens when you both cannot find an agreement?
- How do you know if a disagreement has been sorted out?

What are the reactions of your case worker? (ruptures and confrontation) (silence: masking, avoiding and withdrawing) (violence: controlling, labelling and attacking).

- How do you make sense of those reactions? (hints, sarcasm, poor humour, innuendo, looks, plays the martyr)
- How do you respond to those reactions? (safety, fear, courage, what is the point?)
- Can you tell me the steps you go through?
- How do you deal with them? (what strategies do you use?)
- Can you tell me the emotions you feel during the interactions?

What long term effect do these disagreements and attempts to resolve them have on future interactions you have with your case worker? ➢ Do you benefit from them? ➢ Are they destructive in nature? ➢ How do you adapt to a solution? ➢ What effect does it have on you?
<conditions, constraints and consequences>

Cycle of conversation – Give personal opinions of general experiences of interactions.
When you are with your case worker, is there anything that makes you respond in a negative way?
When you are with your case worker, is there anything that makes you respond in a positive way?
What do you enjoy about being with your case worker?
What do you least enjoy about being with your case worker?
Give examples.
Has working with your case worker changed anything about the way you behave away from here? ➢ What has changed? ➢ What is it like? ➢ Do you feel your offending behaviour has changed? ➢ How do you think have changed? (different identity) ➢ How would your case worker know that you have changed?

If you were asked to describe working with your case worker to your friends – what would you say? What advice would you give to case workers who are new to this job?

Emotional positioning of the participant

> The conversation with the young male should now have covered the subject of the actual interactions with young lads. The focus now shifts towards the characteristics of the case worker in terms of what they emotionally and experientially bring to the interactions. Transference and countertransference.

I've now finished about the way you experience the interactions you have with your case worker. What I would now like to do is to explore how you use your life experiences when interacting with your case worker.

Cycle of conversation – Exploring personal background and life experiences
When you look at your own life experiences, are you aware of any similarities between you and your case worker (age, class, ethnicity, culture, language, past experience)? ➢ What about differences? ➢ How are you aware of these similarities and differences? ➢ Do you think it's important for a case worker to have similar experiences as the young lads?

Cycle of conversation – Explore the use of your life experiences during face-to-face contacts
What do you think and feel about your case worker? (interpersonal schemas are different) ➢ Do you think your case worker understands you in terms of your life situation (traumas and life experiences)? (feelings, experiences, beliefs) ➢ Give me a number between 1 and 10 (being the best) to rate your case worker? ➢ Give me a word or phrase that describes your case worker ➢ Does your case worker ever divulge personal information to you?
What emotions do you feel during the contacts? ➢ <explore Trotter's characteristics>
What do you think the case worker thinks about you?
Now you have been working with your case worker, has your views of them changed?
If you were to describe your case worker to a friend or family, what would you say?

➢ Concluding the interview

Thanks for that. Is there anything else you think I should know about working with young male offenders?

<turn off the audio recording>

Ok … I have now turned off the recording device and the discussion is finished. How do you feel after talking about what you have?

Appendix II. Consent Form

Understanding young male and case worker interactions

Consent form

Please show that you understand what you are agreeing to by ticking the boxes.

I have been told about the research project and have had a chance to ask questions.	☐
I understand that I can choose to take part in this research project, or I can choose not to take part.	☐
I understand that the interview will be recorded using an electronic voice recorder.	☐
I understand that the information I give will be kept safe (the law says this must happen).	☐
However, I understand that the researcher may be required to report to the authorities any significant harm to a child/young person (up to the age of 18 years) that he/she becomes aware of during the research. I agree that such harm may violate the principle of confidentiality.	☐
I understand that what I say will be used to write a report.	☐
I understand that the report might include some of my words, but nobody will be able to tell which words were mine.	☐

I understand that when the research project is finished, I will get a copy of the findings.	☐
I understand that if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research. I may contact the Research Ethics Officer of the School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Nottingham, Dr Simon Roberts by phoning 0115 846 7767 or emailing simon.roberts@nottingham.ac.uk.	☐

I agree to take part in the research project

Participant's name	Participant's signature	Date
Researcher's name	Researcher's signature	Date

Please keep your copy of this consent form in a safe place

If, after the interview, you decide that you would prefer to withdraw from the evaluation please let me know by contacting me through email, telephone or post:

Email: Allan Booth on lqxab11@nottingham.ac.uk

Phone: 07505 359 344

Postal address: Allan Booth PhD student, School of Sociology & Social Policy, University of Nottingham, University Park, Nottingham NG7 2RD

Appendix III. Participant Information Sheet – Young Man

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET – young man

Understanding young male and caseworker interactions

My name is Allan Booth and I am a PhD student at the University of Nottingham.

I am interested in understanding the working relationships young men and caseworkers have with each other.

This will involve you talking to me about your experiences with your case worker. The talk should take up to 60 minutes to complete and will be done in the absence of your caseworker.

This talk will be audio recorded. I will write up our talk but your name and the name of your case worker will not be noted.

You will not benefit directly from taking part in this research, but it could help improve services for other people in the future

You can choose whether or not to take part in this research and your choice will not in any way affect the services you receive. If you agree to take part, but then change your mind any information you have provided will be excluded from the research.

Contact details

Researcher:

- Allan Booth, 07505 359 344, lqxab11@nottingham.ac.uk

Project Supervisors:

- Professor Harry Ferguson, 0115 951 5411, harry.ferguson@nottingham.ac.uk.
- Dr Rachel Fyson, 0115 951 5226, rachel.fyson@nottingham.ac.uk.

Complaint procedure

If you wish to complain about the way in which the research is being conducted or have any concerns about the research then in the first instance please contact the researcher Allan Booth, 07505 359 344, lqxab11@nottingham.ac.uk.

If this does not resolve the matter to your satisfaction then please contact his research supervisors Professor Harry Ferguson or Dr Rachel Fyson using the contact details above. Finally, contact the School's Research Ethics Officer, Dr Simon Roberts by phoning 0115 846 7767 or emailing simon.roberts@nottingham.ac.uk.

Appendix IV. Ethics Form

School of Sociology & Social Policy

Research ethics checklist for staff and students

The University of Nottingham's Guidance on Ethical Review states: "Ethical review (and approval) is required for all projects where the research involves participation of human subjects, their data and/or their tissue (even where the applicant indicates that there is only minimal risk)."

This form must be therefore be completed for all research projects, research assignments or dissertations/theses which are conducted within the School and involve human participants or data that are sensitive or protected**. You must not begin data collection or approach potential research participants until you have completed this form, received ethical clearance including the required counter signature, and submitted this form for retention with the appropriate staff.**

If the study is based only on a review of documentary sources already in the public domain and involves NO fieldwork of any sort, then this form does not need to be completed.

Completing the form includes providing a brief summary of the research in Section 2 and ticking some boxes in Section 4. Ticking a shaded box in Section 4 indicates that the study is above minimal risk and requires further action by the researcher. Two things need to be stressed:

- Ticking one or more shaded boxes does not mean that you cannot conduct your research as currently anticipated; however, it does mean that further questions will need to be asked and addressed, further discussions will need to take place, and alternatives may need to be considered or additional actions undertaken.
- Avoiding the shaded boxes does not mean that ethical considerations can subsequently be 'forgotten'; on the contrary, research ethics need to be informed - for everyone and in every project – an ongoing process of reflection and debate.

The following checklist is a starting point for an ongoing process of reflection about the ethical issues concerning your study.

For further information on ethical issues, please consult the School's Ethics webpage: http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/sociology/research/research-ethics.aspx

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SECTION 1: THE RESEARCHER(S)

To be completed in all cases

Title of project: **'Overcoming the barriers to engagement': A study of working relationships between Youth Offending Team case workers and young male offenders.**

Name of principal researcher: **Allan Booth**

Status: □ Undergraduate student

□ Postgraduate taught student

✓ **Postgraduate research student**

□ Staff

Email address: **lqxab11@nottingham.ac.uk**

Names of other project members: **none as this is a solo research project.**

To be completed by students only:

NAME IN CAPITALS
ALLAN BOOTH

Student ID number: **4201354**

Degree programme: **PhD (Social Work)**

Module name/number:

Supervisor/module leader or tutor: **Prof Harry Ferguson** and **Dr Rachel Fyson**

SECTION 2: RESEARCH WITHIN OR INVOLVING THE NHS OR SOCIAL CARE

Does this research involve the recruitment of patients, staff, records or other data through the NHS or involve NHS sites or other property?

□ Yes

✓ No

If you have answered **YES** to the above question, ethical approval **MUST** be sought from the relevant NHS research ethics committee. Evidence of approval from such a committee **MUST** be lodged with the School office prior to the commencement of data collection.

Does this research involve the recruitment of users, staff, records or other data through social service authorities (children and adult services) or involve social service sites or other property?

✓ Yes

□ No

If you have answered **YES** to the above question, then you must check whether or not the relevant social service authority has its own ethical scrutiny procedures. If appropriate, evidence of approval from such an authority **MUST** be lodged with the School office prior to the commencement of data collection.

Even where external ethical approval has been obtained from an NHS committee or social service authority, completion of this form is mandatory.

SECTION 3: THE RESEARCH

Please provide brief details (50-150 words) about your proposed research, as indicated in each section

1. **Research question(s) or aim(s).** This is a qualitative study of the working relationship between YOT case workers and young male offenders. The research aim

is "to identify the strategies YOT case workers use to successfully develop and maintain engagement during working relationships".

The research objectives are;

(a) to explore how YOT case workers initiate and maintain the engagement of young people during their relationship,

(b) to identify how YOT case workers respond to the resistance enacted by young offenders,

(c) to explore how young offenders experience the attempts made by their YOT case worker to engage and motivate them,

(d) to identify the resistance strategies used by young offenders during their relationship,

(e) to develop practice techniques which best support positive engagement throughout their relationship between YOT case workers and young offenders,

(f) to disseminate the project findings to professional and academic audiences.

2. Method(s) of data collection.

A sample of between 10 and 15 YOT case workers and 10 to 15 young male offenders will be recruited. Semi-structured interviews with case workers and separately with the young male offenders will be conducted individually.

During the interviews I will encourage participants to discuss how they experience the face-to-face contact sessions with they have and any positive or negative aspects of their working relationship. One interview per participant will be required and each interview is expected to last about 1 hour.

The interviews will be conducted in public buildings such as community centres and local authority buildings that have private meeting rooms. This will ensure privacy for the development of discussions free from external distractions. All interviews will be audio recorded. The recordings will not be available to anyone outside of the interview. The audio record of the interview will be loaded onto my university computer system in a password-protected file and then deleted from the recording device. During the transcribing of the audio recording the details of participants will be anonymised.

Draft interview schedules for both case workers and young offenders will be piloted for any necessary adjustments before the main data collection.

3. Proposed site(s) of data collection

Site redacted.

The [redacted] Youth Justice Service is a local authority statutory provision who work with young people between the ages of 10 and 18. The aim of this service is to address the reasons for the offending behaviour of a young person to reducing offending of the young.

4. **How will access to participants be gained?**

I have approached the service manager as the gatekeeper of the [redacted] Youth Justice Service to request permission to undertake this research with their case workers and young male offenders. They have given me permission to approach the case workers

to carry out data collection. Please see the end of this ethics application form for contents of an email from head of the service manager.

I will supply information packs to the service manager who will distribute them to all case workers. The purpose behind the packs is to give enough information for case workers and young males to make an informed choice regarding participation. The information pack will contain an information sheet explaining what the research is all about. There will be two participant information sheets, one for the case workers and one for the young males. Each will describe what is required of them along with how I will protect them from any harm as a result of being involved with the research project. I will also offer to discuss with the YJS any further issues that need clarifying.

Gaining access to participants is a two stage process. First, I will ask all YOT case workers to discuss participation with the young male offenders on their case load. All YOT case workers within the service will selectively approach the young male offenders they work with to discuss if they would like to participate in the research. The inclusion criteria for the young males are 16 years of age or older and that they are currently involved with the youth justice service. All young male offenders who wish to participate will inform their case worker who will then notify me through either email or telephone. The sample numbers I require will be 10 to 15 young male offenders

Second, I will request volunteers from all YOT case workers. The YOT case workers who wish to participate will inform me either through email or telephone. The sample numbers I require will be 10 to 15 case workers.

Prior to meeting up with a young male offender, I will prepare another information sheet for the case worker to discuss the details and implications of the interview with the young male. The aim is to eliminate any anxieties of a young male regarding participation.

SECTION 4: ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Please answer each question by ticking the appropriate box. All questions in section 4 **must** be answered.

4.1 General issues

	Yes	No
Will this research involve any participants who are known to be vulnerable due to:		
Being aged under 18?		
Residing in institutional care (permanently or temporarily)?	✓	
Having a learning disability?		
Having a mental health condition?		✓
Having physical or sensory impairments?		✓
Previous life experiences (e.g. victims of abuse)?		✓
Other (please specify)…		✓
		✓
		✓
Will this research expose participants to any significant risk of physical or emotional harm?		✓
Will this research involve any physically invasive procedures or the collection of bodily samples?		✓
Will this research expose the researcher to any significant risk of physical or emotional harm?		✓
Will this research involve deception of any kind?		✓
Will this research involve access to personal information about identifiable individuals		✓

without their knowledge or consent?		
I will inform immediately the School's Ethics Officer if I change the method(s) of data collection, the proposed sites of data collection, the means by which participants are accessed, or make any other significant changes to my research inquiry	✓	

4.2 Before starting data collection

	Yes	No
I have read the *Research Code of Conduct* guidelines of the University of Nottingham, particularly section 4 on Data, and agree to abide by them: http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ris/local/research-strategy-and-policy/Code_of_Conduct(Version_3_January_2010).pdf	✓	
For those intending to work with children and/or vulnerable adults: I have read the University's *Guidance on arrangements for Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults* http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/wideningparticipation/downloads/Guidance%20on%20the%20Protection%20of%20Children%20and%20Vunerable%20Adults.pdf	✓	
My full identity will be revealed to all research participants	✓	
All participants will be given accurate information about the nature of the research and the purposes to which the data will be put	✓	
All participants will freely consent to take part, and this will be confirmed by use of a consent form. (An example of a consent form is available for you to amend and use.)	✓	
One signed copy of the consent form will be held by the researcher and another will be retained by the participant	✓	
It will be made clear that declining to participate will have no negative consequences for the individual	✓	
It will be made clear that participation is unlikely to be of direct personal benefit to the	✓	

individual		
Participants will be asked for permission for quotations (from data) to be used in research outputs where this is intended	✓	
Incentives (other than basic expenses) are offered to potential participants as an inducement to participate in the research. (Here any incentives include cash payments and non-cash items such as vouchers and book tokens.)		✓
For research conducted within, or concerning, organisations (e.g. universities, schools, hospitals, care homes, etc) I will gain authorisation in advance from an appropriate committee or individual. (This is in addition to any research ethics procedures required by those organisations, particularly health and social care agencies – see Section 2.)	✓	

4.3 During the process of data collection

	Yes	**No**
I will provide participants with my University contact details, and those of my supervisor, so that they may make get in touch about any aspect of the research if they wish to do so	✓	
Participants will be guaranteed anonymity only insofar as they do not disclose any illegal activities	✓	
Anonymity will not be guaranteed where there is disclosure or evidence of significant harm, abuse, neglect or danger to participants or to others	✓	
All participants will be free to withdraw from the study at any time, including withdrawing data following its collection	✓	
Data collection will take place only in public and/or professional spaces (e.g. in a work setting). If fieldwork takes place in the respondent's home please outline in Section 6 what steps will be taken to ensure your safety. You may	✓	

wish to consult the SRA researcher safety guidelines: http://www.the-sra.org.uk/guidelines.htm#safe		
Research participants will be informed when observations and/or recording is taking place	✓	
Participants will be treated with dignity and respect at all times	✓	

4.4 After collection of data

	Yes	No
Where anonymity has been agreed with the participant, data will be anonymised as soon as possible after collection	✓	
All data collected will be stored in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998	✓	
Data will only be used for the purposes outlined within the participant information sheet and consent form	✓	
Details which could identify individual participants will not be disclosed to anyone other than the researcher, their supervisor and (if necessary) internal and/or external examiners without their explicit consent	✓	
I will inform my supervisor and/or the School's research ethics officer and (if necessary) statutory services of any incidents of actual or suspected harm of children or vulnerable adults which are disclosed to me during the course of data collection	✓	

4.5 After completion of research

	Yes	No
Participants will be given the opportunity to know about the overall research findings	✓	
Data must be submitted to the School office and will be retained (in a secure location) for 7 years from the date of any publication based upon them, after which time it will be destroyed.	✓	
All hard copies of data collection tools and data which enable the identification of individual participants will be destroyed	✓	

SECTION 5: ETHICAL APPROVAL

Declaration of ethical research

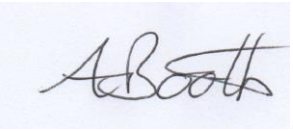
1. ***If you did not tick any of the shaded boxes*** *in section 4 of this form*, please sign and date below **and** get the checklist countersigned (see below).
   Keep one copy of this form for your personal records.

   Students who undertake research involving primary data collection on non-dissertation modules must submit the authorised checklist along with their assessed work to Alison Haigh in B20.

   Undergraduate dissertation students who intend to conduct fieldwork should include **two hard copies** of the checklist with their dissertation plans submitted to dissertation tutors in the autumn. Then assuming the checklist is signed and authorised by their dissertation supervisor, **students should confirm this authorisation in a section discussing ethics in the text of the dissertation**. Failure to do so may incur penalties when the dissertation is marked. Some undergraduate module convenors will also distribute a short 'ethical declaration' that you will have to sign.

   Principal investigators and other researchers, including postgraduate research students and postgraduate taught students, should also keep a copy on file and hand another copy to Alison Haigh in B20.

   By signing this form you are agreeing to work within the protocol which you have outlined and to abide by the University of Nottingham's Code of Research Ethics. If you make changes to your protocol which in turn would change your answers to any of the above questions then you **must** complete a new form and submit a copy to Alison Haigh or for undergraduates to your tutor/supervisor.

Signed …  . Date 5 September 2014……..

2. ***If you ticked any of the shaded boxes in section 4 of this form, then you must complete SECTION 6 (overleaf). You must then discuss all ethical issues arising, record the outcome, including the supervisor's or REO's response, and have this form countersigned (see below)***

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3. All forms should be countersigned by the REO.

Authorisation

This section **must** be completed in **all** cases – by type of investigator the form must be countersigned by the following personnel:

Undergraduate student → module convenor or tutor/project supervisor

Postgraduate taught student → dissertation supervisor

Postgraduate research student → supervisor/upgrade panel

Staff → School Research Ethics Officer (REO)

All forms should be countersigned by the REO

Having reviewed the ethical issues arising from the proposed research:

□X I am happy for the research to go ahead as planned.

□ I have requested that changes be made to the research protocol. The principal researcher must complete and submit a revised form which integrates these changes

□ This project must be referred on for more detailed ethical scrutiny. Please forward a hard copy to the School's REO

□ This project is to be referred to Research Development Group for consideration (this option is for School REO only)

Signed Date 5/9/2014

Role PhD supervisor

School Sociology and Social Policy Date 5/9/2014

Research Ethics Officer

Note: **any** research protocols lodged with the School office may be subject to review by the School's Research Ethics Officer

SECTION 6: FURTHER INFORMATION & JUSTIFICATION OF METHODOLOGY

One box should be completed for **each** shaded box ticked in section 4 of this form.

Ethical issue: 4.1 General Issues: Will this research involve any participants who are known to be vulnerable due to:

Being aged under 18 years.

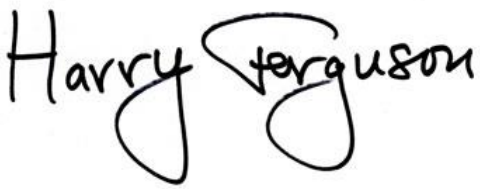
Rationale for chosen methodology and/or how ethical issue is to be addressed:

Any research on young offenders must, by necessity, be with people under the age of 18.

Only young male offenders aged 16 and over will be invited to participate. At this age the law considers everyone to have the capacity to consent unless proven otherwise as defined in s.1 of the Mental Capacity Act (2005).

Supervisors response (including whether ethical issue has been satisfactorily addressed):

I am satisfied that Allan has given full consideration to the ethical issues and will resolve them satisfactorily.



Ethical issue: 4.1 General Issues: Will this research involve any participants who are known to be vulnerable due to:

Residing in institutional care (permanently or temporarily)?

Having a learning disability?

Having a mental health condition?

Having physical or sensory impairments?

Previous life experiences (e.g. victims of abuse)?

Rationale for chosen methodology and/or how ethical issue is to be addressed:

Whilst it is not the intention to recruit young people with any of the characteristics listed above, given the nature of the population of young offenders, it is possible that some participants might fall into one or more of these categories. In order to minimise the potential risks of involving young offenders with these additional vulnerabilities, the information packs for YOT case workers will specifically ask them NOT to recruit any young offender currently living in residential care; with a significant diagnosed learning

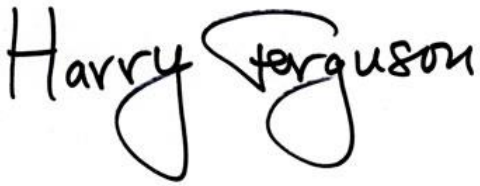
disability; with an acute diagnosed mental health condition or with a known history as a victim of abuse.

During the interview I will remain sensitive to the manner in which the young person is responding. If at any point during the interview I feel that the young male is becoming uncomfortable I will ask them if they want to have a break or terminate the interview. Following on, I will ring the case worker to inform them of any incident.

However, safeguarding is a legal requirement of all professionals who work with young people. It is the law that issues relating to serious risk of harm to the person or to others must be reported to the case worker. Also, if details of an offence that is about to be committed are given then this must also be reported to the case worker. It will be made clear to the young males that should they disclose information relating to the three previously mentioned points I will have to raise them with the case worker.

Supervisors response (including whether ethical issue has been satisfactorily addressed):

I am satisfied that Allan has given full consideration to the ethical issues and will resolve them satisfactorily.



SCHOOL OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY

GUIDANCE ON RESEARCH ETHICS

This **guidance** contains:

- A suggested format for a written consent form
- A suggested format for Participant Information Sheets

We hope you find these documents useful and that you will give us any comments about amendments and omissions.

The School also has guidance on researcher safety, the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and the archiving of research data.

Students only

You must include drafts of your consent form and Participant Information Sheet when you submit your completed Research Ethics Checklist for scrutiny by your supervisor.

School Research Ethics Officer on behalf of

Research Development Group

September 2010